

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE OF CONTRACEPTION IN RURAL KASHMIR

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Received : 24/04/2022
 Received in revised form : 30/06/2022
 Accepted : 10/07/2022

Keywords:
 Rural,
 Contraception,
 Practices

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DOI: 10.47009/jamp.2022.4.3.26

Source of Support: Nil,
 Conflict of Interest: None declared

Int J Acad Med Pharm,
 2022; 4 (3); 113-116



Abstract

Background: Fertility is determined by many factors such as customs, morals and habits of various social and ethnic groups. Jammu and Kashmir Union territory in general and Kashmir valley in particular is a Muslim dominated population with traditionally a conservative society. The aims & objectives is to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of contraception in Kashmir. **Materials and Methods:** It was a cross sectional study. Participants were recruited from gynae OPD at GMC Anantnag who had come to visit to hospital for various gynaecological reasons. Participants were selected by simple random sampling. The investigator collected the data by administering a questionnaire. **Result:** A total of 342 women were included in our study. Our study showed that the knowledge of contraception was 65.78 % in the whole cohort. The knowledge among different age groups was 64.38 % in age group 18 -25 years age, 71.06% in age group 26 to 35, 72.23% in age group 36 to 45 and 44.29% in those with age more than 46. (p=0.04). 72 (21.05%) of them got the knowledge about modern contraceptive method from their social circle, while 170 cases (49.7%) got it from health personnel and 100 cases (29.23%) got from media sources. Majority of women in rural Kashmir the preferred contraceptive methods was male condom (49.07%), this was followed by female condom (36.41%) and hormonal (33.64%).36.41% of married women in rural Kashmir used contraceptive methods as they have completed their families, while 24.07% used it for improvement in health. Only 23.45% of married women in rural Kashmir use it for spacing in birth while only 16% had economic problem as an issue in their life for using contraceptive methods. **Conclusion:** The overall knowledge of contraception was 65.78 % in the whole cohort. It was maximum of 71.06% in age group 26 to 35. Most of women got this knowledge from health personnel. Majority of decision making about using contraceptive method was taken mutually by husband and wife. The preferred contraceptive methods was male condom (49.07%), this was followed by female condom and hormonal. Among those not using contraception, majority did not prefer due to lack of knowledge. Our findings suggest that there is still a need to increase information, education, communication activities and to motivate people to practice contraception.

INTRODUCTION

Fertility is determined by many factors such as customs, morals and habits of various social and ethnic groups. There are many factors which are responsible for variation of acceptance of family planning methods within and between societies at community, family and individual level. Socioeconomic environment, culture & religious values and education are few of them that play a vital role. Our country is the second most populous in the world having a rapidly growing population. Contraception acceptance by a couple is governed by various socio-cultural factors, such as religion

and education of husband and wife.^[1,2,3,4,5] Modern contraceptives are estimated to prevent about one quarter to one-third of all maternal deaths.^[6,7] The growth of our resources to match our needs is much behind the population growth. Despite constant efforts by the government, unmet needs still remain. The reasons for these unmet needs have to be analyzed to help the government in formulation of appropriate policies and modified approaches. Jammu and Kashmir Union territory in general and Kashmir valley in particular is a Muslim dominated population with traditionally a conservative society. Family customs, religious beliefs and societal influences are thought to be responsible for indifference towards contraception. We aimed to

study the knowledge, attitude and practice of contraception in rural Kashmir and various factors influencing it.

Aims & objectives:

To assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of contraception in Kashmir.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It was a cross sectional study. Participants were recruited from gynae OPD at GMC Anantnag who had come to visit to hospital for various gynaecological reasons. Participants were selected by simple random sampling. It was conducted on a sample of 342 married women who were visiting hospital for various reasons. The respondents were married women in reproductive age group and were selected by using simple random sampling technique. The investigator collected the data by administering a questionnaire and further processed, tabulated, classified and analysed the data using SPSS 20 software package for better understanding of the research problem. Descriptive analysis was done by the researcher to describe the results in frequency and percentages. Chi square has been determined to test independence for finding out association between variables.

RESULTS

Baseline Characteristics

The socio demographic profile of the respondents in the present study is shown in the table 1. Among the 342 women in the study group, 33.33% lies in the age group of 26-35 years, 28.67% lies in the age group of 18-25 years while 21.05% lies in the age group of 36-45 years and only 16.95% of women lies in the age group of 46 and above. Out of the total sample of the study, 66.66% of the women were Muslims and 33.33% were Non-Muslims. Further, on categorizing the sample on the basis of socio economic status, 11.69% belonged to upper class, 40.12% belonged to middle class and 53.08% belonged to lower socio economic status. 60.49% of the sample had family members above ten in numbers while 36.41% had 6-10 members and 8.64% had five family members in number.

Knowledge of modern contraceptive method

The knowledge of contraception among different age groups was 64.38 % in age group 18 -25 years age, 71.06% in age group 26 to 35, 72.23% in age group 36 to 45 and 44.29% in those with age more than 46.(p=0.04).

Knowledge of type of contraceptive method used by married women of rural Kashmir

59.56% of women had knowledge about periodic contraceptive method, 53.39% have knowledge about rhythm method, 20.67% have idea about

Coitus interrupts and 17.28% knows about lactational ammenorrhoea. Out of 342 women, 64.81% have knowledge about male condoms, 57.71% have knowledge about female condoms and 20.67% have knowledge about diaphragm.

Source of knowledge about modern contraceptive method

Out of 342 married women in rural Kashmir only 72 (21.05%) of them got the knowledge about modern contraceptive method from their social circle, while 170 cases (49.7%) got it from health personnel and 100 cases (29.23%) got from media sources.

Attitude of respondents towards contraceptive method used by married women in rural Kashmir

We reported that 59.5% of the respondents “strongly agrees” that contraceptive methods against their culture and religion. 26.2% of the married women in rural Kashmir also “agree” to this statement while only 9.5% of the respondents disagree to this statement and 3.6% off them strongly disagree that contraceptive method is against their culture and religion. About 35.7% of married female “strongly agrees” and 33.3% reported to “agrees” that only females should use contraceptive method while “14.3%” of married females “disagree” and 9.5% of them “strongly disagrees” to the statement. To the statement contraceptives are ineffective 29.80% of the respondents strongly agrees and 35.70% of them agrees while only 13.1% of the respondents disagree and 4.6% strongly disagree to the statement. Majority of married women belonging to rural Kashmir believes that contraceptive inhibits their sexual pleasure and these methods are meant only for literate people. Majority of female agrees to the statement that husband should be involved in family planning. [Table 2]

Attitude towards decision making about using modern contraceptive method

Majority of decision making about using contraceptive method is taken mutually by husband and wife in rural Kashmir i.e. in 156 (45.61%) cases. While in 129 cases (37.71%) independent husband approval for using contraceptive method was found and in 57 cases (16.66%) independent wife decision making about using contraceptive methods was noted.

Barrier preferred by married women in rural Kashmir.

The preferred contraceptive methods by married women in rural Kashmir are shown in table. It was seen that among majority of women in rural Kashmir the preferred contraceptive methods was male condom (49.07%), this was followed by female condom (36.41%) and hormonal (33.64%). Diaphragm was preferred by 25.30%, Injectables by 24.38% and pills by 24.38% of married women in rural Kashmir.

Reasons for using and not using contraceptives method by married women in rural Kashmir:

36.41% of married women in rural Kashmir used contraceptive methods as they have completed their families, while 24.07% used it for improvement in health. Only 23.45% of married women in rural Kashmir use it for spacing in birth while only 16% had economic problem as an issue in their life for using contraceptive methods. Among those not

using contraception, 45.98% of married women in rural Kashmir do not prefer using contraceptive methods due to lack of knowledge, while 26.85% of married women do not use it as their husband disapprove them from using it. Moreover, 27.16% of married women in rural Kashmir do not prefer using contraceptive method due to fear of its side effect.

Table 1: Socio demographic profile

| Demographic variable | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Age | 18-25 | 98 | 28.67 |
| | 26-35 | 114 | 33.33 |
| | 36-45 | 72 | 21.05 |
| | 46 and above | 58 | 16.95 |
| Religion | Muslim | 256 | 73.46 |
| | Non-Muslim | 86 | 26.54 |
| Socio-economic Status | Upper | 40 | 11.69 |
| | Middle | 130 | 40.12 |
| | Low | 172 | 53.08 |

Table 2: Attitude of respondents towards contraceptive method

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------------|
| It is against culture/religion | 192 (59.5 %) | 87 (26.2 %) | 4 (1.2%) | 31 (9.5 %) | 11 (3.6 %) |
| Only females should use contraceptives | 116 (35.7 %) | 108 (33.3%) | 23 (7.1%) | 47 (14.3 %) | 31(9.5%) |
| Contraceptives are ineffective | 97 (29.8%) | 114 (35.7%) | 54 (16.7%) | 43 (13.1%) | 15 (4.6%) |
| Inhibits sexual pleasure | 77 (23.6%) | 119 (36.9%) | 89 (27.4%) | 23 (7.1%) | 16 (4.8%) |
| Only for literates | 58 (17.9%) | 119 (36.9%) | 100 (31%) | 31 (9.5%) | 16 (4.8%) |
| Husband should be involved in family planning | 193 (59.5%) | 119 (36.9%) | 4 (1.2%) | 4 (1.2%) | 4 (1.2%) |

DISCUSSION

Our study showed that the knowledge of contraception was 65.78 % in the whole cohort. It was maximum of 71.06% in age group 26 to 35. In another study the awareness was found to be 95.2%.^[8] In another study done by Mustafa R et al in rural area, 81% were aware about contraceptive methods.^[9] In our study only 72 (21.05%) of them got the knowledge about modern contraceptive method from their social circle, while 170 cases (49.7%) got it from health personnel and 100 cases (29.23%) got from media sources. In another study source of information was health personnel contributing to 52.6% were as in another study 98.5% of the subjects got information from the health worker.^[10,11]

We also noted that majority of decision making about using contraceptive method was taken mutually by husband and wife in rural Kashmir i.e. in 156 (45.61%) cases. While in 129 cases (37.71%) independent husband approval for using contraceptive method was found and in 57 cases (16.66%) independent wife decision making about using contraceptive methods was noted. In one study 37.4% decision by husband, 21.4% by wife and 41.2% by wife.^[10] In another study done by Kiran G et al 41.45% is by both, 30.77% husband and 26.07 by wife.^[12]

Regarding the practice of contraception we noted that among majority of women in rural Kashmir the preferred contraceptive methods was male condom (49.07%), this was followed by female condom

(36.41%) and hormonal (33.64%). Diaphragm was preferred by 25.30%, Injectables by 24.38% and pills by 24.38% of married women in rural Kashmir. In another study 15.6% used condom where as in a similar study done by Mustafa R et al 33.9% used condom and in another oral contraceptives pills were most commonly used contributing to 94.3%.^[8,9,13] We also studied the reasons of using and not using contraception and found that 36.41% of married women in rural Kashmir used contraceptive methods as they have completed their families, while 24.07% used it for improvement in health. Only 23.45% of married women in rural Kashmir use it for spacing in birth while only 16% had economic problem as an issue in their life for using contraceptive methods. Among those not using contraception, 45.98% of married women in rural Kashmir do not prefer using contraceptive methods due to lack of knowledge, while 26.85% of married women do not use it as their husband disapprove them from using it. Moreover, 27.16% of married women in rural Kashmir do not prefer using contraceptive method due to fear of its side effect. In another study done in rural area near about 60% said because of husband's disapproval they don't use. Whereas in another study 48% said lack of knowledge was the main reason for not using contraceptive method.^[8]

CONCLUSION

The overall knowledge of contraception was 65.78 % in the whole cohort. It was maximum of 71.06%

in age group 26 to 35. Most of women got this knowledge from health personnel. Majority of decision making about using contraceptive method was taken mutually by husband and wife. The preferred contraceptive methods were male condom (49.07%), this was followed by female condom and hormonal. Among those not using contraception, majority did not prefer due to lack of knowledge. Our findings suggest that there is still a need to intensify information, education, communication activities and motivate the population to practice contraception.

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