

Perceptions regarding contraceptive use among women of reproductive age at the University of Mataram

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Abstract:

Background and aim: Lack of information, unfavorable attitudes, concerns about side effects, insufficient counseling by providers, and poor support from partners are major factors influencing contraceptive use. This study aims to evaluate perceptions regarding contraceptive use among women of reproductive age at the University of Mataram.

Method: A cross-sectional study was conducted among women of reproductive age at the University of Mataram using a self-administered digital questionnaire. Construct validity was evaluated using exploratory factor analysis, and internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondents' characteristics and perception scores. Overall perception was categorized as negative, neutral, or positive based on the average perception score.

Results: A total of 80 respondents completed the questionnaire. The perception questionnaire demonstrated acceptable validity and reliability. The highest mean score was observed for the statement that healthcare providers should provide comprehensive counseling on contraceptive methods (4.25 ± 0.77), followed by the statement that sex education should be introduced at an early age (4.01 ± 0.93). The statement regarding the permissibility of contraceptive methods according to religious teachings had the lowest mean score ($3.50 \pm SD$), although respondents generally tended to agree with the statement. Overall, 52 respondents (65.0%) had a positive perception toward contraception, 27 (33.8%) had a neutral perception, and only one respondent (1.3%) had a negative perception.

Conclusion: Women of reproductive age at the University of Mataram generally demonstrated positive perceptions toward contraceptive use.

Keywords: Contraceptive; perception; survey; Mataram.

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Introduction

Unintended pregnancy and suboptimal birth spacing remain significant public health problems worldwide, as they increase risks to maternal and child health and limit women's social and economic opportunities (Pelit Aksu & Alkaş, 2025). Contraception

generally refers to any actions taken to avoid pregnancy (Beumer et al., 2026). Having control over birth control helps women avoid unplanned pregnancies and supports their rights and equality. Qualitative and quantitative research from low and middle-income settings showed recurring barriers that shape perceptions and usage such as fear of side effects and

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procedures, limited partner support, socio-cultural norms, and unequal access to accurate counseling and services (Alano & Hanson, 2018).

In Indonesia, national family-planning strategies have emphasized increasing use of long-acting methods, including IUDs and implants, but uptake of these methods remains lower than shorter-acting options in many areas (Rahmanti & Pamungkas, 2022; Surinati et al., 2015). The results of the 2024 Family Data Collection indicate that modern contraceptive use has not yet reached the 63.4 percent target set for the 2020–2024 period (BKKBN, 2025, Elfiyan, 2025). Indonesian studies consistently show that inadequate knowledge, negative attitudes, fears about side effects, limited provider counseling, and weak partner support are key determinants in contraceptive use (Aktika & Hasibuan, 2024; Surinati et al., 2015). This study therefore aims to describe reproductive-aged women's perceptions of contraceptive methods in West Nusa Tenggara especially in Mataram city.

Materials and Methods

This study is a descriptive survey with a cross-sectional design. This study was approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee of the University of Mataram (No. 151/UN18.F7/ETIK/2022).

The study population consists of women of reproductive age residing in the city of Mataram. Women of reproductive age (18–45 years) residing in Mataram City who were willing to participate as respondents were included in this study.

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted from a literature review and covered sociodemographic data and perceptions regarding contraception. The questionnaire was created using an online form and distributed on social media for completion. The section on perceptions of contraception consisted of statements regarding various attitudes, with respondents selecting one of the following options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.

The reliability of the statement was tested using Cronbach's alpha, while the construct validity was tested using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The suitability of the data for factor analysis was evaluated using the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. A KMO value of ≥ 0.60 and a statistically significant Bartlett's test ($p < 0.05$) were considered indicative of adequate factorability. The mean for each statement in the questionnaire will be calculated. Responses were evaluated using a five-point Likert scale

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly agree

There will be also negatives statement which use reverse coding. The average score per respondent will also be calculated and categorized into three groups: negative, neutral, and positive perceptions.

Result and Discussion

Validity and Reliability Results

The perception statements consisted of 8 items assessing respondents' perceptions of contraception. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). There were 3 negative statements that should be use reverse coding. The perception statement list bellowed.

Table 1. List of perception statement

Code	Perception Statement	Positive or Negative Statement
S1	According to religious teachings, the use of contraceptive methods is permitted	Positive
S2	I believe buying contraceptives is not important.	Negative
S3	Contraception can alleviate concerns about unplanned pregnancy and give women the freedom to enjoy sexual intercourse.	Positive
S4	Contraception provides women with the opportunity to pursue higher education by delaying pregnancy and enhancing their economic security.	Positive
S5	The contraceptive method is complex and difficult to use.	Negative
S6	Sex education, including information on contraception, should be introduced at an early age.	Positive
S7	Healthcare providers must offer counseling to all women regarding contraceptive methods, their mechanisms of action, the optimal timing for use, and potential side effects.	Positive
S8	A shift in men's behavior towards participating in contraception can increase the prevalence or use of contraception in certain areas.	Negative

Validity analysis was done using exploratory factor analysis demonstrated acceptable construct validity (KMO = 0.72; Bartlett's test, $p < 0.001$) The

reliability analysis was conducted on 40 samples, produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.797. Based on these two values, it can be concluded that the developed questionnaire is valid and reliable.

Respondent's Perception

A total of 80 respondents completed the questionnaire digitally. In table 2, we could see the average of each perception statement. The highest mean score was about the counselling session from health care about contraceptives with mean score 4.25 ± 0.77 . The second highest one is about sex education should be introduced in early age with score 4.01 ± 0.93 .

It is particularly interesting that the points regarding sex education and contraceptive counseling received high ratings, considering that the Muslim population in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) is approximately 96.94%. One study found that individuals who are less religious tend to have more positive perceptions of sex education (Raji et al., 2026). However, most of the sample comes from urban areas, and the sample size is small; therefore, it does not fully represent the entire population, especially since the participants were drawn from the academic community.

The fact that many respondents were university students or members of the younger generation likely contributed to the higher average positive perception regarding sex education. A study in the Philippines showed that university students consider sex education important for them (Bayo et al., 2025).

Table 2. Average score of each perception statement

Code	Perception Statement	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
S1	According to religious teachings, the use of contraceptive methods is permitted	3.51	0.94
S2	I believe buying contraceptives is not important.	3.85	0.89
S3	Contraception can alleviate concerns about unplanned pregnancy and give women the freedom to enjoy sexual intercourse.	3.94	0.75
S4	Contraception provides women with the opportunity to pursue higher education by delaying pregnancy and enhancing their economic security.	3.94	0.82
S5	The contraceptive method is complex and difficult to use.	3.64	0.92
S6	Sex education, including information on contraception, should be introduced at an early age.	4.01	0.93

Code	Perception Statement	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
S7	Healthcare providers must offer counseling to all women regarding contraceptive methods, their mechanisms of action, the optimal timing for use, and potential side effects.	4.25	0.77
S8	A shift in men's behavior towards participating in contraception can increase the prevalence or use of contraception in certain areas.	3.78	0.81

The statement of "According to religious teachings, the use of contraceptive methods is permitted" received the lowest mean score (3.51) among all perception items. Nevertheless, the mean remained above the neutral point, indicating that respondents generally agreed with the statement. Compared with other aspects of contraception, however, perceptions regarding the compatibility of contraception with religious teachings were relatively less favorable or reflected greater uncertainty. This indicates that respondents were comparatively less certain about this issue than about other aspects of contraception.

Table 3. Overall perception by respondents

Average score	Category	Number of respondents (n)	Percentage (%)
1.00-2.33	Negative perception	1	1.25
2.34-3.67	Neutral perception	27	33.75
3.68-5.00	Positive perception	52	65

Among the 80 respondents, more than half (52, 65.0%) demonstrated a positive perception toward contraceptive use. Twenty-seven respondents (33.8%) had a neutral perception, while only one respondent (1.3%) exhibited a negative perception. Overall, these findings indicate that the respondents generally had a positive perception of contraceptive use.

Several other studies have showed similar results, particularly in low- and middle-income countries such as Ethiopia and Tanzania, where women generally have positive perceptions of contraception (Alano & Hanson, 2018; Elia Mosha, 2017). However even though there is some positive perception, some studies also report about some concern regarding about side effects of certain methods of contraceptives (Başaran & Duru, 2025).

The generally positive perception observed in this study provides a favorable foundation for strengthening family planning programs. Healthcare providers should continue providing evidence-based counseling while

addressing misconceptions related to contraception through culturally sensitive educational strategies.

This study has a few limitations. To begin with, it was carried out at just one university with a relatively small group of participants, which could restrict how broadly the results apply. Additionally, relying on self-reported questionnaires might lead to response bias. Lastly, the study did not examine participants' religious beliefs or degree of religiosity, so it couldn't explore how these factors might affect views on contraception.

Conclusion

Overall, the findings indicate that women of reproductive age at the University of Mataram generally had a positive perception toward contraceptive use. Most respondents recognized the importance of comprehensive contraceptive counseling provided by healthcare professionals and supported the introduction of sex education at an early age. Although the statement regarding the permissibility of contraception according to religious teachings received the lowest mean score, respondents still tended to agree with the statement, suggesting a relatively positive perception despite some uncertainty compared with other aspects of contraception. Overall, 65.0% of respondents demonstrated a positive perception, while only 1.3% exhibited a negative perception, indicating a generally favorable perception of contraception among the study population.

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