

Knowledge and Perception of Birth Control

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Abstract: *The purpose of this cross-sectional survey study was to explore the attitudes towards birth control among female adolescents aged between 15 to 19 years in Bangkok and related factors. The sample consisted of 200 people with stratified sampling. Data collection was accomplished with questionnaires from 1 August to 31 August 2020. The statistics used descriptive statistics. The results revealed that the knowledge towards birth control was high (66.2%), that accepting birth control was impotence for sexual prevention among adolescents. The findings lead to recommendations that organizations should have well-planned activities for birth promotion and prevention for teenagers.*

Keywords: Birth control, Birth control options, People's comprehension, Attitudes, Teen age, Contraception, Contraceptive methods, Contraceptive knowledge, Adolescents, Sex Protection

1. Introduction

Monitoring sexual activity and contraceptive use among teenagers is important because of the health, economic, and social costs of pregnancy and childbearing among the teen population. Adolescents lack understanding and do not place a high value on sex protection. As a result, unintended pregnancies and illegal abortions are common. When it comes to contraception, there has been a rise in the usage of condoms among females, followed by oral contraceptives. However, some teenagers are misusing it, which could be one of the main reasons. By looking at Thailand's adolescent birth rate. Between 2000 and 2012, there was a substantial increase in the rate. The number of adolescents aged 15 to 19 years has increased from 31.1 to 53.4 per 1000 people (The United Nations Population Fund) In addition, between 2010 and 2014, the rates of adolescent recurrent births increased by 11.3, 11.8, 11.9, 12.5 percent, and 12.8 percent, respectively, among adolescents aged 15-19 years. 2017 (Charoen Phan Health Office). from a variety of data that have an impact on many facets of Thai society The majority of them are students enrolled in various educational institutions. The repercussions on the family, such as shame and disappointment from their child's actions, were among the side effects of being a teenage mother while studying. Furthermore, children are born as a result of a lack of maturity and self-care. As a result, there is an issue. The infant was born with a lower weight than usual. This allows problems in numerous biological systems to be detected. whether it is psychological, such as being mocked till embarrassed anxiety leading to abortion that impacts health in both life and education, such as getting expelled from school and having to take a break from studying When it comes to vocational training, it is impossible to pursue high-paying jobs that demand a lot of money, which can have a negative impact on one's quality of life. The easiest approach to avoid this issue is to educate yourself on how to protect yourself during sex.

2. Methodology

The cross-sectional survey was conducted to examine the knowledge and perception of contraception among Thai women aged between 15 to 18 years. The survey is in the format of Google form which was developed through July

17, 2021-July 30, 2021, and was sent via social media platforms (i.e., Instagram, Twitter, and Line). We received a total of 205 responses from anonymous sampling participants. A few responses including those with 2 missing values and 3 participants whose ages exceed 18 years old were discarded before data analysis. Eventually, 200 responses were analysed.

The questionnaire was developed based on three aspects: attitudes toward contraception, opinions toward contraceptive methods, and knowledge and perception regarding contraception.

A preliminary draft of the survey was reviewed by the director of a public hospital in Thailand. Further revisions were made as seen as appropriate.

The final draft of the survey contained 24 questions, which were divided into 4 sections: 3 about general information, 5 about attitudes toward contraception, 6 about opinions toward contraceptive methods, and 10 about knowledge and perception

regarding contraception. Most of the questions are modified from RAMA Hospital channel. A few questions were from Cleland *et.al* and Olatunbosun *et. al*.

General Information

The response to the questions consisted of age, and love status. All responses were calculated as a percentage.

Attitudes toward Contraception

The questions are in the format of a five-point Likert scale (i.e., from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree). The responses are assigned numbers as selected.

Opinions Toward Contraceptive Methods The questions are a multiple answer format which allows a respondent to select multiple answer choices for a question. All responses were calculated as a percentage.

Knowledge and Perception Regarding Contraception

The questions consisted of 9 true and false questions and a five multiple-choice question regarding the knowledge of the use of contraception and each contraceptive method's

efficacy. A point was assigned to each correct answer. The sum of all the responses indicates the knowledge and perception of contraception of each individual, in which higher scores indicate more knowledge

3. Results

Table 1: General Information

		Percentage (%)
Ages	15	13.8
	16	14.8
	17	22.9
	18	32.4
	19	16.2
Status	Single	76.2
	In relationship	23.8
	Married	0

Table 1 illustrates the participants’s general information. The majority of the participants are eighteen-year-old girls, consisting of 32.4%. Those aged 17, 19, 16, and 15 are 22.9%, 16.2%, 14.8%, and 13.8%, respectively. In addition, 76.2% of our samples are single while 23.8% are in a relationship.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistic of Attitudes toward Contraception

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Number
Convenience in buying or obtaining birth control substances.	3.719	1.0454	210
Having proper perception and knowledge of birth control can reduce the chance of unintended pregnancy.	4.5714	0.7102	210
The price of birth control substances are reasonable.	3.1619	1.1292	210
Birth control should be supported and/or subsidized by the government as part of state welfare.	4.7476	0.6764	210
Schools should teach about birth control clearly and overtly.	4.9476	0.2438	210

Table 2 represents the mean and standard deviation of five variables. The ‘convenience in buying or obtaining birth control substances’ and ‘The price of birth control substances are reasonable’ variable’s mean are 3.7190 and 3.1619, respectively, while the standard deviation is 1.0454 and 1.1292. The mean represents that the majority think the convenience in buying or obtaining birth control substances and the price reasonableness of birth control substances are moderate. Meanwhile, The ‘Having proper perception and knowledge of birth control can reduce the chance of unintended pregnancy’, ‘Birth control should be supported and/or subsidized by the government as part of state welfare’ and ‘Schools should teach about birth control clearly and overtly’ variable’s mean are 4.5714, 4.7476, and 4.9476, respectively, while the standard deviation is 0.7102, 0.6764, and 0.2438. The means indicate that most people agree on those aforementioned subjects.

Table 3: Contraceptive methods which participants believe they are safe for them

Contraceptive method	Percentage (%)
Male latex condom	87.1
Female condom	16.7
Contraceptive pill	51
Contraceptive implant	57.6
Injectable contraception	30
Contraceptive patch	19
Intrauterine device	17.6
Cervical cap	4.3
Contraceptive sponge	2.4
Coitus interruptus	13.3
Calendar rhythm method	12.9
Douching and urination	1.9
Sterilization	36.7

Table 3 illustrates the percentage of participants choosing methods of contraception that are secure. Male latex condoms are selected by the majority of participants, consisting of (87.1%). Contraceptive implant (57.6%) is the second most common method, followed by Contraceptive pill (51%), while Douching and urination (1.9%) is the lowest ranked.

Table 4: Participants' preferred methods of contraception

Contraceptive method	Percentage (%)
Male latex condom	90
Female condom	16.2
Contraceptive pill	55.7
Contraceptive implant	42.4
Injectable contraception	19
Contraceptive patch	17.6
Intrauterine device	5.7
Cervical cap	3.3
Contraceptive sponge	0.5
Coitus interrupts	16.7
Calendar rhythm method	20.5
Douching and urination	1
Sterilization	11.9

Table 4 demonstrates birth control preferences which represents in percentage. Male latex condoms are the most popular method chosen by the majority of the participants approximately (90%). The second highest in this table is Contraceptive pill, consisting of (55.7%), followed by Contraceptive implant (42.4%). On the other hand, Contraceptive sponge is the lowest ranked from the table.

Table 5: Contraceptive methods which participants consider to be convenient to obtain

Contraceptive method	Percentage (%)
Male latex condom	96.7
Female condom	10
Contraceptive pill	58.1
Contraceptive implant	13.3
Injectable contraception	4.8
Contraceptive patch	11.9
Sterilization	2.4

Table 5 illustrates the birth control options that participants found it convenient to obtain in which more than one option may be selected. The majority of participants chose Male latex condoms (96.7%) as the most convenient method. Following that, the contraception pill is the second

highest(58.1%) followed by contraception implant(13.3%) and contraception patch(11.9%), respectively. However, people found sterilization as the least convenient method.

Table 6: Contraceptive methods which participants believe they are effective

Contraceptive method	Percentage (%)
Male latex condom	95.2
Female condom	12.4
Contraceptive pill	37.6
Contraceptive implant	16.2
Injectable contraception	6.2
Contraceptive patch	17.1
Coitus interruptus	14.8
Calendar rhythm method	2.9
Douching and urination	12.4
Sterilization	3.3

Table 6 represents the percentage of participants choosing birth control options that are easy to use. 95.2% of participants found male latex condoms easiest to use while 37.2% chose contraceptive pills. While contraceptive patch and implant have been chosen by 17.1% and 16.2% of participants, respectively. The least popular option is the calendar rhythm method (2.9%).

Table 7: Sources that participants have learned about contraceptive

Sources	Percentage (%)	
School	46.7	
Family	15.2	
Friends	32.4	
Social Media	86.7	
Article, Research	65.2	
Others	Webinar Online	0.5
	University	0.5
	Boy friend/ Girl friend	0.5

Table 7 illustrates the sources that participants have learned about contraception in which more than one option may be selected. The majority of participants chose Social media (86.7%). Following that, the Article and Research is the second highest (65.2%) followed by school (46.7%) Friends (32.4%), Family (15.2%), and others (1.5%), respectively. However, minorities have learned about contraception from their family.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistic of Knowledge and Perception Regarding Contraception

Mean	Std. Deviation	Number
07-Oct	1.489	210

Table 8 demonstrates Conception and education presented in statistics with an average score of 7 out of 10, and a standard deviation (S.D) of 1.489, indicating that the majority of the sampling respondents have a good understanding and perception of contraception

4. Discussion

According to Table 2, descriptive statistics for the question 'The price of birth control substances is reasonable' in the attitudes toward contraception section show that the mean is 3.1619, which is the lowest when compared to the means of

other questions, and the standard deviation is 1.1292, which is the highest. This implies that participants have differing perspectives on the subject. There may be some factors that influence the results such as personal financial circumstances, which some cannot afford, and attitudes about sex protection, which some do not place a high value on it. Conversely, descriptive statistics for the question 'Schools should teach about birth control clearly and overtly', the results present that the mean is 4.9476, which is the highest, while the standard deviation is 0.2438, which is the lowest. This indicates that the majority agree that school should teach about contraception to adolescents clearly and overtly.

Male latex condoms were chosen by the majority of the participants as the most preferred way because the price is within their budget. This also implies that the majority of people have seen or heard about it. On the other hand, according to the website (www.medthai.com), this substance is insecure and one of the high-risk options. A large number of participants also select contraceptive pills because of the affordable and easy-to-find pricing. However, this is still a moderate-risk alternative, so we should think about it carefully before making a decision. In reality, according to the website (www.medthai.com) contraceptive implant is the most effective way of birth control, but only 16.2% of participants got it correctly.

Moreover, sterilization is also a method that the majority misunderstood. Only a mere 3.3% of participants chose it as an effective option which is the second most effective.

Furthermore, according to the website (www.medthai.com) intrauterine devices are the second safest birth control method. However, the survey result shows that only 17.6% of participants chose intrauterine device as a safe method of contraception. This indicates that even though information from the website is where everyone could reach out to, not everyone pays attention to it which could result in misunderstanding a basic concept.

5. Conclusion

According to the survey, it shows that the majority of respondents have considerable knowledge of birth control, with an average score of 7 out of 10. People largely learned from social media, articles, and research papers. However, There are a few topics that people are still confused about. The majority of respondents believed that there was a need for a break between packs of contraceptive tablets which in fact there is no need and that sterilization and the use of condoms, rather than a contraceptive implant, was the most effective strategy to prevent pregnancy. Furthermore, In reality, 87.5% of respondents preferred to use condoms in terms of safety and convenience which in terms of effectiveness is not the proper method. These findings clearly illustrate that, despite the fact that there are various educational venues from which individuals might learn, not everyone fully comprehends them. Consequently, 95.5% of respondents suggested that school should be more open to this topic and it should be a place where students may learn about birth control.

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