ABSTRACT

Birth control methods are not free of side effects is an universally accepted fact. Attempts have been made time and again to assess each method in terms of its efficacy. Most of these studies have concentrated on the health problems that arise out of these problems. A few studies have concentrated on the sexual problems that arise as a side effect of the use of a method. However no study has attempted to simultaneously assess the sexual problems that arise out of the use of different methods of birth control. Hence it was felt by the investigator that by simultaneously assessing the different methods of birth control and their associated sexual adjustment problems in terms of intensity and kind would be worthwhile.

With advancement in the area of sex research, the concept of the human sexual response cycle has come to limelight. And the presence of different kinds of sexual problems have also been identified. It is also known that for successful sexual adjustment a smooth flow through the sexual response cycle is very essential. And birth control methods because of the inherent nature of the method as well as the health problems caused by them can disrupt any of the stages of the sexual response cycle and cause sexual adjustment problems. Because of the following reasons the investigator felt that the assessment of the impact of birth control methods on sexual adjustment problems is worth undertaking. In fact this study is unique in the sense that an
attempt to understand the impact of all the available birth control methods on sexual problems in a detailed manner along with the impact of health problems and attitudes to sex on sexual problems is the first of its kind.

The sample of this study consisted of 405 men and women of two cultural groups—Indian and American. Of the total sample, 208 cases were collected from the Indian culture, in and around the city of Madras. While 197 cases were collected from two cities in the United States of America—Ohio and Washington D.C. The sample cases were in the age group of 20-45, both educated and uneducated. Care was taken to give a representation of all the methods of birth control.

Results of the study show that different methods of birth control create sexual problems of different levels. These sexual problems can be classified in terms of the four stages of the sexual response cycle. On the whole, low arousal, loss of desire, problems in maintenance of arousal, problems with experience of orgasm and low satisfaction seem to trouble the users of birth control methods.

The influence of personal variables like age, education etc. are however not significant enough, although the presence of some influence cannot be denied.