

## Effect of group counseling program for women on spouse communication regarding family planning in Zahedan health care centers in 2002

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Couple communication is one of the most important factors for accepting family planning methods. Women are the principal source of information about fertility regulation for their partners and communication between partners appears to be a prerequisite for the acceptance of contraceptive methods. Different studies and observations have shown that couple communication and family planning coverage are limited due to traditional and cultural concerns in Zahedan city. This study investigates the effect of group counseling with women on spouse communication about family planning.

**Materials and methods:** A quasi-experimental study (before and after) was conducted in Zahedan in 2002. Forty four women (in fertility age) with two or more children who had not used contraceptive methods were selected by non-random sampling from 3 urban health centers. After completing questionnaires by researcher about women and their husbands and determination of their educational needs, women were divided into 5 groups (8-9 members) and each group participated in 3 counseling sessions (based on their educational level). One month after intervention, the results were analysed by questionnaires and check-list forms using Wilcoxon, Mc-nemar and chi-square tests.

**Results:** Wilcoxon test demonstrated that frequency of spouse communication before and after intervention were significantly different ( $P < 0.00001$ ). Moreover, Chi-square test showed a significant difference after intervention between use of contraceptive methods and spouse communication about family planning (with  $P < 0.01$  for women and  $P < 0.05$  for their husbands). After intervention 43% of cases selected one of the contraceptive methods and Mc-nemar test showed significant difference ( $P < 0.00001$ ).

**Conclusion:** On the base of study results appropriate counseling for women can improve spouse communication regarding family planning. Therefore, it is suggested that couple communication skills should be reinforced by using instructional programs.

**Key Words:** Group counseling, Spouse communication, Family planning, and Zahedan.

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