

Contraception use and abortion trend in South Asia: A systematic review

Sairana Ahsan¹ and Dr. Hala Evans²

¹James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, Bangladesh

²University of Bedfordshire, United Kingdom

Background: Unintended pregnancies are a major public health issue worldwide resulting in numerous complications every year. Unintended pregnancies are closely related to low utilization of contraceptive methods. Abortion is considered as solution to the unintended pregnancies however, most of them are performed in unsafe condition covertly. Unsafe abortions exist in all countries regardless of their economic status, religious and cultural beliefs. Situation is worse in case of developing countries like Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

Aim of the study: This study aimed to explore the reasons of usage or non-usage of contraceptive methods and abortion procedures by women of reproductive age (15-49) in developing South Asian countries involving Bangladesh, India and Pakistan in between the years of 2000 and 2015.

Method: A systematic review was conducted to reflect upon the aim of this study through thematic analysis. 8 original papers of qualitative studies were selected for this review that met the inclusion criteria after extensively searching different databases. Quality of the included studies was appraised using CASP checklist for qualitative studies.

Findings: This review accumulated six themes that recurred in the 8 original papers. Themes include stigma related to birth control, fear, misconceptions and lack of information, family's influence, economic hardship, women's health and service providers' role. All of these themes related to the research aim to explore the reasons of usage or non-usage of contraceptive methods and abortion procedures by women of reproductive age in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

Conclusion and Implication: This study observed that social stigma, intimate partner's influence, misinformation and unavailability of the birth control services are predominant factors for women to decide their reproductive choices. Interventions related to health education, communication and promotion could offer a possible solution for the communication gap of service providers and women in need of birth control measures. In this seminar, I will discuss the themes that emerged through this systematic review which influence contraceptive usage and preferred abortion procedure of women in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

sairana.ahsan@gmail.com