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**Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Palestinian Women  
towards Contraceptives**

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# **Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Palestinian Women towards Contraceptives**

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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my mother, who believed in me and to my father for his ongoing love and support.

Special and loving thanks go to all my sisters, my brothers, Amal, my friends and to all whom I love for supporting me spiritually throughout my research.

## **Declaration**

I certify that the thesis submitted for the degree of master in pharmaceutical sciences is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis (or any part of it) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signed: .....

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Date: 4/5/2019

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## List of Abbreviations

BMI	Body Mass Index
CKA	Contraceptive Knowledge
COCP	Combined Oral Contraceptives
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
EE	Ethinil Estradiol
FP	Family Planning
GI	Gastrointestinal
IBS	Irritable Bowel Syndrome
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IUD	Intrauterine Devices
LAM	Lactational Amenorrhea Method
LARC	Long-acting Reversible Contraceptive
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NIS	New Israeli Shekel
OC's	Oral Contraceptives
PAPFAM	The Pan Arab Project for Family Health
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistic
REC	Research Ethical Committee
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
SD	Standard Deviation
WHO	World Health Organization

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## **Abstract**

**Background:** Contraceptives are currently world widely used, as declared by the World Health Organization, they are provided as one of women rights to ease in family planning decisions. Although, contraceptives have a documented efficiency, it highly depends upon women knowledge and adherence towards the available methods that must be addressed for better outcomes. In this study, we aimed to asses' knowledge and attitudes of married Palestinian women towards contraceptives, their knowledge and practice of the available methods and their side effects.

**Methods:** A cross sectional study of Palestinian married women of childbearing age between 18 and 50 years old was conducted from January 2017 to January 2018. A quota non-probability sample of 900 women was selected based on each governorate population. Data collection was conducted using an interview-assisted questionnaire, that assesses demographical information, current number of children, unplanned pregnancies, family planning methods, the use of instructions and their expected side effects among others.

**Results:** 900 women were surveyed, with 92.5% participation rate and 4.3% exclusion. Results showed that only 42.7% of women did not report the use of current means of contraception reflecting the extent of unmet need. Through their marriage life, 37.6% reported having at least one unplanned pregnancy. Within different available methods, intrauterine device IUD was the mostly used with 40.5%. While, oral contraceptives (OCPs) were the second method with 21% usage rate, with the Progestin only pills presented as the most common type of OCPs (28%). Female sterilization was used as birth control method in 2.5% of married women. Investigation of reasoning behind contraception use showed that the organization of pregnancies was the most common reason with (78.8%), (20.2%) for having a

high number of children, and (11.2%) for economical causes. Regarding attitudes and beliefs towards contraceptives uses, 6.4% of women believe that religion forbids their use, 14.5% considered them socially unacceptable. From a personal standpoint 5.7% of women consider contraception use as unacceptable, as well as, 8.5% of women partners'. The study containing 14 questions about correct use and possible side effects of contraceptives revealed weak knowledge scores (mean= 8.2 correct answers, SD= 2.9).

**Conclusions:** The majority of Palestinian women have used contraceptives in the past or are currently using them. Though, deficient knowledge of contraceptive use and side-effects is apparent. Attitudes of Palestinian women, as well as their partners, towards contraceptives reflect positive general acceptance of their use. However, continuous education of Palestinian women and their partners of the benefits of contraception, and clearing of common misconception is crucially needed, for it is discouraging the use of family planning.

**Chapter one**  
**Introduction**

## **1. Introduction:**

### **1.1. Contraceptive era (Background)**

Many studies were designed and carried out to examine and achieve sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR). Mainly conducted by the world health organization (WHO) (Jin & Patti, 2009; WHO, 2000). The research attempted to accomplish what the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing had declared and what the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) has adopted; that is prioritizing reproductive health rights and attaining for all people all over (Corrêa, 1997; Organization, 2001; Temmerman, Khosla, & Say, 2014).

Reproductive health services are a global plan that has been developed, reanalyzed and reframed over the years by Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to reinforce completion and assuring universal access and success (Crossette, 2005).

One of these services is family planning (FP) programs; which offer many interactive tools, delivering the needed guidance and the appropriate engagement with the family planning philosophy. The services also allow for feedback and documentation of estimated goals accomplished by them (Mohllajee et al., 2005).

Contraceptives are represented by the FP programs to be fertility- regulating devices that help individuals and couple's fertility-choices as well as better reproductive health (Eschen & Whittaker, 2018).

Familiarizing a variety of contraceptive choices, being a strategic approach of the WHO since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, has been a big step for family planning roles as well as improving quality of care. The first beginnings of presenting this perception to the provider and the recipient were health oriented programs allowing for better maternal and infant healthcare quality by introducing a spacer in control for that who want to increase the interval of births