



Knowledge and Awareness on Long-Acting Reversible Contraceptive Methods among Women in Childbearing Age: A Cross-sectional Study in Ampara District, Sri Lanka

I.M.F. Sasky^{1}, H.W.A.S. Subasinghe¹, K.A.K.D. Wijesekera¹*

¹ Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of
Ruhuna, Sri Lanka

**Corresponding author: sewwandisubasinghe@ahs.ruh.ac.lk,
kanchana2018@ahs.ruh.ac.lk*

Long-acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) methods, such as intra-uterine contraceptive devices (IUCDs) and implants, are safe and effective in preventing unplanned pregnancies. However, they are not widely accepted by women due to lack of awareness. This study explored knowledge and awareness about LARC methods among women of childbearing age in Ampara District, Sri Lanka. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted with 423 women aged 18–49 years from selected MOH clinics in Ampara District. Data collection was done using a structured questionnaire consisting of 18 questions to assess knowledge and awareness of LARC methods. Six questions on a scale of True, False, and No idea were used to assess knowledge score. It was categorized as No knowledge (score 0), Low (score 1–3), and High (score 4–6) according to the score. Among 423 respondents, 43.7% were between 29–39 years of age. The majority were Muslims (76.6%), married (100%), and housewives (70.2%). Around 46% had been educated up to G.C.E. O/L. Of the participants, 68.6% (n=290) were aware of the general term “Loop,” which is used for IUCD. Awareness about the terms Copper IUCD, Mirena, and Jadelle were 13.0% (n=55), 6.4% (n=27), and 70.7% (n=299), respectively. Among participants who were aware of each LARC method, the women who had high knowledge about Copper IUCD, Mirena, and Jadelle were 39 (70.9%), 13 (48.1%), and 209 (69.9%), respectively. They were aware of the correct insertion/removal method of Copper IUCD (98.2%), Mirena (96.3%), and Jadelle (83.6%). Comparatively, fewer had knowledge about the maximum effective duration of LARC: Copper IUCD 41.8%, Mirena 7.4%, Loop 14.5%, and Jadelle 51.5%. Less than one-third knew that IUCDs do not protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) (Copper 30.9%, Mirena 25.9%, Loop 26.6%), while 65.6% had the misconception that Jadelle protects against STDs. Women of childbearing age in Ampara District had poor knowledge and awareness about different LARC methods. A comprehensive knowledge assessment and educational interventions are recommended in the future to prevent unplanned pregnancies and to aid correct decision-making related to contraception.

Keywords: Ampara District, Cross-sectional study, Knowledge, LARC, Women