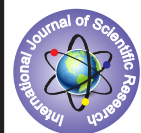


KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN KANCHIPURAM DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY



Gynaecology

KEYWORDS: Knowledge, contraceptive, practice, pregnancy, teenage

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ABSTRACT

Unplanned pregnancies occur when effective contraception is largely inaccessible, or contraceptive method is not used correctly or consistently. It has been estimated that almost 40% unplanned pregnancies occur globally each year as a result of ineffective contraceptive use or failure of method or non-use of contraception (World Health Organization, 2007). Information on knowledge, attitude and practice of contraceptives among young people in India is important because of high rates of teenage and unwanted pregnancies soaring STI and HIV/AIDS rates. To avoid unwanted pregnancy and sexual disease, young people need adequate information about contraceptive methods. This study aims to examine the level of young people contraceptive use and practice in kanchipuram district. **METHODOLOGY** There are two instruments used in this study. They are questionnaire and in-depth interview schedule. The questionnaire contains two sections. The first section is to identify the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in this study, while the second part is information on knowledge and use of contraceptive methods among the young people in the kanchipuram district. The questionnaire was the major instrument of data collection. It is the kind of instrument that can cover wide range of most of the issues raised in this study. The interest is to use the questionnaire to obtain the background characteristics of the participants, their knowledge, opinion in relation to knowledge and use of contraceptive methods. The in-depth interview was used to investigate salient issues that may not have been covered in the questionnaire. It seeks information on the participants knowledge and attitude to the use of contraceptives. The above two instruments were used, because they will facilitate this research more than any other techniques in gathering the desired data among young people. The questionnaire was administered with the help of six PG assistants they were trained to collect the data. **Results:** First, the level of knowledge of contraceptives methods was quite high among the young people, but the majority of the participants ever used any method was quite low. This implies that majority of sexually active young people are highly exposed to consequences of unprotected sex and sexually transmitted diseases. Second, the majority of the young people choose to use modern methods mostly preferred condom and lesser proportion of the participants identified pills and withdrawals, injectables as their preferred choice. Third, greater majority of the young people had positive views towards contraceptives and were interested to know more about it especially before the age they are likely to start sexual activity. Some of them identified they were not properly thought and guided on how to lead their sexual life neither from their parents nor from their teachers. Fourth, the study found that sizeable proportion of youth prefers to use chemists/pharmacy shops to avoid identifying them sexually active and to avoid embarrassment by health workers at government and private hospitals, who will request for registration before attention could be given to them.

INTRODUCTION

Family planning allows individuals and couples to anticipate and attain their desired number of children and the spacing and timing of their births. Family planning has a direct impact on women's health and well-being as well as on the consequence of each pregnancy. The use of modern contraception among Indian women is less than global average. In Asia a majority of unintended pregnancies are due to using traditional contraceptive or no methods which lead to induced unsafe abortion. Family planning has a direct impact on women's health and consequence of each pregnancy reproductive health education through mass media to create awareness of the benefits of planned parenthood are effective strategies to improve modern contraceptive practice among Asian women. In developing countries about 818 million of sexually active women of reproductive age (15-49) want to avoid pregnancy and delay child bearing for at least two years or want to stop pregnancy and limit their family size. About 140 million of those women (17%) are not using any method of family planning, while 75 million (9%) are using less effective traditional methods. Non contraceptive users and traditional users together (215 million women) are said to have an unmet need for modern contraception (Darroch et al., 2011). In 2008, use of contraceptive methods prevented over 250 000 maternal deaths through reducing unintended pregnancies. This is equivalent to 40% of the 355 000 maternal deaths for the year. The number of maternal deaths would decrease by a further 30% in developing countries, if all women who wish to avoid pregnancy use an effective contraceptive

method (Cleland et al., 2012). In Tamil nadu most married women may not wish to become pregnant at a young age or, if they have already had a child, wish to delay a second pregnancy.

The age-range 15 to 24 is a period when most people begin to actively explore their sexuality. Globally, most people become sexually active before their 20th birthday. Among youths, rates of early and unplanned pregnancies, unsafe abortions, maternal deaths and injuries, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) are very high. One in every 10 births and one in 10 abortions worldwide and one in six births in developing countries is to women aged between 15-19 years.

Young people's reproductive choices have an enormous impact on their health, schooling and employment prospects, as well as their overall transition to adulthood [1][4]. Modern contraceptive methods which include male and female sterilization, intra uterine devices (IUDs), implants, injectables, pills, male and female condoms and spermicidal are highly effective in preventing pregnancy, compared with traditional methods, such as withdrawal and periodic abstinence (Singh & Darroch, 2012). Globally, contraceptive use has risen, from 54% in 1990 to 63% in 2007 (World Health Organization, 2011a).

Unplanned pregnancies occur when effective contraception is

largely inaccessible, or contraceptive method is not used correctly or consistently. It has been estimated that almost 40% unplanned pregnancies occur globally each year as a result of ineffective contraceptive use or failure of method or non-use of contraception (World Health Organization, 2007).

Considering that use of modern contraception is the most reliable way to prevent unintended pregnancy and induced abortion, we carried out a literature search to identify factors that are barriers to modern contraceptive practice among Asian women.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are approximately 20 million of unsafe abortions every year, and estimates of maternal death as a result of abortion ranged between 60,000 to 100,000 per year. Therefore, contraceptive Knowledge is very important to avoid sexual disease, and unwanted pregnancy.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

There are two instrument used in this study. They are questionnaire and in-depth interview schedule. The questionnaire contains two sections. The first section is to identify the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in this study, while the second part is information on knowledge and use of contraceptive methods among the young people in the kanchipuram district. The questionnaire was the major instrument of data collection. It is the kind of instrument that can cover wide range of most of the issues raised in this study. The interest is to use the questionnaire to obtain the background characteristics of the participants, their knowledge, opinion in relation to knowledge and use of contraceptive methods.

The in-depth interview was used to investigate salient issues that may not have been covered in the questionnaire. It seeks information on the participants' knowledge and attitude to the use of contraceptives. The above two instruments were used, because they will facilitate this research more than any other techniques in gathering the desired data among young people. The questionnaire was administered with the help of six post graduates they were trained to collect the data.

RESULTS :

- The analysis were based on 300 (Three hundred) returned questionnaires from the participants. The analyses were divided into two major sections : 1. personal data of participants. 2. knowledge of contraception.

i) Personal Data of the Participants

This section deals with the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in this study. This includes Sex, Age, Religion, Education Qualification etc.

Distribution of Respondents by Sex

The sex of the participants includes male and female young people in kanchipuram district.

Table -1: Distribution of Participants by Sex

sex	No. Of. Participants	Percentage
Female	188	62.6
Male	112	37.4
Total	300	100

Table -1 shows that majority of the Participants were female young people (62.6%). While the male participants were (37.4%) of the sample. This shows that the female participants were majority and showed more interest to the study at the time of the Administration of the questionnaires.

Age Distribution

The ages of the respondents ranging from 18-28 years were categorized into intervals of 5 years given a total of three intervals. This was presented in table -2 below

Table -2: Distribution of participants by Age

Age	No. of. Participants	Percentage
18 -22	108	36
23-27	146	48.6
28+	46	15.3
Total	300	100

Table -2 showed that the highest proportion of participants were aged between 23 and 27 years (48.6%), followed by those aged 18-22 (36%) and then those aged 28+ years (15.3%). Since the highest participants is between 23-27 years, it means that Contraceptive information should be made available to this age bracket because it was presumed that this is the age youth engages in sex whether contraceptive are available or not. And most of the people interviewed agreed that this the age of critical point of starting sexual relationships for some of them if they are not properly guided.

Level of Education

The concern here was to show how level of education attained influences the knowledge and use of contraceptives among young people. This was presented in table -3 below.

Table -3: Distribution of participants by Educational Qualification

Educational qualification	No. of. participants	Percentage
Secondary school	80	26.6
Higher secondary school	96	32
Graduate	124	41.3
Total	300	100

The table -3 shows that majority of the participants are graduates (41.3%).

ii) Knowledge of contraception

With the increasing rate of sex related diseases like HIV/AIDS, STDs and STIs in our society today, the researcher seeks to know whether the youth have knowledge of contraceptives in the study area.

Table -4: Distribution of participants by Knowledge of Contraception

Knowledge of contraception	No of participants	Percentage
Yes	202	67.4
No	98	32.6
Total	300	100

Table -4 shows that a higher proportion of participants (67.4%) have heard of any contraceptives while 32.6% of the participants have not heard of any method of contraception. The result shows that majority of the young people in kanchipuram district have knowledge of contraceptive method during the period of administration of the questionnaires.

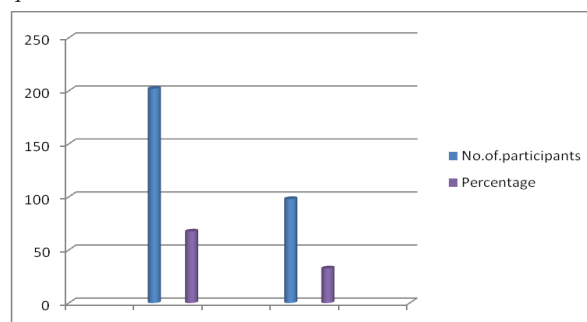


Figure -1

Figure-1 illustrates the level of contraceptive knowledge by the participants. The figure shows that those who admitted that they have knowledge of contraceptives are higher than those who identified that they don't have the knowledge. This could be as a result of numerous advertisements of contraceptives on radio and television stations including bill boards to prevent HIV/AIDS and other sexual related diseases

Types of Contraceptive method

Since, majority of the respondents indicates that they have knowledge of contraception, it is important here to know the type (s) of contraceptive method they know

Table -5 Distribution of participants by type of Contraceptive Methods they know

Contraceptive Methods	YES	NO	Total
Pills	188(62.6%)	112(37.4%)	300(100%)
Condom	223(74.3%)	77(25.7)	300(100%)
Safe period	84(28%)	216(72%)	300(100%)
Withdrawal method	115(38.3%)	185(61.7%)	300(100%)
IUD	47(15.6%)	253(84.4%)	300(100%)

The above result shows that the two most frequently spontaneously named contraceptive methods the participants indicate they know were condom and pills 74.3%, 62.6% respectively. This was followed by withdrawal methods (38.3%), safe period (28%) and Intra Uterine Device method (15.6%) that young people in kanchipuram district have more knowledge of condoms, pills and withdrawal method as a contraceptive method than any other methods in this study at the period of administration of the Questionnaires

Table-6 : Distribution of participants on if they have ever used any Contraceptives

Have you ever used contraceptive	No. of. participants	Percentage
No response	32	10.6
Yes	124	41.4
No	144	48
Total	300	100

Table -6 shows that one hundred and twenty four (124) participants reported that they have used contraceptives while one hundred and forty four (144) reports that they have never used any contraceptives. Thirty two (32) participants did not indicate whether they have used or not. With the highest proportion of participants who reported that they have never used any contraceptive methods at the period of this study, it shows that young people in kanchipuram don't usually use contraceptive when having sexual intercourse.

Table-7: Distribution of participants on the types of Contraceptive method(s) they have used.

What contraceptive method did you used	No. of. participants	Percentage
No Response	56	18.7
Condom	119	39.7
Pills	61	20.4
Injectable	06	2
Withdrawal	33	11
Safe period	20	6.6
IUD	05	1.6
Total	300	100

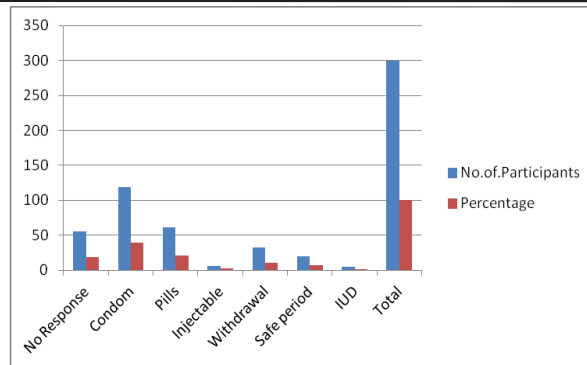


Figure -2

The Figure -2 shows that condom (39.7%) was most frequently used method. Pills (20.4%) was second most frequently used methods, followed by withdrawal (11%), safe periods (6.6%), injectable (2%) and IUD (1.6%) respectively at the period of administration of the questionnaires. The results from in-depth interviews also confirmed that majority of the youth use contraceptives especially condoms, though not all the time they have sex. They raised the issue of negligence, engaging in unplanned sex, having sex when the state of mind is not clear due to influence of alcohol and substances and imposition from partner as reasons for inconsistency use of contraceptives.

CONCLUSION

First, the level of knowledge of contraceptives methods was quite high among the young people, but the majority of the participants ever used any method was quite low. This implies that majority of sexually active young people are highly exposed to consequences of unprotected sex and sexually transmitted diseases. Secondly, the majority of the young people choose to use modern methods mostly preferred condom and lesser proportion of the participants identified pills and withdrawals, injectables as their preferred choice. Thirdly, greater majority of the young people had positive views towards contraceptives and were interested to know more about it especially before the age they are likely to start sexual activity. Some of them identified they were not properly thought and guided on how to lead their sexual life neither from their parents nor from their teachers. Fourthly, the study found that sizeable proportion of youth prefers to use chemists/pharmacy shops to avoid identifying them sexually active and to avoid embarrassment by health workers at government and private hospitals, who will request for registration before attention could be given to them.

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