

Abstract

Background : Use of family planning following the childbirth has benefits to both mother and the child and it has been considered as a way to reduce unmet need in family planning among women. Postpartum family planning is the use of family planning methods during the first year postpartum. Its prevalence or associated factors between urban and rural communities have not been compared in the few studies done locally.

Objective : To compare postpartum family planning practices and associated factors related to socio demography, knowledge, myths, attitudes and services received, among mothers of infants, attending Child Welfare Clinics, in two urban and rural settings in Polonnaruwa district

Methods : A clinic based comparative cross-sectional study was conducted in two urban and rural settings in Polonnaruwa district. A sample of 198 participants were recruited for each group making a total of 396. Consecutive sampling method was used in the urban setting due to availability of lesser number of mothers whereas systematic sampling method was used in the rural setting. An interviewer administered questionnaire was used to collect data. The data was analysed using SPSS version 23.0. Chi square test was used to compare the postpartum family planning practices. Unadjusted odds ratio and 95% confidence interval were used to find the associated factors. P value less than 0.05 was considered as significant.

Results : The response rate was 100%. Of the participants, 77.8% in the urban setting and 73.2% in the rural setting were following the national recommendation of PFP. The difference observed between the two groups was not statistically significant ($p=0.293$). However, almost same percentage in the rural setting (82.3%) and in the rural setting (82.8%) were practising a family planning method, by the time the study was conducted.

In the urban setting, younger age (OR=1.98, 95%CI:1.00-3.90) and higher level of education of mother (OR=0.45, 95%CI:0.21-0.94), having nuclear family (OR=2.37, 95%CI:0.17-4.83), with low income (OR=2.57, 95%CI:1.25-5.3) and receipt of family planning counselling at the place of delivery (OR=3.16, 95%CI:1.57, 6.35) and in the rural setting, having a younger partner (OR=2.21, 95%CI:1.16-4.21) and partner's higher level of education (OR=0.34,

95%CI:0.18-0.66), higher level of education of mother (OR=0.51,95%CI:0.27-0.97) and low income (OR=2.22,95%CI:1.17-4.22) were associated significantly ($p<0.05$) with the compliance to postpartum family planning whereas knowledge, attitudes, and myths on family planning were not associated significantly with postpartum family planning in both settings. The associations did not show significant differences between urban and rural settings.

Conclusion and recommendation : Postpartum family planning was satisfactory in both settings. The compliance to it was significantly associated with several socio-demographic and health service related factors. It is recommended to focus on family planning counselling at the place of delivery.

Keywords: Postpartum family planning, family planning, contraception