

# EFFECT OF AGE AND EDUCATION ON DECISION MAKING OF WOMEN REGARDING CONTRACEPTIVES USE AT KHYBER TEACHING HOSPITAL, PESHAWAR

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To determine the effect of age and education in the decision-making of women regarding contraceptive use, at Khyber teaching hospital Peshawar.

**Material and Methods:** This was a cross-sectional study and was carried out from November to April 2019. A convenient non-probability sample of 353 was taken from Gynae wards of Khyber Teaching Hospital, Peshawar. The data obtained were analyzed using SPSS software and shown primarily in the form of frequencies, bar charts, and pie charts.

**Results:** The study was conducted in Khyber Teaching Hospital Peshawar. A total of 353 females were included in the study, amongst them 11% were less than 20 years of age while 51.6% were from 21-30 years and 25.8% were from 31-40 years. On an educational level basis, 64.3% of females were uneducated while only 9.1% had an education of intermediate or beyond, and about 25% had a primary level of education. The mean number of children per woman was 3.6. Out of 353 women, 70.8% were aware of contraception. About their views on contraceptive use, 66% of women with education levels from primary to intermediate have positive views on using contraceptives as compared to 24% of females with no education at all. According to the age group, 76% of females between the age group of 21 to 40 had positive views while 24% of females who were less than 20 years of age did not know about its use. The husband was the decision-maker in 12.7% of cases mostly in the case of young and uneducated females while in 16% of cases, women were deciding on their own and 48.2% of the spouses weren't opposing the use of the contraceptives while 7.9% were opposing it.

**Conclusion:** This study concluded that young and uneducated women have less authority to decide regarding the use of contraceptives while educated & middle-aged women could decide on their own.

**Keywords:** Contraception, decision-making, education

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## INTRODUCTION

Modern contraceptives have proven to be very systematic and productive in preventing pregnancy which became available in the 20th century. Approximately 45% of married women around the world are currently using contraception.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to other benefits, it also serves to decrease the number of maternal deaths. Child survival is found to be improved, by prolonging intervals between pregnancies. Since teenage pregnancies are thought to

be more prone to adverse outcomes it is in the best interest to provide easy access to contraceptives. Economic growth, which is also a crucial factor, emphasizes the need for contraceptives.

About 57% of women of childbearing age in 2012 wanted to avoid pregnancy 553 million of whom were in sub-Saharan Africa and 97 million were in Asia.<sup>2</sup>

Education has a potent impact on women's ability to decide about their future and family size, So, they can plan accordingly.<sup>3</sup> Having a better educational level in females has been demonstrated to have a better impact on the health and economic future of young women.<sup>4</sup> It is also seen that the infant mortality rate of babies whose mothers have received some kind of education is lower as compared to children whose mothers were not literate.<sup>5</sup> Despite contraception being universally prevalent our country has still a very low contraceptive prevalence that is almost 35%.<sup>6,7</sup> The use of modern contraceptive methods accounts for as low as 26% in Pakistan. The most commonly

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used methods are male condoms and female sterilization.<sup>8</sup> Family planning and contraceptive use are closely linked to markers of socioeconomic status<sup>(9)</sup> not limited to female education and age only.<sup>10, 11</sup>

Education increases confidence which in turn increases decision-making power.<sup>12</sup> Many studies from both developed and developing countries have brought forward the negative correlation between female education and fertility rates.<sup>13</sup>

One such study conducted in Pakistan showed that 23.4% of females with no education were using modern contraceptives compared with 31.1% of females having secondary education.

Decisions about contraceptive use in Asia and the Middle East are mostly taken by husbands, due to the patriarchal society.<sup>14</sup> A Study conducted in Ethiopia showed that because of male dominance in society, females are forced to bear a large number of children.<sup>15</sup>

This study is used to find out the role of females in deciding contraceptive use and the degree to which the female's age and education influence it. It is emphasized that the education of females is important and higher authorities should take initiatives for promoting female education.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

It is an observational cross-sectional study where cases were selected from the Gynecology/obstetrics wards of Khyber Teaching Hospital after getting informed consent from participants. The study was completed within 6 months from April to November 2019. The sample size was calculated by using the WHO formula  $Z^2 \times pq/d^2$  Where  $Z^2$  is the standard deviation,  $p$  is the prevalence,  $q = 1-p$ , and  $d$  is the standard error.

According to this formula, our sample size was 350 with about 50% prevalence. A convenient non-probability sampling technique was used. Any married female patients of reproductive age visiting the hospital were taken into study. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection after obtaining ethical approval from the MTI board. Data analysis was done using SPSS version 22. The decision-making power of females regarding modern contraception was recorded using a simple random technique. A P-value of less than 0.05 was considered significant

## RESULTS

This study had a total of 353 subjects. Most were married women between the ages of 21-30 and 31- 40 only a few were less than 20 years.

**Table 1: Age of the female and knowledge about contraceptives/contraception use**

Age of the Female	Knowledge about contraception		Total
	Yes	No	
30-15 years	153	75	223
45-31 years	97	28	124
Total	250	103	353

**Table 2: Level of education of the and knowledge about contraception**

Level of education	Level of education		Total
	Yes	No	
Uneducated	18	85	103
Primary education	35	7	42
Grade 9-6	25	9	34
Grade10- (Secondary)	142	0	142
Higher secondary and above	31	1	32
Total	251	102	353

**Table 3: Level of education of participant and its relation to views of the spouse**

		Level of education		Total
		Yes	No	
Level of education of the case	non-educated	97	18	115
	Primary pass	6	20	26
	Middle pass	1	16	17
	Metric pass	2	16	18
	Inter and above	1	21	22
Total		107	91	198

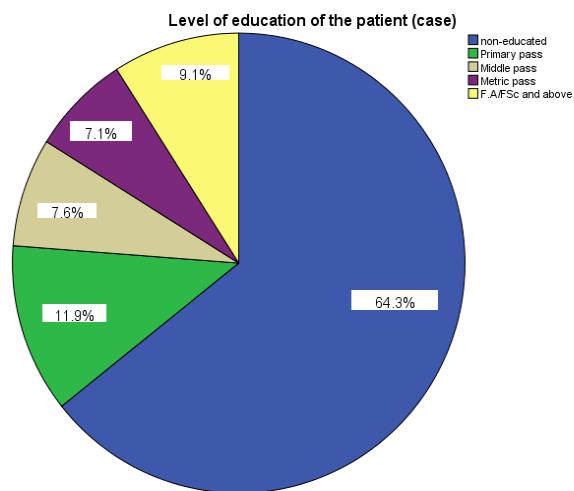


Fig 1: Education level of participants

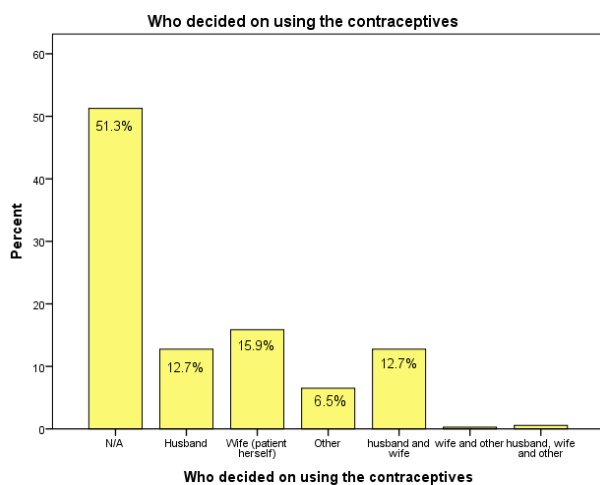


Fig 2: Percentage of subjects who decided the use of contraceptives.

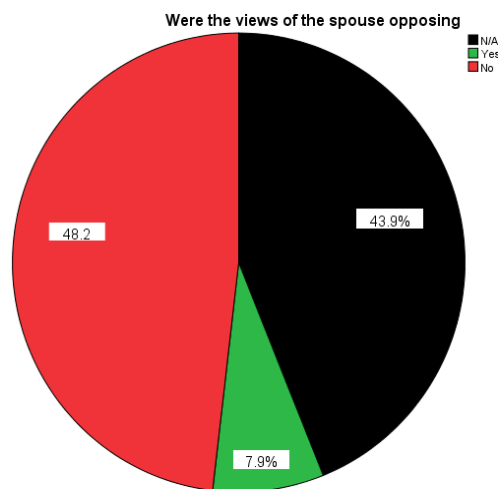


Fig 2: Views of spouses on contraception

## DISCUSSION

A study conducted by Hemmings, Wubshet, Lemma, Antoni, and Cherinet in Ethiopia concluded that women’s education not only improves their knowledge but also affects decisions about contraceptive use.<sup>18</sup> This is similar to our study in which 37.4% of those who were uneducated did not know, while primary, middle, and matric intermediate stand at 16.7%, 33.3%, 4.0%, and 3.1% respectively. A lack of knowledge of family planning services and methods is taken as a key factor responsible for the increased number of childbirths.<sup>19</sup> Results of different studies carried out in developing countries showed that women’s age and family structure were the strongest elements of women’s rights in making their decisions.<sup>20</sup> Women of middle age and those in nuclear households usually take part in family decisions than younger women contrary to our study in which 20 to 40 years of females, 33% had used contraceptives. The youngest age group was below 20 in this study, where a total of 44% of cases were not aware of contraceptives. The influence of age on contraception use can be clarified by the fact that 70.8 % of the subjects who were 21-30 years old and were married at the age of 11-20 years were in favor of using it. So, this shows that the younger populations of females have a better approach to maintaining a smaller and more economical family size to have a better quality of life.

A study in Tercha Town, Southern Ethiopia was conducted to analyze current modern contraceptive practices and decision-making power among married women in Tercha Town. It was found that married women living in urban areas were more likely to decide on the use of a modern contraceptive method as compared to rural women due to their better knowledge, our study findings conducted in the urban areas depicted the same results.<sup>21</sup> A study was conducted in Bangladesh to determine the socio-demographic factors influencing contraceptive use among married women who were of reproductive age.<sup>22</sup> The results of this study explained the sociodemographic factors and their association with contraceptive use among married women of reproductive age in Bangladesh, this information was obtained from three Health Surveys (BDHSs) carried out in 1993–1994, 2004, and 2014 respectively. The results of the surveys described that level of education strongly affects the use of contraception which is consistent with our study results.

While conducting our research, we also faced several limitations. To start, since the question being asked in our research was one that pertained to issues regarding women and their private lives, a female colleague was almost always necessary to conduct this research. We also found that a considerable amount of the cases from whom we gathered information were uneducated or only at primary level education. This was an issue as some cases were not immediately able to comprehend the question and we had to fill out the questionnaires

## CONCLUSION

The study results showed that age does affect the decision-making power of women, particularly in the age group of 11-20 years, who have less role in decision-making in comparison to other age brackets. Educated women were using contraceptives more as compared to illiterate women.

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### AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

Following authors have made substantial contributions to the manuscript as under

- Daanyaal M:** Concept, planning, study design, study conduction, critical review, analysis, manuscript writing.
- Mustafa A:** Critical review, discussion, interpretation, manuscript writing, study conduction.
- khattak SA:** Analysis, critical review, study conduction.
- Raza A :** Critical Review, study conduction, interpretation.
- Abbas W:** Study design, study conduction.
- Khan S:** Critical review, discussion.

Authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.



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