

## **Contraceptive use Behavior and Male's Attitude Towards Women's Involvement in Family Planning**

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### **Abstract**

**The study was carried out in Peshawar City, NWFP Pakistan by randomly selecting 613 married males (15-49 years old) from five out of total bazaars through cluster-sampling procedure to investigate contraceptive use behavior and male's attitude towards women's involvement in family planning. Majority of the husbands (80%) favored their wives having frequent communication on family planning, its purpose and use with relatives and friends. Similarly, 78.1% of the respondents were in favor of their wives getting family planning information from anywhere. About 76% of the respondents favored woman to decide and use any method of family planning for her-self and spouse as well. Decision making by women on birth spacing and number of children to be born, was supported by 77.7 and 75.4% of the respondents, respectively. A positive but non-significant relationship ( $\gamma = 0.054$ ) existed between contraceptive use behavior and male's attitude towards women getting family planning information, deciding any family planning method by her-self ( $\gamma = 0.052$ ) and or for her spouse ( $\gamma = 0.074$ ). Similar relationship existed between contraceptive use behavior and husband's attitude towards wife to decide the number of children ( $\gamma = 0.080$ ) or birth spacing ( $\gamma = 0.080$ ), have communications with her friends/relatives regarding family planning ( $\gamma = 0.011$ ) and discuss the use/purpose of family planning methods with her relatives/friends ( $\gamma = 0.032$ ). Encouragement of wives by their husbands regarding family planning in the present study suggested that men should be also involved along with women in the family planning program to ensure higher adoption of contraception in the study area.**

**Key words:** Contraceptive, Family-planning, Pakistan

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### **Introduction**

Contraception being one of the needs of today's age, necessitates equal involvement of man and women but studies conducted in developing countries regarding fertility control uses were mainly concentrated on the women's responses and males were totally ignored in the past. Although, men playing a major role in contraception, very few efforts had been made in past to directly involve men in the family planning programs (Decarlo and Campbell, 1996). The major barriers to include men in family planning services were the limited funds for male services, predominantly female staff in family planning clinics, negative staff attitude and lack of staff training to better handle men in family planning (Forrest, 1987). However, it has been realized in recent years to include males and draw conclusions based on direct responses (Joesoef and Muhammad. 1988; Warren and Charles, 1990; Mbizvo and Adamchaj, 1991 and Ezeh, 1993). Female's focused studies would therefore suggest husbands' opposition as a major obstacle in fertility control endeavors. Kamal and Fowler (1991) also reported male's attitude to be one of the obstacles in contraceptive use. Spouses may have different reproductive goals, and data from both partners would be necessary to ascertain differences therefore, family planning program and research should continue to expand information on men's attitudes and behavior (Bankole and Singh, 1998). Men's participation in family planning means using a condom, coitus interrupts, periodic abstinence or vasectomy, but more often it means reaching an agreement with their wives to allow them to use other methods. The husband's permission to use contraception is essential for consistent and continued use of preferred methods (Kiani, 2000). Keeping in view findings of the previous efforts and important role of men in encouraging their wives to use contraceptives and get necessary information about family planning, the present study was undertaken in Peshawar city, Pakistan to study contraceptive use behavior and male's attitude towards women's involvement in family planning.

**Materials and Methods**

The study was carried out in Peshawar City, NWFP Pakistan by randomly selecting 613 married males (15-49 years old) from five out of total bazaars through cluster-sampling procedure to investigate contraceptive use behavior and male’s attitude towards women’s involvement in family planning. A comprehensive interview schedule was devised covering almost every aspect of study. Independent and dependent variables were framed with likert and semantic scales, respectively. Dependent variable (contraceptive use behavior) was indexed and equally divided into three categories with an interval of four namely, inconsistent (n=52), moderately consistent (n=443) and consistent (n=118) to get the desired purposes of making analysis of responses getable. Cronbach’s alpha test was used for working out reliability. Reliability coefficients worked out for the generated data ranged from 0.7 to 0.8. The data were analyzed using, uni-variate and bivariate analysis. Cronbach’s alpha was measured through the following formula (Georg and Mallery, 2000)

$$\alpha = Kr/1+(K-1) r$$

Association between dependent and independent variables was worked through bi-variate as follows, analysis using Chi square test as measure of significance adopting the procedure outlined by McCall, (1975). Where ever the frequencies in cells were less than 5, Fisher Exact Test was used instead of

simple chi-square adopting the procedure of Baily (1982).

**Results and Discussion**

Finding pertaining pertaining to contraceptive use behavior and male’s attitude towards family planning are given and discussed in this section. As given in Table 1, some 80% of the respondents were eager to allow their wives having frequent communication on family planning, its purpose and use with relatives and friends. Similarly, 78.1% of the respondents were in favor of their wives getting family planning information from anywhere. About 76% of the respondents favored Woman to decide and use any method of family planning for her-self and spouse as well. Similarly, decision making by women on birth spacing and number of children to be born, was supported by 77.7 and 75.4% of the respondents, respectively (Table 1). Encouragement of wives by their husbands regarding family planning in the present study was a positive indicator towards higher adoption of contraception. On the other hand, their negative attitude towards women’s involvement in family planning would result in poor adoption of contraception as Mahmood and Ringheim (1996) have also reported adverse effects of male’s autonomy on decision regarding contraceptive.

**Table 1. Responses of men regarding involvement and encouragement of women seeking family planning**

Attributes	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total
Woman be encouraged to get family planning information from anywhere	479(78.1)	11(1.8)	123(20.1)	613(100)
Woman be encouraged to decide over any method of family planning	467(76.2)	18(2.9)	128(20.9)	613(100)
Woman be encouraged to use any family planning method	466(76)	17(2.8)	130(21.2)	613(100)
Woman be encouraged to have communication with her friends/ relatives regarding family planning	492(80.3)	14(2.3)	107(17.5)	613(100)
Woman be encouraged to discuss the use/purpose of family planning methods with her relatives/friends	487(79.4)	14(2.3)	112(18.3)	613(100)
Woman be encouraged to recommend any family planning method for herself/spouse	439(71.6)	13(2.1)	161(26.3)	613(100)
Woman be encouraged to decide over birth spacing foe herself	476(77.7)	17(2.8)	120(19.6)	613(100)
Woman be encouraged to decide the number of children to be born	462(75.4)	19(3.1)	131(21.4)	612(99.8)

\* Values in the table present frequency while values in the parenthesis represent percentage proportion of the respondents

**Table 2. Relationship between male's attitude to women's involvement in Family Planning and contraceptive use behavior**

Women should be encouraged by her husband to:	Attitude	Contraceptive use behavior			Total	Statistics
		Inconsistent	Moderately consistent	Consistent		
Get family planning information from anywhere	Agree	36 (5.90)	358(58.40)	85 (13.90)	479(78.1)	$\chi^2 = 7.003$ (0.136) $\gamma = +0.054$
	Undecided	1 (0.20)	7 (1.10)	3 (0.50)	11 (1.80)	
	Disagree	15 (2.40)	78 (12.70)	30 (4.90)	123(20.1)	
Decide over any method of family planning	Agree	33 (5.40)	347(56.60)	87 (14.20)	467(76.2)	$\chi^2 = 6.255$ (0.181) $\gamma = +0.052$
	Undecided	2 (0.30)	12 (2.00)	4 (0.70)	18 (2.90)	
	Disagree	17 (2.80)	84 (13.70)	27 (4.40)	128(20.9)	
Use any family planning method	Agree	34 (5.50)	346(56.40)	86 (14.00)	466(76.0)	$\chi^2 = 6.424$ (0.17) $\gamma = +0.029$
	Undecided	1 (0.20)	11 (1.80)	5 (0.80)	17 (2.80)	
	Disagree	17 (2.80)	86 (14.00)	27 (4.40)	130(21.2)	
Have communication with friends and relatives on family planning	Agree	37 (6.00)	364(59.40)	91 (14.80)	492(80.3)	$\chi^2 = 5.078$ (0.279) $\gamma = +0.011$
	Undecided	1 (0.20)	10 (1.60)	3 (0.50)	14 (2.30)	
	Disagree	14 (2.30)	69 (11.30)	24 (3.90)	107(17.5)	
Discuss the use and purpose of family planning methods with her relatives/friends	Agree	37 (6.00)	358(58.40)	92 (15.00)	487(79.4)	$\chi^2 = 4.89$ (0.29) $\gamma = -0.032$
	Undecided	3 (0.50)	9 (1.50)	2 (0.30)	14 (2.30)	
	Disagree	12 (2.00)	76 (12.40)	24 (3.90)	112(18.3)	
Recommend any method of family planning for herself and spouse	Agree	29 (4.70)	328(53.50)	82 (13.40)	439(71.6)	$\chi^2 = 8.127$ (0.087) $\gamma = +0.074$
	Undecided	2 (0.30)	8 (1.30)	3 (0.50)	13 (2.10)	
	Disagree	21 (3.40)	107(17.50)	33 (5.40)	161(26.3)	
Decide over the birth spacing for herself	Agree	36 (5.90)	351(57.30)	89 (14.50)	476(77.7)	$\chi^2 = 4.225$ (0.376) $\gamma = +0.016$
	Undecided	2 (0.30)	13 (2.10)	2 (0.30)	17 (2.80)	
	Disagree	14 (2.30)	79 (12.90)	27 (4.40)	120(19.6)	
Decide the number of children to be born by her	Agree	37 (6.00)	343(56.00)	82 (13.40)	462(75.5)	$\chi^2 = 4.742$ (0.315) $\gamma = +0.080$
	Undecided	2 (0.30)	11 (1.80)	6 (1.00)	19 (3.10)	
	Disagree	13 (2.10)	88 (14.40)	30 (4.90)	131(21.4)	

\* Values in the table present frequency while values in the parenthesis represent percentage proportion of the respondents

A positive but non-significant relationship ( $\gamma = 0.054$ ) existed between male's attitude towards women getting family planning information and contraceptive use behavior. Similar relationship existed between contraceptive use behavior and husband's attitude towards wife's to decide; the number of children herself ( $\gamma = 0.080$ ) and birth spacing ( $\gamma = 0.080$ ; Table 2). The findings suggested an improvement in contraceptive use behavior with improvement in husband's attitude to allow wife getting family planning information and deciding the number of children or birth spacing by her-self. This was also evident from the findings of Joesef and Muhammad (1988) and DeSilva (1993) who stated husbands' approval as the major determinants in contraceptive usage.

Positive and non-significant relationship was found between contraceptive use behavior and male's attitude towards women deciding; any family planning method by her-self ( $\gamma = 0.052$ ) and or for her spouse ( $\gamma = 0.074$ ; Table 2). Similar relationship existed between contraceptive use behavior and male's attitudes towards women; having communications with her friends/relatives regarding family planning ( $\gamma = 0.011$ ) and discussing use/purpose of family planning methods with her relatives/friends ( $\gamma = 0.032$ ; Table 2). Cernada *et al.*, (1994) also reported relatives, friends and neighbors as the key sources about family planning information in Pakistan. Contrary, Angin and Shorter, (1996) in Turkey and DeSilva (1993) in Sri Lanka reported direct influence of husbands on acceptance, choice and use of contraception. The positive attitude of men towards women's autonomy in selecting family planning methods for her-self and spouse and frequent discussion on the use and purpose of family planning in the present study suggested higher chances for adoption of contraception in the study area.

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