

**MALE INVOLVEMENT IN CONTRACEPTIVE
PRACTICE IN RURAL SETTING OF SINT-GAING
TOWNSHIP**

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ABSTRACT

Male involvement in spousal discussion about contraception has been demonstrated a significant positive effect on contraceptive use. The study aimed to investigate male involvement in contraceptive practice among rural couples, to find out the factors associated with male involvement in contraceptive practice, to determine the effect of male involvement on unmet need for contraception, and to explore the perceptions of men and women on male involvement in contraceptive practice and barriers to their participation. A community-based, cross-sectional study was conducted in rural areas of Sint-Gaing Township. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data. For quantitative data collection, altogether 200 married couples were interviewed by using pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire. For qualitative purpose, eight FGD sessions were carried out with married men and women. The study found 64.3% of men were adequately involved in contraceptive practice. Around 70% of men reported that husbands and wives made joint spousal decision-making. A fair agreement was observed between husbands and wives' responses. Men's involvement was comparatively lower in husbands of the youngest age group, Muslim men, lower level education, farmers and manual laborers, low contraceptive knowledge and negative attitudes towards contraception than their counterparts. Adequate male involvement significantly reduced the unmet need for contraception ($p < 0.01$). According to qualitative results, majority of men and women perceived contraceptive use was the primary responsibility of women although they considered that men should involve in it. They believed men's involvement would be a great advantage to women's health as well as to the whole family. Gender-related issues, such as being female health care provider, were some recognized barriers for male involvement in contraceptive practice. To achieve integral participation of men in relation to reproductive health including contraceptive practice, men should be discussed about gender roles and sharing responsibilities and provided with contraceptive counseling using strategic gender approach.