

# The Knowledge and Practice of Various Contraceptive Methods for Family Planning among Married Males in Down Town Area of Lahore, Pakistan

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## ABSTRACT

**Aim:** To estimate the knowledge, prevalence and factors associated with practice of contraceptive methods among married males of age group 20-49 years in down town area, Lahore Pakistan.

**Methods:** In person interviews were carried out with 200 married males of the area, randomly. Data was collected regarding socio-demographic features, reproductive profile, family size, knowledge and practices of family planning (FP) services and reasons for not using contraceptive methods.

**Results:** Total number of participants using FP techniques is 58.5% while 41.5% are not using FP techniques. 48% participants started FP after the birth of 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> child. 25.5% are not using FP methods for want of more children or desire for a male child. Other reasons for not using FP methods are 5.5% have no child, 4.5% thought that this is against religion, 2.5% have fear of any side effect. The most common used FP method in women is (Intrauterine contraceptive device) IUCD 20.5% and then pills 10.5%; while in men most common FP method, is use of condom 17.5%. 51.5% men permitted their wives to use FP method and 48.5% did not permit use of FP methods.

**Conclusions:** Prevalence of male family planning practices along with knowledge of contraceptive methods is found low and has direct relation with attitude and behaviour not only among themselves but also for their wives. It is advised to arrange regular seminars, group discussion by involving couples regarding family planning which may improve these practices.

**Keywords:** Family planning, contraceptive methods, married males

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## INTRODUCTION

Family planning means utilizing various methods of voluntary prevention of pregnancy in order to achieve the desired frequency and timing of pregnancies. These services are directed to improve the maternal and child health and to having a better outcome of pregnancy<sup>1</sup>.

The world population has been stabilized in the developed world but Pakistan, which is the 6th most populous country of world<sup>2</sup> still trying to control the fast growing population. According to the Population Reference Bureau 2006<sup>3</sup>, the estimated population of Pakistan is 162.4 million and is expected to be 295 million in the year 2050<sup>4</sup>. Pakistan faces many health problems due to this fast growing population. Millions of rupees have been spent on family planning programme with no major achievement<sup>5</sup>. One of the important reasons for the failure of this programme is improper implementation which didn't take into account the cultural and lifestyle of the peoples<sup>6</sup>. In our culture males are ruling authority and decision

maker and the woman can not take any decision without the permission of her husband. Pakistan is male dominating society and most of the decisions are taken by the man<sup>7</sup>. It has been observed that behaviour and attitude modification is time taking process but without knowing actual situation one can not pursue to achieve this target. Various methods to achieve birth control can be categorized into reversible and irreversible. The reversible methods<sup>8</sup> include Intrauterine Contraception (copper T IUD) Levonorgestrel intrauterine system, Hormonal methods which include combined oral contraceptive pills, progestin only pills, implants, injection or shot, patch, hormonal vaginal contraceptive ring, emergency birth control<sup>8</sup> Barrier strategies (diaphragm or prophylactic device, male condoms, female condoms, spermicides), Fertility Awareness based mostly strategies (natural planning, standard days method). The irreversible method<sup>8</sup> include female sterilization (tubal ligation, transcervical ligation) male sterilization (vasectomy). The traditional methods include Rhythm and Withdrawal<sup>9</sup>. This study may provide some fruitful information regarding Knowledge, practice and attitude of males in family planning and may help to formulate the strategies for their effective involvement in family planning program in particular area.

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## MATERIAL AND METHODS

This cross sectional descriptive study was conducted on 200 men of age group (20-49) in Paise Akhbar Anarkali Lahore, which is a busy and thickly populated area with majority of people belonging to low socioeconomic strata during three months from March to May 2015. Random sampling technique was used. Married men of age group (20-49) were included in the study. Interviews were conducted, after obtaining an informed consent. A structured questionnaire designed in local languages was used to obtain information on socio-demographic feature, reproductive profile, contraceptive knowledge, attitude and practices of family planning services. Reasons for non-utilization of contraceptive services were also asked from the respondents. DATA was entered and analysed in SPSS 17.

## RESULTS

About 200 males of reproductive age group (20-49) were interviewed. The socio-demographic features of men are shown in Table 1. In this study 20.5% men are in age group of 20-29, 48% are in age group of 30-39 and 31.5% are in age group of 40-49. It is noted that majority of participants i.e., 49.5 % got married at the ages 18-25 years, 37% got married at the ages 26-30 years. It means that 86.5 % participants got married before reaching 30 years of age while only 13.5% got married at the age 30 years and above. It is noted that 17% participants are illiterate while 83 % have attended the school with 29% primary, 13% secondary, 35.5% college and 5.5% having university education .

The knowledge of participant about various contraceptive methods reveal that they have about condom 86%, Tubal ligation 59%, IUCD and Vasectomy 56.5%, pills 53.5%, Injection 23.5 and withdrawal 21%. Only 18.5% participants know about all the methods and another 8.5% do not know about any method. 51.5 % shows their willingness to permit their wives and 48.5% are not willing to allow their wives to use FP. Only 9.5 % participants showed their willingness to undergo vasectomy as compared to 90.5 % who are not willing to undergo the procedure.

Generally at the time of survey, 58.5% of the participants and their wives use some of family planning methods. The most common methods used are by the wives of participants which are IUCD 20.5%, oral pills 10.5%, injections 7 % and then tubal ligation 2.5%. The male family planning methods are least used which are condom 17.5%, withdrawal 0.5% and vasectomy 0.

Table I: Selected social and demographic characteristics of the men

Characteristics	Frequency	%age
<b>Current age</b>		
20-24	6	3
25-29	35	17.5
30-34	44	22
35-39	52	26
40-44	48	24
44-49	15	7.5
Mean	35.57	-
SD	32.69	-
<b>Age at effective marriage</b>		
18-25	99	49.5
26-30	74	37
>30	27	13.5
Mean	26.15	
SD	29.85	
<b>Educational level</b>		
Primary	58	29
Secondary	26	13
Intermediate	41	20.5
Graduate	30	15
Post graduate	11	5.5
Illiterate	34	17
<b>Geographical Location</b>		
Belong to Rural area	116	58%
Belong to Urban area	84	42%
<b>Knowledge about Family Planning (FP) methods</b>		
IUCD	113	56.5
Pills	107	53.5
Injection	47	23.5
Tubal ligation	118	59
Condom	172	86
Withdrawal	42	21
Vasectomy	113	56.5
Lactation Amenorrhea	128	64 %
Emergency Contraception	53	26.5
All Methods	37	18.5
No Method	17	8.5
<b>Permit wife to practice Family Planning</b>		
Permit wife to use FP	103	51.5
Don,t permit wife to use FP	97	48.5
<b>Willingness to undergo vasectomy</b>		
Yes	19	9.5
No	181	90.5
<b>Current use of FP method</b>		
IUCD	41	20.5
Pills	21	10.5
Injection	14	7
Tubal ligation	5	2.5
Condom	35	17.5
Withdrawal	1	0.5
Vasectomy	0	0
<b>Total number of participants</b>		
Using FP method	117	58.5
Not using FP method	83	41.5
<b>Time of start of Family Planning method</b>		
After 1 <sup>st</sup> child	21	10.5
After 2 <sup>nd</sup> child	33	16.5
After 3 <sup>rd</sup> child	63	31.5
Still not started	83	41.5
<b>Reason for not using Family Planning Method</b>		
Wants more children	51	25.5
NO child	11	5.5
Against religion	9	4.5
Inconvenient	2	1
Any side effect	5	2.5
Don't know	5	2.5

Majority of the participants started family planning practice after birth of third child 31.5%, 16.5% started practicing family planning after second

child and only 10.5% started FP after one child. So it is observed that 48% participants started practicing family planning after 2-3 children. 25.5% participants want more children so they are not using any FP method. 5.5% have no child, 4.5% consider its use against religion Islam, 1% feel inconvenience, 2.5% avoid these methods due to fear of side effects and misconception and surprisingly 2.5% participants did not know about any family planning methods.

## DISCUSSION

In Asia, Pakistan is the country in which family planning program was started more than five decades ago despite this program is very slow in Pakistan than in most other Asian countries<sup>4</sup>. The total fertility rate in Bangladesh is 2.8 India 2.7, Iran 2.0 and in Pakistan is 3.9 which is highest among South Asian Region<sup>3</sup>. Current contraceptive use in this study was 58.5% as compared to district Khairpur<sup>10</sup> 28% and in Karachi<sup>11</sup> 48%. Relationship of contraceptive methods with literacy is well acknowledged fact<sup>12</sup>. Over 42% respondents have school education and 35.5% have college education which could be reasons for high Contraceptive prevalence rate, (CPR) this shows literate men are more likely to follow family planning methods as compared to illiterate.

According to geographical location 42% men were urban residents while 58% came from rural areas .Regarding various methods of contraception and family planning 18.5% men said that they had knowledge of all methods of contraception while 8.5% have no knowledge about any method. The knowledge about condom was seen to be highest 86%, followed by female sterilization 59% while the differential regarding other methods was IUDs and vasectomy 56.5%, pills 53.5%, injection 23.5% , traditional methods 21% lactation amenorrhea 64%, emergency contraception 26.5%. 100% urban resident men have knowledge of family planning methods as compared to the 70% of rural men. The percentage distribution regarding practice of various methods is as follows: condom 17.5%, injectables 7% IUDs 20.5%, pills 10.5%, lactation amenorrhea 64%, emergency contraception 26.5%. Among users of contraceptive methods 2.5% experienced adverse effects.

Reported mean age of marriage in Pakistan was 27.1 years for males<sup>13</sup>. Results of our study were 26.1 years. Majority of the participants started family planning practice after birth of 3<sup>rd</sup> child i.e., 31.5%, 16.5% started practicing family planning after second child. So 48 % respondents started practicing family planning after 2-3 child .It signify positive male attitude towards family planning , who were dominant

in decision making pertaining to women's fertility and birth spacing in Pakistan<sup>14</sup>.

Wish to have more children was the most common reason given by non-users, Fear of side effects 2.5, on religious grounds 4.5% is the third common cause for not using contraceptive methods . A weakness highlighted in a study from Karachi regarding use, efficacy and safety of contraceptives which shows a gap in information, education and communication of component of family planning programs for non users<sup>15</sup>.

In this study, it is found for the practice of contraceptive methods, education, knowledge and approval of participants is most important. In Paisal Akhbar Anarkali and other similar localities, group discussion on various issues related to family planning and reproductive health may be helpful in creating awareness.

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the current male contraceptive practices are not at the expected levels. If we want to improve family planning programme in Pakistan then men must be considered as an active participant in the process of planning, designing and implementing family planning policies. Population planning programme will have to arrange regular small seminars, group discussion by involving couples regarding family planning.

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