

Original Article

Women's satisfaction with contraceptive methods and its related factors in Isfahan health clinics in 2008

*Nahid Fathizadeh**, *Maryam Firuzabadi***, *Pejman Aqdad****, *Maryam Kianpour*****

Abstract

BACKGROUND: Starting sexual relations in early ages, diminution of family size and couple's delay for having babies in recent years have increased the length of using contraception methods and women need contraceptives for an average of more than 30 years. On the other hand, the tendency to use a contraceptive method like other tendencies depends on the general attitude to apply it and this means satisfaction. Therefore, satisfaction of using a contraceptive method is very important for women. This study aims to compare the satisfaction of women with the contraceptive methods.

METHODS: This is a descriptive comparative study with cross-sectional data collection method. The study sample included 706 women using LD pills, condoms, intrauterine devices (IUDs), Depo Provera injections, female sterilization and withdrawal method. The sample was selected using systematic random sampling. Data were collected using a researcher made questionnaire included 8 questions for three methods of using IUD, sterilization and withdrawal methods and 9 questions for pill, condom and DMPE injections. Questions were multiple choices (5- choices) and each question ranked from 1 to 5. Content reliability and re-test were used to evaluate the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis tests using SPSS software were used for data analysis.

RESULTS: Findings showed that the maximum and minimum mean scores of satisfaction belonged to female sterilization (4.36) and condom (4.08), respectively. Also, there were significant differences in mean score of satisfaction between users of IUD and condom, sterilization and condom as well as sterilization and withdrawal.

CONCLUSION: Women were more satisfied with reliable methods. It means that efficiency and reliability have an effective role in women's satisfaction with contraceptives and this should be considered in birth control counseling.

KEY WORDS: Satisfaction, contraceptives, family planning, birth control.

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One of the biggest problems in developing societies is increase in population, which is a serious threat for the global society. Public service announcements, concerning birth control services, are not only the key to population control and improvement of women and children health, but also considered as a basic human right¹. In Iran, also, the rate of unwanted pregnancies is 24.1% for each couple in spite of 78% usage of contraceptives and the main causes are failure of contraceptives and not using effective contraceptives, respectively.²

A contraceptive method is chosen based on the general attitude toward it and the knowledge and beliefs about its efficiency, easy usage, side-effects, probable interference with sexual intercourse, accessibility and cost will shape this attitude. Also, the previous background of using contraceptives and satisfaction of them are other related factors in creating individuals' thoughts and beliefs to a special method³. An important factor in choosing a contraceptive method is the satisfaction with it⁴. Salemi's study on women's experiences with contracep-

* MSc in Midwifery, Vice President of Education, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, Isfahan, Iran.

** MSc in Midwifery, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, Isfahan, Iran.

*** MD, The Head of Population Control Association of Isfahan Province, Isfahan Health Center, Isfahan, Iran.

****. MSc in Midwifery, Vice President of research, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, Isfahan, Iran.

Correspondence to: Nahid Fathizadeh, MSc.

E-mail: fathizadeh@nm.mui.ac.ir

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tives reported that women's experiences about side-effects, merits, advantages and disadvantages as well as their satisfaction with the health center lead to an attitude towards the contraceptive methods and their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the method they used cause continuing or stopping it as well as advising others about their experiences⁵. In addition, some other factors such as, education, occupation, the number of children and duration of using a method may affect on satisfaction. As, Zeynep in his study showed no significant relationship between satisfaction of using IUD with age and education level, but he find out a significant relationship between satisfaction and the number of children⁶. Gonenc et al find out a positive significant relationship between the duration of implant method and the satisfaction of it⁷

This study aims to quantitatively calculate the satisfaction with contraceptives, and the satisfaction factors for the use of authorities and users of birth control programs. This study compares the satisfaction with various contraceptive methods among women who use them.

Methods

This is a descriptive comparative study carried out in one step and with multiple groups. The study environment included the birth control units of ten health centers in Isfahan, Iran. Sampling method was random stratified and the women were selected based on the population of 10 to 49 years old married women under the birth control program in each of the two main branches of health network in the city. Also, the number of women selected from each center was based on the population of 10 to 49 years old married women under each of the contraceptive methods. Then the sampling was done based on the random stratified sampling method from current and previous users of the contraceptives. The researcher contacted the subjects and invited them to the health center. Those who had the entry criteria were asked for permission and their questionnaire was completed by the researcher based on a face-to-face interview with each of them. The number of subjects using each of LD pills, IUDs, condoms

and withdrawal method was 154, the women using sterilization were 50 and those using Depo Provera injection were 40. The total number of subjects was 706. Data were collected using a researcher made questionnaire including a section on demographic data and a section on satisfaction with the contraceptive method. The satisfaction section included 8 questions for the three methods of IUDs, sterilization and withdrawal, and it included 9 questions for the three methods of pills, condom and injection. The questions were multiple choices (5 choices) and the score for each question was 1 to 5. The total score was the sum of scores for satisfaction section questions. Therefore, the satisfaction score range was between 9 and 45 for the three groups of LD pills, Depo Provera injection and condom and it was 8 to 40 for the three groups of IUDs, withdrawal method and sterilization. Content validity and retest were used for the validity and reliability of the questionnaire and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (minimum, maximum and mean scores, standard deviation and frequency distribution table), inferential statistics (ANOVA and Kruskal-wallis) and SPSS software.

Results

The findings of this study (Table 1) showed that there was no significant difference between the mean scores of satisfaction with contraceptive service providers, their educating and counseling services, access to the services, permanent access to the method and easy usage of the selected method compared to other methods. However, Kruskal wallis test showed a significant difference between women's satisfaction regarding the reliability of various contraceptive methods ($p < 0.001$). The highest and lowest mean score in this regard belonged to sterilization and withdrawal method, respectively. Also, Kruskal wallis test showed a significant difference between satisfaction scores considering no side effects ($p < 0.001$) and the highest and lowest mean scores in this area belonged to withdrawal and LD pills, respectively. Regarding no interference with sexual intercourse, Kruskal-wallis test showed a significant

Table 1. Comparison of the average ranking of the women's satisfaction from contraceptives

Satisfaction factors contraceptive	Service providers' contact	Educating and counseling services	Access to the services	Permanent access to the method	Easy usage	Reliability of the method	Safety of the method	No interference with sexual intercourse	Spouse's satisfaction
LD pills	3.69	3.69	3.55	4.49	4.55	4.86	3.42	5	4.63
IUD	3.91	3.85	3.58	--	4.29	4.55	4.02	4.84	4.78
Condom	3.69	3.68	3.49	4.46	4.23	3.86	4.66	4.36	4.01
Withdrawal	3.71	3.66	3.60	-	4.40	3.77	4.79	4.57	4.33
Female sterilization	3.68	3.84	3.82	-	4.44	4.90	4.52	4.90	4.94
Depo Provera injections	3.93	3.90	3.83	4.5	4.35	4.78	4.13	4.70	4.45
P-Value	0.1	0.4	0.3	1	0.1	>0.001	>0.001	>0.001	>0.001

difference between different methods ($p < 0.001$) and the highest and lowest mean scores belonged to LD pills and condom. Also, regarding the spouse's satisfaction, Kruskal-wallis test showed a significant difference between different methods ($p < 0.001$) and the highest and lowest mean scores belonged to sterilization and condom. Moreover, the findings showed (Table 2) that the highest mean score of satisfaction was for female sterilization 4.36 and the lowest mean score belonged to condom 4.08. ANOVA showed a significant difference between the mean scores of satisfaction with IUDs and condom as well as sterilization and withdrawal ($p < 0.001$).

In addition, there was no relation between age, education, career and the number of children with the satisfaction scores, but there was a direct significant relation between the duration of using a method and the satisfaction score.

Discussion

The results of this study show that there is a significant difference between women's satisfaction with various methods considering the reliability of the methods. The highest and lowest mean score in this regard belonged to sterilization and withdrawal method, respectively. The reason for this significant difference is the fact that sterilization is a permanent and very effective method⁸ while withdrawal is known as an unreliable method⁹. Also, regarding the side effects of contraceptive methods, there was a significant difference between satisfaction scores and the highest and lowest mean score in this regard belonged to withdrawal method and LD pills, respectively. These results are similar to the results of Tonkelaar et al (2001) who reported a significant difference between women's satisfaction while using pills and other contraceptive

Table 2. The mean, SD, lowest and highest scores of women satisfaction of contraceptives

Satisfaction	mean	SD	Lowest	Highest
LD pills	4.2	0.49	2	5
IUD	4.22	0.46	3	5
Condom	4.08	0.56	2.22	5
Withdrawal	4.1	0.58	2.25	5
Female sterilization	4.36	0.41	3.25	5
Depo Provera injections	4.28	0.55	2.67	5

The table shows that the highest scores of satisfaction belong to the Female sterilization and Depo Provera injections. And the lowest scores belong to Condom and Withdrawal

choosing withdrawal method in Amir Ali Akbari's study was its lack of side effects¹¹. Regarding the interference with sexual intercourse, there was a significant difference between women's satisfaction with various methods and the highest and lowest mean score in this regard belonged to LD pills and condom, respectively. The Tonkelaar et al study showed that there was a significant difference between the satisfaction of those who used condom and those who used other methods regarding the change of the quality of sexual relations¹⁰. Huber's study in 2006 showed that one of the reasons for changing contraceptive method from condom to other methods was its interference with sexual relation¹² while another study indicated that oral pills have no interference with sexual relation⁸. In addition, there was a significant difference between different methods regarding the spouse's satisfaction, and the highest and lowest mean scores belonged to sterilization and condom. It seems that husbands are highly satisfied with female sterilization because it is permanent, its failure rate is low;¹³ and it has no interference with sexual relations.⁸ But the husbands' unsatisfactory with condom can be related to the fact that it is depended on men and increase their responsibility of birth control as well as being focused on the sexual organs¹⁴ Also, considering the fact that the lowest score of satisfaction was 1 and the highest was 5 and the higher scores mean more satisfaction, the results of the study show that women are considerably satisfied with all contraceptive methods. Moreno's study (2008) on contraceptive methods in Spain showed that 88% of contraceptive method users (pills, IUDs, condom, withdrawal and sterilization) were very satisfied or relatively satisfied with their method.¹⁵ Also, the results showed that the highest mean score of satisfaction belonged to sterilization and the lowest belonged to condom. In a study by Panel (2008) on French women's satisfaction with their contraceptive methods, the women were asked to give a score of 1 to 10 to their method based on their satisfaction with it and the highest score belonged to sterilization, IUDs, oral pills and condom, respectively. In this

study, the efficiency and easy usage had an effective role in satisfaction.¹⁶ Oddens's study (1999) also showed that the highest level of satisfaction was 92% for sterilization group, 68% for oral pills and 59% for IUDs, respectively; while the lowest level of satisfaction was 30% for condom group and 43% for withdrawal, respectively.¹⁷ These studies are in agreement with the results of our study. Moreover, there was a significant difference between the mean scores of satisfaction with IUDs and condom as well as condom and sterilization, and sterilization with withdrawal. It seems that the most important reason for this significant difference is that the sterilization is a permanent and effective method compared to condom and withdrawal and also IUDs are more effective than condom and the efficiency and reliability of these methods are different and also the husbands are more satisfied with IUDs and sterilization. One of the effective factors on choosing a contraceptive method and continuing the usage is its efficiency and effectiveness in contraception.⁴ One of the main factors of women's satisfaction with their contraceptive method is their knowledge of how much this method can prevent unwanted pregnancies¹⁸ and in general, the main cause of unsatisfactory with a contraceptive method is its inefficiency.⁴ Besides, if women choose their contraceptive method based on their knowledge and familiarity with methods, they have more interest and comfort with their choice and this leads to the longer term of using the method.¹⁹ Also, there was no relation between age, education, career and the number of children with the satisfaction scores, but there was a direct significant relation between the duration of using a method and the satisfaction score. It means that the longer a woman use a method, the more she will be satisfied with it and we can say that longer usage of a method reduces the side effects and the adaptation and knowledge towards the method will increase and this will lead to more satisfaction. Considering that there is less satisfaction with the methods of higher failure rate because of their failure or the women's worries about unwanted pregnancy and lack of education,

therefore, the birth control counselors should provide a complete information about advantages, disadvantages, efficiency and the proper way of using methods for the women who refer to them for choosing a contraceptive method,

and then let them freely select their methods.

The Authors declare that have no conflict of interest in this study and ethical committee approved the study.

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