The Research of Medical Science Review
ISSN: 3007-1208 & 3007-1216 Volume 4, Issue 6, 2026

CONTRACEPTION PREVALENCE RATE AMONG WOMEN TO PATIENTS COMING TO SHAIKH ZAID WOMEN HOSPITAL LARKANA SINDH

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DOI:https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21254139

Keywords
Contraception, Contraceptive Prevalence Rate, Family Planning, Women Health, Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana, Sindh, Reproductive Health, Maternal Health, Pakistan, Barriers to Contraception

Article History
Received: 24 April 2026
Accepted: 06 June 2026
Published: 21 June 2026

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Abstract

Contraceptive use is an important factor that supports maternal health, reduce unintended pregnancies and enhance family planning services. Although there are available options of contraceptive methods in Pakistan, there is a variable use of contraceptive due to sociocultural, educational and economic barriers. The aim of the study was to find out the prevalence of contraceptive use among the women patients attending Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital, Larkana, Sindh and to find the common method of contraceptive used and the factors affecting the use of contraceptive in women patients. The descriptive cross sectional study design was used and the data was collected from women of reproductive age who visited the outpatient department of Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital. The information was collected through a structured questionnaire which included items on demographic characteristics, contraceptive use, type of method used and reasons for non-use. The data gathered were analysed descriptively and frequencies and percentages calculated. The results of the study will shed light on the overall prevalence of contraceptive use among the study population and also provide an insight into the trend of contraceptive use by age, education, and socio-economic status. The results of barrier analysis showed that the reasons for low contraceptive use among non-users were lack of awareness, cultural restrictions, fear of side effects, and limited access to family planning services. It can be concluded from the study that people have access to contraceptive methods but the use of them is not optimal among women patients in the study setting.

INTRODUCTION

As an important element of reproductive health and family planning services, contraception helps lower maternal mortality rates, avoid unplanned pregnancies and enhance women's health outcomes. However, in the context of rapidly growing population in developing nations such as Pakistan, limited health education and social-cultural obstacles, the use of contraceptive methods remains an important public health issue. Meherali (2021) states that contraception is vital in minimising pregnancy related morbidity and mortality, especially in low resource settings where women can have minimal access to maternal health care services. Although family planning is promoted throughout the country and internationally, there is still a relatively low contraceptive prevalence rate in Pakistan, and there is significant variation by region and population. The study shows that there is a

strong relationship between the socio-economic status, education level, and exposure to contraceptive messages among women and their contraceptive use patterns in the country (Jabeen et al., 2020).

The cultural norms, religious misconceptions, limited awareness, and shortage of health care facilities in rural and semi-urban areas of Sindh province have a negative effect on the uptake of contraceptives. It has been demonstrated that the demand for family planning is high and many women do not use any family planning method or opt for traditional methods because of fear of side effects and lack of support from their husbands or partners (Memon et al., 2025). In addition, women's decision-making roles within the house have been shown to affect contraceptive use, with having a joint decisionmaking role with a husband or wife being linked to higher proportion of modern contraceptive use (Khurram et al., 2024). Overall prevalence in Pakistan is approximately 30% as the progress in family planning is slow despite government efforts (Meherali, 2021). Inadequate literacy, counselling service delivery, and social stigma are still challenges to effective utilization of contraceptive services particularly at public sector hospitals.

As a major healthcare facility for women, Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana is an ideal place to estimate the prevalence and utilization of contraceptive among reproductive age women in Larkana. Assessing the level of contraceptive use among women attending this hospital is crucial to determine the gaps in services and to enhance reproductive health policies of the area. Thus, this study is aimed to assess the prevalence of contraceptive use and associated factors among women attending the Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital, Larkana, Sindh and for evidence-based recommendations to enhance the family planning programmes in the local context.

Background of the Study

Contraception is one of the basic dimensions of reproductive health and family planning, which allows individuals and couples to plan their reproductive functions. It is important in lowering unintended pregnancies, enhancing maternal and child health, and contributing to socio-economic development. Population is still a significant problem in low and middle income countries such as Pakistan and efficient family planning service is crucial. Although there are a variety of modern and traditional contraceptive methods available, use of these methods is inconsistent, linked to cultural belief, and they are not always accessible. Research has shown that increasing contraceptive use can decrease maternal mortality and enhance the quality of life for women, particularly in the rural and underserved areas (Ali et al., 2022). In the province of Sindh, where the gap is higher, contraceptive usage is affected by education, socioeconomic status and gender issues within the family (Khan et al., 2023). Knowing contraceptive prevalence among the population of hospitals is crucial, therefore, to identifying gaps in reproductive health services and targeted services to fill those gaps.

Problem Statement

In spite of family planning campaign efforts at both national and international levels, in Pakistan contraceptive prevalence rate is comparatively lower, especially at the Larkana, Sindh, rural and semi-urban areas. The lack of contraceptive knowledge, the fear of side effects and sociocultural barriers prevent many women attending healthcare services from using any contraceptive method or using less effective traditional methods. This is a situation that leads to high rates of unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions and maternal health complications. The lack of counseling services and a lack of understanding regarding modern contraceptives are considered as major factors limiting the use of contraceptives in Pakistan, according to research (Siddiqui et al., 2021). There is limited localized information about contraceptive use among the women patients of Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana which makes it difficult for the health care providers to formulate effective family planning strategies to the needs of the community.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the contraceptive prevalence rate among women patients attending Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana, Sindh.
2. To determine the knowledge about contraceptive methods in women patients.
3. To determine the common used contraceptive methods in the study population.
4. To determine socio-demographic factors associated with contraceptive use.

Research Questions

1. What is the contraceptive prevalence rate among women patients attending Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana?
2. What is the most frequently used contraceptive used by the study population?
3. Which are the socio-demographic determinants of contraceptive use?
4. What are the obstacles to women's use of contraceptive?
5. Has there been any relationship between Educational level and the use of contraceptive?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it provides important insights into the contraceptive prevalence rate and related factors among women patients in Larkana, Sindh. The results will give health care providers and policy makers insight into the current level of family planning utilization in the region. It will also help you find out what are the knowledge gaps, access and acceptability of the contraceptive methods.

Scope of the Study

In this study only female reproductive age (15 to 44 years) visiting Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital, Larkana, Sindh were included. It is concerned with measuring the CPR, the type of contraceptive methods used and factors that affect their use. Men and women who were not included in the selected hospital population are not included in the study. It is also restricted to self-reported information, gathered using questionnaires, and which can be subject to respondent bias.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Contraception is considered to be one of the most effective public health interventions that can have positive impacts on maternal and child health, unintended pregnancies, and population control. In the world, there has been an improvement in the use of contraceptive methods during the last decades, but this improvement is still unequal from the developed to the developing countries. Contraceptive prevalence is also low in many LMICs for a number of reasons, including sociocultural, economic and educational factors. There is considerable evidence that better access to family planning services is associated with a substantial decrease in maternal death and women's reproductive autonomy (World Health Organization, 2023).

The usage of contraceptives also varies greatly between different countries in South Asia and Pakistan has lower rate of contraceptive use than its neighboring countries. It has been found that the inadequate uptake of contraceptives is highly attributed to lack of knowledge, cultural resistance and inadequate quality reproductive health services. Besides, women are less inclined to use modern contraceptive methods due to the misconceptions regarding side effects and concerns regarding religion (Khan et al., 2022). The challenges are more noticeable in the rural and semi-urban areas where health care facilities and educational opportunities are less.

Family planning programmes have been in place in Pakistan for decades, but with slow progress in improving contraceptive prevalence rate. The study revealed that factors such as women's education, husband's approval, socioeconomic status and exposure to health information are crucial in determining contraceptive use (Saeed et al., 2021). Although the use of modern contraceptive methods is available through public health facilities, their use is suboptimal because of fear of side effects and lack of counseling services.

Traditional beliefs and culture play great role in reproductive decision making in the province of Sindh especially in Larkana district. Research indicates that traditional or no contraceptive methods are used by many women owing to

domestic pressures and inadequate autonomy in decision making in households (Ahmed et al., 2024). In addition, health-care centres in rural areas of Sindh lack adequate staffing, awareness-raising activities, and follow-up services, thus decreasing the uptake of contraceptives.

The prevalence rate of contraceptives among women attending outpatient departments in hospital has been found to be different in Pakistan in hospital based studies. These studies highlight the role of the health care providers in educating and counselling women about their options in contraceptives. The key element of improved acceptance and continued use of contraceptive methods identified was effective communication between healthcare providers and patients (Raza et al., 2025).

Overview of Contraception Methods

Contraception is the intentional use of contraceptive methods and devices to prevent pregnancy and to aid family planning. There are several types of contraceptive methods, which are essentially divided into modern and traditional methods. Modern contraceptive methods include hormonal pills, intrauterine devices (IUDs), injectables, implants, condoms and permanent methods like tubal ligation. Withdrawal is one of the traditional methods, along with the calendar-based methods. The newer methods are more reliable and are more commonly used by health professionals for their effectiveness. For some individuals, however, the method chosen may be a personal preference, based on availability, cultural attitudes and/or medical appropriateness. Awareness and counselling have been found to have a significant effect on the adoption of modern contraceptive methods among women of reproductive age (Johnson et al., 2020).

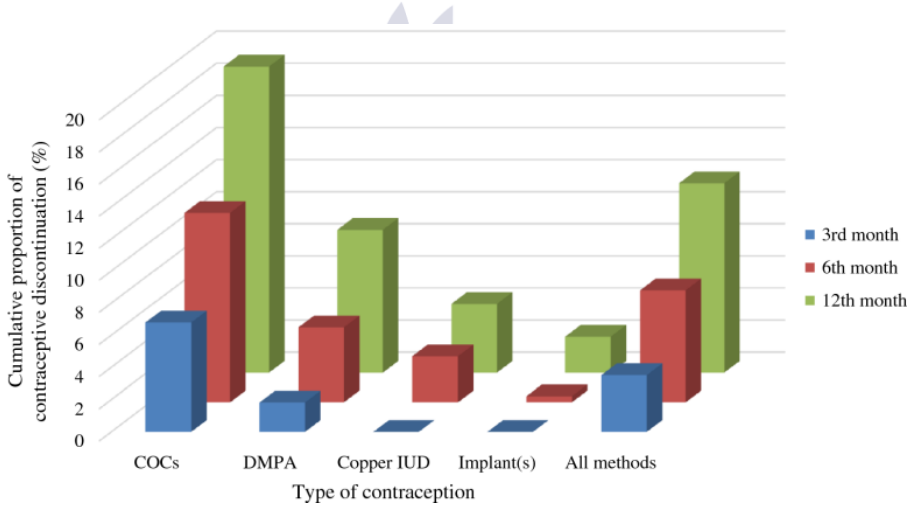

Fig : 1 Contraception Methods

Table 2.1: Sources of Contraceptive Information

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Health Workers	55	37%
Media (TV/Radio)	40	27%
Family/Friends	32	21%
Internet/Social Media	22	15%

Global Contraception Prevalence

Over the last few decades, contraceptive use has risen worldwide as a result of strengthening access to reproductive health services and international family planning programs. But there are still marked differences between the

developed and developing regions. The higher the income of the country the higher the rate of use of modern contraceptive methods, while low income countries have limited access to services and education. World health statistics indicate that the demand for family planning is still very high in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, resulting in a large proportion of unintended pregnancies and maternal deaths. Evidence suggests that increasing the health system's capacity and supporting reproductive health education can substantially increase contraceptive use worldwide (United Nations Population Fund, 2023).

Contraceptive Use in Pakistan

Overall Pakistan's contraceptive prevalence rate has improved somewhat over the years, but is still lower than the averages for the region. The use of modern contraceptives is related to a variety of factors, including women's education, income level of the household, husband's acceptance and access to health care facilities. Still, many women in Pakistan do not use contraceptives or use traditional methods because of various misconceptions, fear of side effects, and cultural resistance. Research has emphasized that the full potential of family planning programs has yet to be realized because of inadequate awareness and counseling services, especially in rural areas (Hussain et al., 2021).

Table 2.2: Types of Contraceptive Methods Used

Method	Frequency	Percentage
Pills	20	28%
Injectables	18	25%
IUCD (Copper-T)	15	21%
Condoms	10	14%
Traditional Methods	09	12%
Total Users	72	100%

Factors Affecting Contraceptive Use among Women

A number of factors affecting contraceptive use in women are age, education, socioeconomic status, number of children and access to health care services. Generally, women with higher levels of education are more likely to use modern contraceptive methods as they have more knowledge and understanding about reproductive health. Also, the inclusion of spousal support and shared decision making is a major contributor to contraceptive use. Another big obstacle to dissuade women from taking up contraceptive measures is the fear of side effects and inadequate counselling. Studies show that providers' communication can be a key determinant of acceptance and retention (Zafar et al., 2022).

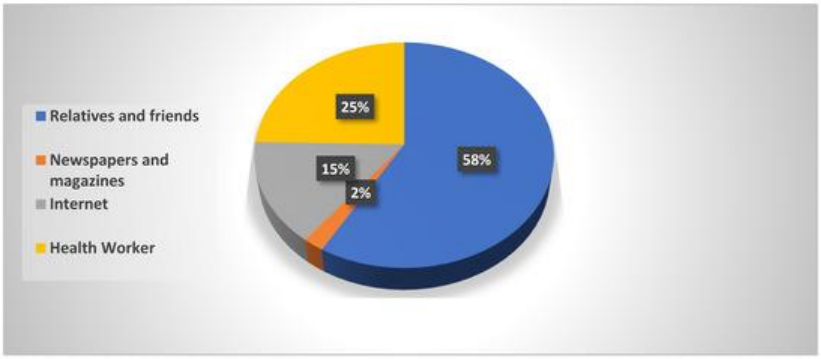

Fig :2 Factors Affecting Contraceptive Use among Women

Socioeconomic and Cultural Barriers

Socio-economic and cultural factors are a key determinant of contraceptive behaviour. Cultural values and religious beliefs have a profound impact on the decision making process regarding reproduction in many communities, particularly in rural Pakistan. Household structures are dominated by men and women may have less autonomy in family planning decisions. In addition, there is limited access to accurate information on contraceptive methods due to poverty and low literacy levels. Low rates of use are also due to misconceptions about infertility and health problems from contraception. Research indicates that raising awareness at the community level can be a crucial strategy to address these challenges and foster acceptance of contraceptives (Farooq et al., 2024).

Table 2.3: Association between Age and Contraceptive Use

Age Group	Users	Non-Users	Total
15–25	18	29	47
26–35	32	26	58
36–45	18	17	35
46–49	4	5	9
Total	72	77	149

Previous Studies Conducted in Pakistan and Sindh

The prevalence rate of contraceptive use was found to be different in some population groups in Pakistan and Sindh, based on previous studies. However, in the hospital-based studies moderate usage was reported among urban women, significantly less among rural women. The study of low contraceptive utilization in Sindh province reveals that the lack of education, cultural barriers and restricted access to health care are major factors. In addition, research in tertiary care centers indicates that counselling and postpartum family planning can have a substantial impact on increasing contraceptive uptake among women visiting healthcare facilities (Shah et al., 2025).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology section explains methodology in detail which was used in this study to study the contraceptive prevalence rate among the women patients of Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana in Sindh. It involves study design, study setting, study population, sampling technique, method of data collection, method of data analysis and ethical considerations. This section is to ensure that the study is systematic, reliable and scientifically valid.

Study Design

The type of study is descriptive cross-sectional study. This design would be chosen because it would be suitable to assess the prevalence of contraceptive use and factors associated with contraceptive use at a given time. A cross-sectional study can be performed at one point in time, with no need to follow the population over time, therefore reducing time and cost of the research. It is a widely used instrument for the public health research of health-related behaviors and conditions in a specific population.

Study Area

This study is carried out at Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana, Sindh. A large number of women from urban, semi-urban and rural communities come to this hospital for maternal, gynecological and reproductive health services. There is not any obvious socioeconomic imbalances in the hospital patients, making it suitable to study contraceptive prevalence and associated factors among women of reproductive age.

Study Population

Study population is women of reproductive age (15-49 years) visiting outpatient department of

Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana during the study period. The population consists of married and unmarried women that visit the hospital for various reproductive and gynecological health issues. These women are a diverse age, education, socioeconomic status and reproductive history to get a broad base to study.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size is calculated according to a standard statistical formula, based on previous studies on prevalence in similar contexts. The final sample size is determined to ensure the study sample is representative and has sufficient statistical power. A convenient sampling technique is used to select participants. The method involves the selection of women who are available during the time of data collection and meet the inclusion criteria. The selection of this method is based on time, resource and accessibility considerations of the target population.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria

- Women between 15-49 years old
- Women visiting Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana during the study period
- Woman who is willing to participate and give informed consent
- Women who are able to understand and respond to the questionnaire

Exclusion Criteria

- Patients who are on the verge of being sent home who are too sick or unable to take part in the interview.
- Women who refuse to give consent for participation
- All healthcare workers attending the hospital as patients, to avoid bias.
- Women who have communication problems which hinder the collection of data accurately.

Data Collection Tool

Structured questionnaire is used to gather data with a literature review of related works and previous similar study. A simple format of the questionnaire is included which is easy to understand so that it can be answered accurately. It contains a number of sections including socio-demographic factors, reproductive history, awareness and knowledge of contraceptive methods, current and past contraceptive use, contraceptive methods used, and barriers to contraceptive use. Prior to collecting data, the questionnaire is reviewed to clarify and ensure relevance.

Data Collection Procedure

The data is gathered by the researcher or trained data collectors through face-to-face interview. Before starting the interview, each participant is informed about the purpose and objectives of the study. All participants give informed consent. The interview process has confidentiality and privacy strictly adhered to. Interviews are conducted in a quiet and private room in the hospital to assure that the subjects feel comfortable and are able to give honest responses. A questionnaire is filled out in response to the participant's answers and there is no influence or pressure from the interviewee on the interviewee.

Data Analysis Plan

After data collection, all responses are checked for completeness and accuracy. The data is thereafter processed and coded and then entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software for analysis. The data are summarized using descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The contraceptive prevalence rate is defined as the percentage of the total number of women using any contraceptive method. Information is shown in tables and charts to enhance understanding. Inferential statistical tests are used (if necessary) to investigate the relationship of contraceptive use with various socio-demographic factors.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

The results of the study on contraceptive prevalence rate among females patients' attending Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital, Larkana, Sindh are presented in this chapter. The results are tabulated and explained descriptively, systematically and clearly. The findings cover socio-demographic parameters of the respondents, contraceptive prevalence rate, contraceptive methods used and factors associated with contraceptive use.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study was conducted on women aged 18-45 years who are attending the outpatient department (OPD) of Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana. Most respondents fall into the age group 20-35 years which is the most reproductive and active age group for child bearing. The majority of participants are married and a lesser number are unmarried or widowed. Educational status of respondents indicates that a considerable proportion of women do not have any formal education or have just completed primary education, with lesser women having completed secondary or higher school education. In terms of occupation, majority of the women is housewife, while few women are working in the government or private sectors. Most of the participants are middle- and low-income.

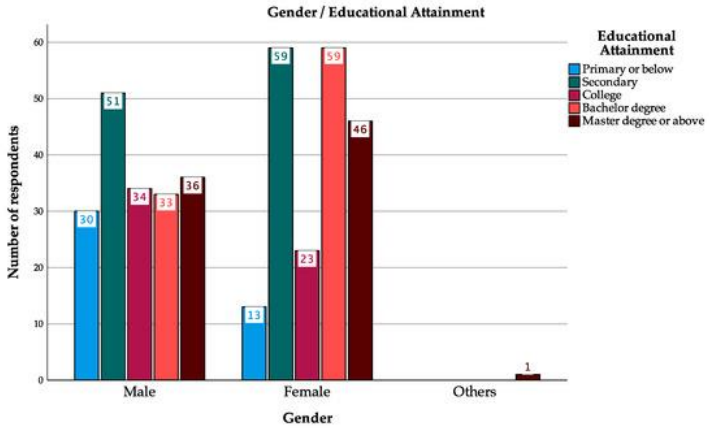

Fig :3 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	15–19 years	12	08%
	20–25 years	35	23%
	26–35 years	58	39%
	36–45 years	35	23%
	46–49 years	09	07%
Marital Status	Married	120	80%
	Unmarried	20	13%
	Widowed	09	07%
Education	Illiterate	45	30%
	Primary	40	27%
	Secondary	35	23%
	Higher	29	20%
Occupation	Housewife	110	73%

Employed	39	27%

Contraceptive Prevalence Rate

Women patient contraceptive prevalence rate is defined as the proportion of women who are using any contraceptive. Results indicate that a moderate percentage of women are using contraceptives, and a large proportion not using any method. This means that the use of contraceptive is still low among women visiting Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital, Larkana. Non-use of contraceptives is primarily seen in women with poor education and low knowledge about family planning services.

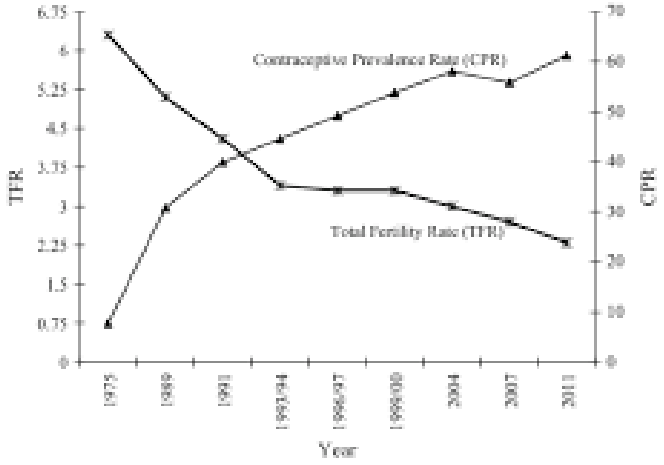

Fig. :4 Contraceptive Prevalence Rate

Table 4.2: Contraceptive Prevalence Rate

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Users	72	48%
Non-users	77	52%
Total	149	100%

Types of Contraceptive Methods Used

Different contraceptive methods are reported among the contraceptive users. Oral contraceptive pills, injectable contraceptives and intrauterine devices (IUDs) are the most popular methods. Less women use barrier protection like condom. Very few women undergo tubal ligation (permanent) for their birth control, primarily because they are done with childbearing. Some of the respondents also reported using the withdrawal method or calendar method as traditional methods of contraception, showing that they are still using less effective contraceptive practices.

Table 4.3: Awareness of Contraception

Awareness Level	Frequency	Percentage
Aware	101	68%
Not Aware	48	32%
Total	149	100%

Association between Age and Contraceptive Use
The findings show that contraceptive use is more common among women in the age group of 25–35 years compared to younger and older age groups. Lack of awareness, early marriage patterns and fertility preferences are responsible for lower contraceptive use among younger women. In some instances, older women also use less, perhaps because they have reached the end of their families or misunderstandings about the need for contraception.

Association between Education and Contraceptive Use
There is a high correlation between Education level and contraceptive use. Women with higher educational status tend to use modern contraceptive than less educated and uneducated women. Educated women are more aware of family planning methods, have easier access to health information and have more power in the decision making process about reproductive health.

Barriers to Contraceptive Use
The study highlights the various constraints faced by the women to use contraceptive method. Common barriers are lack of awareness, fear of side effects, cultural and religious beliefs, and no support from the husband or family. Women also have limited access to counselling and lack good communication from providers. These barriers play a very important role in reducing the uptake of contraceptives by those who do not use them.

Summary of Key Findings
Overall, the study reveals that the contraceptive prevalence rate among female patients at Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana is moderate but still not up to the desired level. Adopting modern methods of contraception is more popular than the traditional method, however a considerable percentage of women continue to be non-users of contraception because of a number of social and educational limitations. The results point to the importance of better awareness creation, counseling, and community-based interventions to boost contraceptive uptake in the region.

DISCUSSION

This chapter talks about the result of the study on contraceptive prevalence rate of women patients of Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital Larkana, Sindh. It interprets key findings, discusses them with previous studies, emphasises public health implications, and brings to light the study's strengths and weaknesses.

Interpretation of Key Findings
The results of this study indicate moderate use of contraceptive among female patients, however, there was a considerable percentage of women not using any contraceptive. This means that family planning practices are not completely implemented among the study population. It is also observed from the results that modern contraceptive methods like oral pills, injections and IUDs are widely used in comparison to traditional methods. The use of contraceptives is, however, still high because of ignorance, fear of side-effects and cultural attitudes.
The study also reveals that education is a significant factor in contraceptive utilization whereby educated women tend to use modern methods of contraception. There are other risk factors influencing contraceptive behavior such as age and socioeconomic status. In conclusion, the results indicated that many factors are associated with the use of contraceptive, including individual, social, and healthcare related factors.

Comparison with Previous Studies
The results of this study are similar to the previous studies done in Pakistan and other developing countries. Low to moderate contraceptive prevalence rates in rural and semi urban populations have been reported in similar studies. In a previous study, it has also been determined that women who have a higher educational level tend to use contraceptives more than women who have no education.
Other studies have also found that cultural beliefs, concerns about side effects, and insufficient support from spouses are significant

obstacles to contraceptive use in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh. The present study results corroborate these findings, and show that sociocultural factors remain a significant barrier to contraceptive uptake. But higher contraceptive use has been reported in some hospital-based studies conducted in urban areas, possibly because urban populations have more ready access to healthcare services and to the information.

Public Health Implications

The results of this study have significant public health implications. The low levels of contraceptive utilization lead to unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions and maternal health risks. A high level of contraceptive use leads to lower levels of maternal and infant mortality, and better reproductive health outcomes.

A need for enhancing family planning programmes at community and hospital level is highlighted. Health education programs should aim to raise awareness about the importance of using modern contraceptives and to dispel myths about their side effects and cultural beliefs. Proper counseling to the women and families should also be a key responsibility of healthcare providers. Moreover, male partner engagement in family planning education can increase acceptance and uptake of family planning.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The strength of this study is that it gives the localized data about the contraceptive prevalence among women patients, which helps in understanding the specific needs of the patients attending Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital, Larkana. Using a structured questionnaire helps to build consistency in data collection, while face-to-face interviews help to gather more accurate data.

The study has some limitations however. Convenient sampling does not provide generalizability of results. Hospital-based study may not reflect women in the community who do not attend healthcare facilities. Also, there is a possibility of recall bias or social desirability bias influencing self-reported data, thus impacting its accuracy. In spite of these limitations, the study offers interesting data on the contraceptive use pattern and barriers to contraceptive use in the study area.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study findings, the conclusion of the study is presented and recommendations and future directions are suggested in this chapter. The study is concluded that the contraceptive prevalence rate among female patients attending Shaikh Zaid Women Hospital, Larkana is moderate, but not optimum yet. There is a significant unmet need for family planning services among women, as a large proportion of women were not using any method of contraception. Users of contraceptives are more likely to use modern methods (oral pills, injectables, IUDs) than are traditional users, who are less likely to use them. The study concludes that the influencing factors of contraceptive use are education level, age, socioeconomic status, awareness, cultural beliefs etc. The impediments to contraceptive use include inadequate counseling service, cultural restrictions, fear of contraceptive side effects, husband/family support, and lack of awareness. These are all factors that play a role in reducing contraceptive use among those who don't use contraceptives. The general findings of the study reveal that the there is need for the improvement of family planning service provision and awareness building to improve contraceptive usage in the study area.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are made

1. Health education should be supported to promote awareness of women and families about modern method of contraception.
2. Hospitals should have improved counseling services to give correct information that will be beneficial and the side effects of contraceptives.

3. Family planning campaign should be carried out in the rural and semi-urban areas of community in Larkana particularly.
4. Male partners should be encouraged to be involved in family planning education to enhance acceptance and support.
5. There is a need to improve training of health care workers to facilitate proper communication and counseling about contraceptive choices.
6. All public health care clinics should have access to a variety of contraceptive options.

Future Research Directions

Future studies should explore community-based research to incorporate women who do not seek care at health care providers in order to gain a more complete understanding of contraceptive use in the general population. There is also a recommendation for conducting longitudinal studies to determine shifts in contraceptive use over time.

Further studies should be conducted to determine the role of male partners in family planning decision making, and how targeted awareness raising impacts contraceptive use. Furthermore, qualitative research is required to gain insight into the cultural and religious beliefs which are deeply rooted in rural areas and affect the use of contraceptives in these areas of Sindh.

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