

# Assessing Family Planning Knowledge in Kamrup District, Assam

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**Abstract:** This study tries to assess the level of family planning knowledge in the Kamrup district of Assam through employing of primary and secondary data. Family planning knowledge and family size are interrelated and is reflected in the use of family planning methods, number of children and the desire for children. In the study area it is seen that not many respondents have knowledge of family planning or the importance of small family size. Family planning measures are also not seen to be adopted but despite these, the family size 85 per cent of the respondents are observed to have small family size. Knowledge of family planning is important as it empowers a woman, a family and a nation.

**Keywords:** Children, Family Planning Knowledge, Family Planning Methods, Family Size.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Family size refers to the number of individuals living together in a household and considered as part of a family unit (Kuznets, 1978; Blake, 2022). This includes the parents (or guardians) and their children, but can also extend to other relatives such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, depending on cultural or legal definitions. In demographic studies, family size is often used to measure household composition and is a significant factor in social, economic, and health-related research (Ciptanurani & Chen, 2021; Anfaara et al. 2024). Family size can impact various aspects of life, including economic resources, education, healthcare, and overall well-being (Rodrigues et al. 2023). It's also an important factor in studies of population growth and resource allocation.

Family planning knowledge refers to the understanding and awareness individuals have about methods and practices that allow couples or individuals to control the number and timing of their children (Obeleniené et al. 2021; Islam, 2024). It encompasses information about different contraceptive methods, the benefits of family planning, and the reproductive health options available to people. Family planning knowledge plays a vital role in improving public health, economic stability, and gender equality (Purohit, 2023). Family planning knowledge is a critical aspect of reproductive health (der Hatcher et al. 2023). It allows individuals to make informed choices about contraception, improves overall family health, and has far-reaching social and economic benefits. Education, access to services, and cultural awareness are key to empowering individuals and communities to take control of their reproductive health,

ultimately contributing to healthier societies (Tohit et al. 2024).

The impact of family planning knowledge on family size is significant, as it enables individuals and couples to make informed decisions about the number of children they wish to have and the timing of their births (Hutchinson et al. 2021). When individuals have access to comprehensive family planning knowledge, they are more likely to adopt contraceptive methods that align with their desires and health needs, resulting in changes to family size. The need for family planning knowledge is critical for improving health, economic stability, and quality of life at both the individual and societal levels (Andeskebtso & Ugochukwu, 2023; Islam, 2024). When individuals, families, and communities are well-informed about family planning options, they are better able to make informed decisions regarding reproduction, health, and resource management.

The way the population of the world is increasing it is likely that one day either we would have major scarcity of food and shelter or if we follow the process of constantly clearing jungles and provide food for the people in the world, we would over exhaust nature and that would lead to a grave natural disaster that might kill thousands of people (Ehrlich et al. 1993; Giller et al. 2021; Lloyd, 2023). It has become a concern for the whole world now as to how save the world from destruction and devastation that would be the consequence of over population (Fletcher et al. 2024). Individually all the countries in the world are taking up measures to limit and control the population of their country but then in most of the countries the rules are not rigid and the counter actions are not stern therefore the measures either

have not been implemented well or in some cases have not been followed in a proper manner. Family planning has been the key word in the run for development which the third world have been suggested time and gain but then their lack of infrastructure to spread the awareness in these countries have let condition deteriorate (Cleland et al. 2006; Rodwin, 2022).

India was the first country in the world to have launched a National Programme for Family Planning in 1952. India has surpassed China to become the country with the highest population in the world with a total population of 1.419 billion which is around 19 per cent of the world's total population (Hertog et al. 2023). India has around only 2.4 per cent of the world's total land area, therefore this ever-increasing population on the fixed land size is putting enormous pressure on the land and other resources of the country. This necessitates the importance of controlling the family size and the awareness about family planning knowledge. As per NFHS-5 data, the total unmet need for family planning among currently married women aged 15-49 years reduced to 9.4 per cent from 12.9 per cent in NFHS-4 for the country. In case of Assam, it reduced from 14.2 to 11.0 per cent and in case of Kamrup, it reduced from 19.6 per cent to 17.6 per cent. The present study will try to assess the level of family planning knowledge in the district of Kamrup and try to associate it with family size in the district. The total populations of the district is 15,17,542 persons and the district has a density of 489 persons per sq km., contributing around 4.86 percent (Census of India, 2011) of the state's total population. The total male population is 778,461 and female population accounts for 739,081 in the district. Revenue Circle wise statistics shows that Hajo Revenue Circle or sub-district has the highest share of population with a total of 2,62,531 persons. Present study covers all the eleven sub districts of Kamrup district according the data of office of the Deputy Commissioner and census of India 2011.

### ➤ Objectives of the Study

The study aims to

- To assess the level of family planning knowledge in the study area.
- To assess the relation between family planning knowledge and family size in the study area.

## II. DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study, primary data as well as secondary data has been used. Primary data was collected with useful methods like survey and interviews with women respondents and ASHA Karmis in the study area. The Secondary data has been obtained from various governmental reports as NFHS-4, NFHS-5, Census of India 2011, and also from research articles and newspapers.

For assessing the objectives of the study, primary and secondary data have been collected by various methods. In-person interviews were conducted with the help of questionnaire cum survey schedule in October, 2024. Study respondents were drawn using a snowball and purposive sampling technique. Only women in the child bearing age were chosen for this study. The first respondent led to the introduction of the second and thereafter. The ASHA Karmi personals were also interviewed for the purpose of study. The primary data gathered from the study have been analyzed using descriptive statistical methods and the results have been displayed using diagrams and tables.

### ➤ Respondent Demographics

The respondents chosen for the study are primarily females belonging to the age range 21-45 years. 35 per cent of the respondents fall in the age group 20-29, 60 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group 30-39 years, and 5 per cent aged 40 years and above.

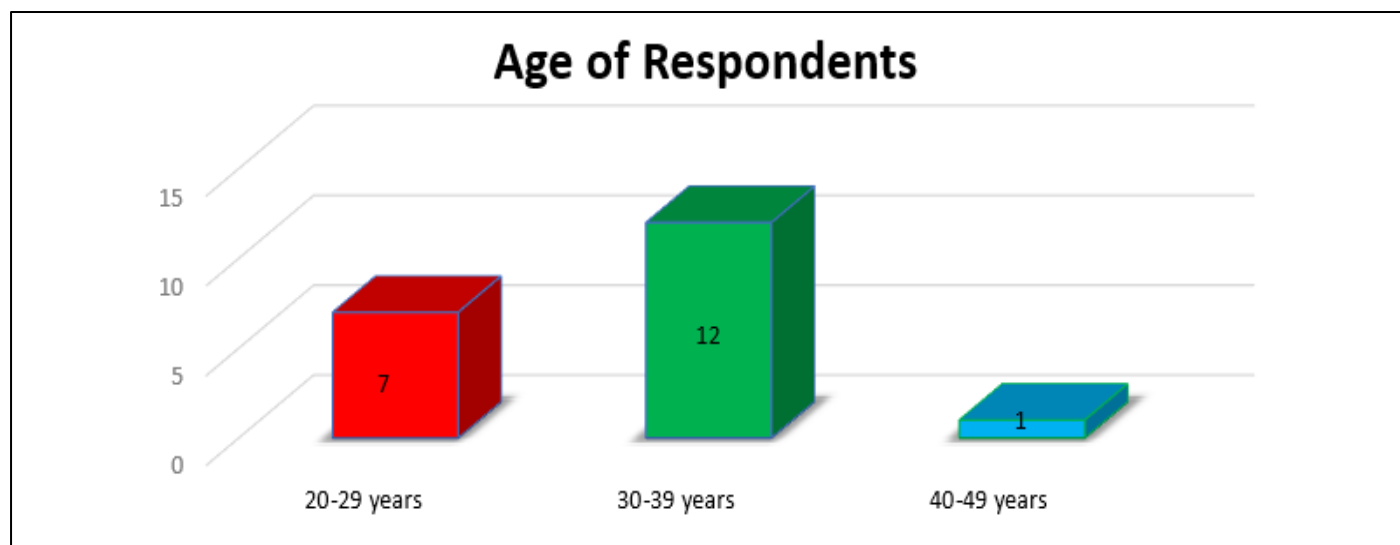


Fig 1 Age of Respondents  
Source: Primary Survey

All the respondents are married women with majority having three children each. 35 per cent of the respondents have two kids and 15 per cent have one kid.

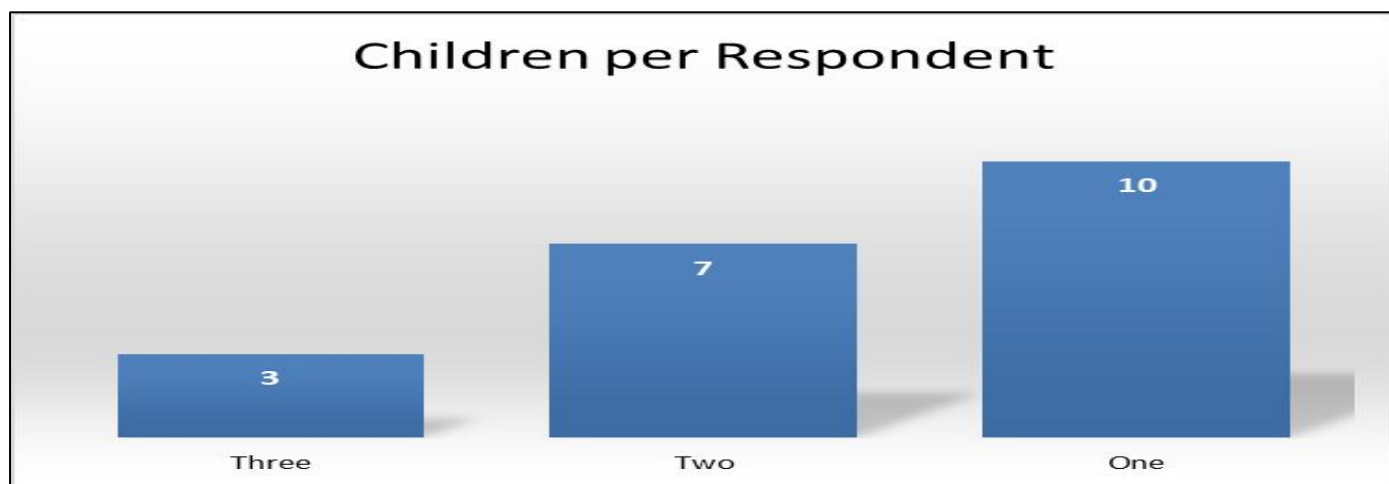


Fig 2 No of Children Per Respondent

Source: Primary Survey

The respondent of the study belonged mostly to OBC (60 per cent) and 40 per cent were of General caste.

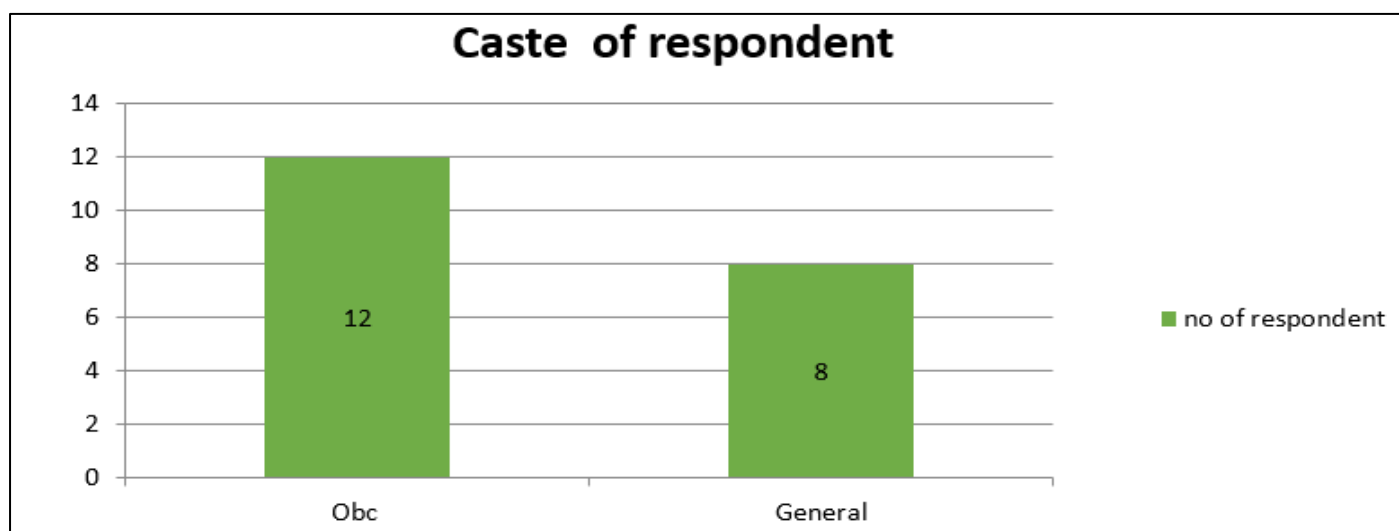


Fig 3 Caste of Respondents

Source: Primary Survey

Education qualification of respondents varied from majority (35 per cent) being only 7<sup>th</sup> standard pass to 15 per cent being graduate.

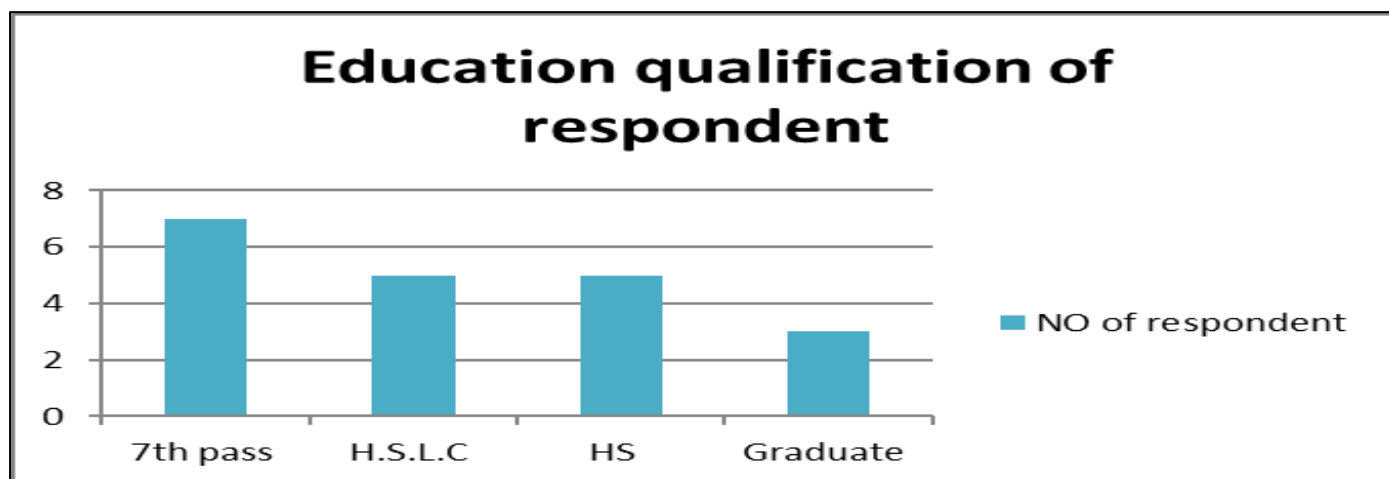


Fig 4 Educational Qualification of Respondents

Source: Primary Survey

The occupation of the respondents is mainly homemaker. A homemaker is a woman engaged primarily in caregiving to kids, adults and elders of the household and also manages the household chores such as cooking, cleaning, childcare, running errands, buying, cooking, and storing food for the family, buying goods that the family needs for everyday life, etc.

All the respondents have a say in household decision making. Household decision refers to the choice made by the individuals living together in household, such as family example of household decision choosing a new car, deciding on a family meal plan, selecting a healthcare provider, planning a family vacation, choosing a child's school, determining to allocate household chores, etc.

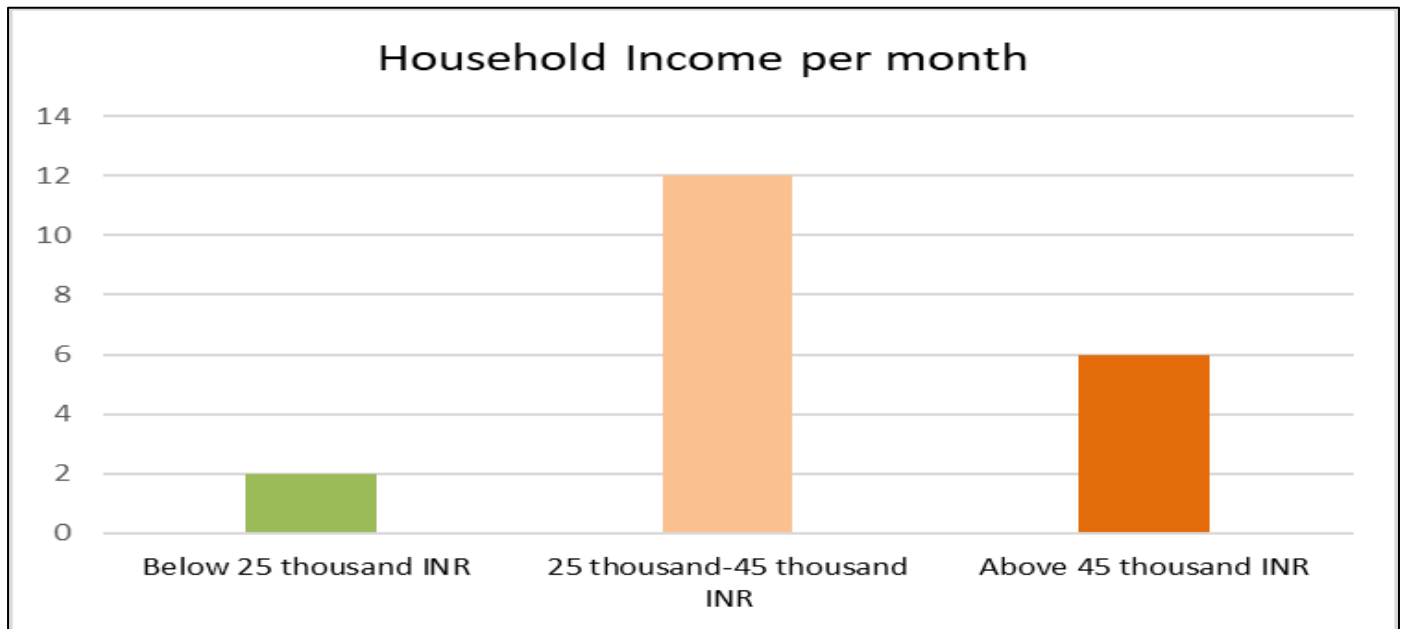


Fig 5 Household Income Per Month of Respondents  
Source: Primary Survey

The household income and expenditure of the respondents give a picture of the economic status of the respondents which aids their healthcare access thus affecting maternal and child health. 10 per cent of the respondents have

per month income of below 25 thousand INR, while 30 per cent have more than 45 thousand per month income, the highest being 89 thousand INR.

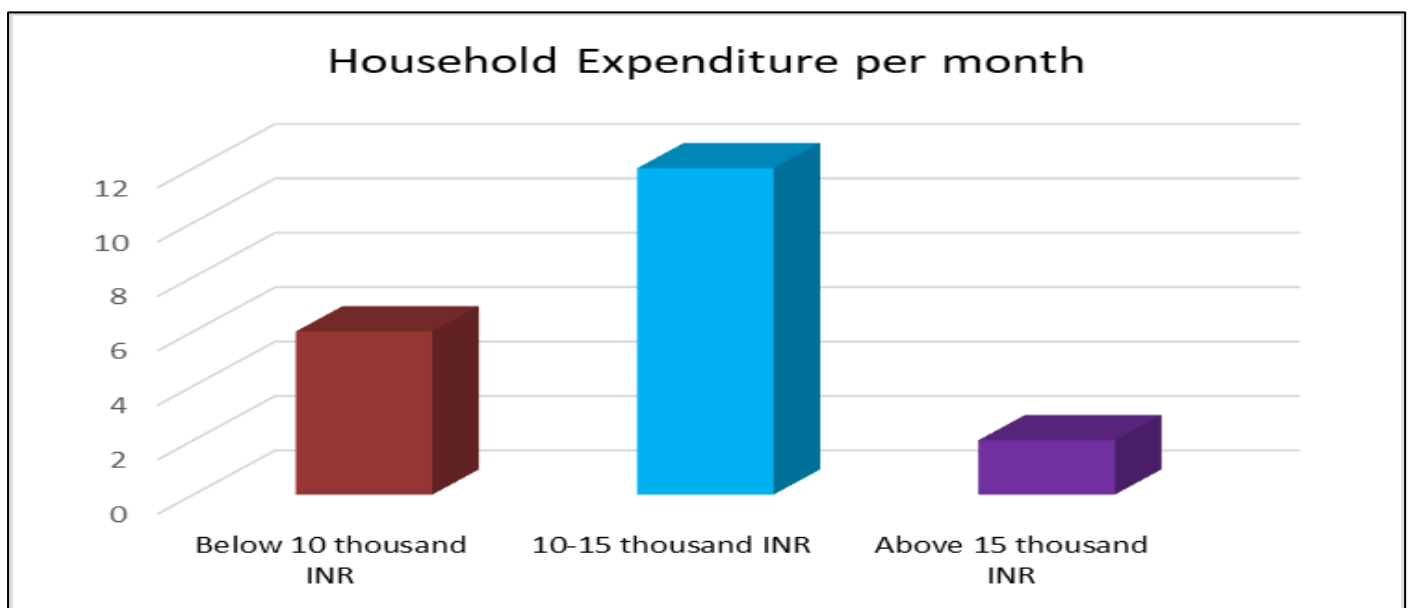


Fig 6 Household Expenditure Per Month of Respondents  
Source: Primary Survey

In case of household expenditure, 60 per cent of the respondents spend 10 to 15 thousand INR every month, while

10 per cent spend more than that and 30 per cent spend less than it.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### ➤ Knowledge of Family Size

The concept of family size is deeply intertwined with cultural, social, economic, and personal factors that influence decisions about the number of children a family wishes to have. Knowledge of family size refers to an individual's or a community's understanding of the implications of having a certain number of children, the factors influencing those decisions, and the potential impact of family size on various aspects of life, including health, education, and economic stability.

Understanding family size is crucial for both individual well-being and broader societal development. The number of

children a family has can affect multiple aspects of life, such as economic conditions, maternal and child health, and access to resources like education and healthcare. Knowledge of family size empowers individuals and couples to make informed decisions about how many children they want, when to have them, and how to plan for their upbringing. When people are educated about the consequences of family size, they are better able to manage their family's future and ensure that they can provide adequate care, resources, and opportunities for each child. Knowledge about family size also allows individuals to make informed choices about contraception and family planning, which can help avoid unplanned pregnancies and reduce the social and economic pressures of raising large families.

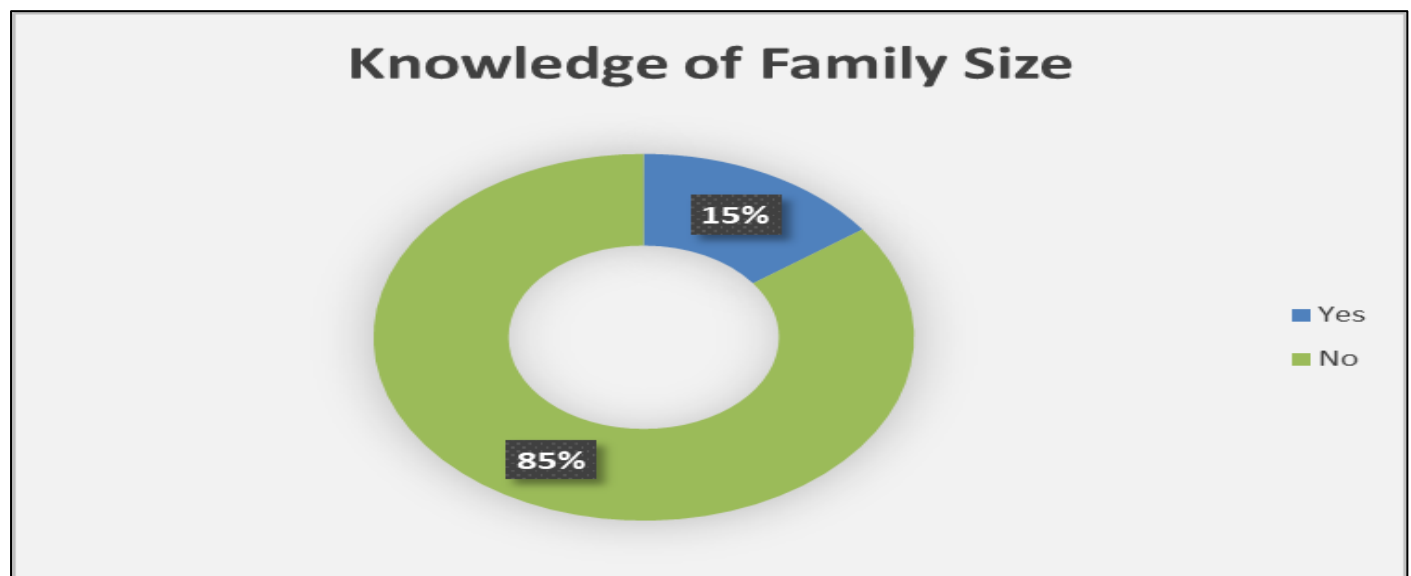


Fig 7 Respondents who have Knowledge of Family Size

Source: Primary Survey

In the study area, it has been observed that 85 per cent of the respondents do not have knowledge of family size and its importance while only 15 per cent are aware of the importance of family size.

#### ➤ Knowledge of Family Planning

Having knowledge of family planning is beneficial to self and society at large. One of the most significant benefits of knowledge of family planning is improved health outcomes for both mothers and children. Family planning allows individuals to space pregnancies and reduce the risks associated with unintended pregnancies.

Knowledge of family planning is vital for economic stability, both at the individual and societal levels. For families, being able to plan the number of children they have can help reduce financial strain. Raising children comes with significant costs, including healthcare, education, and housing. Families that are able to plan their family size are more likely to be able to afford these costs and ensure that each child has access to quality care and education. At the societal level, when families can manage their size, it can lead to more sustainable population growth. This, in turn, reduces the strain on public resources such as healthcare, education,

and social services, and can promote economic development. Knowledge of family planning also enables women to enter and remain in the workforce, leading to greater economic participation and independence.

Family planning knowledge plays a critical role in empowering women. When women are equipped with the information and resources to control their reproductive health, they gain more autonomy over their lives and futures. The ability to make informed decisions about when and how many children to have allows women to pursue educational and career goals without the burden of unplanned pregnancies. Knowledge of family planning also allows parents to focus on ensuring that their children have better access to education, leading to greater social mobility and opportunities for future success.

On a broader scale, knowledge of family planning contributes to social and environmental sustainability. As the global population continues to grow, resources such as food, water, and energy are increasingly stretched. Family planning helps manage population growth in a way that ensures these resources are used more efficiently, reducing pressure on the environment and contributing to sustainable development.

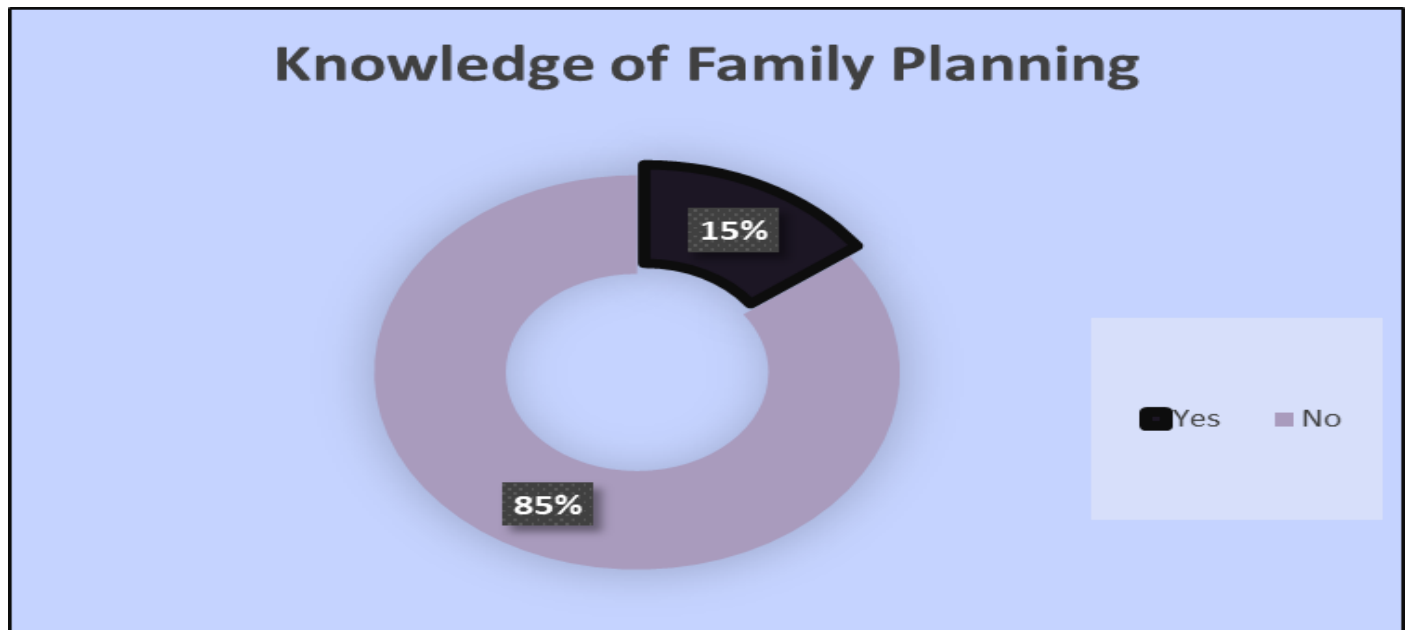


Fig 8 Knowledge of Family Planning in the Study Area  
Source: Primary survey

As evident from the figure, only 15 per cent of the respondents in the study area have family planning knowledge while rest have none. This less awareness is rooted in the ignorance of educating women regarding the importance of family planning. Also, no health workers have sensitized the women of the study area regarding family planning.

#### ➤ Use of Family Planning Methods

Family planning methods can be categorized into several types, including temporary methods, permanent methods, and natural methods. Temporary methods include hormonal methods such as use of birth control pills, injections, implants, etc., barrier methods such as use of condoms, and the use of Intrauterine Devices (IUDs). Permanent methods include sterilization methods and natural include Fertility Awareness Methods (FAMs), etc.

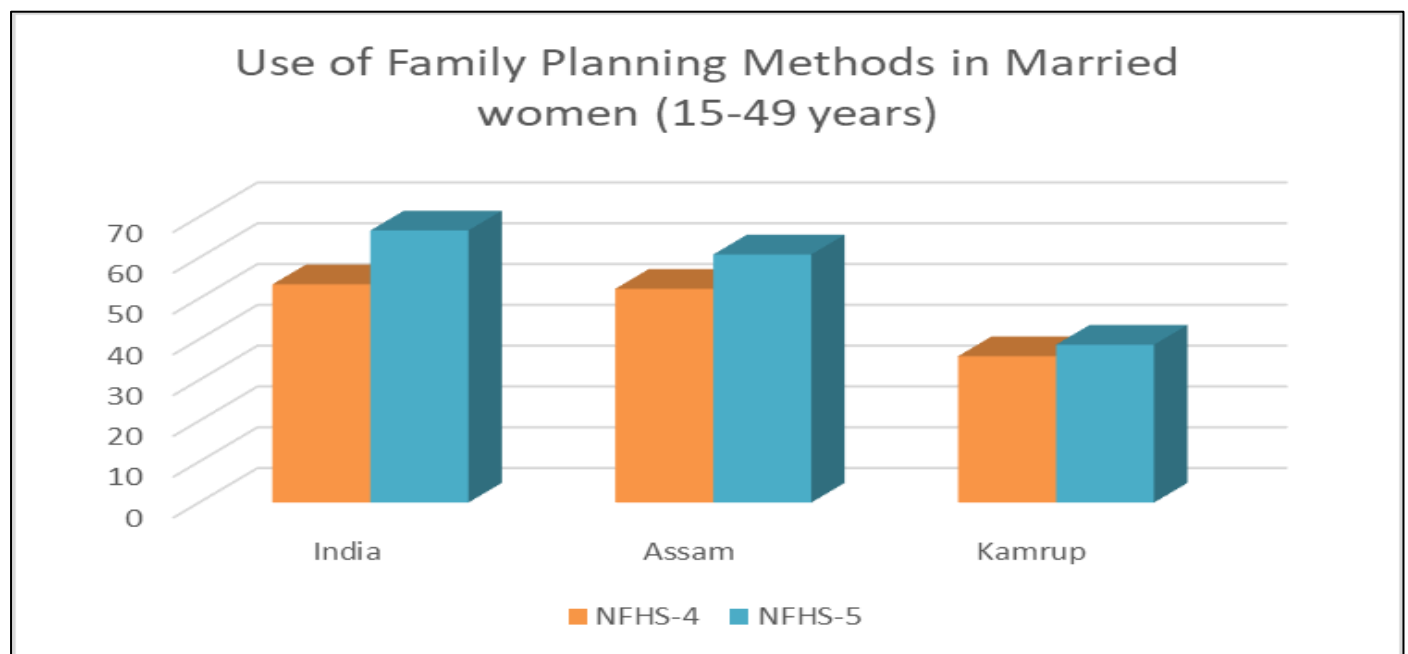


Fig 9 Percentage of currently Married Women (15-49 years) using Family Planning Methods  
Source: NFHS-5

There is only slight increase in the percentage of married women who use family planning methods in the district as compared to the state or country. Among the respondents in

the study area, 100 per cent of the respondents reported to no use of family planning methods.



### ➤ Children Number

The number of children a family decides to have is one of the most important personal and societal decisions individuals and couples make. Family planning plays a central role in helping people determine the number and timing of their children, enabling them to make informed

choices based on their health, financial situation, and life goals. The ability to control family size through various family planning methods brings about several benefits, including improved health outcomes, economic stability, and gender equality. However, this decision is influenced by a range of personal, cultural, social, and economic factors.

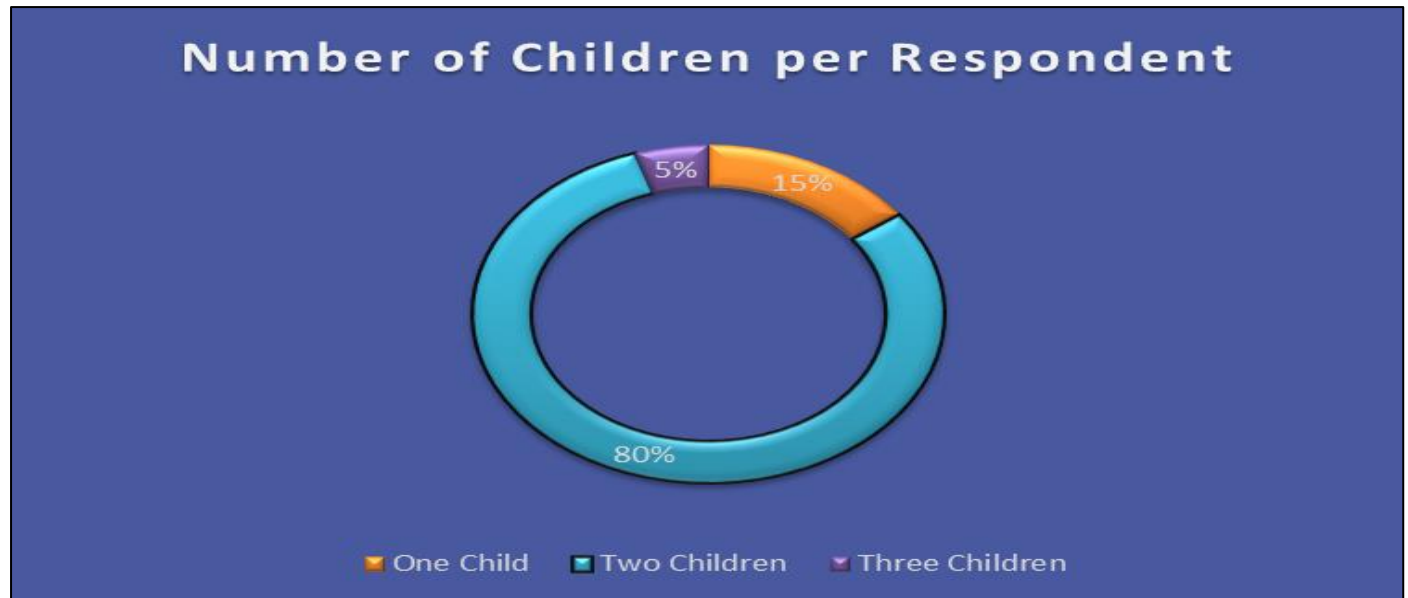


Fig 10 Number of Children Per Respondent

Source: Primary Survey

Majority of the respondents (80 per cent) have two children, 15 per cent have one child and only 5 per cent have three.

### ➤ Desire for More Children

The desire for more children is a deeply personal decision, influenced by a variety of factors including cultural norms, personal aspirations, and family dynamics. For some individuals or couples, the wish for a larger family may stem from a deep sense of love, tradition, or the desire to pass on values and heritage. However, in today's world, the decision to have more children often intersects with family planning, which provides the tools and knowledge to manage reproductive health and ensure the well-being of the family.

While some families wish to have many children, family planning offers them the opportunity to make informed choices about when and how many children to have, based on health, financial, and personal factors. The interplay between the wish for more children and the use of family planning methods reflects a complex balancing act between personal desires and practical considerations. In the study area, 100 per cent of the respondents and neither do their spouses wish for more children.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Family planning is a crucial aspect of sustainable development, contributing to improved health, education, and economic outcomes for individuals and communities and communities. Through this project, we have explored the importance of family planning in promoting responsible

parenthood, reducing maternal and infant mortality rates, and ensuring a better quality of life. In conclusion, family planning is not just a personal choice but a societal responsibility that can lead to a healthier and more prosperous future for all. By implementing effective family planning strategies, communities can achieve sustainable development, reduce poverty, and promote gender equality.

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