


Integrative review on the investigation of knowledge and adherence to contraceptive methods in young adults

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ABSTRACT

Concern about avoiding unplanned pregnancies motivates the use of contraceptive methods, but the effective transmission of knowledge about these methods is limited. The doctor-patient relationship plays a crucial role in providing guidance on contraception, aiming to meet patients' individual needs. The objective of this integrative review was to investigate knowledge and adherence to contraceptive methods in young adults, addressing adherence, reasons for choice, consequences and adaptability. 23 articles were reviewed, of which seven met the inclusion criteria. The studies analyzed highlighted the importance of considering social, cultural and individual factors when choosing contraceptives, aiming to improve the services offered. The results indicated that most women use short-term methods, but there is growing interest in long-term methods. The review also addressed the relationship between hormonal contraceptives and mental health, as well as risk factors associated with their use. Raising awareness about contraception from an early age and inclusive approaches are crucial to promoting adequate sexual and reproductive health among young people. This study highlights the need for a patient-centered approach to ensure effective and equitable contraceptive services, as well as highlighting the importance of early education about contraception and sexual health.

Keywords: Contraception, Reproductive Health, Family Planning.

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INTRODUCTION

According to Febrasgo, in 2019, according to the National Health Survey, 52.2% (109.4 million) of the Brazilian population were women, considered to have a reproductive age of 15 to 49 years. According to reproductive planning data, among sexually active women, 80.5% (33.6 million) used some contraceptive method in 12 months, which varied according to age – 15 to 24 years (76.1%) and above 25 years (80%)¹.

Contraceptive methods are applied with the aim of preventing reproductive processes. Developing Brazil faces a major public health problem compared to developed countries: unplanned pregnancy. There are control approaches, mainly increasing access to long-acting contraceptive methods, which can contribute to a different scenario than the current one².

Currently, there is a varied framework of methods offered on the market, but there is a failure to transmit knowledge about them within a social context, as well as a desire on the part of women to know more. The doctor-patient relationship is crucial regarding proper guidance in the contraception process, aiming to accommodate individual needs, within the patient's reality, and as a consequence achieving maximum adherence to contraceptive methods, based on reasons for choice, adaptability and adherence³.

Among the target population, the majority of women are healthy and have physical well-being, however it is necessary to investigate adherence to the methods, as well as how much they affect their quality of life. It is clear that there are factors that influence young people's preference for this choice; it is necessary to verify this use. Understanding values and preferences to promote a better care program. Therefore, it is clear how behavioral control can determine psychological aspects essential to adherence, especially to the oral contraceptive pill. Auxiliary counseling techniques, such as structured information and telephone calls, can improve adherence to hormonal contraceptives and reduce discontinuation rates⁴.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This article consists of an Integrative Literature Review, and adopted the objective of investigating knowledge and adherence to contraceptive methods, adopting adherence, reasons for choice, consequences and adaptability as parameters. The databases used were Pubmed and LILACS (Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences), the latter through the virtual health library (VHL). Using the descriptor “Contraception”, 35 articles were found in PubMed, of the integrative review type within the age range of 19-24 years, and 85 in LILACS, whose main subjects were contraceptives, contraception and hormonal contraceptives. For the descriptor “Reproductive Health”, 74 results were found in PubMed of the systematic review type between 19-24 years of age, and 31 results in LILACS, the main subjects of which were contraception and contraceptives.

Finally, 12 articles were selected from PubMed of the systematic review type in young adults, and five articles from LILACS, addressing contraception and contraceptives as the main subjects, using “Family Planning (Public Health)” as the descriptor. All selected texts were published in the last five years, in full text, in English and Portuguese. Among the 23 articles selected, only six corresponded to the research objective, one from the PubMed platform and five from LILACS, made available free of charge, excluding repeated articles, which did not describe the methodology used or which did not correspond to the research objective.

RESULT

It was prepared in a descriptive and expository way: the type of study, objective and conclusion of the six articles on the use of contraceptives in Table 1.

Table 1: Detailed analysis of the reviewed and selected articles regarding the type of study.

Title	Authors/Year	Kind of study	Purpose of the study	Conclusion
Identification of health risk factors among women using hormonal contraceptive methods	OLIVEIRA <i>et al.</i> , 2020 ⁹	Descriptive study with a quantitative approach	Check whether users of hormonal contraceptives had risk factors that could make the use of medication a health hazard.	Knowledge of personal and family risk factors associated with the use of hormonal contraceptives makes it easier for chronic diseases to develop.
Different perceptions between women and their doctors about contraceptive advice: results from the TANCO survey in Brazil	MACHADO <i>et al.</i> , 2020 ¹	Online quantitative research	Assess women's awareness and self-reported knowledge about contraception; detect which contraceptive is most recommended by doctors and preferred by women; assess satisfaction and compliance with the current method and assess how clinicians are evaluating their own performance in terms of contraceptive counseling and services offered compared to women's perceptions.	When choosing a contraceptive, women considered safety and effectiveness as the two most essential points. Greater attention to individual needs and expectations can help with greater knowledge, contributing to more efficient discussions and a greater likelihood of choosing the right contraceptive for each woman.
Opinions about contraception and sexual behavior among young university students in southern Brazil	STEPHANOU, DELATORRE, DIAS, 2020 ⁷	Cross-sectional study	Investigate differences in self-reported sexual and contraceptive behavior among young university students.	The results showed that there are difficulties in making joint decisions and negotiating the use of contraceptives.

Effect of hormonal contraceptives on depression, anxiety and quality of life: controlled study	SOUZA <i>et al.</i> , 2020 ⁸	Cross-sectional study	Identify the effect of using oral hormonal contraceptives on depression, anxiety and quality of life.	The use of contraceptives is not a prerequisite for the presence of depression, anxiety and changes in quality of life.
Use of contraceptive methods among health academics	PAIVA <i>et al.</i> , 2020 ⁵	Quantitative, descriptive and cross-sectional study	Identify which contraceptive methods are used by academics in the health field and what are the reasons that influence their adherence and/or rejection.	The consistent use of contraceptive methods is not yet a reality among these students, which is mainly due to the unavailability of condoms.
Adolescents' knowledge about contraceptive methods and sexually transmitted infections	VIEIRA <i>et al.</i> , 2021 ⁶	Cross-sectional study	Identify adolescents' knowledge about safe sexual practices and identify adolescents' information needs about sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy.	The adolescents had previous and possibly superficial conceptions regarding the prevention of STIs and pregnancy. Female members had greater knowledge about this.

DISCUSSION

Within the study of the approach to conception and its methods within the young population, it was revealed during a study carried out with 198 academics in the health field, where 57.1% use the male condom as their main contraceptive method of choice, 27.8% of these students do not adhere to condoms and 64.3% of students identified same-sex relationships as the main reason for non-adherence to contraceptive methods^{5,6}.

Furthermore, it is important to emphasize the differences in divergences of information about contraceptives, taking into account the intimate behavior adopted by academics. Analyzes focused on this perspective revealed that, although 95% of participants reported adherence to contraceptive methods, only 22% reported regularly using condoms, revealing the need for interventions that address the perceived barriers to constant use among young people. An interesting analysis addresses the observed gender differences. Women revealed themselves to be more determined about the use of contraception, while men took their partner's opinion to a greater extent. This discrepancy demonstrates the relevance of considering the perspectives of both genders when developing strategies to promote sexual health^{5,7}.

In a survey whose target group was teenagers, the results obtained show that women have greater knowledge about the diversity of methods, compared to men, who in turn have less information about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and safe sex practices, within this group,



24.6% believe that oral contraceptives prevent these pathologies. These differences highlight the need for comprehensive and equitable sexuality education for both sexes⁶.

Furthermore, it was shown that there is no harmful relationship between psychological effects and preferences for combined hormonal contraceptives (CHOC), which was a frequent question when it came to contraception, with the conclusion that there are no significant adverse effects in women without comorbidities⁸.

Additionally, the recognition of personal and family risk factors associated with the consumption of hormonal methods is crucial not only for women's current health, but also for their quality of life. By identifying these risk-increasing conditions, healthcare professionals must be empowered to provide a preventive and awareness-raising approach in order to reduce the incidence of long-term complications. Additional research indicates that there is a growing interest among women in long-term contraceptive methods, highlighting the importance of information and an approach related to conditions that cause harm, to expand their choices, such as the occurrence of migraines, which are the type with aura, in particular, it is considered a contraindication to the use of CHOC, due to the increase in ischemic cerebrovascular events. These findings highlight the importance of education about contraception from an early age and highlight the need for inclusive and educational approaches to promote adequate sexual and reproductive health among young people^{1,9}.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The results of this article presented an analysis of the number of women in the Brazilian population who are of reproductive age according to Febrasgo, which corresponds to 52.2%. Among these, 80.5% used some contraceptive over 12 months, with short-term contraceptives being used mostly, but there is a growing interest in long-term methods.

Thus, still within the approach, contraceptive methods prevent reproductive processes and Brazil, still in development, faces the major issue that revolves around unplanned pregnancy, compared to developed countries.

The review was based on the Pubmed and LILACS database, whose main topics were contraceptives, contraception and female contraceptives. Therefore, the objective is to investigate knowledge and adherence to methods using issues such as security, side effects, privacy and autonomy as main parameters.

In this integrative review, the analysis suggests that women of childbearing age are concerned about preventing unplanned pregnancies. However, understanding of contraceptive methods is restricted and their dissemination is incomplete.



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