

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES OF CONTRACEPTIVES AMONG FEMALES OF CHILD BEARING AGE (15 TO 49 YEARS) ATTENDING GYNAECOLOGY OUTPATIENT DEPARTMENT AT ALLAMA IQBAL MEMORIAL TEACHING HOSPITAL, SIALKOT

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Abstract:

Objectives: To assess the Knowledge and practices of contraceptives among females of child bearing age (15-49 years) attending Gynaecology OPD.

Methods: A Cross-Sectional Study conducted at gynae OPD of Allama Iqbal Memorial Teaching Hospital, Sialkot city

Results: A total of 100 participants responded to the questionnaire. Of the respondents, approximately half belonged to the age group of 31-40 years with a median age of 30 years. A total of 50 respondents had completed their matriculation. Most of the participants had about 3-6 children. About 64% of the respondents had a total income between Rs.50,000 and Rs.100,000.

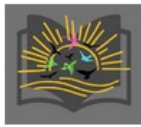
Conclusion: A huge number of married women of reproductive age have some knowledge about family planning but the percentage of users is not as high.

Key Words: Contraceptive, Child bearing age, Gynaecology

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Introduction

One of the major problems which developing countries face today without any doubt is increasing population, which has turned into a population bomb. Nowadays, family planning is not just a key to population control, but has now become a fundamental human right, which is



playing a major role in women and children's health. Pakistan, having almost 2.83% of the total world's population, is the 5th most populous country of the world¹.

A study in the United States showed that there are a series of complications for not using or ineffectively using contraceptive methods among Hispanic women.² Economic factors and access to health care are important factors. Now, it has been proven that knowledge and cultural values have an impact on reproductive behaviour².

Contraception is a method that is in the knowledge of the people of Pakistan, but prefer to avoid studying it or even talking about it even at a time like today where the rest of the world is busy trading Bitcoin, working on the artificial intelligence and the genetic engineering. There is a need to express the importance of contraception and strengthen the perceptions that religion not only allows but also recommends family planning.³

Contraception, also known as birth control or anticonception, is a method or device used to prevent pregnancy. Some of which include; Pills, Intra-uterine Contraceptive Devices (IUCDs), Condoms, Implants, Rings and Injections etc. Tubal Ligation and Vasectomy being the permanent methods among women and men respectively.⁴

Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) is the percentage of married women, between the ages 15-49 years, who use modern and the traditional methods of contraception. National surveys carried out in 1974-75 (Pakistan Fertility Survey) and 1990-91 (Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey) documented essentially unchanging contraceptive prevalence less than 12%^{3,4}.

We conducted this study in the city of Sialkot, which is a city of 376,000 people, having 4 tehsils administratively divided into 52 Union Councils.

Allama Iqbal Memorial Hospital is a 500 bedded teaching hospital affiliated to Govt. Khawaja M. Safdar Medical College.

Objective

To assess the knowledge and practices of contraceptives among females of child bearing age (15-49 years) attending Gynaecology OPD of Allama Iqbal Memorial Hospital, Sialkot.

Methodology

A descriptive, cross-sectional study carried out at Allama Iqbal Memorial Hospital, Sialkot during June to August, 2022 with sample size of 100 women between the age of 15-49 years with convenience.

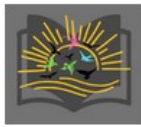
The data is then analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 2022.

Inclusion Criteria: Married women of child bearing age (15-49 years) attending Gynaecology OPD at Allama Iqbal Memorial Hospital, Sialkot who were willing to participate.

Exclusion Criteria:

1. Age less than 15 years or more than 49 years.
2. Divorced and Widowed women
3. Women who were not willing to participate.

The permission of the study was granted by the Ethical Committee of the Community Medicine Department, similar permission was also taken from a Medical Superintendent and Head of Gynaecology Department of Allama Iqbal Memorial Teaching Hospital, Sialkot. Informed Consent was taken from each participant. The confidentiality of the data gathered from the respondents was ensured.



The study was conducted using a 27-item questionnaire. The questionnaire elicited information regarding their age, educational status, number of children, knowledge and methods of contraceptive used. Pilot testing of the ten (10) questionnaires were done and necessary changes were made accordingly.

Results:

A total of 100 participants responded to the questionnaire. Approximately half of the respondents belonged to the age group of 31-40 years with a median age of 30 years. The 50% respondents had completed their matriculation. Most of the participants had about 3-6 children. About 64% of the respondents had a total income between Rs.50,000 and Rs.100,000.

Variable	Frequency
Age Group	
15-20 yrs	15
21-30 yrs	25
31-40 yrs	40
41-49 yrs	20

Table-1; Age wise distribution

Education	
Illiterate	10
Under matric	55
Matric	25
Intermediate	10
Bachelors and above	00

Table-2; Education wise distribution

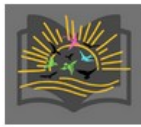
Number of children	
1-3	12
3-6	45
More than 6	43

Table-3; Children wise distribution

Occupation	
House wife	32
Government job	20
Private job	30
Jobless	10
others	08

Table-4; occupation wise distribution

Husband's Occupation	
Self employed	38
Government Job	



Private Job	47
Others	10
	5

Table-5; Husband's Occupation wise distribution

Family Income	
Less than 20,000	7
20,000-50,000	20
50,000-100,000	64
More than 100,000	9

Table-6; Family Income wise distribution

Of the respondents, 67% had knowledge of contraception while 58% had used contraception at least once in their lives. Furthermore, the educated respondents were more prone to using contraception than the uneducated ones. Regarding the methods of contraception most of the respondents were using condoms (55.6%) and followed by Oral Pills (30%). The methods which were found most effective were condoms (70%) followed by tubal ligation (9.6%). Almost half of the respondents had poor knowledge, one-fourth had good knowledge, and the rest had average knowledge of contraceptive modalities.

Knowledge regarding side effects of contraceptives	Number
Nausea and vomiting	7
Menstrual irregularities	8
Abnormal Vaginal Bleeding	22
Weight Gain	10
Effects Fertility	0
No side effects	3
Others	0

Table-7; Knowledge Regarding Side Effects of Contraceptives

Among the reasons for not using contraceptives were lack of finances (20%), fear of side effects and inconvenient to buy (8%). The most common side effects/myths that people reported were abnormal vaginal bleeding (22%), weight gain (10%), menstrual irregularities (8%), and nausea and vomiting (7%).

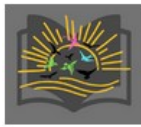
Discussion:

According to Pakistan Reproductive Health and Family Planning Survey 2000-2001, husband's disapproval was the main factor for not using any family planning method among married women⁵ which coincides with our study.

Women's illiteracy is one of the factors that affect the knowledge regarding the use of contraceptives. Pakistan has a low literacy rate. This is also reflected in the present study where the illiteracy level was around 30% which is even lower in rural areas.

The most preferred method of contraception in young adults was the condom followed by OCPs as reported in the study conducted by Fantahun MI in North Gonder in 1995 and by Araoye MO

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et al. in Nigeria in 1998. However, OCPs were the most preferred method of emergency contraception (43.9%) in a study conducted by Tamire W in Ethiopia in 2007.⁶

In a study conducted in Yemen in 2007, which narrated the reasons for non-contraceptive users were fear about side effects 38%, however people wanted children 22%, while people had religious constraints 7%, method failures 5%, desire to have sons 4% and family pressure 3% while in our study the reason for non-contraceptive users were of weight gain 22%, abnormal vaginal bleeding 10%, menstrual cycle irregularities 8%, nausea and vomiting 7%. They also considered it expensive and inconvenient to buy 12%, but the husband did not want to use 15%. In the same study conducted in Yemen in 2007 to assess husband's attitude towards modern contraceptives concluded that to decide the practice of family planning should be in the husband's hand 70.5%, while 56% felt the wife should have the right to decide. Results indicated ambivalence by some husbands on the main decision maker for family planning practice.⁶

In our cross-sectional study, 67% of women of child bearing age (15-49years) had knowledge about common methods of contraceptives while a similar study conducted in Bhana Mari union council Peshawar showed 90.2% of knowledge of common methods of contraception which was higher in our study.⁸

In our study about 40% married women were of age 31-40years while it is evident from a study conducted in Peshawar that about 70.4% of married were of age 25-40 years.⁷

In our study, the percentage of illiterate women was about 40%. Whereas in the study in Bhana Mari union council Peshawar city percentage of illiterate women was 50.5%.⁸ In our study the most effective and used methods of contraception were condoms 58%, Oral contraceptive pills (OCP) 25% followed by Tubal ligation about 10%. Condoms were the most common chosen method used by 33.9% of couples as shown in other studies as well. OCP were used by 11.3% of women in comparison with 32% and 10% in other areas of Pakistan.^{10, 11, 12}

Conclusion

A 67% is a massive number of married women of reproductive age have some knowledge about family planning but the percentage of users is not as high.

Recommendations

1. Awareness through health education campaigns.
2. Women empowerment should be promoted.

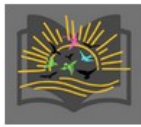
Budget; Nil

Limitations

1. Shortage of resources.
2. The result of this study cannot be generalized to the whole population.
3. Bias may have occurred, as the study was limited to a small group.

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