Current Knowledge and Attitudes toward Oral Contraception (OC) Use among Ghanaian women

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INTRODUCTION

The facts that prompted this study and led the research team to the following research questions:

- About 25% of women in selected three study sites would like to avoid an unwanted pregnancy in the near future, yet they are not using any family planning method.
- About 35% of women using contraception among OC use prefer OCs to any other contraceptive method.
- Research has identified disparities in use of contraceptive use among different sub populations.
- Africa has low levels of contraceptive use compared to the rest of the world in particular.

METHODS

A mixed methods approach was used to analyze data collected through administration of a survey and focus group discussions.

Surveys were administered to healthcare providers, including Doctors, Nurses, and Midwives.

Focus group discussions conducted in the community.

Due to study limitations, convenience sampling was used for both surveys and focus groups. About 52 respondents completed surveys and 17 participants contributed to focus group discussions.

RESULTS

Demographics of the survey respondents included an age range of 23-58 with an average age of 34.

Occupations are shown below with most common being Midwife. Approximately 90% of the respondents were female.

Focus group participants were comprised of Seamstresses, students, and Doctors.

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High level results of the surveys are displayed below.

About 92% of respondents think prevention of unintended pregnancy is an important issue in Ghana, while only 51% think Ghanaian women have adequate access to OCs.

The findings from both the surveys and focus group discussions indicate there is a lack of education and fear associated with OCs.

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DISCUSSIONS

Healthcare providers were able to provide feedback in addition to their responses on surveys.

The feedback received indicated there is a need for more education, greater access to OCs, and additional options in contraceptives for males.

Focus Group participants provided feedback - mentioning there was a need for more education in this area.

Participants cited fear of infertility and/or side effects as reasons for not using OCs.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Study findings suggest there is a need for intervention in the areas of public awareness and education about the use of contraception.

In addition, community engagement in public health education of women and men about contraception use is warranted.

While further research is needed in the specific area of OCs, future research should also include other effective contraception methods and incorporate male perspectives.

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