



KNOWLEDGE & PERCEPTION AMONGST FEMALE MEDICAL STUDENTS REGARDING CONTRACEPTION AT A TEACHING INSTITUTE, INDORE, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Background: International evidence shows that increasing the availability of method choice increases acceptance rate and helps meet the changing needs of couples. Multiple methods make switching easier, reduce method specific discontinuation and improve user satisfaction.

Methods: Female medical students in the third prof MBBS, interns and post-graduates were included. A ten question web based survey assessing knowledge about contraceptive methods and perception about use and ease of conversation about the same amongst colleagues were included along with basic statistical information after taking consent .

Results: The awareness regarding oral pills was maximum (93.33%) followed by male condom (86.67%) and intrauterine devices(85.33%)

Conclusions: This study was conducted to assess knowledge of female medical students about contraception & their variety and use. To understand how they perceive the topic of discussing about contraception with colleagues and peers

KEYWORDS : Attitude, contraceptive methods, family planning

INTRODUCTION

India is the second most populous country in the world, and accounts for more than 20% of global maternal and child deaths - most of them preventable. Family Planning can have a positive impact on population growth, maternal mortality, and infant and new-born outcomes.²

In order to meet the increasing demand for contraceptives and to ensure the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women, including the right to planned parenthood, intensified efforts are urgently needed.³ India accounts for 20% of maternal deaths worldwide.⁴ Despite the fact that induced abortion has been legal in India since 1971, most of the approximately 6.7 million annually induced abortions are performed in an unsafe manner.^{5,6}

Over the years India's family planning programme has evolved with the shift in focus from merely population control to more critical issues of saving the lives and improving the health of mothers and newborns.

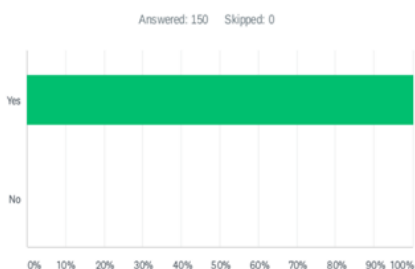
METHODS

Female medical students in the pre final, final year of MBBS, interns and post-graduates were invited to take this survey. A ten question web based survey assessing knowledge about contraception and methods as well as perception about use and ease of conversation about the same amongst colleagues were included using an online survey program which also provided the basic statistical information. Contraception was defined as use of artificial means to prevent pregnancy as a result of sexual intercourse. Verbal consent was obtained from all participants ensuring anonymity.

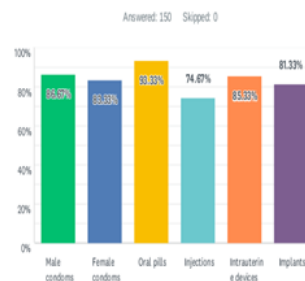
RESULTS

Majority of the students were well aware and had a positive perception about contraception.

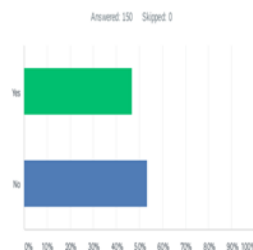
Q1 Are you aware of what contraception is?



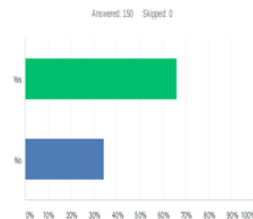
Q2 Which method of contraception method are you aware of?



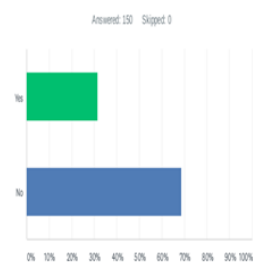
Q3 Do you think unprotected sexual intercourse during any phase of the menstrual cycle can result in pregnancy?



Q4 Do you think a single act of unprotected sexual intercourse leads to pregnancy?

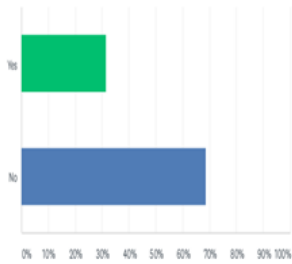


Q5 Do you think the use of pills/ IUDs/ injections causes more harm than benefit?



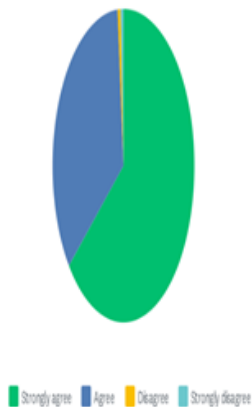
Q5 Do you think the use of pills/ IUDs/ injections causes more harm than benefit?

Answered: 150 Skipped: 0



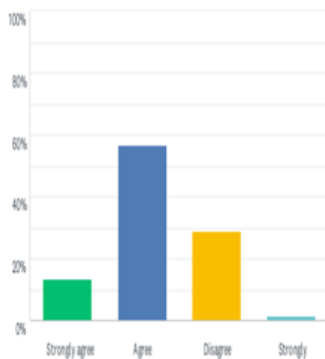
Q7 Do you think contraceptive advice should be included in medical curriculum?

Answered: 150 Skipped: 0



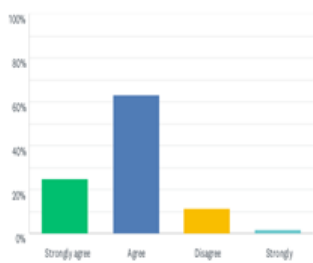
Q8 Do you think family planning methods are not easily accessible in India?

Answered: 150 Skipped: 0



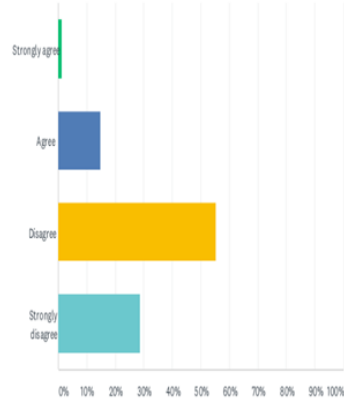
Q9 Do you think you have enough information regarding contraception to advise others?

Answered: 150 Skipped: 0



Q10 Do you think discussing about contraception amongst seniors or colleagues is embarrassing?

Answered: 150 Skipped: 0



DISCUSSION

Of the total 291 students 150(51%) completed the survey. Age range of participants was between 21 to 37 years. All the participants knew what contraception was. A cumulative of 93.33% knew about contraceptive pills and a single participant also included permanent method of sterilization. Almost an equal number consider that a single act of unprotected sexual intercourse can and cannot result in pregnancy during any phase of menstrual cycle and more than half (66%) agree that a single act of unprotected sexual intercourse can result in pregnancy. Well over 50% strongly disagree that contraception should be used only by females; however a few do agree to this notion. 31% participants agree to use of contraceptive methods causes more harm than benefit. A total of 96 participants strongly agree to include contraceptive advice among curriculum. 24 consider talking about contraception amongst colleagues as embarrassing but 87% answered they have enough information about contraception to advise others. 70% agree that family planning methods are not easily accessible in India.

CONCLUSION

Although medical students are aware about the definition of contraception and the variety available; there are still gaps of knowledge that need to be filled regarding its timing of use and misconceptions regarding when and how they act. Publication of 'Contraceptive Updates' a reference manual for doctors by the United Nations Population Fund, India is a milestone in providing information regarding contraception to key health workers. India's Vision FP 2020 advocates teaching about contraception to health care providers. Including contraceptive awareness as well as converting it into a topic of conversation amongst colleagues and peers would help in overcoming the embarrassment associated with it and help students in informing others who need it easier.

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