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## A STUDY OF PROBLEMS OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH OF THE WOMEN

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### ABSTRACT

During a woman's reproductive years—from menarche to menopause—marriage, pregnancy, childbirth, and contraception all play pivotal roles. However, the circumstances under which these events unfold are heavily influenced by factors such as cultural norms and access to medical care. Diet, age, lifestyle, general health, genetics, medicine, and the living environment all have a role in determining how health care is administered. In the modern world, women may get cutting-edge treatments for every issue relating to their reproductive health. Eating well, leading a generally healthy lifestyle, and getting regular checkups are all easy ways to support your reproductive health. Women's lives may be transformed by investing in their education and in programs that improve their reproductive health. Women's health is of paramount importance since they are the backbone of society and the home. One of the primary goals of these initiatives is to promote reproductive health by raising public awareness about reproductive issues and helping individuals access the resources they need to create a more fertile and stable society.

**KEYWORDS:** Reproductive Health, Women, medical care, general health, stable society

### INTRODUCTION

Maintaining good health is essential for living a fulfilling life. Every effort we make as human beings leads to improved health. Participation in social, political, and cultural activities, as well as the ability to earn a living and advance one's career, all depend on one's health. The concept of well health is simply an aspirational goal for optimal human functioning.

As a concept, reproductive health refers to a couple's ability to engage in sexual activity without fear of harm to themselves or their offspring, while also enjoying complete autonomy over when and how often they engage in sexual activity. Access to safe, accessible, and effective family planning and maternity care is

essential to ensuring a healthy pregnancy and delivery for every person. This includes the right to engage in sexual activity. HIV/AIDS and other STDs may be avoided by following safe reproductive practices. Therefore, educating and empowering women on reproductive health is a crucial step in achieving global health. The notion of reproductive health was first introduced to the globe at large during the International Conference held in Cairo in 1994 A.D. Quality of life is the driving force for the introduction of reproductive health ideas. It was made up of several (internal) components.

### Reproductive Health Meaning

- Humans have the capacity for procreation and fertility control.

- Safe pregnancies and deliveries are now the norm for women everywhere.
- Pregnancy is productive in terms of mother and baby health and survival.
- It's safe for couples to have sex without worrying about becoming pregnant or spreading illness.

## **DEFINITION OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**

The absence of reproductive sickness or infirmity is just one aspect of reproductive health; rather, reproductive health is a condition of full physical, mental, and social well-being. All aspects of a person's reproductive system, including their health, are the focus of reproductive medicine.

## **IMPORTANCE OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**

The well-being of a population's reproductive organs is essential to that of the species as a whole. Reproductive health is affected by a variety of factors that occur during childhood, adolescence, maturity, the reproductive years of men and women, and the subsequent generation. The major purpose of reproductive health is to ensure the health, especially of the infant, of both the mother and the father.

The treatment of women in their reproductive years has global implications for reproductive health. The state of one's reproductive system is indicative of one's overall health not only during childbearing years, but also in later life. Reproductive health issues also affect men's health, but to a lower degree than they do women's. Therefore, men's decisions about women's reproductive health concerns and needs are

crucial. But women's future health and happiness across the board, including reproductive health, has a snowball impact on the sequence of life events.

Aside from having a basic right to the best possible health, reproductive health is also considered as a precondition for social, economic, and human growth since most of our human energy is focused on reproduction.

Tired and weak individuals cannot afford non-healthy reproductive practices because they take too much energy and creativity for healthy and active involvement in social and economic growth of the nation.

## **CONCEPT OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**

Maternal mortality rates, STD prevalence, and other indicators of reproductive health are not discussed, nor are the various programs aimed at improving maternal health, child health, family planning, etc. The phrase "reproductive health" refers to the ability of both sexes to make choices about reproduction (such as whether or not to have children), as well as other life and death matters (such as whether or not to use contraception). The amount of intimacy and maturity between a man and a woman, as well as other factors, may have a significant impact on their reproductive health. Its poor reproductive health is the root cause of all of its other disorders and difficulties. With a focus on healthy reproductive practices rather than population policy or fertility control, the Cairo Conference sought to make individuals the focal point, rather than the objectives, of reproductive health development initiatives. The responsibility of men must be a part of these kinds of development efforts, as must the

empowerment and participation of women, including their access to education and the better implementation of programs and services for all the poor, marginalized, and excluded.

Outside of the realm of reproductive health, it was imperative that women in general conduct themselves in a secure and effective manner. Reproductive health services and technology improved, if imperfectly, throughout the second half of the 20th century.

However, there was a severe lack of funding for programs that improved reproductive health. The fundamental flaw was located inside the reproductive services' philosophical framework. Instead of being seen as integral to the process of regulating fertility, society has traditionally seen women only as a means to an end. While maternity and child health was addressed, the needs of women were not the primary focus of the developmental programs. In most cases, the requirements of the mother took precedence over those of the daughters. While the MCH programs are intended for the care of both the mother and the child, they have focused primarily on ensuring the safe and healthy delivery of the child through promotional, preventative, and curative practices, with little attention paid to the individual health risks of the mother during pregnancy and childbirth or the obstetric functions themselves. As a result, maternal death rates have skyrocketed in low-income nations outside the United States. Although women's quality of life has improved greatly as a result of family planning programs, these initiatives have fallen short of satisfying their specific requirements. The stakes are higher for

women as a result of fertility reduction initiatives. The introduction of contraceptives was a major step toward giving women more control over their reproductive health, sexuality, and overall quality of life. Instead, governments have solely utilized family planning as a means of limiting the population. Governments and policymakers have long devalued women as just tools for population control, dismissing them as unable or unwilling to consider alternatives to conventional methods of family planning.

Reproduction has reduced women to health care instruments rather than patients, which has created unmet demands. Despite the fact that infertility poses no significant medical risk to women, the method has failed to address the emotional and social distress that many women experience as a result. Despite the massive health programs and services targeted towards reproductive women, the plans have ignored the anguish of those women who are unable to bear children. A big worry of women is becoming pregnant unintentionally during sexual activity, which may put them at risk for contracting STDs, HIV, and other severe health issues. Unfortunately, the family planning programs, which only looked at the demographic problems of the nations, missed this crucial need for women. The goal of mother and child health programs is to ensure that all children in a country are born healthy, rather than conducting a wide-ranging investigation of women's reproductive health concerns that should not be limited to the childbearing years. Every stage of a woman's life—from childhood to adulthood to old age—brings health concerns related to her ability to

reproduce. The view that women are more of a commodity to be exploited than anything else is common in today's culture. The advocates for education have also been worried about the effect of declining birthrates on maternal and infant health. Women's dietary concerns have traditionally been secondary to those of the developing fetus and newborn. More resources should have been allocated to ensure the health of the infant than the breastfeeding mother, which is perhaps the greatest tragedy observed in that of maternal death. Reproductive health is a relatively new concept that was developed to address women's unmet needs; its overarching goal is to provide a holistic and coordinated strategy for addressing all issues related to women's reproductive health. Women are treated as subjects rather than objects in these health initiatives. It centered on valuing women for who they are as individuals, not only as mothers, and responding to their needs as such.

## **THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PACKAGE**

Health, as defined by the WHO Charter, is more than just the absence of sickness; it encompasses a person's emotional, mental, and social aspects as well. Therefore, a woman cannot be considered healthy in an unplanned pregnancy only because the fetal developments have been normal and her related health variables have been fairly under control, since its application is considerably more important and idealistic in the area of reproductive health.

Reproductive health is a whole picture, as stated by Fatcalla in 1996. Therefore, it is absurd to expect women to have a certain kind of health that is superior to another. In

other words, progress in one area of reproductive health facilitates progress in related areas. In a region of the globe with one of the highest infertility rates (the Sub-Saharan region of Africa), a common cause is a pelvic infection. Again, in cases where infertility has defied treatment due to factors such as the prevalence of STDs, postpartum infections, or unsafe abortion procedures, it is impossible to restore fertility without first addressing these underlying causes.

Birth planning, namely adequate spacing between children, is another factor in infant and child survival that is fundamentally tied to appropriate maternity care. Further decline in child survival is associated with unchecked HIV infection. Safe parenthood and fertility control go hand in hand because fewer unplanned pregnancies means fewer complications during pregnancy and fewer abortions performed in hazardous settings. Therefore, careful preparation is crucial for lowering the incidence of high-risk pregnancies.

Mothers and women of childbearing age are not the only people who benefit from taking care of their reproductive health. Adolescent females, who are on the cusp of reaching sexual and reproductive maturity before reaching adulthood, are likewise a focus. Women over the childbearing years are included in the reproductive health framework since their reproductive system requires attention up to the time their ovaries stop producing eggs. This idea was based on the same tenet that an adult's health might have an effect on a child's health. It is reasonable to assume that the term "reproductive health" should include males, who have their own

unique set of requirements in this area that need equal consideration to those of women.

## **FACTORS AFFECTING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**

Reproductive health issues cannot be solved by focusing just on the medical field. The economy, education, employment, family relationships, living conditions, other social relationships (including gender relationships), traditional habits, and governing laws all have a hand in shaping people's sexual and reproductive behavior. Therefore, the health sector is not the only one that may contribute to improving reproductive health. Reproductive health issues cannot be remedied until there is a substantial improvement in the health sector's services, knowledge, and capabilities.

By a wide margin, girls' and women's reproductive health were determined by the way they were treated or abused. Girls and women may take control of their life, including their health and fertility rates, when they have access to education. Therefore, the empowerment of women is crucial to the health of future generations.

## **AFFECTED BY REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PROBLEMS**

When comparing the reproductive health of the sexes, women are more negatively impacted. They are more likely to have difficulties during pregnancy, childbirth, and the dangers associated with unplanned pregnancies and unsafe abortions, as well as issues related to contraception, reproductive health infections, including STIs, etc. Reproductive health issues are responsible for the loss of an estimated 36% of healthy years of life for women, compared to just 22% for males.

Reproductive health challenges and problems are exacerbated by a confluence of biological, social, political, and economic variables. Lack of proper knowledge and access to the ensuing services makes young individuals of both sexes disproportionately susceptible to such reproductive health disorders.

## **THE IMPACT OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**

The effects of poor reproductive health extend well beyond the individual to society and the country at large. There are serious implications for global stability between the population and available natural resources and between the human species and its corresponding environment due to the inability observed in couples and individuals in developing countries on their lack of information and access to reproductive health services.

However, the spread of communicable illnesses has further negative effects on society as a whole. Sexually transmitted illnesses like HIV/AIDS are more controllable communicable diseases than other 'air-borne' diseases that spread readily to individuals while traveling across countries. Thus, international transmission of such illnesses is feasible. Investments in the field of reproductive health are seen as a long-term bet because of the potential knock-on effects on maternal and paternal health.

## **ASPECTS OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**

The reproductive system and its proper operation and structure are the primary foci of reproductive health considerations. Reproductive health also encompasses the changes seen in the physical realm of development. It has been established that a

person's physical, mental, and social health are significantly affected by both the reproductive process and the structure of the family. The factors that have been linked to a healthy pregnancy and a fulfilled life are discussed here:

**1. Planning of family:** Family planning is the process of determining how to best use a household's time, energy, and money to maximize the well-being of all its members. Some of the factors that contribute to a family's well-being and prosperity that are supposedly addressed include their financial situation, their level of education, their age when they got married, the size of their family, the number of children they have, and their use of contraceptives. Only through careful preparation has it been able to have a fulfilling and fulfilling family life. Therefore, its significance has grown through time.

**2.** The provision of safe maternal health relies heavily on reproductive health services. It is believed that every year throughout the globe, five lakhs women lose their lives owing to complications during childbirth. The bulk of issues with parenting safety may be traced back to factors such as early marriage and pregnancy, a lack of birth control, an inadequate amount of time between pregnancies, and a lack of education.

**3.** Terminating a pregnancy artificially, prior to the fetus's healthy development, is known as abortion, and is considered a serious crime due to the unsafe conditions in which it is performed and the wide variety of complications that arise as a result. Abortion is a leading cause of maternal mortality. As a result,

abortion has a central position in the discussion of reproductive strategies and the issues it raises.

**4.** When it comes to caring for a newborn or kid after they've been born, it's just as important to have access to quality postnatal care as it was to have access to quality prenatal care. Child and newborn mortality and morbidity rates, as well as the health issues connected with them, may be reduced if sufficient care is provided to their health. We have a responsibility to ensure that infants and children get the care they need, including correct nutrition, love, a balanced diet, cleanliness and sanitation, prompt medical attention, adequate breastfeeding, and more. The state of a child's reproductive health is determined by the quality of their surroundings, namely the degree to which they are protected from harm.

**5.** Infections of the Reproductive Tract (RTIs) RTIs are a severe threat to sexual and reproductive health. Unhealthy and dangerous sexual behavior and practices are the leading cause of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, syphilis, and infections of the reproductive system. Infertility, cervical cancer, prostate cancer, and other serious health problems increase in prevalence the longer these disorders go untreated. Therefore, it's crucial to educate the public about sexually transmitted diseases and their consequences via programs dedicated to reproductive health.

**6.** Infertility is the failure of a man or a woman to conceive a child and have a healthy infant via normal reproductive techniques. Causes of infertility have been traced back to issues with or flaws in the reproductive organs. The Mayo Clinic

reports that up to 20% of male infertility cases are caused by chromosomal abnormalities. 40–50% attributable to female chromosomal abnormalities and 30–40% to male chromosomal abnormalities. Sexually transmitted illnesses, substance misuse, defective sperm, issues with the uterus or fallopian tubes, ovulation difficulties, poor diet, obesity, and other lifestyle factors have all been linked to infertility. Infertility issues may be resolved if professional help is sought out early on.

**7. Adolescent Reproductive Health 7:** The teen years are sometimes referred to as the "age of change" because of the rapid development that occurs in this population. Changes in the person's physical, emotional, social, and mental health might cause them to engage in risky sexual practices such having sexual relations before marriage or having children at a young age. These are also important reproductive health concerns, and raising teenagers' understanding of these problems should be a top focus.

**8.** Menopause, which typically begins in women over the age of 45, is a serious reproductive health risk for women over the age of 45. During menopause, a woman's fertility begins to decline, which may lead to a host of physical and mental health issues (such as breast cancer, cervical cancer, osteoporosis, arthritis, high blood pressure, and the empty nest syndrome). These ladies really need proper education and regular checkups.

## THE CHALLENGES

When compared to the industrialized world, developing nations face far more difficulties and obstacles on the path to reproductive health. In many developing

nations, the birthrate is close to 90%. A total of around 180 million births Annually, the globe has 115 million births, with 20% of those pregnancies being unplanned. However, it is estimated that 20% of the estimated annual 50 million abortions that are induced naturally are carried out in dangerous environments or by inexperienced physicians. The annual global incidence of treatable sexually transmitted illnesses is estimated at 333 million. Tragically, many couples suffer the infertility consequences of such diseases. It is estimated that almost 600,000 women per year die from complications associated with pregnancy, childbirth, or abortion; nearly all of these deaths occur in underdeveloped nations. Comparatively, just one woman in every 1800 in the developed world dies from such a reason.

Every year, around 7.6 million newborns do not survive the perinatal stage. More women and babies make it through the reproductive process, but many of them are left with lifelong problems as a result. Insufficient prior investigation and measurement of these issues contributed to the imprecision of the estimations and figures included in the supplied report.

Lack of necessary information on the scope of reproductive health issues is the root cause of the observed information gaps. Millions of women are estimated to have not gotten excellent touch with healthcare professionals during birth, or to have not received timely contact or appropriate action after making contact. Millions of men and women still lack the information and resources necessary to make educated decisions about their fertility, such as access to family planning



services and safe abortion procedures. The health and fertility of millions of individuals are at risk because of a lack of information about preventable illnesses and how to protect against them.

The exponential growth in the population that need services poses a serious and imminent threat to reproductive health. Although fertility rates have started to fall in certain regions, the next few years will still see a surge in the population of women aged 15 to 49, as well as young couples.

The daunting problem for a nation with inadequate family planning services and, in particular, a lack of contemporary methods of contraception. The population of these nations between the ages of 15 and 49 is expected to grow by an additional 50% between 1995 and 2010. If a nation wishes to keep growing at current rates while maintaining the same subpar level of service, it will need to invest more in infrastructure and human talent in order to meet rising demand.

Less work will be needed to keep up with the projected rise in the number of the population that must be serviced in countries with more developed health and family planning services (again, the proxy measure is the contraceptive prevalence rate). For instance, in Columbia, the population of both adults and children under the age of 15 is expected to grow by less than a quarter during the next 15 years. In the years ahead, Thailand will see a decline in its youth population. This suggests that, with regards to respective reproductive health frameworks, both Columbia and Thailand have demands based on resources and policy planning. The spread of HIV/AIDS and other STDs,

as well as improving the quality of reproductive health programs and expanding their services to underserved populations, will remain formidable obstacles. But only steady population increase will allow governments to take on such challenges.

## CONCLUSION

Reproductive health is a crucial aspect of human progress and a key future idea of general health. While issues of reproductive health are a worldwide problem, they are of particular importance to women throughout their childbearing years. Considering that the health of the mother and child are inextricably linked, it is alarming that nearly half of all women (48%) of reproductive age (i.e., 15-49 years) in India have had anemia. Women with anemia are more susceptible to a wide range of infections, and the offspring of anemic mothers are more likely to be born with compromised immune systems. In order to improve the health of women, particularly those of reproductive age, additional research from a variety of angles need to be undertaken. If the current trend continues, India's future is doomed.

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