

Empowering couples of childbearing age to become active family planning acceptors to create quality families

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ABSTRACT

The Family Planning (KB) Program is one of the government's strategies in controlling the population growth rate and realising quality families. Couples of childbearing age (PUS) are the main target in this program, but many PUS still have not yet become active family planning acceptors, especially in rural and remote areas. This community service activity aims to increase the understanding and participation of PUS in the use of contraceptives through education and counseling. The implementation method involved lectures, discussions, demonstration of contraceptives, and using leaflet media and teaching aids to 20 participants in the work area of the Pattingalloang Health Center, Makassar. The activity results showed an increase in the enthusiasm and knowledge of participants regarding the importance of being an active family planning acceptor. Supporting factors for the activity's success include the support of health workers, cadres, and the availability of infrastructure, while time constraints and the number of participants are obstacles. It is hoped that this activity can strengthen the role of PUS in the success of the family planning program and create healthy, prosperous, and quality families.

Keywords: Contraceptive Acceptors, Education, Quality Families, Women of Childbearing Age.



INTRODUCTION

Population growth is a critical issue that affects various aspects of national development, including health, education, employment, and the environment. One of the most effective strategies to manage this growth is the implementation of comprehensive family planning programs [1]. These programs aim to reduce birth rates and improve families' quality of life by ensuring planned and healthy pregnancies. In this context, Women of Childbearing Age (WCA) play a central role, as they are the primary target group for reproductive health services, especially family planning [2].

In Indonesia, the Family Planning Program (Program Keluarga Berencana) has been implemented for decades and has made significant contributions to reducing the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) [3]. However, challenges remain, particularly in rural and underserved areas, where many WCAs are still reluctant or unable to access contraceptive services [4]. This reluctance may stem from limited education, cultural myths, fear of side effects, partner disapproval, or lack of information about the available contraceptive methods [5]. As a result, a substantial gap persists between the number of women who wish to avoid or delay pregnancy and those who use contraceptives, also known as unmet need [6].

The concept of Contraceptive Acceptors refers to individuals or couples who actively choose and use a contraceptive method to plan their families [7]. Increasing the number of contraceptive acceptors is essential to the success of national family planning goals [8]. By ensuring that more WCAs become contraceptive acceptors, the risk of unintended pregnancies can be significantly reduced, thereby enabling women to pursue personal, educational, and economic aspirations. Moreover, when women can properly space or limit their pregnancies, they are more likely to raise healthier children and improve the overall well-being of their families [9].

In addition to improving maternal and child health outcomes, effective family planning contributes directly to creating Quality Families [10]. A quality family is not solely defined by the number of children but by the ability of parents to raise them in a nurturing, healthy, and stable environment. This includes being physically and emotionally prepared for parenting, having sufficient economic resources, and maintaining social harmony. Therefore, the empowerment of WCAs through family planning education and support services plays a pivotal role in national efforts to achieve sustainable development, particularly in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as Good Health and Well-being (Goal 3) and Gender Equality (Goal 5).

One of the key elements in promoting family planning participation is education. Health education provides individuals and communities with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about their reproductive health. Educational interventions such as counseling, group discussions, media campaigns, and peer outreach can dispel myths, build trust, and improve attitudes toward contraceptive use. When properly executed, these strategies lead to behaviour change and increased uptake of family planning services among WCAs.

This paper presents a community-based intervention to empower Women of Childbearing Age to become active contraceptive acceptors through health education in the Pattingalloang area of Makassar, Indonesia. This intervention aims to raise awareness about reproductive health and encourage greater participation in the national family planning program. The initiative involves collaborative efforts among healthcare

providers, local leaders, and educational institutions to ensure that reproductive health services are accessible, acceptable, and effective for all WCAs.

By understanding the barriers to contraceptive use and implementing targeted educational programs, communities can foster a supportive environment that promotes reproductive autonomy and the development of quality families. This effort benefits individual households and contributes to broader national population control and social welfare objectives.

METHOD

This community service activity was carried out to increase Couples of Childbearing Age (PUS) 's knowledge and awareness of the importance of being an active Family Planning (KB) acceptor to create a quality family. The location of the activity is in the working area of the Pattingalloang Health Center, Makassar City, South Sulawesi. This activity is the result of a collaboration between the service team from the DIII Midwifery Study Program STIKES Nani Hasanuddin with the Midwife of the Health Center, Family Planning Field Extension (PLKB) officers, and health cadres in the local environment.

The method of implementing the activity is carried out through several stages structured as follows:

Initial Preparation and Coordination

The initial stage involves coordination with the Pattingalloang Health Center to determine the time and place of the activity. The implementation team also identified and mapped targets, namely PUS, who are 15-40 years old and have not actively participated in the family planning program. In addition, media and counseling tools such as informative leaflets and contraceptive props were prepared.

Recruitment and Determination of Participants

The activity participants were as many as 20 PUS people recruited directly by the region's health cadres and medical personnel. Although the number of participants has not met the expected ideal target (35 people), the enthusiasm of the participants who attended remained high.

Implementation of Counselling

The counselling activity will be conducted on January 20, 2025, at the Posyandu in the Pattingalloang Health Center work area. Counselling materials include:

Education about the importance of using contraceptives in spacing pregnancy distances. Introduction of different types of contraceptive methods (hormonal contraceptives, intrauterine devices, steady contraception, and traditional methods). Explain each contraceptive method's benefits, effectiveness, and potential side effects. The importance of the active role of PUS in supporting family planning programs for the welfare and quality of families. The material delivery method uses a lecture approach, interactive discussion, and demonstration of props. The implementation team also opened a question-and-answer session to answer participants' doubts and personal experiences related to contraception.

Use of Educational Media

The leaflets distributed to participants contained visual and narrative information about the benefits of family planning and the types of contraceptives. In addition, props

such as contraceptive models are used so that participants can understand the shape, how to fit, and how each tool works firsthand.

Evaluation and Documentation

The evaluation was carried out qualitatively by observing the participants' activity during the discussion and their level of understanding of the material. The participants' enthusiasm was considered a positive indicator of the success of the counselling. Activity documentation is carried out by taking photos of the activity and recording participant feedback. This method was chosen because it effectively reaches the community directly and provides a more intensive interaction space between the service team and the target community. The success of this activity is strongly supported by cross-sectoral cooperation and active participation from all parties involved.

RESULT

Based on a survey that has been conducted in the work area of the Pattingalloang Makassar Health Center, it shows that there are still many PUS in the area who do not understand the importance of participating in the family planning program and the use of contraceptive methods. The consequences of this lack of understanding can potentially hinder efforts to regulate births and birth spacing, ultimately affecting family welfare and the creation of quality families. To overcome these problems, the Community Service Team carried out community empowerment activities by providing PUS health education about family planning services. This activity was held on Monday, January 20, 2025, at the Posyandu in the working area of the Pattingalloang Makassar Health Center.

20 PUS people attended this community service activity by providing education on the benefits of using contraceptives, the side effects of each contraceptive method and the introduction of various contraceptives. In addition, the community outreach team also explained the importance of participation in the family planning program to regulate birth spacing and maintain the reproductive health of PUS. Lectures, discussions, and demonstrations carried out this activity. During the activity, participants were very enthusiastic about listening and understanding the material provided. Followed by the Moderator opening a question and answer session, and supported by the activity of the participants who asked questions related to family planning and reproductive problems that they experienced. The media used in this activity is a leaflet containing information about the importance of using contraceptives, the benefits, the side effects that can be caused, and the relationship between the use of contraceptives and the creation of a quality family. Teaching aids are also used to introduce in detail each type of contraceptive device, shape, place of installation and effectiveness of each contraceptive device.



Figure 2. Participants of the activity and the community outreach team

DISCUSSION

After the activity is carried out, it is necessary to find out the extent to which the method provided by the implementation team can be understood and beneficial to the community. The evaluation was done by directly seeing the participants' enthusiasm in listening to the material presented. This activity is carried out as a vehicle for education to the community, which is carried out but is easy to understand and apply and has a good impact on public knowledge. The achievement of this activity is highly dependent on the active role of all elements involved in the activity, so that the knowledge of all counseling participants about the importance of being active family planning acceptors [11].

In this activity, several factors support and hinder the implementation of the activity. Factors that support the implementation of service activities are the active participation of all participants, support from health centre midwives, PLKB officers, cadres and adequate infrastructure so that counselling activities can run smoothly. The factors that hinder this activity are time constraints and the relatively small number of counselling participants (20 participants) from the expected target number of 35 participants.

Implementing community service activities to empower Women of Childbearing Age (WCA) to become active contraceptive acceptors is a strategic step in supporting the government's efforts to improve families' quality and reduce population growth [12]. Based on the observations and surveys conducted in the working area of Puskesmas Pattingalloang, it was found that many WCA had not yet become active participants in the Family Planning (FP) program, despite having more than three children [13]. This condition reflects a significant gap in understanding and awareness regarding the importance of family planning for personal and social welfare [14].

One of the major obstacles identified was the lack of comprehensive information and understanding about contraceptive methods among the target population. Many participants expressed fear about potential side effects and long-term impacts of contraceptive use, which discouraged them from actively participating in the FP program [15]. Misconceptions and myths, such as beliefs that contraceptives cause infertility or hormonal imbalance, also contributed to the reluctance of women and their partners [16]. In this regard, the educational intervention provided through the community service activity proved essential in addressing these fears and filling the knowledge gap [17].

The educational approach used in this program included a combination of lectures, group discussions, and demonstrations using contraceptive models [18]. This method allowed participants to receive accurate, detailed, and visual explanations regarding each type of contraceptive, its function, effectiveness, side effects, and proper usage [19]. Participants were also encouraged to share their personal experiences, concerns, and questions during the discussion sessions. This interactive format increased engagement and helped build trust between the facilitators and the participants [20].

The use of visual aids such as leaflets and anatomical models was particularly effective in supporting the educational content. These materials provided accessible information that participants could take home and share with others, potentially multiplying the program's reach. By introducing contraception in a transparent, respectful, and culturally sensitive manner, the activity helped dispel myths and promoted a positive attitude toward family planning [21].

During the session, the enthusiasm of the participants was evident. Many asked questions not only about the available contraceptive methods but also about reproductive health in general, such as menstrual cycles, fertility, and postpartum contraception [22].

This reflects a broader interest and need for reproductive health education among WCA in the region. Therefore, the session functioned as a platform for promoting contraceptive use and a medium for empowering women with broader health knowledge. Several key factors contributed to the success of the program. First, the active support of local stakeholders, including midwives from the local health center (Puskesmas), field officers (PLKB), and community health cadres, played a vital role in mobilising participants and ensuring smooth coordination. Their presence enhanced the event's credibility and created a welcoming environment for open dialogue. Second, adequate facilities and materials ensured the session could be conducted effectively. Third, the topic's relevance to participants' daily lives made the content highly impactful and practical [23].

However, the activity was not without challenges. One of the main constraints was the limited number of participants, totalling only 20 individuals, whereas the expected target was 35. This limitation was partly due to scheduling conflicts and a lack of prior registration from some potential participants. Another challenge was the time constraint; although the material was extensive and the participants were eager to learn more, the session had to be completed within a limited timeframe. This prevented the facilitators from addressing all individual concerns in detail. Despite these limitations, the overall impact of the activity was positive [24]. The increased knowledge and awareness among participants regarding contraceptive options and the importance of planning pregnancies were clear indicators of success. Additionally, the session helped foster a culture of openness around reproductive health, an area often considered sensitive in specific communities [25].

In the broader context, initiatives like this contribute significantly to realising quality families. By empowering WCA to make informed decisions about their reproductive health, communities can break cycles of poverty, improve maternal and child health outcomes, and promote gender equality. Moreover, these efforts align closely with national and international development agendas, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and Goal 5 (Gender Equality). This community-based intervention highlights the importance of targeted, participatory, and educational approaches in increasing the number of contraceptive acceptors among women of childbearing age. It demonstrates that, with the correct information, support, and tools, women are more likely to take control of their reproductive choices, ultimately contributing to healthier, happier, and more quality families.

CONCLUSIONS

Implementing this community service activity, focusing on empowering Women of Childbearing Age (WCA) to become active contraceptive acceptors, has positively impacted participants' knowledge and attitudes toward family planning. Through targeted education, the program addressed misconceptions, increased awareness about contraception's benefits and options, and encouraged greater participation in the national Family Planning (FP) program. Active support from local health professionals, PLKB officers, and community cadres significantly contributed to the smooth execution of the event. At the same time, visual aids and interactive discussions made the educational content accessible and engaging. Despite challenges such as limited participant numbers and time constraints, the program effectively met its objectives. Ultimately, by equipping women with the knowledge and confidence to make informed reproductive decisions, this initiative supports the broader goals of promoting quality families, improving public

health, and contributing to sustainable population management. Continued collaboration between health institutions, communities, and educational bodies is essential to sustain and expand the impact of such initiatives.

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