

## Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude and Contraceptive use in Married Women of Peshawar

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### ABSTRACT

**Objectives:** To determine the knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) regarding family planning services among married women.

**Methods:** A “cross sectional” study was done on 400 married women of Bhana Mari Union Council Peshawar. The sampling technique was systematic sampling. “Structured questionnaire” was used for measuring the knowledge, attitude and practices. SPSS version 16 was used for analysis of data.

**Results:** It showed that 70.4% of married women were of age 25 to 40 years. Percentage of illiterate participants was (50.5%). 90% of married women had knowledge of the common types of contraceptives methods. Knowledge of women about condom was 35.9%, about oral pills was 27.7% and 26.2% knew about injections. Among the sampled population, 87.8% had positive attitudes towards family planning. Most married women were currently practicing oral pills and their husbands were currently practicing condoms.

**Conclusion:** The study finding showed that women who were literate and in late young age used contraception.

**Key words:** Knowledge, attitudes, practices, married women, family planning.

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### INTRODUCTION

Reproduction is seen as totally women’s responsibility in much of the world, although it is a dual commitment<sup>1</sup>. Men are mostly forgotten by health clients, particularly in case of family planning services<sup>2</sup>. The role of females in family planning has been receiving greater attention recently as population planners have begun to recognize the importance of men’s influence over reproductive decisions around the world. Men have a direct and major role in contraceptive decision-making, but also an indirect role as a dominant factor in women’s life concerning their own economic, social and family needs<sup>3</sup>.

Men almost dominated on women, in the decisions regarding fertility and birth spacing<sup>4</sup>. However, getting women involved in the family planning program will lead to increasing the use of contraceptives methods<sup>5</sup>.

Population growth is becoming a universal problem. Countries like Canada, Sweden, Denmark, UK, Germany and France which are considered to be economically sound have adopted policies for keeping check on population for maintaining the national economic growth. Increase in population creates problems for a country leading to unproductive population saps which leads to economic disability.

The use of contraceptive methods is associated with age of women, their education, source of income, number of their alive siblings, age at the time of marriage, years of marriage, child mortality, their knowledge and availability of contraceptives<sup>7</sup>. Contraceptive practices affect fertility by reducing the probability of conception. They vary considerably in their theoretical effectiveness and in their actual effectiveness in use. Most of the women are well aware of different types of contraceptives but don’t know when to start contraception after delivery and as well as regarding emergency contraception. Urban population with low-income do know the importance of small family size but “less contraceptive usage” due to less education, discontinuation of method and improper knowledge<sup>8</sup>.

Pakistan, being one of the populous countries of the world, is currently experiencing declines in availability

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of land, water, and forest resources. It has already reached population growth at 3% per year and is eroding economic gain. To stabilize population growth, a balance between birth and death rates is necessary. In this regard a safe and effective family planning program for needy people will play a vital role. Although women behaviors are mainly focused but the decision making authority rests with men in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) culture<sup>6</sup>. Contraceptive methods, such as pills and injections use depends on approval from their husbands. Women who have their husband's support and permission use of contraceptives is much higher among them<sup>6</sup>. This study was conducted on married women regarding their knowledge, attitude and practices towards family planning services in Peshawar, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Province (KPK).

## MATERIAL & METHODS

“Bhana Mari” is an urban slum of Peshawar, a cross sectional study was conducted there. This study was a cross sectional study involving 400 married women living in Bhana Mari Union Council Peshawar. Its population was 27015. The sampling technique was systematic sampling. Married women who did not meet pre-determined criteria were replaced with those from the nearest households. Married women were interviewed through structured questionnaire. All Married women at union council Bhana Mari were eligible to be enrolled as participants in the study if they were married, multigravida, 15-49 years old and permanent residents of the area. Severally ill patients, mentally ill patients, non-willing person and women who were not permanent resident of District Peshawar were excluded from the study.

### Sampling Technique

Sampling units were households, list of house hold was sample frame and then systematic sampling was done by selecting the study objects which was conducted on an ordered list of all members of the population available; subjects were chosen from the list at a given uniform interval from each other, using a starting point that was selected randomly. Structured questionnaire was filled by 400 married women, age between 15-49 years about knowledge, attitudes and use of family planning services.

Married women residing at “union council Bhana Mari” were offered to participate, ensuring they were “multigravida”, between “15-49” years old and “permanent residents”. Those who were “severally ill”, “mentally ill” patients, “non-willing” or were not “permanent resident” of District Peshawar were excluded from the study.

A “conceptual framework” was adopted to know find out relationship of “demographic”, “knowledge”, “attitudinal”, and “contraceptive use”. Among the demographic characteristics variables like age of participant, number of alive siblings and education were considered. Variables related to knowledge, use of contraceptive methods, attitude of women play a direct relationship towards the use of contraception.

Systematic sampling technique was used for data collection and selected persons after filling consent form were interviewed in utmost privacy. Purpose of the study was explained to every participant. SPSS for “social sciences version 16” was used for data analyses. Ages, duration of experience were described as continuous variables for Mean Standard Deviation. Categorical variables like gender and questions about knowledge and practices were used to determine the frequencies and percentages.

### Knowledge: (Quantification of Knowledge)

Knowledge was assessed about how to use contraceptives, their side effects and danger signs of contraceptives used and with the help of questionnaire based and rewarded as:

Good Knowledge  
Average Knowledge  
Poor Knowledge

Knowledge of respondent about family planning information (Sources of information available, access to information, etc...)

If >7 correct answers = Good knowledge  
If 4-7 correct answers = Average knowledge  
< 4 correct answers = Poor knowledge

### Attitude: (Quantification of Attitude)

Attitude of married women about contraceptives methods and benefit of family planning services will be categorized into positive and negative attitudes. Whether they accept or reject family planning services. (Respondents' attitude towards Family Planning practice)

Positive attitude  
Negative attitude

### Practice: (Quantification of Practice)

Practice was assessed by use of contraceptives methods by local married women.

The response to questions of practice was whether they use or do not use contraceptives. If they use, then what types were used and how often do they use it, was a tag question. If they do not use, then why they were not using contraceptives was another tag question. A tag question is a continuation on the previous question!

Eventually the second tag question will lead on to specific questions on the barriers to use of family planning services in married women.

Use/Don't use, family planning services. It was questionnaire based and the response was checked by

Using contraceptives = Positive  
 Not using = Negative

**Specific Objective**

To determine the knowledge, attitude and practice regarding family planning services among local married women.

**RESULTS**

The study showed that about 70.4% of married women were in age between 25 to 40 years (Fig.1).

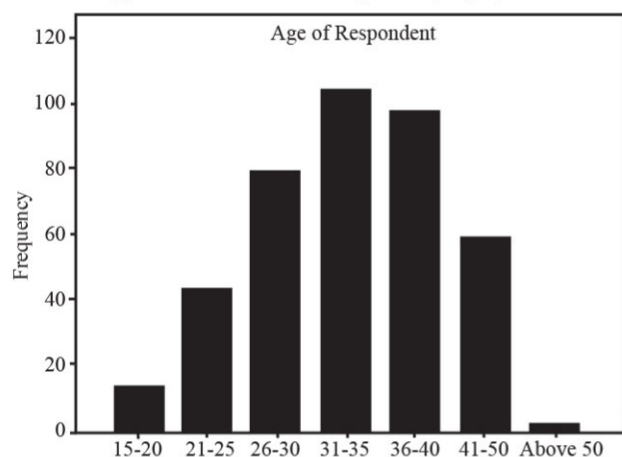


Fig. 1. Age of the respondents in a KAP study of married women towards family planning services in Peshawar

Our results showed that most of the couples (31.9%) had 3 children, 25.9% had 4 children, 17.1% had 5 children, 7.5% had 6 children, 10.3% had 2 children and 2.5% had 1 child (Fig.2).

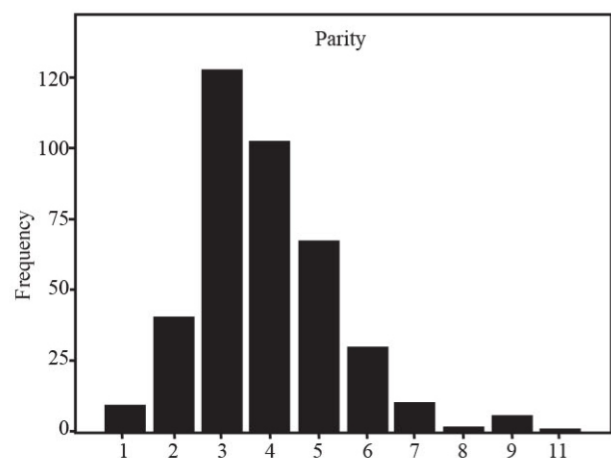


Fig. 2. Parity of respondents in a KAP study of married women towards family planning services in Peshawar

The results revealed that illiteracy was very high amongst the surveyed women. Most of the respondents were illiterate. About 50.5% were illiterate because of low socio-economic condition and lack of awareness. About 16.8% had completed less than primary education, 26.5% had completed greater than primary level and 6.5% did Matric (Fig.3).

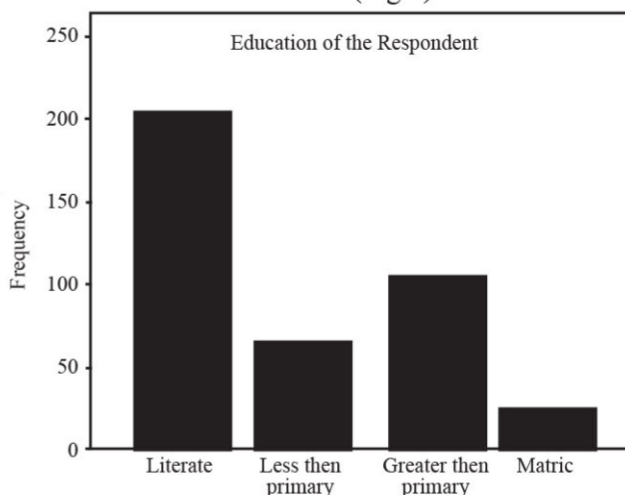


Fig. 3. Education of respondents in a KAP study of married women towards family planning services in Peshawar

**Knowledge of respondents in a KAP study of married women towards family planning services in Peshawar**

About 19.5% respondents had good knowledge of contraception, 76.4% respondents had average knowledge about contraception and 4% had poor knowledge about contraception (Fig.4)

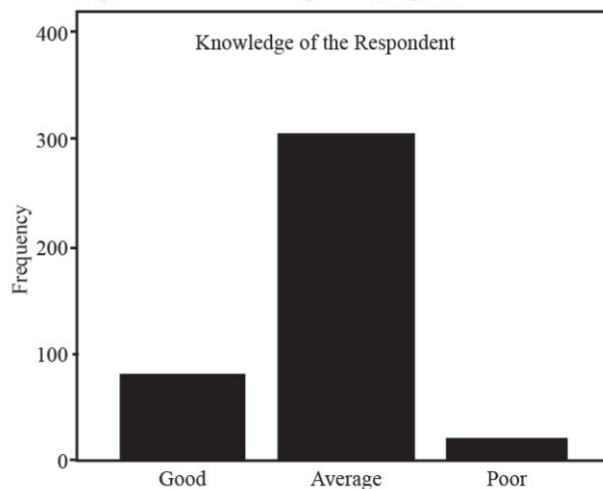


Fig. 4. Knowledge of respondents in a KAP study of married women towards family planning services in Peshawar

**Attitude and practices of respondents in a KAP study of married women towards family planning services in Peshawar**

Accordingly to our study results, only 7.7% of respondent's attitude was negative about contraceptives methods (Table 1). Most of the study respondents who

showed negative attitude were interested in large family size and they had very low socioeconomic status. About 87.8% of respondents had positive attitude towards contraceptive methods. These respondents were using contraceptives methods. Similarly, 82.8% married women were practicing contraception while 12.7% were not using contraceptive methods (Table 1).

Table 1: Attitude and practices of respondents in a KAP study of married women towards family planning services in Peshawar

Attitude of respondents	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Yes	367	87.8	87.8	92.3
No	32	7.7	7.7	100
Practices of respondents				
Yes	346	82.8	82.8	87.3
No	53	12.7	12.7	100

## DISCUSSION

As far as the age of respondents is concerned, our results concurred with the survey findings conducted in Chicago in 1971 that 70% of married women were in age between 20 to 39 years<sup>9</sup>. Similarly, a (KAP) study was conducted in India to assess “knowledge”, “attitude” and “practice” of family planning, it also revealed that age of the married women (20-40) years<sup>10</sup>. Our results are also in line with Pakistan reproductive goals and family planning attitudes study, which showed that 75.4 % married women were in age between 30 to 40 years<sup>11</sup>.

The study conducted in Chicago in 1971 also showed that desire for the number of children differed significantly from the number of children produced<sup>9</sup>. Our results are in line with Pakistan reproductive goals and family attitude study, which showed that size of family and fertility outcome in cultures where men’s rule in family, has much of importance in dimension of gender relations. Men and women could have similar fertility preferences; men want to have large families to get stronger economically and socially powerful. While women may have high “fertility desires” for old age support<sup>11</sup>. Our results also have close resemblance with the study findings done in Bangladesh, which revealed that couples involvement is a challenge for Bangladesh family planning program. This study findings showed that most of husbands do not accept small family size and one third (33%) of them for more children<sup>12</sup>.

Earlier study done in India showed the level of education, about 24% of the women was illiterate and 54% had their Matric<sup>10</sup>. The survey conducted in Pakistan about reproductive goals and family planning showed that husbands being more educated than wives, 49% husbands have similarity in educational level when compared to 17.5% of their wives. This is due to underprivileged position of women in “economic”

and “decision-making” spheres. It inhibits them to make choices about their “family size” as well as “family planning”. On the other hand, educated couples are more likely to use contraception<sup>11</sup>.

Our results have similarity with a study done in rural central India, men there considered “family planning” associated with “female sterilization”, and they saw “contraception” as to “spacing methods”, with limited knowledge<sup>13</sup>. According to our study, total 97% of respondents had knowledge about contraceptives methods. Knowledge and current family planning methods use in Pakistan in 2000 and 2001 showed the use of pill (1.9%), knowledge about pills (76.5%), current use of condoms (5.5%), knowledge (57.6%), current use of injection (2.6%) and knowledge about injections (75.5%)<sup>14</sup>. Our results are further supported from a study done in Yemen in 2007 that 90% of women were aware of pills, intra-uterine devices and condoms<sup>15</sup>. The survey results in Senegal showed that men and women know about methods such as the pill, intra-uterine device (IUD) and injections, as campaigns of family planning had focused on these methods<sup>16</sup>. Global contraceptives prevalence is 63.4%<sup>19</sup>. In Pakistan, contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) is 28%, which is not up to the desired level and discouraging<sup>20</sup> as compared to CPR of neighboring countries like India (48%), Bangladesh (58%) and in Srilanka (70%). Similarly, our results from a study done in Yemen, which showed the prevalence of family planning practice among the husbands as 39% and 44.3% among their wives. Only 11% of the husbands and 20.8% of the wives were currently practicing modern family planning. There were only 19.3% where both husbands and wives were practicing family planning, 19.8% of couples where husbands practiced but their wives did not, 25% of couples where husbands did not practice but wives did and 36% where both husbands and wives did practice<sup>15</sup>.

Regarding attitude, our results are in close resemblance to a study done in Yemen regarding attitude towards modern contraceptives methods. According to this study most of the respondents (89.3%) showed positive attitudes towards family planning and appreciated the effectiveness of modern methods than traditional methods. The majority of husbands (51.3%) agreed that husbands should also practice family planning<sup>15</sup>. Some of the respondents were against family planning due to the religious beliefs that Islam is not in favor of contraception and its Allah will and we cannot interfere in Allah will. A study conducted in district Sindh, Pakistan, revealed that family planning programs are influenced by religious and cultural pressures<sup>19</sup>. A study done in Jordan, showed that nearly 40% of married men were against practicing contraception and believed that family size should be left up to God.

Reasons for non contraceptive-use were they fear “side effects” (38%) and want children (22%), “religious constraints”(7%), “method failure” (5%), desire to have sons (4%) and family pressure(3%)<sup>15</sup>.

According to our study results, 51.4% of respondents were not allowed to practice family planning and 43.3% were allowed for family planning practice, In Pakistan, men are dominating in decision making power especially in family planning. Most of respondents did not allow their wives to practice family planning because their wives were in young age and those who allowed their wives were in old age. Earlier study done in Yemen in 2007 to assess husband attitude towards modern contraceptives concluded that to decide practice of family planning should be in husband’s hand (70.5%) while 56.3% felt wife should have the rights for decision. The results indicated ambivalence by some husbands on the main decision maker for family planning practice. Although 63.9% of the respondents felt that family size decision making should be a couple’s responsibility and 78.6% of respondents preferred a husband and wife approach to the family planning<sup>15</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

Majority of married women in reproductive age have some knowledge about family planning but percentage of users is not as higher. Change in attitudes shows that many respondents have no interest in male child or in more children.

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