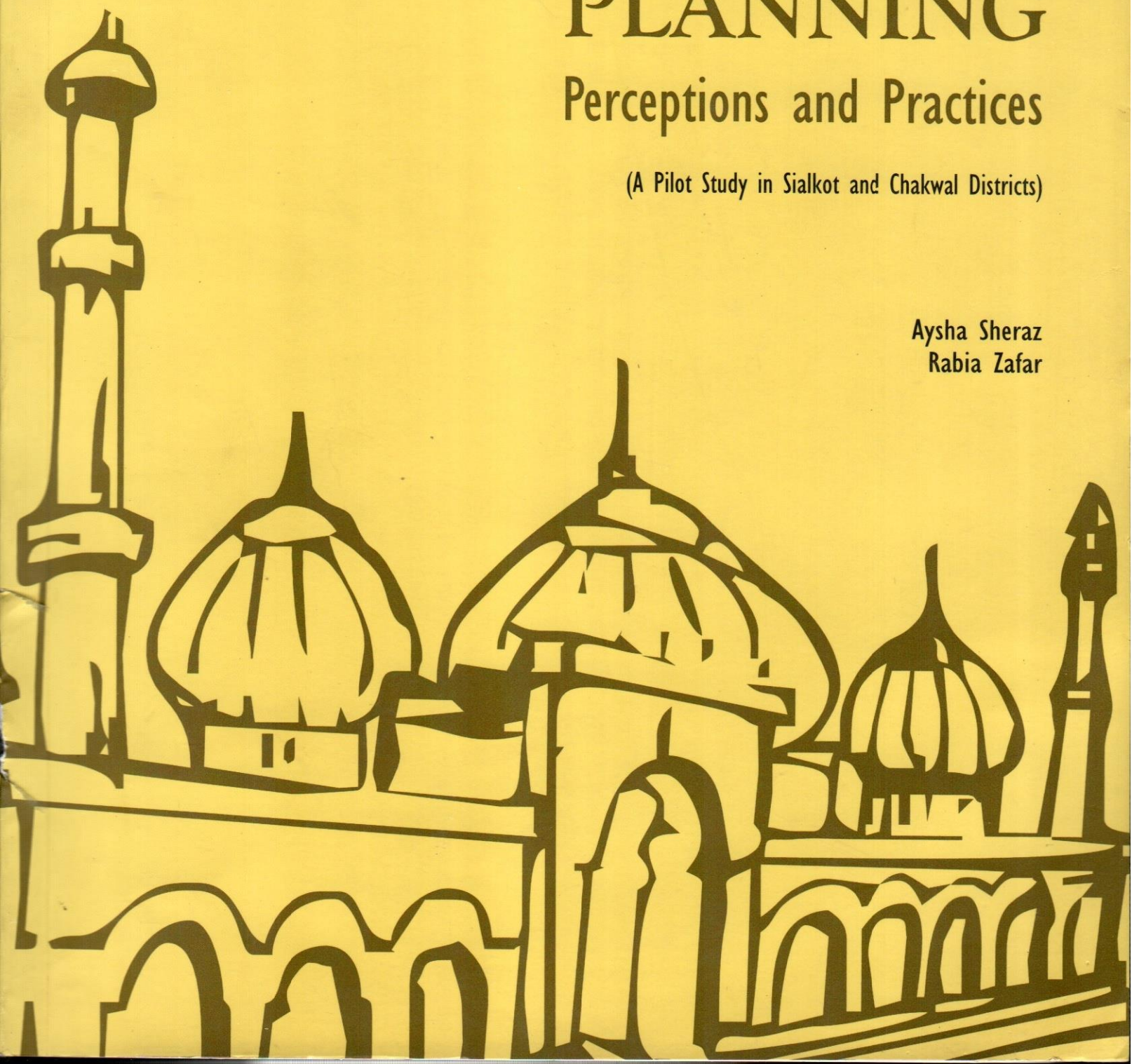


ISLAM & FAMILY PLANNING

Perceptions and Practices

(A Pilot Study in Sialkot and Chakwal Districts)

Aysha Sheraz
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Foreword

The National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) undertakes applied and inter-disciplinary research in the field of population and development. It provides research-based support and analytical input in the area of population, family planning, reproductive health and development for planning and policy-making to the Ministries of Population Welfare, Health and other concerned Federal Ministries and Departments of the Provincial and District Governments.

The present study titled "Islam and Family Planning- Perceptions and Practices" (A Pilot Study in Sialkot and Chakwal Districts) , from a qualitative as well as quantitative research perspective, represents a pioneering work as there has been no research conducted on this topic from the general public as well as from Ulema. The study involved in-depth, quantitative and qualitative research methods with the aim to yield data for understanding the effects of different factors on the perception, behavior and practices related to Islam and Family Planning. The research under consideration provided a detailed scanning of different aspects, perceptions, attitudes, practices of Islam and Family Planning in the context of prevalent socio-cultural setting.

The study has produced worthwhile findings regarding Pakistan's two districts and reveals a clear picture about the current level of their family planning practices and their perceptions and practices. It provides research-based analytical data, which would be useful in devising strategic interventions for focusing on improving participation of Ulema in improving country's situation and making their role effective in family planning.

The difficult task of data collection, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions was efficiently and successfully accomplished by the research teams. Dedication and hard work of the researchers and supervisors in carrying out their assignment in field deserve special mention and appreciation.

Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan Federal Minister for Population Welfare deserves special mention for initiating the idea and in pursuing the study forward underscoring the importance of findings lest they lose their effectiveness and efficacy. Mr. Nayyar Agha, Former secretary Ministry of Population Welfare, was fully supportive during the entire project. I am very thankful to Mr. Shaukat Hayat Durrani, Secretary MoPW for his guidance in finalizing the report.

I am profoundly grateful to Mr. Amanullah Bhatti; Project Director for his active involvement in the study, at all stages, and finally gave a good shape to this report.

I appreciate the services of Ms. Aysha Sheraz, Principal Investigator and Ms. Rabia Zafar Deputy Principal Investigator of the project. I also acknowledge devotion and hard work of NIPS staff involved in the study. The consultant, Dr. Waheed Chaudhry made valuable contribution during all phases, from finalization of Questionnaires, In-depth guides, Focus group discussion guides, data analysis and writing of the report.

Financial and technical support for the project was provided by UNFPA. The encouragement and assistance received from UNFPA, Islamabad during the course of implementation of the project is gratefully acknowledged. With concerted efforts of its research teams, NIPS has been able to produce a comprehensive research report with meaningful analytical input for use by the policy makers and planners

Dr. Sajid Ahmad
Executive Director

Acknowledgement

The study on "Islam and Family Planning: Perceptions and Practices (A Pilot Study in Sialkot and Chakwal Districts) was carried out on the said topic including quantitative and qualitative research methods as only quantitative data does not adequately address the issue because of the limitations of standardized survey methods of data collection.

The study was carried out in many stages i.e. planning of the project and technical assistance, research methodology including questionnaire, samples, pre-testing and training, field work, data editing, data entry and data processing and production of the research report. Target group comprised of the following two broad categories: general public (male/female) and Religious Scholars (male/female including Maulvis, PWP sensitized scholars). The sample was drawn from three tehsils of Sialkot and Chakwal each; Daska, Pasrur, Sialkot (from District Sialkot) and Chakwal, Choa Saidan Shah and Talagang (from District Chakwal).

I acknowledge the contribution of several individuals, organizations and technical committee of the project for their assistance at different stages of the project. Special thanks to the general public and Ulema, who spared their precious time and provided us their valuable, honest and frank opinions.

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Aysha Sheraz

Fellow/
Principal Investigator

Glossary

Ahle Sunnat	Followers of Sunni sect
Ahle-Sunnat Wal Jammāt	Followers of Sunni sect
Ahle Tashi	Followers of Shia sect
Alim	Religious Scholars
Azl	Withdrawal
Barelvis and Deobandis	Two types of Hanfi School
Fiqh	Sect
Fiqh e Hanafia	Hanafi sect
Fiqh e Jafariya	Shia sect
Halal	Allowed in Islam
Haram	Not allowed in Islam
Ijma	Consensus of the Ulema
Ijtamah	Islamic group meeting
Imam	Religious leader
Imam Masjid	Religious leader deputed in mosque
Jaiz	Allowed/accepted in Islam
Juma	Friday
Juma Khutba	Friday sermon
Khateeb	Religious leader who delivers sermon
Kuffar	Non believers of Allah
Madrassa	Informal religious institution
Madaris	Informal religious institutions
Maulvi	Religious leader
Milad	Islamic function
Mubah	Acceptance
Mufti	Scholar
Makrooh	Disapproved/disliked deeds, though not unlawful in the sunnah or in the Quran
Naimat	Blessing of God
Nikah	Marriage contract according to Islam
Namaz	Prayer
Nazim	District manager
Numberdar	Influential person in village
Ijab	Offer
Pirs	Spiritual Leaders
Qabul	Accepted
Quran	The holy book of God
Rehmat	Blessings of God
Shia	Followers of Fiqh e Jafariya sect
Sunni	Followers of Ahle Sunnat sect
Tafseer	Explanation of the verses of the Holy Quran
Ulema	Religious leaders
Yahudo Nasara	Jews and Nazarenes

Acronyms

FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FWA	Family Welfare Assistant
FWC	Family Welfare Centre
FP	Family Planning
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IUD	Intra Uterine Device
IDI	In-depth Interview
IPC	Inter Personal Communication
LHV	Lady Health Visitor
MoPW	Ministry of Population Welfare
P.B.U.H	Peace be Upon Him
PDHS	Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
TV	Television



Table of contents

Foreword.....	i
Acknowledgement	iii
Executive Summary.....	xiii
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	1
1.3 Justification	5
1.4 Methodology and research design	5
1.4.1 Objectives of the study	6
1.4.2 Logic in exercise.....	6
1.4.3 Selection of research area.....	6
1.5 Sampling	8
1.6 Research tools.....	9
1.7 Study team composition and training.....	11
1.8 Field work.....	12
1.9 Field supervision and monitoring	12
1.10 Limitations and field problems	12
1.11 Data processing and procedures	13
1.12 Coverage	13
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	17
2.1 Current situation.....	17
2.2 Dynamics of family planning	18
2.3 Islamic perspective of family planning.....	20
2.4 Muslim fertility	25
2.5 Converging the perspective	27
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	33
3.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of house hold population	33
3.1.1 Age structure	34
3.1.2 Marital status	34
3.1.3 Educational status	34
3.1.4 Employment status	35
3.1.5 Fiqh.....	38
3.1.6 Number of children	38
3.2 Socio-demographic characteristics of focus group discussants.....	38
3.2.1 Age distribution of FGD participants.....	38
3.2.2 Marital status	39
3.2.3 Education status	41
3.2.4 Fiqh of FGD participants.....	41
3.2.5 Children of FGD participants	41
3.2.6 Contraceptive use.....	41
3.3 Socio-demographic characteristics of IDI respondents.....	42
3.3.1 Gender distribution	42
3.3.2 Age distribution.....	43
3.3.3 Marriage pattern	43
3.3.4 Education status	43
3.3.5 Fiqh.....	43
3.3.6 Income status	44
3.3.7 Parity of IDI respondents	47
3.3.8 Ethnicity	47
3.3.9 Contraceptive use.....	47
FAMILY PLANNING KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES AT HOUSEHOLD LEVEL	49
4.1 Knowledge of family planning	49
4.2 Practices of family planning	52
4.3 Use of contraception	54
4.4 Reasons for non use of contraception	57
4.4.1 Future intentions for non use of contraception	59
4.5 Exposure to family planning messages.....	62

PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF GENERAL PUBLIC IN THE LIGHT OF ISLAM.....	67
5.1 Number of children ever born and desired number of children	67
5.2 Status of family planning in islam.....	71
5.2.1 Breast feeding for birth spacing	74
5.2.2 Provision of birth control in islam	75
5.2.3 Status of family planning services	75
5.2.4 Advocacy of family planning	76
5.3 Status of abortion in the light of Islam:.....	76
5.4 Citations about family planning	80
5.4.1 Source of islamic knowledge	81
5.5 General practices and islamic views on family issues	81
5.5.1 Female education in the family	82
5.5.2 Age at marriage	82
5.5.3 Importance of girls education in islam	84
5.5.4 Ideal age for marriage in islam	84
5.5.5 Views about size of the family	85
5.5.6 Provision to plan the number of children	85
5.6. Community Ulema's point of view about family planning	85
5.6.1 Discussion on family planning issue in juma sermons.....	88
5.6.2 Frequency of lectures in juma sermons.....	89
5.6.3 Opinion of local ulema on family planning issue	90
5.7 Suggestions to promote family planning in the light of islam	92
PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE LIGHT OF ISLAM	93
6.1 Knowledge and practices of family planning	93
6.1.1 Contraceptive use.....	94
6.1.2 Reasons for non use	95
6.1.3 Future intentions for contraceptive use.....	95
6.2 Views on family issues in islamic perspective.....	96
6.2.1 Number of children allowed in islam	96
6.2.2 Concept of small family	96
6.2.3 Problems due to large family size	97
6.2.4 Son preference	98
6.2.5 Age at marriage in islam.....	98
6.3 Participation in family planning sensitization conference by mopw.....	99
6.3.1 Objective of the sensitization conference	100
6.3.2 Views of different fiqh's about family planning.....	101
6.3.3 Importance of role of religious leader's in family planning	101
6.3.4 Consensus building	102
6.3.5 Sensitization activity helpful in convincing public.....	102
6.3.6 Impact of sensitization on the role of ulema	102
6.4 Views of government employed ulema	103
6.5 Role of religious leaders	104
6.5.1 Participation in family planning activity	105
6.5.2 Advocacy for family planning	106
6.6 Religious leaders views about general public	107
6.7 Suggestions about role of religious leaders	110
6.7.1 Perception of general public about family planning	111
6.7.2 Need to create awareness in general public.....	112
6.7.3 Most effective group/person to change the opinion of public.....	112
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	115
7.1 Summary of the findings	115
7.2 Recommendations	123
Bibliography.....	129
APPENDIX A: List of Project Staff	133
APPENDIX B: Focus Group Discussion Guide	135
APPENDIX C: Indepth Interview Guide for Ulama	139
APPENDIX D: Questionnaire for Ever married Male and Female.....	143

List of Tables

Table 1.1: Total Coverage of Household Questionnaires, IDIs and FGDs	9
Table 1.2: Households Coverage in Chakwal and Sialkot	14
Table 1.3: Coverage of FGDs Respondents	14
Table 1.4: Total Coverage of IDIs	15
Table 3.1: Background Characteristics of Household Respondents	36
Table 3.2: Background Characteristics of FGDs Respondents	40
Table 3.3: Background Characteristics of IDIs Respondents	45
Table 4.1: Knowledge of Family Planning and Source of Motivation among General Public	50
Table 4.2: Ever Use of Contraceptive Methods	54
Table 4.3: Current Use of Contraceptive methods	56
Table 4.4: Reasons for Non Use of Contraceptive Methods	58
Table 4.5: Reasons for Nonuse of Contraceptive Methods in Future	61
Table 4.6: Access to Family Planning Messages	62
Table 4.7: Nature and Contents of Family Planning Messages	64
Table 5.1: Number of Living Children by Ideal Number of Children	69
Table 5.2: Reasons for Son's preference	70
Table 5.3: Islamic Perspectives about Family Planning	73
Table 5.4: Status of Abortion in the Light of Islam	79
Table 5.5: Source of Islamic Teaching's Knowledge	81
Table 5.6: Practice regarding Family Issues	82
Table 5.7: Views about Family Issues in the Light of Islam	84
Table 5.8: Community Views about Ulema/Maulvi on Family Planning Issues	87
Table 5.9: Suggestions Regarding Promotion of Family Planning in the Light of Islam	92
Table 6.1: Ulema's Knowledge and Use of Family Planning	94
Table 6.2: General Perception about related factors in the Light of Islam	97
Table 6.3: Perception of Ulema's sensitized by MoPW about the Conference and its effect on Family Planning Programme	100
Table 6.4: Govt. Employee Ulema's views on family planning Issue	103
Table 6.5: Perception about Role of Religious Leaders	105
Table 6.6: Perception and Interaction of Ulema with FWCs	108
Table 6.7: Suggestions about Role of Religious Leaders	111



planning in general public and b) to gauge the extent of awareness and get the sense of perceptions of religious leaders on the phenomenon of family planning . The aim was to discover the existing role of religious leaders in communicating family planning knowledge to the communities and to assess the possibility of launching advocacy by them.

To carry out the study, three tehsils from each district were selected; Daska, Pasrur, Sialkot in District Sialkot; and Chakwal, Choa Saidan Shah, and Talagang in District Chakwal. The field staff was appointed on the basis of their previous experience in qualitative and quantitative research methods. A ten-days training was organized on purpose, outline and objectives of the research. Training contents also included the empirical examples of linking qualitative and quantitative data in research projects. Data collection took place in the months of November and December 2009. To ensure quality of the data, the field teams were regularly monitored and supervised. The analysis has not been confined to numbers only but is also dependent on the areas emerging from the transcriptions.

The statistical frequencies have been used more for determining the analytical parts according to percentages. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and In-depth Interviews (IDIs) were analyzed through complete transcripts, a total of 2,398 households were selected and covered. The equal number, that is of 1,199 males as well as females were successfully interviewed. Total sampled respondents of In-depth Interviews (IDIs) were 36. Twelve from Chakwal, 8 from Sialkot, 5 from Daska and Pasrur each, 4 from Talagang and 2 from Choa Saidan Shah were interviewed. A total number of 24 FGDs were held in 6 selected areas. Four FGDs, two for males and two for females were arranged at each area separately.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Household Population were discussed to have a better understanding of the perceptions and attitudes of eligible persons. For this study, it was equally important to know their background characteristics. Age structure reveals that more than three fourth (78 percent) respondents were between the age group of 25-44 years, reflecting the mid age population base. There is a gradual decline in the percentages as the age brackets exceed 45 and above years, with a further decline in the female members. A similar age pattern is reflected in both Chakwal (80 percent) and Sialkot (85 percent) districts. Marriage pattern exhibits nearly all (98.6 percent) were currently married. The share of those ever married including widowed, divorced or separated was very small (1.4 percent) on the whole, which was more for Sialkot (2.7 percent) than Chakwal (0.2). Literacy rate was quite high among the respondents. Only 17 percent had no education while the rest had education ranging from informal to secondary plus level in all the areas. In Sialkot, more

Executive Summary

The status of family planning practices in the light of Islamic teachings has always remained a highly debated topic, across time and space. There are very few empirical researches ever conducted on this topic to reveal the facts that prevail at the community level, in Pakistan. However, Population Welfare Program since its inception in early sixties has made efforts to achieve the modest success on the issue by administering various studies and launching meaningful initiatives in the very domain at the country level. The International Conference on Population and Development's (ICPD) 1994 Program of Action focused on human development and provided a holistic framework for slowing population growth and improving people's lives. A central recommendation of the Program is universal access to a full range of safe and reliable family planning methods. Islam's position on family planning and the circumstances under which it can be practiced has a direct bearing on how Muslim countries can achieve their development goals, including the ICPD goals. So, importance of Islam and family planning was further discussed in an International Ulema Conference, which was a mega advocacy event to involve religious scholars and opinion leaders for community mobilization. Ulema from 21 Muslim countries as well as communities in minority Muslim States met in Islamabad to discuss the issues concerning population and development. In the conference, the government being cognizant of population problems felt that issue might be discussed and explored further.

There was an urgent need to conduct an empirical research to get as close to the reality as possible. One can come across various versions, stories and even myths regarding the role of Islamic teachings in inhibiting or permitting family planning practices. No national level qualitative in-depth study has ever been undertaken in Pakistan due to sensitivity of the issue, and fear of criticism on Islam and religious leaders about the reproductive health or family planning

To comply with the felt need, the idea of "Islam and family planning" was accorded high priority and the study under the title "Islam and Family Planning - Perceptions and Practices" (A Pilot Study in Sialkot and Chakwal Districts) was conducted in two culturally diverse regions of Punjab. The empirical evidences were collected from rural and urban settings of districts Sialkot and Chakwal, through quantitative and qualitative research methods. The objectives of the study were:, a) to investigate the prevailing knowledge of Islam and family

that it is against Islam. Other commonly cited reasons by the non users were no sex, health concerns, up to God and interferences with body's normal processes. Majority of the (16.5 percent) non users reported that Islam opposes family planning so they do not intend to use the contraceptives in future.

Data revealed that on the whole, 42 percent of the respondents have not been ever exposed to any kind of family planning message. While overall in both the districts 40 percent respondents have seen family planning messages on television followed by the messages from health/ family planning personnel (23.6 percent), radio (11.5 percent) and print media (7.6 percent). A majority of the respondents who heard or saw a family planning message in the month preceding the interviews said that the message was about "limiting the size of the family" (34.4 percent), 18.8 percent understood the message as "birth spacing", 12 percent mentioned that message conveyed the concept of 'small family that leads to prosperous life' and 8.6 percent said the message informed about the 'welfare of the family'. More than 5 percent said the message promoted the use of contraception and mother and child health.

Socio Demographic Characteristics of FGDs participants indicate that overall highest percentage of them were in the age group of 30-39 years, which comprise 52 percent of the total sample population. It was found that 98 percent of the FGD participants were married and only 2 percent were never married. Nearly 90 percent had at least five grades of education while the rest never visited school or any formal education institution. It is amazing to note that two-fifth (40 percent) of the FGDs participants have acquired upto secondary education and only one fourth (26 percent) had attained the secondary plus level. Nearly three-fourth (70 percent) of the participants belonged to Sunni Fiqh including Ahle Sunnat Wal Jammata and Hanafi Fiqh, while one-fourth (25.4 percent) of the participants belonged to Fiqh e Jafariya. It was observed that 5 percent participants had no children so far. More than one-third of the participants (41 percent) had one- two children. Forty three percent had 3-4 children whereas one-third (33 percent) had children 4 and above. From total of 185 participants highest contraceptive use rate (85 percent) is in tehsil Chakwal and lowest (19 percent) is in tehsil Pasrur, where as half of the participants have 4+ children.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of IDI Respondents showed that out of 36 religious leaders, three-fourth (67 percent) were males and one third (33 percent) were females. An interesting finding is that 14 percent of the respondents were in younger age group of 25-29. Data presents the fact that more than three-fourth (77 percent) of the IDI participants had an education level of matric or above with 17 percent having less than matric education.

respondents (18.8 percent) had no education than Chakwal (15 percent). More than a half (55 per cent) of those interviewed in all areas was employed in some kind of paid jobs. The great majority of respondents belonged to Hanafi Fiqh (37 percent) and Ahle Sunnat Wal Jammāt (56.7 percent), whereas only 6.6 percent belonged to Fiqh e Jafariya. More respondents belonged to Fiqh e Jafariya in Chakwal (11 percent) than Sialkot (3 percent), while more males belonged to Fiqh e Jafariya than females. It is observed that 19 percent respondents had no sons so far. While, two third respondents (61 percent) had one or two sons and one-fifth (17 percent) had 3 to 4 sons, whereas, 2 percent had 5 or more sons.

Family Planning Knowledge and Practices: Over all 96.6 percent respondents have the knowledge of family planning in districts of Sialkot and Chakwal. The women were more exposed to family planning knowledge than men and similarly family planning knowledge was slightly higher in females, too. It was observed from the findings of FGDs that 86.5 percent of the total respondents were aware of the family planning methods whether they were practicing it or not. In both the districts 72.2 percent of the respondents claimed television as a source of knowledge about family planning, whereas Health and family planning person occupied second place as a source of knowledge. Fifty six percent of the respondents had acknowledged their efforts in extending knowledge on family planning to???. The other source of knowledge included radio (19 percent), print media (15 percent), friends (14 percent), and spouse (10 percent). At the time of survey 49.1 percent of the sample was using at least one of the projected family planning methods. One third of the respondents (33 percent) reported family planning/Health workers as the source of motivation to adopt family planning practices, while the spouse was acknowledged as the second major source of motivation with the response of 14.2 percent respondents on that. However, 59 percent of the total sample reported that they used family planning methods at some stage of their reproductive life.

Nearly half of them were using some family planning method however; the females (50.3 percent) found more frequent in usage of contraceptives than males (47.7 percent). Condom was the most commonly used method which was practiced by majority (24 percent) of the respondents or by the spouses, while other methods were found to be used by a nominal percentage of the respondents. The findings of FGDs showed that 55.7 percent participants were the current users of at least one of the family planning methods.

Forty-five percent respondents reported the reason of non use of contraception that they wanted to have more children followed by 9.3 percent of the respondents, who mentioned

and Islamic teachings and their implications on the fertility behavior. Initially it presents a comparison of desired number of children of the male and female respondents and actual parity. The males bracket reveals that one fifth (21 percent) of them desired upto 4 children, whereas more than one fourth of the females (27 percent) has desired for 4 children, showing that females wanted to have their family size relatively larger than their husbands. The others included 'upto God' showing a pro fatalistic attitude. A higher number (54 percent) of females wanted more sons, with slight variation in desire of the males (52 percent) as an old age security, whereby 47 percent males desired larger families for earning hands also.

On the whole, nearly half of the respondents stated that family planning is approved in Islam. Regional variations depicted that in Chakwal (57 percent) more respondents confirmed approval of family planning in Islam than Sialkot (43 percent). One third (33 percent) of the respondents said that Islam disapproves family planning, while a meager number (one percent) stated that family planning is allowed in certain conditions, followed by one percent that there is no statement in Islam regarding use of family planning. About 3 percent of the respondents admitted that they do not know about the Islamic teachings in this regard. A large number (86 percent) of the general public respondents reported that breast feeding is allowed in Islam as a method for birth spacing, while sexual differentials described wide difference of 15 percent. To support the issue the qualitative data gathered through FGDs indicates that respondents were of the view that breast feeding is the only method of birth spacing. The evidences from FGDs reflected that mothers should breast feed their young ones to achieve the target of birth spacing. When status of family planning was asked from the respondents with reference to Halal or Haram, one-fifth (21 percent) said that it is Haram and meager number (7 percent) termed it makrooh. Nearly all respondents (96 percent) said that abortion is a murder, followed by abortion allowed before four months (3 percent), then in first month (0.7 percent) finally not allowed (0.2 percent).

The main sources of Islamic teachings about family planning were print/electronic media (28 percent), religious leaders (27 percent), family (20 percent), own readings and friends (11 percent each). Overall 99.2 percent respondents agreed that Islam emphasizes on girls education. The similar trend was observed in Sialkot and Chakwal districts. Majority of the females (57.6 percent) informed that from Islamic, point of view, one should get married at the age of 16-18 years while male respondents also agreed on this age group but their percentage (52.3 percent) was slightly lower than females. According to half (52 percent) of the respondents, Islam favors small family. More than four-fifth (87.8 percent) of the

Similarly, only 6 percent had received informal education, followed by 37 percent matric, 17 percent FA and 3 percent had attained up-to BA standard education. A significant percentage 20 percent of religious leaders had completed Master's Degree. Ninety seven percent of religious leaders claimed to be employed. While, a good number of them, that is, 40 percent shared that they are earning more than ten thousand per month with almost the same percentage i.e. 40 percent again shared their earning between three to five thousand rupees per month. The data revealed that majority (90 percent) of the religious leaders had more than 3 to 4 and 60 percent had more than four children. Similar pattern prevailed in all the districts irrespective of the caste or creed or area. Some of the religious leaders had 8-9 children. It is amazing that data of the sampled religious leaders reflects that despite the misinformation that religious leaders in Pakistan are against contraception, nearly half of them were using contraceptive.

Chapter on Family Planning's Knowledge and Practices captured the perceptions of married males and female's knowledge, ever and current use of contraception, source of information and motivation, reasons of non use and intentions to use family planning in future. Overall 96.6 percent respondents had the knowledge of family planning in districts of Sialkot and Chakwal. Percentage of the male respondents having family planning knowledge was comparatively lower than the females in Sialkot. Television appeared to be the most important medium of information. In both districts 72.2 percent of the respondents claimed television as a source of knowledge about family planning. There existed a general consensus that more than half of the population of reproductive age has practiced family planning methods at some point of time. About 60 percent of the respondents reported use of family planning methods. As mentioned earlier, that majority possess knowledge of family planning, so is the trend reflected in usage of family planning knowledge. The 65.6 percent of the female respondents from both districts have ever used family planning methods. Overall 14.2 percent respondents reported that their life partner motivated him/her to use family planning methods. In both districts, 3.7 percent of the respondents who claimed ever use of family planning methods, reported that their source of information had been friends. In this regard the male respondents in both districts remained 5.8 percent in comparison to the females as 1.5 percent.

Perceptions and Practices of General Public in the Light of Islam presents information on general public and FGD participant's perceptions, attitudes and practices in the light of background variables and analysis of the predominant inter-linkages between family planning

practiced family planning. Four-fifth (87.5 percent) of them suggested that role of religious leaders can be improved to use their services for the promotion of family planning programme. Only 12.5 percent disagreed with this idea and mentioned that religious leaders can not perform a role. Majority of the Ulema (67.7 percent) suggested that to create awareness in general public about family planning and its benefits, Ulema can play a vital role.

While talking about the most effective group/ person to change the opinion of public Ulema highlighted that the influential persons, politicians, numberdars, landlords can be most effective (35.5 percent) owing to their high status in the society, followed by religious leaders (25.8 percent), through discussions (19.4 percent), teachers (12.9 percent) and media (6.5 percent).

Overall, out of 36 respondents, majority (94 percent) said the number of children is not fixed in Islam. The data according to the sect exhibits that all of the Fiqh e Jafariya respondents replied that it is not fixed. However, 7 percent of the Suuni's were of the view that it is fixed. More than four-fifth (83 percent) of the Ulema said that there are advantages of small family, out of which the Sunni Ulema were more progressive as 85 percent of them said that there are advantages of small family than the 78 percent of shia religious leaders. Only five percent had no children otherwise they had large families as some of them even had nine children, therefore, more than four-fifth (83 percent) of the religious leaders agreed to having problems due to large family size. None of the female religious leaders were in favor of son preference, while 12 percent males preferred sons and sectoral difference reveals that more Shias (11 percent) had son preference than Sunnis (7 percent). Most of the religious leaders had same views that age for marriage is given in Islam and it preaches that males and females should get married, once they reach the age of puberty.

It was difficult to find the list of Ulemas sensitized by MoPW from the District Population Welfare Officers. In Chakwal, more religious leaders having attended a sensitization session were got located, while in Sialkot despite getting their addresses and contact numbers only a few were traced out. Whereas it is encouraging to note that one third (66 percent) of the religious leaders had attended sensitization sessions and three-fourth (60 percent) of them said that main objective of the workshop was to create awareness of family planning among the religious leaders and one-fifth (20 percent) of them revealed the information that main objective of the workshop was to eliminate or clear misconceptions about family planning.

respondents informed that Ulema never discussed family planning in Juma sermons to convince and guide the people in the light of Islam. The similar information was found from FGDs data which depicted that in Sialkot the responses of the females were more positive by explaining that Ulema favor the use of family planning (26.5 percent) while only (8.2 percent) males told that Ulema favor family planning. The general public was asked about the most effective institution for the promotion of family planning. As is apparent from the household data, one-third (36 percent) of the respondents were of the view that educational institution is best followed by Madrassa (21 percent) and then mosques (13 percent).

Role of religious leaders in explaining family planning in the light of Islam unfolds the perceptions and practices of religious leaders with back ground characteristics based on sex and sect. Majority (97.2 percent) Ulema had knowledge of family planning. The analysis of IDIs reveals that two fifth (41.7 percent) of the interviewed Ulema were the ever user of family planning methods some time in the past. About one tenth (11.1 percent) were the current users. Almost nearly half (47.2 percent) of them mentioned that they never used any family planning method. The data analysis of IDIs reveals that 14.7 percent Ulema reported that Islam opposed family planning. A majority, three-fourth (74.3 percent) accepted that Ulema can play a positive and constructive role in the promotion of family planning according to the teachings of Islam. Two-third accepted that they never indulged in such activities while only one third recorded that they have taken interest in the family planning activities and participated in them. Two-third (67.9 percent) of the respondents mentioned that they are ready to discuss the family planning issue in the community according to Islamic values. Ulema discussed that most effective persons for the advocacy of family planning are religious scholars, Ulema, Maulvis and spiritual healers. More than four-fifth (87.1 percent) of the Ulema agreed that old cultural pattern and set of values regarding the practice of family planning should be changed.

Majority of the Ulema (66.7 percent) believed that public is in favor of family planning. Only 13.9 percent Ulema thought that people are against family planning and 19.4 percent mentioned that they never discussed about family planning with people. During discussion majority of Ulema (86.1 percent) told about the presence of Family Welfare Centre in the area. Only 13.9 percent reported that they are unaware of the family welfare centre working in their community. Nearly half (42.4 percent) of the Ulema supported those religious leaders who practiced family planning methods and shared that they favor them. One-third (36.4 percent) opposed them and one fourth reserved their views about such religious leaders who

the formal education are more supportive of the idea and their knowledge base can be utilized in training programs to motivate others. The research recommendations here are formulated for policy makers, religious leaders, and researchers, which would contribute to pave the way for achieving the set goals of population stabilization and improving the family planning program.

Recommendations

- Religious leaders should discuss and debate the issues related to family planning on TV, to spread the message to the wider audience. Similarly, youth in the educational institutions should be informed about family planning methods.
- Best people for advocacy of family planning and Islam are religious leaders; because people listen to them and media can be an effective medium to widespread the message. People can be informed about the family planning matters in Friday sermons and family planning literature may also be distributed.
- Health personnel can perform a vital role in disseminating the message, to motivate them their salaries may be raised and they may be given Islamic knowledge about family planning. There should be a panel of religious leaders who can work as a team and conduct informative meetings in the different villages.
- There should be community meetings for males and females separately to talk about family planning and related issues. Family planning may be promoted with the help of lady health worker, and all the services may be provided at the door step. Educated people from ministries may help in promoting family planning program. Uneducated females may not be hired as LHWs.
- There should be printed material and literature regarding Islam and family planning in religious institutions.
- Ulema, political leaders, media and health personnel can join hands to communicate the family planning message. Cricketers, actors and other celebrities may also be involved to enhance the effectiveness of the advocacy campaigns.
- Teams should go to the communities and create awareness as village people are not educated.

The religious leaders were also asked about their views on building a consensus among the religious leaders of all sects and schools of thoughts on the issue of family planning. Then one third (33 percent) of them replied in affirmative about having a consensus while the others disagreed. Four-fifth (80 percent) of the participants who replied the question had the impression that the activity is helpful in changing minds of the people. The religious leaders commented that the sensitization sessions are helpful for advancement or campaign of family planning. Those who had responded to this question two-third (67 percent) confirmed the idea that sensitization is helpful while similar percentage of the males had the same idea. Whereas four fifth (80 percent) of the Sunni religious leaders said that it is help ful. Half of the religious leaders (among the respondents), who work with the government had 1-5 years of work experience, while, the other half had served the government, for more than 15 years. There were no females and Fiqh e Jafariya religious leaders working for the Government. When the religious leaders were asked whether they had received any instructions from the government to discuss Islam and family planning all replied in negative. Some of the religious leaders were of the view that if they were asked or provided a chance to impart family planning knowledge, they would be a willing worker.

Conclusions and recommendations

The findings reported here contradict the notion that Muslim religious leaders are more resistant to family planning than the broader community in which they live. As Islamic texts are widely interpreted to support family planning, it has been traditional ways of life--rather than religious tenets--around which barriers to contraceptive use have been constructed. In particular, the notion that family planning contradicts the Islamic way of life has been widespread. There is a need to enhance the knowledge base of religious leaders as well as general public about family planning issues to bring about positive behavioral and attitudinal changes in the population. The concept of birth spacing is well accepted by Ulema in Pakistan. Now, most Ulema are willing to discuss issues related to birth spacing, women's health and male responsibility in their Friday sermons but they seem to lack knowledge and confidence. Imam Masjids should be trained on what and how to communicate this sensitive information in their sermons. Most of the Ulema support spacing for two or two and half years probably up to the period of lactation. Ulema look up to prominent Muftis and Scholars for guidance. Therefore, their positive views can be a strong influencing factor for Imams and Khatibs. There is wide awareness of modern contraceptive methods among Ulema but these are associated with health concerns which need to be addressed. Ulema with higher level of

- Some said advertisements may not be given on TV, as they create embarrassment for elders. Instead of that there should be informative meetings for the males and the females separately at the community level.
- Ulema should have consensus and provide information about family planning in the light of Islam on TV and can be convinced to write articles in the newspapers. Doctors, poets and writers can also play an important role in this regard. Local politicians for instance Nazims can be convinced and involved in advocacy on the family planning.
- Experience from other countries may be quoted and jaiz (approved in Islam) methods may be explained so that the people's views may change. People may be taught about implications of population growth so that they become aware of the consequences and have fewer children.
- Print material on family planning may be placed in the Mosques and Madaris to inform general public. Islamic knowledge may be given to the family planning workers and sayings from the Quran and Hadith in favor of family planning can be displayed.
- Some general public is of the view that the real problems are the religious leaders themselves if they speak in favor of family planning then community will follow them Maulvis, their wives, Pirs (spiritual leaders) teachers, doctors, aged women in the community are influential people in the community and people believe and follow them.
- The religious people can act positively if media remind them of their responsibilities. They should appear on TV and talk about family planning then people will listen to them as they have regard, love and respect for the religious leaders.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The status of family planning practices in the light of Islamic teachings has been a widely debated topic, across time and space. The topic has been discussed from various dimensions including intellectual and scholarly aspects. However, very few empirical researches are ever conducted on this topic to reflect the real situation at the community level. The family planning program was initiated in Pakistan in early 1950's, with a varying support from the government, donors and community at large. The concept and practices of family planning have always been under heavy discussion, particularly from Islamic point of view. It is pertinent to share that the religious scholars from different Islamic sects always expressed the diverse views at various occasions on the matter and the adoption of methods in domain of family planning. It is also important to surface here that family planning practices at the community level and their relevance with the Islamic teachings always lack a first hand evidence. To bridge this gap, there was an urgent need to conduct an empirical research to get as closer to the reality as possible and one can come across various versions, stories and even myths regarding the role of Islamic teachings in inhibiting or permitting family planning practices, once there are ample evidence based facts. So, the study in hand had focused on exploring the reality.

The study titled, "Islam and family Planning - Perceptions and Practices" is a pilot study, conducted in two culturally different regions of Punjab. The empirical evidences are collected from rural and urban settings of the districts; Sialkot and Chakwal, through quantitative and qualitative research methods.

The study involved in-depth qualitative research with the aim to yield data for understanding the effects of different factors on the perception, behavior and practices relating to Islam and family planning. The research results also provide a detailed scanning of different aspects including perceptions, attitudes, and practices related to Islam and family planning in the context of prevalent socio-cultural setting.

1.2 Statement of the problem

At its inception, Pakistan had a population of 32.5 million, which has reached 164.6 million in 2010. Sharing 0.6 per cent of area on the globe today, Pakistan, shares 2.46 per cent of its population (NIPS, 2009). This rapid population growth manifests serious implications for the socio-economic development of the country. A closer look at the demographic situation in

Pakistan signals the need for exploring ways and means to control the burgeoning fertility rate, which unleashes, in addition to many other issues, the significance of Islam and family planning (NIPS, 2008)

Worldwide there are various organized family planning programs that provide modern contraceptives and related services which have become increasingly common in the last 40 years (Roudi-Fahimi, 2004). These programs have aimed to improve the health of women and children and to slow population growth in countries where rapid population growth is seen as a barrier to socioeconomic development. In 1994, the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the 2000 Millennium Development Summit were called for universal access to family planning information and services. Islamic countries who attended the ICPD, generally endorsed the conference's Program of Action with the reservation that they would interpret and adopt its recommendations in accordance with Islam — a position necessary for Muslim countries to take the conference recommendations home for implementation. The ICPD's Program of Action focused on human development and provides a holistic framework for slowing population growth and improving people's lives. A central recommendation of the Program is universal access to a full range of safe and reliable family planning methods. Islam's position on family planning and the circumstances under which it can be practiced has a direct bearing on how Muslim countries can achieve their development goals, including the ICPD goals. The ICPD Program of Action also acknowledged that the implementation of its recommendations "is the sovereign right of each country, consistent with national laws and development priorities, with full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural background of its people, and in conformity with universally recognized "international human rights" (ICPD, 1994).

As a continuity of United Nation's Initiative, GOP started consultation with religious leaders; in and outside the country, so importance of Islam and family planning was further discussed in a Conference. Ulema from 21 Muslim countries as well as communities in minority Muslim States met in Islamabad to discuss the issues concerning population and development. The conference recognized that concerted and coordinated efforts should be initiated by Muslim Ummah, in general, and the participating countries, in particular, in the field of population and development (MoPW, 2005).

The generally prevailing perceptions and practices are usually linked with Islamic teachings and so is the case with family planning practices. In Pakistan the family planning knowledge

is now nearly universal but still there is gap between knowledge and practice. It is observed that one of the reasons quoted by people for non use of contraception is Islam (PDHS, 2008). Thus there was need to further explore the issue. As we are well aware that in a society like Pakistan, where education is not widespread and majority of the people have conservative outlook, the religious people have much influence on the masses. In context of Islam, a Muslim has three sources of knowledge to obtain answers to the questions pertaining to various aspects of human life. These sources are: the Holy Quran; Sayings (hadith) and acts (Sunnah) of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The views of the leaders of juristic schools qualified to interpret the teachings of Islam; therefore a Muslim only seeks guidance in any aspect (Roudi-Fahimi, 2004). In Pakistan there are two major sects, Sunni and Shia with majority belonging to Sunni school of thought. The religious leaders of both sects influence their followers in different ways but they have some shortcomings. Most of them do not have knowledge of modern trends because modern science and thoughts are not taught in traditional and religious schools. Therefore, there are religious conflicts and controversies among various groups. A single religious leader of any sect is not acceptable to all the Muslims of Pakistan (Zahir, 2000).

The residents of Pakistan frequently interact with religious leaders for solving their problems; one of the important aspects is religious occasions to intermingle with each other. One of the most important events is Namaz. The imam mosque leads the prayers five times a day and is a spiritual leader for the community and no religious rites could be performed without his blessings. He, in a way, is the most readily available religious leader in the community for the people and they discuss their problems and issues with the leader as well as among themselves. As most of the people in Pakistan have blind faith on religious leaders and so they can play a key role in bringing attitudinal change of the masses for their social well being, even in the sensitive issue like family planning. In order to improve the population welfare program coordinated strategic approach is needed to involve all those who really matter in Pakistan; particularly conservative religious leaders. By involving religious leaders program can reach to more conservative groups. The principle of preventing conception was accepted in those sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) which allowed some of his followers to practice 'azl' or coitus interrupts. These ahadith embodied the earliest legal reasoning of Muslims on contraception and were essential instruments of argument in later Islamic thought on contraception (Roudi-Fahimi, 2004).

Islam, as the religion of pristine nature, has never opposed to what is good to man. Indeed it has always been ahead in the effort towards the achievement of this betterment, till the time it does come in conflict with the purposes of the law giver. Family planning, as understood by Islam, is not opposed to marriage or to the begetting of children, nor does its concept imply disbelief in the doctrine of fate and divine dispensation for Allah Almighty has bestowed reason upon man to enable him to distinguish between the useful and the harmful, and to help him follow the path that would assure him happiness in this world as well as in the world to come (Underwood, 2000). It is considered that family planning is allowed in Islam but all Muslim jurists do not speak with one voice on the question of birth prevention, on its lawfulness, on conditions for practice and on methods that may be used. It is considered that the coitus interruptus was permitted (mubah) and this permission could be ratified by analogical reasoning. A man could refrain from marriage; or marry but abstain from mating or have sexual mating but abstain from ejaculation inside the vagina--'azl.

One frequently cited barrier to more widespread adoption of family planning (family planning) in Muslim countries is religious opposition. To examine the depth and extent of such opposition in Bangladesh, 106 men who had been identified by their wives as religiously opposing to family planning were interviewed. Unexpectedly, 26 percent of the "opposing" husbands reported that they were current users of a contraceptive and an additional 50 percent, although not practicing, said they were in favor of family planning. Of the alleged "opposers," only 23 percent said that they opposed family planning on religious grounds. One fourth of this last group was able to cite specific Islamic injunctions against family planning (Bernhart, 1990). A study of religious leaders consisting of Imam Mosques and religious scholars covering all the provinces and urban and rural areas of Pakistan highly recommends the importance of Inter Personal Communication (IPC) and in turn religious leaders can be important for convincing people (Zahir, 2000). The channel should be a step-by-step process because family planning is still not an easier pill to be swallowed by religious radicals or religious conservatives. This group is always engulfed in religious rigidity and cultural orthodoxy. Even those who are generally inclined may refuse to approve the program due to growing tension because they do not allow any one to undermine the facts (ibid, 2000). Evidence from another study shows that among other factors cited for family planning not being used in Pakistan, the religious factor is considered being prominent (PDHS, 2008). However except partial explanation in different surveys no independent empirical evidence prevails to support this point.

1.3 Justification

A few studies have been undertaken on the said topic; however, quantitative data does not adequately address the issue because of the limitations of standardized survey methods of data collection. Keeping in view the overall perspective it was observed that hundreds of millions of rupees have been spent by national and international agencies to support the family planning initiatives in the country, hence, there is still a presumption that ambiguity over the way Islam views family planning has been a primary obstacle to the large scale acceptance of family planning program. Many Muslims, including religious scholars, have misperceptions about family planning within the context of Islam. However, no national level qualitative in depth study has ever been undertaken in Pakistan due to the sensitivity of issue and fear of criticism of Islam. It is generally believed that religious leaders do not openly support the population welfare programs, like family planning, that is why population program has not achieved the desired results in Pakistan as compared to the other Muslim countries. The reasons for opposing family planning may be on account of ignorance, misconceptions and lack of proper information.

The lack of knowledge on Islam and family planning methods is considered a major impediment towards the use of contraceptives in the country. While looking in to this dilemma, it becomes important to take a reflexive stance of the prevalent state and to recognize that the two sides, who participate in the implementation of the family planning agenda, a) the one's who are the targets of policies and b) the one's who formulate and implement policies--are in an unequal power position. It was also of paramount importance to undertake a research study which is needed and considered essential to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of the people and religious leaders along with their knowledge and attitudes towards family planning.

As this study was directly related with the views and perceptions of general public and religious leaders, therefore, it would be a valuable technical resource/knowledge base to the future researchers, who would be examining/investigating the issue of Islam and family planning.

1.4 Methodology and research design

This section, under its sub sections provides the details on: study objectives, research design, organization of FGDs, carrying out of in-depth interviews, role and functions of technical advisory committee, work of study team, training of field staff, field work and modes of data analysis.

1.4.1 Objectives of the study

The principal objectives of the study were:

- To investigate the prevailing knowledge of Islam and family planning in general public.
- To collect information on extent of awareness and perceptions of religious leaders about Islam and family planning.
- To discover existing role of religious leaders in communicating family planning knowledge to their communities.
- To assess the possibility of advocacy for family planning by religious leaders.

1.4.2 Logic in exercise

The research design of the present study was a good mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches. To gather required information, research tools included structured questionnaires, FGDs and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs). The purpose of using both questionnaires and in-depth interviews was to explain individual behavior and practices on the selected matter, while FGDs assisted in understanding and revealing the community's actions and attitudes towards Islam and family planning.

1.4.3 Selection of research area

The study commenced with a sample survey of the selected areas. The sample was drawn through purposive sampling. Two districts were selected from Punjab province i.e. Sialkot and Chakwal. Out of four tehsils from the Sialkot, three tehsils i.e. Daska, Pasrur, and Sialkot and from Chakwal, three tehsils Chakwal, Choa Saidan Shah and Talagang were selected by random selection method. Then clusters from each tehsils were randomly selected by considering the appropriate representation of rural and urban population. Some conspicuous features of districts of Sialkot and Chakwal have been discussed hereunder to familiarize the readers about the areas.

Sialkot

Sialkot is a city in the northern province of Punjab in Pakistan, located 130 kilometer north-west of Lahore; at the feet of the snow-covered peaks of Kashmir and near the Chenab River. It is inhabited by the people of Punjab comprising a population of approximately 3,000,000. It is one of the major industrial centers of Pakistan and is well-known for its manufacture and export of surgical instruments, musical instruments, sports goods, leather goods, textile products and other light, Manufactures. The city, the district headquarters, lies just in north of

the Aik Nala (Aik Stream) and south of the Jammu Hills and is connected by rail with Wazirabad and Jammu and by road with Lahore and Gujranwala (Govt of Pakistan, 2000).

It is said to have been founded by Raja Sala, uncle of the Pandavas of the epic Mahabharata, and re founded by Raja Salivahan in the time of Vikramaditya; it may be the site of ancient Shakala (Sagul), capital of the Indo-Greek Menander (Milinda) and Mihirakulathe Hun (died AD 540). Several townships have grown up around the original city, which was incorporated as a municipality in 1867. There are three libraries and several hospitals, and colleges affiliated with the University of the Punjab. Sialkot was the birthplace of the famous poet-philosopher Dr. Alama Muhammad Iqbal, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, and Asghar Sodai and houses several shrines, including that of the first Sikh guru, Nanak.

It was once famous as a centre for the manufacture of damascened ware and paper; its modern industries include flour and cotton mills and the production of surgical instruments, leather goods, embroidery, ready-made garments, and musical instruments and sports goods. The northern portion is very fertile; the southern, less fertile, is irrigated by the Upper Chenab Canal. About nine-tenths of the cultivable area is under crops. The chief crops are wheat, barley, rice, corn (maize), millet, and sugarcane. Sialkot is an industrial city of Pakistan; Sialkot produces a big amount of income for Pakistan because of its exports (Govt of Pakistan, 2000).

Sialkot District lies southeast of Gujrat District, southwest of Jammu district, while Narowal District is to the southeast and Gujranwala District is situated to the west. Sialkot district is spread over an area of 3,016 square kilometres comprising of three tehsils, Daska, Pasrur, Sialkot and Sambrial. Sialkot is hot and humid during the summer and cold during the winter. June and July are the hottest months.

Chakwal

Chakwal is the main town of Chakwal District, Punjab, Pakistan and is located 90 km south-east of the federal capital, Islamabad. As noted in District Gazeteer Jhelum 1904, the city is named after Chaudhry Chaku Khan, chief of the Mair Minhas Rajput tribe from Jammu, who founded it in 1525 C.E during the era of the Mughal Emperor, Zaheerudun Babur. It remained a small but central town of Taluka Dhan Chaurasi for many centuries. In 1881, during the British era, it was declared the Tehsil Headquarter. It was finally upgraded to district status in 1985 (Govt of Pakistan, 2000)...

Chakwal district borders the districts of Rawalpindi and Attock in the north, Jhelum in the east, Khushab in the south and Mianwali in the west. The total area of Chakwal district is 6,609 square kilometers, which is equivalent to 1,652,443 acres (6,687.20 km²). According to the 1998 census of Pakistan, the total population is 1,083,725 of which 12.01 percent only were urban, making Chakwal the most rural district in Punjab. The tribes, clans and castes that inhabit this area are the Awans, Jats (the main clans being the Khoti, Khingar, Gondal and Mekan), Bhutta, Mair Minhas Rajputs (including the Janjua, Bhatti, Jalap & Khiwa), Kahuts, Mughal Kassar, Pathans, Gujars, Syeds of Chak Misri, Maliars, Kashmiris and the Punjabi Sheikhs (including the famous Sahgal family). (Govt of Pakistan, 2000).

Talagang tehsil is almost entirely inhabited by the Awan tribe, with just a few villages of Bhatti Rajputs. While Chakwal Tehsil has always been associated by the three Chakwal tribes, the Mair Minhas, Kahut and Mughal Kassar. The physical features of the district, its tribes, its society and its economy all combine to make Chakwal one of the main recruiting areas for the Pakistan Army and the Pakistan Air Force. Other main occupations of the people are agriculture and mining. Transport and poultry business is also important.

During British rule, Chakwal was a tehsil of Jhelum district, the population according to the 1891 census of India was 164,912 which had fallen to 160,316 in 1901. It contained the towns of Chakwal and Bhaun and 248 villages. The most well known and favorite food product coming from Chakwal is a sweet called Riyori (pronounced ree-o-ree). It is basically a mixture of desi ghee (clarified butter) and gurr (jaggery) covered with sesame seeds.

1.5 Sampling

The stratified sampling was adopted. Initially Sialkot and Chakwal districts were selected through purposive sampling. Then three tehsils from each district were selected. The Tehsils of district Sialkot included Daska, Pasrur, Sialkot, whereas, Chakwal, Choa Saidan Shah, Talagang were part of the sample from district Chakwal.

The third stage of sampling involved selection of households. In both areas total 2398 households were selected. The table presented below contains details of the number of households selected from each tehsils of the two districts.

Table 1.1: Total Coverage of Household Questionnaires, IDIs and FGDs

Geographical Locations	Structured Questionnaires	In-Depth Interviews	Focus Group Discussions	
			MALE	FEMALES
DISTRICT SIALKOT	1,200	18	6	6
Daska	390	6	2	2
Pasrur	330	6	2	2
Sialkot	480	6	2	2
DISTRICT CHAKWAL	1,198	18	6	6
Chakwal	660	6	2	2
Choa Saidan Shah	118	6	2	2
Talagang	420	6	2	2
TOTAL	2,398	36	12	12

The target group was comprised of the two broad categories: first was general public, in which the respondents were males between the age group of 15-54 years and females between the age group of 15-49 years . To get information a cluster of fifteen households in each locality were listed and data of the respondent's personal characteristics and perceptions were collected. To keep the gender balance intact, equal number of male and female respondents was ensured in this research.

Second category was comprised of religious leaders, in this group there were male and female religious leaders. It was especially kept in mind to cover respondents from both Shia and Sunni sects and also the religious leaders who were sensitized by Population Welfare Program regarding their family planning initiative.

1.6 Research tools

As mentioned earlier, the research utilized both Qualitative and Quantitative research tools. A brief description of the research techniques is discussed below.

Structured questionnaire

Structured questionnaire was designed to capture the following:

- Personnel / back ground characteristics of the respondents
- Knowledge and use of family planning (family planning) methods
- Perception of Islam and family planning
- Change in behavior, attitudes and Practice of family planning with regard to Islam.
- Suggestions and recommendations

In-depth interviews (IDIs)

IDIs were conducted with Ulema to understand their practices and attitudes towards family planning. Total 36 in-depth interviews (18 in each district) were conducted, with the break down of 12 IDIs with males and 6 with females in each district. A team comprised of Moderator and Note-Taker conducted individual interviews after establishing rapport with the community. A number of respondents were visited for the second time to get clarity on the obscure points/areas. The emphasis was on getting Ulema perspectives on events and actions and obtaining a rich description of the context and situations in which decisions are taken on use of contraceptives, sources of supply, level of knowledge etc. The IDI's covered the following aspects:

- Personnel / back ground characteristic
- Knowledge and use of family planning (family planning) methods.
- Perception of Islam and family planning value of the campaign
- Change in behavior, attitudes and practice of family planning with regard to Islam.
- Suggestions and recommendations

Focus group discussions (FGDs)

Focus Group Discussion is a qualitative research technique utilized in social sciences research. A small group of informants (six to ten people) meet at a certain place to discuss and talk freely and spontaneously about issues considered important for investigation. Moderators guide these groups of people, while the note takers record the discussions. Following the said parameters, 24 FGDs were conducted in two districts, involving equal numbers of male and female groups.

The guidelines included the following topics to get a holistic view of the respondents.

- Prevailing Knowledge of family planning (family planning) methods.
- Teaching of Islam regarding concept & practices of family planning.
- Use of family planning methods
- Role of religious leaders in provision of knowledge and guidance about family planning practices.
- Change in behavior, attitudes and Practice of family planning.
- Suggestions and recommendations

1.7 Study team composition and training

To select the qualified research teams walk in Interviews were conducted at NIPS. The field staff recruited for the study had the past experience in carrying out qualitative and quantitative research. The study team comprised of a Consultant, Project Director (PD), a Principal Investigator (PI), a Deputy Principal Investigator (DPI), one Co-Coordinator, one Programmer, one Accountant, one Assistant and two Data Entry Operators (DEO) for field data collection. Eight male and eight female researchers were hired on contract basis. For editing and compilation of the data, four editors were also included in the research team.

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprised of professionals from NIPS and various other government and non-governmental organizations and universities was constituted. The committee observed, discussed and finalized the proposal, questionnaire, in-depth interviews and FGDs guides. The tools were also translated in to Urdu. The Committee supported the study and recommended to launch it, as it would provide a useful set of information on family planning in the light of Islam. .

The project formally started with the training of field staff which continued for ten days. PI, DPI and the Consultant along with professionals from other line departments imparted the extensive training. The orientation training focused on quantitative and qualitative research methods and techniques, in general, and on study objectives, sampling procedures and elucidation of the research questionnaire, in particular.

In the training, special emphasis was given on purpose, outline and objectives of the research. The Quantitative and qualitative research methods and empirical examples of linking qualitative and quantitative data in projects were discussed. The importance of the issue of Islam and family planning and the related terms, currently in vogue were explained. The explanation of the FGD guides and structured questionnaires were made through interactive sessions and conducting mock exercises. Finally, a detailed discussion was conducted on possible problems and the prevalent biases that the field team can come across with, in the field areas and how to overcome them. .

The training was inclusive of three days of field work (as part of orientation), which also included pre-testing of the house hold questionnaires, FGDs guide and IDIs outline. This training enhanced the interviewing capacity of the researchers and also facilitated the training team to judge their skills.

1.8 Field work

The fieldwork of the study was carried out in two districts in the months of November and December 2009. Four teams were formed for data collection and they stayed in the field for the whole data collection period. Teams had male and female researchers to have better access to respondents of both sexes. The teams approached sample population for interviewing, FGDs and IDI's. During data collection easy access to the respondents was facilitated by several government officials at the district and tehsil levels.

1.9 Field supervision and monitoring

To ensure quality of the data, the field teams were regularly monitored and supervised. Project Director (PD), Principal Investigator (PI), and Deputy Principal Investigator (DPI) undertook spot checks to observe the performance of field research staff and to validate the survey questionnaires in each area. The field monitoring was focused on supervision of questionnaire filling process, participant observation of IDIs and FGDs, verification of the data collected by spot checks. Adherence to the identified sample population was ensured during these field visits. The coordinator also followed the field teams to support and facilitate them in using the questionnaires, adhering to the sample, conducting interviews, editing the questionnaire, observing team coordination, ensuring efficient use of time and to assist the teams to resolve the problems. The filled questionnaires were returned from the field to NIPS headquarter in Islamabad, where they were thoroughly reviewed. Content verification and authentication of set criterion was carried out to confirm that the data was collected according to the guidelines of FGDs & IDIs. The male / female ratio of respondents was also examined to observe the loop holes, if there were any.

1.10 Limitations and field problems

Few problems were encountered during the field work in following the sample of religious leaders. The religious leaders target group was also comprised of maulvis, who were sensitized by MoPW on the matter of family planning. Lists of these maulvis were collected from the MoPW and the respective District Population offices. So, in Chakwal indicated religious leaders were easily located and successfully interviewed but in Sialkot difficulty was faced to locate the indicated people, as their addresses were not correct. Therefore, the planned number of IDIs with the religious leaders sensitized by MoPW could not be achieved.

Few members of the field research team could not stay on board for the planned project duration due to some unavoidable reasons like sickness. However, the replacements were arranged well in time.

1.11 Data processing and procedures

The processing of the data entry of questionnaires started soon after the fieldwork commenced. After the final editing, data was entered by the data processing teams who were specifically trained for this task. A double entry system was adopted for completing the information. The data entry and editing phase of the research was completed in one month.

The information gathered through structured questionnaires and the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) was processed and analyzed in both statistical and qualitative methods. The open ended questions were coded and also entered into the SPSS program. As the responses were free flowing, therefore, the flexibility of coding multiple responses for each aspect were maintained with an objective that not a single piece of information get overlooked. Therefore, the analysis has not been confined to numbers only but the piece of information that emerged from the transcriptions was also valued and compiled to keep the perspective broader. The statistical frequencies have been used more for determining the analysis areas according to percentages.

FGDs and IDIs were analyzed through complete transcripts, with an analysis framework i.e., patterns, grouping, frequencies, etc. All the quotations, citations, proverbs, key sentences and cultural phrases (slangs) used in the FGDs were translated verbatim into English from the local language.

Finally the analysis was done after the formulation of an extensive analysis framework with focus on the research objectives. The tables were deduced from various variables wherever required. The study was completed in a stipulated time of 10 months.

1.12 Coverage

Table 1.2 presents the coverage of individual response rate. A total of 2,398 house holds were selected and covered. The equal number that is of 1,199 males as well as females was successfully interviewed. According to the population and household size in district Sialkot, Tehsils of Daska, Pasrur and Sialkot had 16 percent, 14 percent and 20 percent coverage respectively. Whereas in Chakwal , Chakwal, Choa Saidan Shah and Talagang tehsils had 27 percent, 5 percent and 17 percent coverage respectively. The urban and rural area had 31 and 69 percent representation in both districts.

Table 1.2: Households Coverage in Chakwal and Sialkot

Area		Male		Female		Total	
		Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Districts	Sialkot	50.0	600	50.0	600	50.0	1,200
	Chakwal	50.0	599	50.0	599	50.0	1,198
Tehsils	Daska	16.3	195	16.3	195	16.3	390
	Pasrur	13.8	165	13.8	165	13.8	330
	Sialkot	20.0	240	20.0	240	20.0	480
	Chakwal	27.5	330	27.5	330	27.5	660
	Choa Sadian Shah	4.9	59	4.9	59	4.9	118
	Tala gang	17.5	210	17.5	210	17.5	420
Place of residence	Urban	31.2	374	31.2	374	31.2	748
	Rural	68.8	825	68.8	825	68.8	1,650
Total		100.0	1,199	100.0	1,199	100.0	2,398

A total number of 24 FGDs were held in 6 selected areas. Four FGDs were arranged at each area; two for males and two for females separately. FGDs were conducted with a view to supplement previous information; fill in the information gaps and to have in-depth insight of the community on the subject.

Table 1.3 shows qualitative sample of participants of Focus Group Discussions. Total sample of the participants of all FGDs was 185 and the highest number of participants was from Talagang (49) followed by Sialkot (38), Chakwal (33), Pasrur (26), Daska (21) and Choa Sadian Shah (18).

Table 1.3: Coverage of FGDs Respondents

Tehsils	Sialkot		Chakwal		Total	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Daska	24.7	21	--	--	11.4	21
Pasrur	30.6	26	--	--	14.1	26
Sialkot	44.7	38	--	--	20.5	38
Chakwal	--	--	33.0	33	17.8	33
Choa Sadian Shah	--	--	18.0	18	9.7	18
Tala Gang	--	--	49.0	49	26.5	49
Total	100.0	85	100.0	100	100.0	185

Table 1.4 displays the qualitative sample of IDI's respondents. Total sample respondents of In-depth Interviews (IDIs) were 36. The geographical representation of the respondents was: 12 from Chakwal, 8 from Sialkot, 5 from Daska, 5 from Pasrur, 4 from Talagang and 2 from Choa Saidan Shah.

Table 1.4: Total Coverage of IDIs

Tehsils	Sialkot		Chakwal		Total	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Daska	27.8	5	--	--	13.9	5
Pasrur	27.8	5	--	--	13.9	5
Sialkot	44.4	8	--	--	22.2	8
Chakwal	--	--	66.7	12	33.3	12
Choa Sadian Shah	--	--	11.1	2	5.6	2
Tala gang	--	--	22.2	4	11.1	4
Total	100.0	18	100.0	18	100.0	36



2.1 Current situation

Before going into conceptual details that encircles the topic of research, it appears appropriate to have a look at some demographic realities related to Muslim population, which will facilitate to understand the discussions shared in this research report. Data indicates that during the period 1988-2008, the distribution of Muslim population has changed somewhat in the seven regions. South Asia, Central Asia and South-East Asia each lost about 2 percentage points, while the share of Sub-Saharan Africa increased from 14 to 19 percent and that of America's and Europe increased slightly from 1 to 2 percent. (Pew research center, 2009). The results suggests that by the middle of 2009, there were about 1.57 billion Muslims living all over the world, representing 23 percent of an estimated 2009 world population of 6.8 billion, which has increased from 19 percent in 1988, India, has the third-largest population of Muslims, worldwide. China has more Muslims than in many Arab countries, Russia is home to more Muslims than Jordan and Libya combined. (Pew research center, 2009).

Islam is the official religion of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. A census held by the Pakistan International Bureau indicates that over 97 percent of the population of Pakistan is Muslim. Out of Muslim population 75 percent are Sunni and Shi'a is 20 percent. There are small non-Muslim religious groups: Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis, Bahá'ís, Kalash and others totaling 3 percent. Pakistan has the second largest Muslim population in the world after Indonesia (Mathew, 1996). The Muslims are divided into different sects which are called Madhab (Mazhab) i.e., schools of jurisprudence (also 'Maktab-e-Fikr' School of Thought in Urdu). Nearly all Pakistani Sunni Muslims belong to Hanafi School with a small group of Ahle Hadith. The Hanafi School is divided into Barelvis and Deobandis schools and understanding of these subgroups is limited to a very small population. Nearly 60 percent of the total seminaries (Madrassah) are run by Barelvis, 20 percent by the Deobandis, 10 percent by the various Shia's organizations and 10 percent by Ahle Hadith. In broader terms, population of the country is divided into two major groups, i.e., Shias & Sunnis. By following the existing patterns of religious groups, this study has adopted the same two categories for further investigation and analysis. The literature reviewed for the study further suggests that there is a close link between Islamic teachings and adoption of family planning practices. To get more clarity on this a regions exercise focused on a review of related researches and documents in presented here under.

2.2 Dynamics of family planning

The key concept of family planning, can simply be defined as “a program to regulate the number and spacing of children in a family through the practice of contraception or other methods of birth control” (Britanica, 1994)

Family planning programs help millions of people, providing reproductive health care that saves lives, avoids unintended pregnancies, and offers more choices. A strong commitment and adequate funding for family planning programs are considered essential to assure widespread access to good-quality reproductive health care. Support from health care officials, policy-makers, donor agencies, women's organizations, the news media, and religious and community leaders are also important. The determinants of family planning are different in different societies ranging from economic, political, and social to belief systems. In Pakistan, there prevails a strong assumption that family planning practices are highly influenced by Islamic teachings. There is a variety of views which one comes across in the media and general discussions. In the presence of a long range of views, it becomes imperative to conduct an empirical research to find out the reality. The research is focused on answering a key question; does any relationship exist between the Islamic teachings and family planning. What is the level of knowledge of the Pakistani masses about Islamic teachings related to family planning?

Advocacy for family planning is becoming crucial as demand for reproductive health care grows. Worldwide, as many as 600 million people use contraception, and millions more would do so with better access to good-quality services (Pew research center, 2009). Although fertility levels are falling in much of the world, rapid population growth remains a critical issue in most developing countries, where needs are great and resources are scarce. For many programs advocacy is a new and challenging responsibility. Advocates must attract and hold the attention of key audiences with powerful arguments and persuasive communication. In particular, research-based evidence of the benefits of family planning helps leaders to justify their support.

Family planning benefits individuals and countries in many ways. Amongst the most important ways are these (MoPW, 2007):

Saving women's lives: Avoiding unintended pregnancies could prevent about one-fourth of all maternal deaths in developing countries. Especially, using contraception helps avoid unsafe abortions to end unintended pregnancies. It also enables women to limit births to their

healthiest childbearing years and to avoid giving birth more times than is good for their health.

Saving children's lives: Spacing pregnancies at least two years apart helps women have healthier children and improves the odds of infants' survival by about 50 percent. Limiting births to a woman's healthiest childbearing years also improves her children's chances of surviving and remaining healthy.

Offering women more choices: For many women, controlling their own childbearing, by using effective contraception, can open the door to education, employment, and community involvement. Also, couples who have fewer children are more likely to send their daughters as well as sons to school.

Benefits of Slower Population Growth: As more people choose family planning, fertility falls and population growth slows. Although fertility has fallen throughout the world, further declines would make a crucial difference in many developing countries. World population has reached 6 billion and is growing by nearly 80 million people each year.

Slower population growth aids development: It buys time and, with more of the population in their productive years, provides a demographic bonus that can be invested in education, job creation, health care, and other efforts to raise living standards. The sooner fertility falls to low levels, the better most countries will be able to achieve sustainable development. Even small declines in fertility today will make a substantial difference in population size in the future. Acting now to obtain support for reproductive health care helps meet people's needs today and improves prospects (Alcala, M. J. 1995).

Poor knowledge about the effect of the use of long-term methods on fertility as well as poor understanding of the procedures, particularly for vasectomy, have led to the fuelling of myths and beliefs that hinder the successful promotion and adoption of the services. With reference to myth and belief they say; Vasectomy equals Castration, Many men and women in Uganda believe that vasectomy involves removal of the testicles and that it thus renders a man unable to achieve an erection thereby preventing him from having further children. Vasectomy is equated to castration because it renders the testicles although present, incapable of causing pregnancy, just as a man without testicles is unable to cause a pregnancy. Another myth and belief is; Vasectomy means loss of Manhood (Omran, Abdul Rahim. 1992).

There exist many attitudes and cultural barriers towards long-term and permanent family planning methods. Attitudes that favor large families and continued birth of children affect

the adoption of long-term and permanent methods. In the light of Islam, Omran (1992) said that family is the basic social unit of Islamic society. Even without compelling population pressures, there has been concern with spacing and family planning. Islamic view of marriage, family formation and child rearing developed and adapted over the centuries.

Population growth rates in the Muslim world reflect a number of factors. The shortage of financial capital and the degraded state of Middle East lands causes people to use children as a social security system the only social security system they think they can afford, despite the obvious counter-productivity. The low status of women in religious-fundamentalism-oriented Islamic societies prevents women from obtaining education and good jobs, narrowing their life-shaping options and increasing their desired family sizes. Many of the more fundamentalist Muslim Mullahs take dim views of such family planning options and vasectomy if not other forms of contraception (Bruce 2008).

A greater range of scholarly opinions regarding family planning can be found within the body of Islamic hermeneutic writings than is presented here. With respect to contraception, Muslim scholars universally accept the legitimacy of a hadith (or one of the collected sayings of the Prophet Muhammed) in which the Prophet, when asked, noted that withdrawal is permitted, for "if God wanted to create something, no one could avert it." By analogy, this has been interpreted to imply that all nonpermanent methods are in keeping with Islam. Furthermore, a number of Qur'anic verses emphasize the notion that God does not wish to burden believers, with the implication that the quality of children overrides concerns about quantity. Additionally, marriage is portrayed in the Qura'n as a source of companionship and mutual protection, rather than as primarily for procreation (Sura 30:21).

2.3 Islamic perspective of family planning

The source of knowledge has been considered critical for the accuracy and authenticity of information. As we know, a Muslim has three sources of knowledge to obtain answers to the questions regarding guidance on human life. These sources are: (1) The Holy Quran (2) Sayings (Hadith) and acts (Sunnah) of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H); and (3) The views of leaders of various Fiqh in Islam. (Al-Dardir, A.M. and Ahmed, Wajihuddin, 1982) A review of Qur'anic text and Hadith by Khalid Farooq (Akbar 1992) in his famous writing on "Family Planning & Islam: A Review"; concludes that "No Qur'anic text forbids prevention of conception. There are, however, some Qur'anic verses which prohibit infanticide and these are used by Muslims to discourage birth control". After discussing a sizable number of

ahadith, he concludes that, "These ahadith reflect two points; first that the Prophet (P.B.U.H) knew about the practice (of Azl) and did not prohibit it, and second, that the Prophet (P.B.U.H) himself permitted the practice (Akbar 1992).

The views of medieval Muslim jurists do not speak with one voice on the question of birth, on its lawfulness, on conditions for practice and on methods that may be used. The lawfulness of an act is determined by the Muslim scholars on the basis of four principles or sources. Two of these (the Quran & Sunnah) are religious sources, whereas, the others two are known as analogical reasoning and the consensus of the Ulema (ijma). After a thorough deliberation of earlier & contemporary opinions of Muslim jurists, Al-Ghazzali classified their views into three groups:

- a. Unconditional permission for 'Azl',
- b. Permission if the wife consents but prohibition if she does not,
- c. Complete prohibition (Haq, 1984).

Amongst the various views of Muslim jurists Al-Ghazzali adopted a more elaborated view in accepting prevention of contraception. He validated the following reasons for adopting contraception: a desire to preserve the beauty or health of a woman, or save her life, desire to avoid financial hardship and embarrassment, avoidance of other domestic problems caused by a large family. He categorically rejected the acceptance of contraception to avoid a female baby birth, particularly. In addition to an elaborated perspective of Al-Ghazzali, some other Muslim Scholars like Ibn-e-Majah and Ahmad also agreed that coitus interruptus was permitted by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) (Khan 1987, Govt. of Pakistan, 1987).

By and large, the topic of abortion has been touched upon by many scholars, with a difference of opinion. Their deliberations have been based on the division of the development of fetus. According to them the period of pregnancy can be divided into two stages. The first 120 days i.e. 4 months, and the rest of the time before birth of a child.

Akbar expressed his views on the situational changes in Muslim community. He is of the view that Islam was few and weak in the midst of a vast majority of aggressive and oppressive people. The good of the Muslims then required that there should be a call for the multiplication of their numbers, in order that they might be able at the time to fulfill their responsibilities in defending the mission of Islam and protecting the true religion of Allah against the power and multitudinous adversaries threatening it (Akbar, 1992). But now we find that conditions have changed. We find that the density of population in the world

threatens a serious reduction in the living standards of mankind to the extent that many men of thought have been prompted to seek family planning in every country so that the resources may not fall short of ensuring a decent living for its people to provide public service. Family planning, understood by Islam, is not opposed to marriage or to the begetting of children, nor does its concept imply disbelief in the doctrine of fate and Divine dispensation--for Allah Almighty has bestowed reason upon man to enable him to distinguish between the useful and the harmful, and to help him follow the path that would assure him happiness in this world as well as in the world to come.

According to Jabir, "We used to practice 'azl in the Prophet's (PBUH) lifetime while the Qura'n was being revealed." There is another version of the same hadith, "We used to practice coitus interruptus during the Prophet's (PBUH) lifetime. News of this reached him and he did not forbid us." According to Jabir, "A man came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said, 'I have a slave girl, and we need her as a servant and around the palm groves. I have sex with her, but I am afraid of her becoming pregnant.' The Prophet (PBUH) said, 'Practice 'azl with her if you so wish, for she will receive what has been predestined for her.'" (Akbar 1992)

According to 'Umar Ibn Khattab, "The Prophet (PBUH) forbade the practice of 'azl with a free woman except with her permission."

Some in the wordings of Anas, "A man asked the Prophet (pbuh) about 'azl and the Prophet (PBUH) said, 'Even if you spill a seed from which a child was meant to be born on a rock, God will bring forth from that rock a child.'" According to Judhamah bint Wahb, "I was there when the Prophet (PBUH) was with a group saying, 'I was about to prohibit the ghila (intercourse with a woman in lactation) but I observed the Byzantines and the Persians, and saw them do it, and their children were not harmed.' They asked him about coitus interruptus, and the Prophet (PBUH) replied, 'It is a hidden infanticide.'" This hadith provided for Ibn Hazm's minority view that 'azl was prohibited by the Prophet (PBUH). But medieval jurists used the hadith about the Jews to refute the argument for prohibition. They claimed that how the Prophet (PBUH) could have maintained that the Jews lied by calling 'azl akin to infanticide and then have maintained the same opinion himself (Akbar, 1992).

Al-Ghazzali stated that there was no basis for prohibiting 'azl'. For prohibition in Islam was possible only by adducing an original text or by analogy with a given text. In the case of contraception, there was no such text, nor was there any principle on which to base prohibition. In his view, coitus interruptus was permitted absolutely (mubah) and this

permission could be ratified by analogical reasoning. A man could refrain from marriage or marry but abstain from mating, or have sexual mating but abstain from ejaculation inside the vagina--'azl'. Although it was better to marry, have intercourse, and have ejaculation inside the vagina, abstention from these was by no means forbidden or unlawful.

Al-Ghazzali made a distinction between infanticide and contraception. He said that a child could not be formed merely by the emission of the spermatic fluid, but by the settling of semen in the woman's womb; for children were not created by the man's semen alone but of both parents together. So contraception could not be compared with infanticide which was the killing of an existing being while contraception was different. In the process of contraception, the two (male and female) emissions are analogous to two elements, 'offer' (ijab) and 'acceptance' (qabul) which are components of a legal contract in Islamic law. Someone who submits an offer and then withdraws it before the other party accepts it is not guilty of any violation, for a contract does not come into existence before acceptance. In the same manner, there is no real difference between the man's emission and retention of the semen unless it actually mixes with the woman's 'semen' (Al-Ghazzali, *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, Al Matba al-Azhariyya al-Misriyya, 1992).

Another great scholar, Ibn Taymiyah, discussed divine providence, procreation and contraception (in this way) in the early fourteenth century. He argues, "Allah creates children and other animals in the womb by willing the meeting of parents in intercourse, and the two semen in the womb. A man is a fool who says, 'I shall depend on God and not approach my wife and if it is willed that I be granted a child I will be given one, otherwise not and there is no need for intercourse.' This is very different from having intercourse and practicing withdrawal, for withdrawal does not prevent pregnancy if God wills a pregnancy to occur, because there can be involuntary pre-emission of semen." (Ibn Taymiyah, 1966).

Ibn Hazm (994-1063) argued that numerous permissive ahadith were early and reflected the fact that in Islam everything was lawful until the Prophet (pbuh) prohibited it specifically. He based his argument on the hadith quoted by Judhamah bint Wahb. Ibn Hazm claimed that the Prophet (pbuh) had abrogated these permissive Ahadith when he later said that 'azl was 'hidden infanticide.' Since the Qura'n prohibits infanticide in the strongest possible terms, and the Prophet (pbuh) called coitus interruptus hidden infanticide, he maintained that 'azl was prohibited also (Ibn Hazm, *Al-Muhalla*, 1998).

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (1291-1351), who proved 'azl' as permissible in his famous work, *Zad al-Ma'ad*. showed that the claim of Ibn Hazm required an exact historical dating to prove that the abrogating hadith was subsequent to the 'permissive' hadith and that such an exact dating was impossible. He added that, in any case, it was generally agreed in the Islamic law that infanticide applied only after the fetus was formed and the child born. Infanticide thus defined was prohibited; coitus interruptus was clearly something else. (Ibn Qayyim, *Bada'i al-Fawa'id*, 4 vols. (Dar-Al-Kitab al Arabi,1991.).

The Grand Mufti of Jordan, Shaykh 'Abd Allah Al-Qalqili, issued a fatwa in 1964 in which he said: There is agreement among the exponents of jurisprudence that coitus interruptus, as one of the methods for the prevention of childbearing, is allowed. Doctors of religion inferred from this that it is permissible to take a drug to prevent childbearing, or even to induce abortion. We confidently rule in this fatwa that it is permitted to take measures to limit childbearing. (Gupte), Omran argues that: "if excessive fertility leads to proven health risks to the mother and children, and/or if it leads to economic hardship or embarrassment for the father, or if results in the inability of parents to raise their children according to religious traditions, and educate them socially, then Muslims would be allowed to regulate their fertility in such a way that these hardships are warded off or reduced" (Omran, 1992).

A great majority of the Muslim scholars agree to have an abortion for valid reasons during the first stage (Musallam, 1983), but after the stage of ensoulment, abortion is completely prohibited, except in a situation where it may have to be done to save life of the mother. Akbar, (1974) has presented a detailed perspective of various schools of thoughts of Muslim Scholars. According to him, the Hanafi Scholars allowed abortion before the end of 4th month of pregnancy. They also allow a woman to have abortion without her husband's permission, but she must have a strong reason to do that. The most frequently presented reason in this regard is the presence of a nursing infant. As the new pregnancy would put an upper limit on lactation, therefore, the Hanfi Scholars believed that if the mother could not be replaced by a wet-nurse, the infant would die. The abortion is completely forbidden, according the resolution of a majority of scholars of Maliki School of thought.

Shaykh 'Ali Jad al-Haq, the Grand Mufti of Egypt, commented on the projection of family planning as a distrust in the popular belief that Allah will take care of a family's needs regardless of how big it grows, in these words. Contraception, through withdrawal or any newer method, does not mean distrust in Allah's generosity or mercy. Do you recall what our Prophet (pbuh) said to the camel man who was afraid of losing his valuable beast? "First take

the precaution of tying up your camel and then trust in Allah's care for her." Is this not the best counsel for combining planning with faith in God's concern for all? (Haq, 1984.)

2.4 Muslim fertility

During the 1960s and 70s, while trying to explain persistently high fertility in developing countries, most Western demographers had taken the view, that fertility is generally embedded in cultural and religious factors, which encourage high fertility in most countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia. In this respect, much more has been written about high fertility among Muslims than about the followers of any other religion (Jones, and Mehtab, 2005) For example even prior to any considerable fertility decline experienced by any developing country, a question arises whether there is anything demonstrably intentional about this Islamic demographic expansion? In an article seeking to "exploite the myth" of Muslim demographic aggression, journalists Namita Bhandare, Louise Fernandes and Minu Jain themselves admit that according to official surveys, "the disapproval of family planning is highest among Muslims", while "the practice of family planning methods in 1980 was lowest amongst Muslims, only 23 percent of those surveyed practiced it as opposed to 36 percent Hindus. (Operations Research Group, 1993).

They further admit that between 1971 and 1981, "the Hindu population was up by 24.15 percent, whereas the Muslim population shot up by 30.59 percent". Further, they give the decline in fertility levels in the same period: 20.1 percent decline for urban and 20.0 percent for rural Hindus, 18.5 percent for urban and 17.3 percent for rural Muslims. This means that the already lower fertility level of the Hindus is declining faster than that of the Muslims. (Jones and Mehtab, 2005).

The indications from an official source reflects that "the total fertility rate (TFR) is 3.4 children per woman. Muslims have considerably higher fertility than any other religious group. Muslim women have a TFR of 4.4, which is 1.1 child higher than the TFR for Hindu women." (Mathew, 1996). Kirk in his review of Muslim fertility in the mid-1960s, had observed that, Muslim populations tended to have high fertility, there was no evidence of any decline, and in a given country, Muslims tended to have higher fertility than followers of other religions (Berelson, 1966).

Similarly, over two decades later, Weeks (1988) argued that the nations of Islam are characterised by higher than average fertility and rapid rates of population growth [and] the

single most remarkable demographic aspect of Islamic societies is the nearly universal high level of fertility and population growth rate.

Perhaps that was the situation till the mid-1980s, as beginning in the 1990s, it had become clear that there is no such thing as Muslim level or pattern of fertility. For example, in a 1997 publication on the basis of analyses of data collected in the 1990s, round of Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), author demonstrated that between the mid-1970s and mid-1990s, many Muslim majority countries experienced substantial declines in their fertility. Most prominent among them was Iran (with 62 percent decline) followed by Algeria, Tunisia, Syria and Bangladesh, each experiencing a fertility decline between 44 and 49 percent. Thus, he argues that while religious factors may have played important role in keeping fertility levels high in Muslim-majority countries, however, during the 1990s, effective family planning programs seemed to have played fairly important role in achieving fertility transition in several of these countries" (Karim,1997).

Later he argued that in Islamic scriptures, as recorded in the revealed book the Qura'n and Hadith, views on the major proximate determinants of fertility are not only available but have also been widely debated in the writings of the early Muslim jurists and scholars. They took the stand, that besides provision for prolonged breastfeeding to the new born, Islam promotes delayed female marriage and allows for use of birth control methods. Most were also supportive of abortion up to 120 days after conception. (Karim & Jones, 2005).

The Muslim rate of growth in percentage of the Indian population will go on increasing. Instead of extrapolating across centuries, we may make a safer prognosis for the next few decades. It is safe to predict that the 2001 census will show another sharp increase in the rate at which Muslims are demographically catching up with the Hindu majority. It is then that the full effect of the birth control campaigns of the 1960s and 70s will become visible. Given the higher Hindu participation in the birth control effort of the 1960s and 70s, we must now be witnessing a cumulative effect, of a proportionately smaller number of Hindu mothers (born in that period) having in their turn each a smaller number of children than the proportionately larger number of Muslim mothers, on average (P. Gupta, 1989).

In 46 countries where Muslim are in a majority, in the past, while most had fairly high fertility, which continued well into the late 1970s and early 80s, but starting in the 90s, most have experienced declines in TFR. Four countries with the largest concentration of Muslim population are in Asia. These include 203 million in Indonesia, 174 million in Pakistan, 161

million in India and 145 million in Bangladesh. Only in countries where Muslims are in an overwhelming majority and demographic competition is simply not an issue that Islamic governments and religious leaders, faced with the problems resulting from overpopulation, have made an effort to curb the birth rate. Iran now tries to encourage a three-children-per-family norm, and prides itself on reducing the yearly increase in population to 1.75 percent, about half of what it was in the 1980s (Volkskrant, 1995).

Given the extremely high birth rate in the generation now growing up to become the fathers and mothers of the next two decades (much more numerous than the generation presently in their twenties and thirties and trying to stick to the three-children-per-family norm), even a two-children-per-family norm would still amount to an impressive demographic growth for two more generations. With a norm of three children per family, Iran is not even pursuing a policy aimed at achieving demographic zero growth, but even if it were, it could only achieve it at a much later date, and at a much higher population level, than countries with a more stringent commitment to demographic responsibility. For example, Vietnam, with a two-children-per-family norm but still is increasing by over 1 million per year, not to speak of China with its draconic one-child-per-family norm but a population still increasing at a rate of over 10 million individuals per year.

2.5 Converging the perspective

Worldwide the influence of religion on fertility behavior is fast disappearing and apparently now there is no standard pattern of fertility behavior among Muslims. In most Muslim-majority countries - with the exception of those in Sub-Saharan Africa and a few others - fertility rates have been declining and in some have reached fairly low level. It is a fact that over one-fourth of the world's Muslims live in South Asia. Muslim women in three South Asian countries report different patterns of reproductive behavior depending on their country of residence. The analyses suggest that fertility levels of Muslims are converging in Bangladesh and India. In Bangladesh, contraceptive use among currently married Muslim women is fairly high even among those living in rural areas; with two or fewer children; without any schooling and; who are the poorest. Thus, apparently in Bangladesh, there is an impact of proper outreach of family planning program even in lower socioeconomic strata. Even though overall socioeconomic indicators of Muslims in India are poorer than their counterparts living in Pakistan, however, contraceptive use is fairly higher in the former. On the other hand, women living in Pakistan, although have better living conditions and marry late, but they are far behind in contraceptive use, than Muslim women living in Bangladesh

as well in India. To achieve a lower fertility rate comparable to those in Bangladesh and in India, Pakistan's family planning program has to make considerable efforts in reaching out to couples who are of lower socioeconomic strata and/or poorer. Experiences from different countries exhibit different results and different inferences or conclusion. (Cleland J and Wilson C, 1987).

Muslim religious leaders are often assumed to hold more conservative attitudes than the general population about family planning, yet a review of the literature finds no research that has specifically compared the two groups. Indeed, Muslim religious leaders' stance toward family planning is often misinterpreted. While they can be expected to refer to religious texts for guidance as they seek to interpret the acceptability of new ideas, religious leaders may prove no more opposed than other members of society to innovation, unless a new idea is perceived to contravene religious tenets (Carol, 2000).

Studies concerning the family planning beliefs of religious leaders are rare and, when conducted, have typically relied on small samples. In a survey of 81 African Independent Church leaders and 40 Muslim religious leaders residing in the Yoruba area of southwest Nigeria, 12 percent of the former and 78 percent of the latter reported having preached against family planning. Questions regarding family planning knowledge and use however, were not included in the study and, again, there was no comparison with the larger society.

A study of the family planning attitudes and practices of Ethiopian elites was conducted with a sample of 99 orthodox Christian priests and 86 Muslim religious leaders. The authors found that 24 percent of orthodox Christian and 80 percent of Muslim religious leaders had heard of family planning. Among those who were married (89 percent and 92 percent, respectively), 6 percent of the orthodox Christians and 26 percent of the Muslims practiced contraception. Religious leaders were found to be less favorably disposed toward family planning than other elite groups (such as teachers and community leaders), but the authors did not compare religious leaders' responses with those of the general population.

A study in Jordan exhibits that 80 percent of men, 86 percent of women, 82 percent of male religious leaders and 98 percent of female religious leaders believe that family planning is in keeping with the tenets of Islam. Among religious leaders, 36 percent reported that they had preached about family planning in the year preceding the survey. Seventy-five of women and sixty two percent of men in the general public said that they had spoken about family

planning with their spouse, and 9 percent and 17 percent, respectively, reported having spoken with a religious leader (Department of Statistics and Macro International, 1997).

In a study in Jordan when religious leaders were asked about their level of agreement with the statement, "Other religious leaders ask me for advice or counseling about family planning," about 73 percent of male and 83 percent of female clerics agreed or strongly agreed. Roughly 70 percent agreed that the mosque was an appropriate venue for family planning lectures and that family planning issues should be discussed in the mass media

When religious leaders were asked about their public pronouncements regarding family planning, 36 percent replied that they had preached about family planning in the year preceding the survey. About 32 percent of all religious leaders reported that they had lectured four or more times in the past year about family planning-related issues. When asked to elaborate on the themes of their homilies, 63 percent stated that they had preached about family planning in general; 14 percent about population growth and Islam; 9 percent about women, health concerns and family planning; and 8 percent about intra couple relationships and Islam.

These themes were extracted from religious leaders' responses to a series of open-ended questions, so it was often difficult to ascertain whether they spoke favorably about family planning. Yet, only 11 individuals — or less than 1 percent — said both that they believe family planning is prohibited by Islamic law and that they had discussed family planning at public gatherings. (Carol, 2000) Our findings also relate with the findings of a study conducted in Jordan and confirmed the views of the Pakistan Ulema.

In the communities where there was a demonstrated increase in CPR, mullahs (religious leaders) play a key role in advocating contraceptive use. In the three sites of the "Accelerating Contraceptive Use Project", all 37 mullahs interviewed by project staff agreed to promote birth spacing after they had received accurate information about modern contraceptives (MSH 2007). In some cases, mullahs are serving as community health workers and educating men about contraceptives. Community religious leaders are also taking actions that help expand contraceptive use (MSH, 2007).

Ibn Sina and the International Centre for Reproductive Health (2002, p. 33) mention that "in Islam the use of contraception is accepted for 'spacing' of pregnancies, but not for 'planning' the number of pregnancies and children." This is a common idea among Afghans, many of whom regard children as gifts of God (thus not to be planned). However, many people are not

aware of the fatwa issued by the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Sheikh Jadel Haq Ali Jade Haq, in 1983, which states that “A thorough review of the Qur’an reveals no text prohibiting the prevention of pregnancy or diminution of the number of children” (quoted in Omran 1992, p.6). Because Islam is the foundation of Afghans’ lives, the Accelerating Contraceptive Use Project (MSH 2006a, 2006b) crafted messages to promote birth spacing, based on scientific evidence of the benefits of birth spacing, using Qur’anic verses that justify birth spacing. Likewise, in communities in Afghanistan, the sensitive introduction of family planning for birth spacing to protect the health of mothers and children is more acceptable than emphasizing planning for a smaller family that will have a better future economically. Management Sciences for Health No. 6 (2007) Management Sciences for “Health Challenges and Successes in Family Planning in Afghanistan” 2007.

The attitudes of political and social leaders are important and should not be assumed when examining fertility trends. In a recent article contrasting the divergent paths of Bangladesh and Pakistan, the authors argue that Bangladeshi religious leaders sided with Pakistan in the war for independence and therefore undermined their credibility with the general public. In contrast, the Islamic party remained a strong political force in Pakistan. The authors’ underlying assumption is that religious leaders stand in the way of a public that is favorably disposed toward family planning. . The authors of another article argue that Bangladeshi religious leaders opposed contraceptive use in the early 1980s, but that advocacy and orientation workshops led this group to become more favorably disposed to family planning programs.

The family planning literature often promulgates the message that religious leaders must be convinced of the appropriateness of contraceptive use and that they may be more resistant to it than the general public. Increasingly, religious leaders have been invited to participate in seminars and workshops with the goal of increasing their family planning knowledge, of improving their attitudes about contraceptive use and of motivating them to advocate publicly for family planning to help make it socially acceptable.

The views of religious leaders should be studied before assumptions are made about their position on family planning. Furthermore, it is vital to understand more fully religious leaders’ social roles and the obligations that are integral to the fulfillment of these roles. Not only may religious leaders be able to be guided by policy and programs, they also may be able to guide them. This suggests that religious leaders should not be ignored as potential proponents of family planning. Indeed, some studies have shown that religious leaders, as

respected members of the community, can be effective advocates for family planning. The Islamic Republic of Iran, for example, has developed a highly successful family planning program in the past decade, and much of this success has been attributed to the support and guidance provided by the country's religious leaders.

The notion that religious leaders are less favorably disposed than the general public toward family planning is not unique to scholars and policymakers. A study conducted among Egyptian married couples found that 85 percent of men and women personally approved contraception, but that only 65 percent thought their local religious leader would do so even though Egypt's Grand Mufti has publicly proclaimed that "Islam is for family planning."

A study of the family planning knowledge, attitudes and practices of Jordanian men and women indicates that many of them are convinced that their religious leaders would not approve the contraceptive use, even while they themselves do so. Even so, the data also show that the consonance of Islam with family planning, as well as with specific contraceptive methods, is important to Jordanians. Given that Islam is a vital force in Jordanian society and that Muslim clergy, as interpreters of Islamic principles and laws, are an important source of information and advice for many Jordanians. It is important to examine the family planning perceptions of religious leaders and to contrast these with those of the general public. It is important to mention that some ??? would be done in the study in hand. It would not be out of place to acknowledge that the literature reviewed is not only important as a source of knowledge, but would also be utilized for comparing and contrasting with the empirical results of this study. Many of the issues discussed in literature review will provide a guideline for the review & analysis of information collected from Sialkot and Chakwal districts of Punjab, Pakistan.

Among all the groups, who said that they have belief that family planning is allowed in Islam and they registered significantly higher scores on the benefits of family planning scale against those who said that it is makrooh or Haram or those who were uncertain. While this correlation was anticipated, the relatively low scores registered by religious leaders seem to contradict the hypothesis that religious leaders hold attitudes similar to those of the general public.

The effects of high population pressures are multi dimensional for a relatively politically and economically unstable country like Pakistan. The recent shortage of basic necessities of life like flour, electricity, natural gas, petroleum products and many others have direct

relationship with menace of population growth in Pakistan. One of the highest population growth rates in the world has nullified all efforts and resources invested to raise the living standards of a common Pakistani. No doubt, the per acre production of crops has increased over the time, industries are expanding, private & public sectors are providing more employment opportunities, new venues have been explored by the corporate and small enterprises; but all these efforts could not produce a collective effect to reduce the adverse effects of population growth. As a result of this population explosion, Pakistan could not provide large additions of youngsters with food, clothing and education. The young adults remained without jobs, housing and other consumers essentials, whereas the vicious circle of poverty is affecting all segments of society. (Akbar, 1974). As a result the gender disparities have gone worse in this country.

The efforts to control population growth in Pakistan started decades ago and in early 1950's, it was realized that the ever growing population will not only add into the miseries of people but is a constant threat to the social system of Pakistan. Pakistan is among those countries that first of all started government sponsored population control campaigns, but in 30 years, even after spending nearly five billion rupees on population control campaigns, we have failed to restrain the rate of population growth (Akbar, 1974). There is little evidence of any positive effect of these programs except some slogans printed on posted envelopes and some billboards with jingles. While pointing out the failure of family planning program in Pakistan, the list may be a long one by including conceptual, programmatic, administrative, logistical and implementation issues. Despite these administrative realities, there is a considered opinion that the ambiguity over the way Islam views, family planning has been one of the major obstacles for a large scale acceptance of family planning programs by Muslim community of Pakistan.

3.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of house hold population

In order to have a better understanding of the perceptions and attitudes of eligible persons for this study, it is equally important to know their background characteristics. The social environment of an individual is an important determinant of a person's behavior, attitudes and practices. This chapter provides a demographic and socio-economic profile of the respondents. In order to get the holistic information about the respondents, detailed information was collected on literacy, employment status, occupation and earnings. Such background information will be useful for better understanding of findings presented in the next section of report. As the research used a combined approach of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, this chapter includes characteristics of respondents from both the approaches. The quantitative survey focused on information mostly pertaining to knowledge and practices of the target population in a certain age group; i.e. female in the age bracket of 15 to 49 years, and males of 15-54 years. Similarly, all participants of the focus groups were between the same age group of 15 to 49 years for females and 15-54 for males. The qualitative side of the study was more towards the behavioral aspects of the respondents to supplement the statistical data. However, the study respondents belonged to the same age cohorts, but their socio-economic characteristics varied, which are of considerable importance during the analysis of their behavioral and attitudinal trends.

A few demographic and socio-economic characteristics were taken into consideration during the selection of IDI respondents, which were religious leaders. This section discusses various characteristics of these eligible people such as age, sex distribution, marital status, educational attainment, employment status, ethnicity, caste, number of children and contraceptive use. In this context, we have observed from different studies that there are five factors potentially affecting family planning, in addition to the expected positive relationship of age of women, number of living children, urban residence, and education, deriving from both the sociological and cultural perspectives (Coale and Watkins, 1986). Socio-demographic and economic background characteristics are important for understanding its nexus with their reproductive attitudes and behaviors, which can be helpful in promoting change, especially in patriarchal societies like Pakistan where status of women is low (Hussain, Z, 2006-7).

3.1.1 Age structure

Age is an important factor influencing an individual's attitude and outlook at various aspects of life. It can be seen in Table 3.1, more than three-fourth (79 percent) of all the 2,398 respondents were between 25-44 years, reflecting mid age population base. There is a gradual decline in the percentages as the age brackets exceed 45 and above years. A similar age pattern is reflected in both Chakwal (80 percent) and Sialkot (85 percent) districts, with a significant increase in the percentages as the ages of the respondents went up and then declined in two older age groups. As regards the tehsils, similar pattern emerged in nearly all of them.

3.1.2 Martial status

Personal characteristics of a person are affected by their marital status. In Pakistan, marriage is a social and religious obligation (Sultan, Baqui, 2008). In order to determine the marital status of the respondents, information was collected from all the respondents. Out of a total of 2,398 respondents, 2,348 (98.6 percent) were currently married. The share of those ever married including widowed, divorced or separated was very small (1.4 percent) on the whole, which was more for Sialkot (2.7 percent) than Chakwal (0.2 percent). When difference was observed by sex the findings showed that more females were ever married than males. This might be due to the fact that more males tend to re-marry than females.

3.1.3 Educational status

It is a well established fact that education plays an important role in country's development and progress. It redirects the attitudes and behaviors of the population towards improvement in the quality of life. Furthermore, it helps to overcome poverty, increase income, improve health, and reduce family size, and change the perceptions of the people. (Hussain, Z, 2006-7). The education has been established as one of the strongest and important predictors of socio economic and demographic behavior in Pakistan (Ali, 2000). Moreover, it plays an important role in changing overall behavior of the population.

When we look in to the literacy rate of the sample population, the facts reveal that only 17 percent of the total sample had no education, while the rest had education level ranging from informal to secondary plus grades in all the areas. If we narrow down the focus in geographical terms then the situation reveals that in Sialkot 18.8 percent respondents were illiterate as compared to the respondents from Chakwal where 17.4 percent never attained any formal/informal education. The share of illiterate respondents was highest in Tehsil Daska (23.6 percent). There was a reasonable percentage of respondents having studied up-to

intermediate level, but greater concentration was in the middle (19.4 percent) and secondary (27.6 percent) level education categories. Very few had attained secondary plus (18.9 percent) education level. This pattern prevailed in nearly all areas.

3.1.4 Employment status

Labor force participation not only gives a person an opportunity to earn income, but also exposes them to the outside world especially for women to various authority structures and networks, other than kin-based ones (Dixon, M, 1993). The perceptions and practices of the respondents on the matter of Islam and family planning are influenced by their social environment and their daily activities. Employment status is another important determinant in this regard.

It was found that out of 2,398 respondents, more than half (55 percent) of them were employed in some kind of paid jobs. The ratio of such persons was slightly lower in Sialkot (53.4 percent) than in Chakwal (55.5 percent). If we analyse the data Tehsil wise, then the highest percentage of unemployed respondents came from Choa Saidan Shah (49.6 percent), followed by Pasrur (48.2 percent), Daska (47.7 percent), Sialkot (44.8 percent) and Talagang (44.3 percent), respectively.

Spouse employment status is also very important in our society. As wives are expected to be economically dependent on their husbands and it is taken as a source of pride and prestige for men that they are fully looking after the economic needs of their wives. During study, a question around the income generating status of the spouses was asked from both the males and the females respondents, and the data later revealed that the working couples were 52.6 percent of the total sample population.

Background characteristics		Sialkot				Chakwal				All			
		Daska	Pasrur	Sialkot1	Total	Chakwal	Choa Sadian Shah	Tala Gang	Total	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Respondent's Fiqah	Fiqh Hanafi	20.6	9.3	11.9	14.1	167	20.0	95.8	88.0	51.4	611	32.7	778
	Fiqh e Jafariya	2.1	2.8	2.7	2.5	30	14.1	0.8	8.2	10.7	127	6.6	157
	Ahl-e-Haddith	5.4	9.9	6.1	6.9	82	--	1.7	2.4	1.0	12	4.0	94
	Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal Jamaat	71.9	78.0	79.2	76.5	909	65.9	1.7	1.4	36.9	439	56.7	1,348
Spouse's Level of Education	No education	26.4	23.0	24.4	24.7	296	18.6	14.4	19.3	18.4	221	21.6	517
	Upto primary	13.6	13.3	12.9	13.3	159	16.2	16.9	12.1	14.9	178	14.1	337
	Upto Middle	18.2	26.7	20.6	21.5	258	15.9	14.4	14.3	15.2	182	18.3	440
	Upto Secondary	22.8	25.8	25.0	24.5	294	29.8	24.6	32.9	30.4	364	27.4	658
	Secondary +	18.5	10.9	17.1	15.8	190	19.2	29.7	21.2	21.0	251	18.4	441
	DK/missing	0.5	0.3	--	0.3	3	0.2	--	0.2	0.2	0.2	2	0.2
No. of children: Sons	0	20.3	19.4	17.3	18.8	226	15.3	17.8	27.4	19.8	237	19.3	463
	1	27.7	21.8	26.5	25.6	307	44.2	36.4	31.4	39.0	467	32.3	774
	2	26.7	33.6	31.5	30.5	366	28.3	25.4	26.0	27.2	326	28.9	692
	3	15.9	15.2	15.8	15.7	188	8.2	12.7	11.2	9.7	116	12.7	304
	4	5.9	7.9	6.3	6.6	79	2.9	5.9	3.8	3.5	42	5.0	121
	5+	3.6	2.1	2.7	2.8	34	1.1	1.7	0.2	0.8	10	1.8	44
Daughters	0	21.5	22.1	24.8	23.0	276	27.6	28.0	31.0	28.8	345	25.9	621
	1	28.7	30.0	31.3	30.1	361	35.5	30.5	31.2	33.5	401	31.8	762
	2	25.4	21.8	20.8	22.6	271	23.8	19.5	20.0	22.0	264	22.3	535
	3	13.6	16.7	14.0	14.6	175	8.0	10.2	10.7	9.2	110	11.9	285
	4	5.1	7.3	6.5	6.3	75	3.5	5.1	4.3	3.9	47	5.1	122
	5+	5.6	2.1	2.7	3.5	42	1.7	6.8	2.9	2.6	31	3.0	73
Both sexes	0	8.5	7.0	6.9	7.4	89	0.9	11.0	11.9	5.8	69	6.6	158
	1	11.0	13.9	12.3	12.3	148	19.5	14.4	16.9	18.1	217	15.2	365
	2	14.6	9.1	16.7	13.9	167	29.7	14.4	25.2	26.6	319	20.3	486
	3	17.2	22.7	18.8	19.3	232	23.2	24.6	14.0	20.1	241	19.7	473
	4	22.3	17.9	18.5	19.6	235	15.3	10.2	15.0	14.7	176	17.1	411
	5+	26.4	29.4	26.9	27.4	329	11.4	25.4	16.9	14.7	176	21.1	505
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1,200	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1,198	100.0	2,398

This is a direct reflection on the local socio-economic conditions in the areas. It should be kept in mind that the relatively high ratio of employed persons in a particular area does not necessarily mean greater availability of employment opportunities in those areas and non-availability in others. May be more people work due to poor economic conditions. But the income level of the respondents shows that nearly two-third of the people were of middle class having income from 3,000 to 10,000 PKR, while one third (29.8 percent) of them lies in 10,000 plus category. In Sialkot more people are business men or employed therefore as expected more Sialkot respondents (35.3 percent) lie in 10,000 plus category as compared to the respondents from Chakwal (24.5 percent).

3.1.5 Fiqh

Fiqh of a person plays a very important in shaping ones personality, attitude, faith and set of beliefs towards life. According to our data, most of the study respondents belonged to the sect Ahle-sunnat Wal Jammāt (56.7 percent) followed by Hanafi Fiqh (32.7 percent). Whereas, only 6.6 percent (10.7 percent in Chakwal and 2.5 percent in Sialkot) of the total respondents; belonged to Fiqh e Jafariya.

3.1.6 Number of children

There is an evidence that big family size and a strong son preference is in high desire among the Pakistani couples (Khan and Sirageldin, 1977; Mahmood 1992; Ali and Rukanudin 1992). The number of children does explain some variations. Table 3.1 elucidates the data regarding number of children in respondents house holds. From data it can be found that 19.3 percent of the respondents had no sons so far, whereas, two-third respondents (61.2 percent) had one to two sons, one-third (36.8 percent) had 3 to 4 sons, and 21.1 percent had 5 or more sons.

3.2 Socio-demographic characteristics of focus group discussants

This section addresses the principal demographic factors, of FGDs participants. As discussed earlier that the total number of participants of all FGDs were 185. Highest number of the participants were from Talagang (49) followed by Sialkot (38), Chakwal (33), Pasrur (26), Daska (21) and Choa Sadian Shah (18). The detailed demographic characteristics are discussed in the sections below:

3.2.1 Age distribution of FGD participants

Table 3.2 indicates that overall highest percentage of the participants were in age groups of 30-39 (51.4 percent) years followed by 40-45+ (25.4 percent) years and 20-29 (23.3 percent) years. In Sialkot the similar trend is found whereas in Chakwal most of the participants were

in age group 30-39 years, followed by the age group 20-29 (27 percent) years and 40-45+ (21 percent) years.

3.2.2 Marital status

As regards the marital status of the participants is concerned, it was found that 98 percent of the FGD participants were married, whereas, only 1.6 percent were ever married. When we observed the Tehsil wise data it got revealed that other than Sialkot Tehsil (7.9 percent), all participants were currently married.

Table 3.2: Background Characteristics of FGDs Respondents

Background characteristics	Sialkot						Chakwal						Total	
	Daska	Pasrur	Sialkot	Total		Chakwal	Choa Sadian Shah	Tala gang	Total		Percent	Number	Percent	Number
				Percent	Number				Percent	Number				
Age of Participants	20-24	4.8	19.2	2.6	8.2	7	3.0	5.6	6.1	5.0	5	6.5	12	
	25-29	28.6	3.8	5.3	10.6	9	27.3	33.3	14.3	22.0	22	16.8	31	
	30-34	19.0	11.5	28.9	21.2	18	18.2	27.8	24.5	23.0	23	22.2	41	
	35-39	19.0	26.9	36.8	29.4	25	33.3	22.2	28.6	29.0	29	29.2	54	
	40-44	14.3	30.8	15.8	20.0	17	6.1	11.1	14.3	11.0	11	15.1	28	
Marital Status	45+	14.3	7.7	10.5	10.6	9	12.1	100.0	12.2	10.0	10	10.3	19	
	Married	100.0	100.0	92.1	96.5	82	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100	98.4	182	
Education level of participants	Ever Married	--	--	7.9	3.5	3	--	--	--	--	--	1.6	3	
	No education	--	15.4	16.7	12.0	10	--	--	4.1	2.0	2	6.6	12	
	Upto primary	4.8	26.9	30.6	22.9	19	3.0	--	6.1	4.0	4	12.6	23	
	Upto middle	14.3	30.8	19.4	21.7	18	12.1	5.6	6.1	8.0	8	14.2	26	
	Upto secondary	38.1	23.1	16.7	24.1	20	60.6	66.7	44.9	54.0	54	40.4	74	
Sect	Secondary +	42.9	3.8	16.7	19.3	16	24.2	27.8	38.8	32.0	32	26.2	48	
	Fiqh e Hanafi	19.0	23.1	15.8	18.8	16	3.0	--	12.2	7.0	7	12.4	23	
	Fiqh e Jafariya	19.0	3.8	34.2	21.2	18	15.2	33.3	36.7	29.0	29	25.4	47	
	Ah-le-Haddith	4.8	--	--	1.2	1	9.1	--	4.1	5.0	5	3.2	6	
	Ah-le-Sunnat	42.9	73.1	31.6	47.1	40	72.7	66.7	46.9	59.0	59	53.5	99	
Children	98	14.3	--	18.4	11.8	10	--	--	--	--	--	5.4	10	
	0	9.5	7.7	7.9	8.2	7	--	--	4.1	3.0	3	5.4	10	
	1	19.0	11.5	7.9	11.8	10	30.3	27.8	18.4	24.0	24	18.4	34	
	2	14.3	15.4	18.4	16.5	14	27.3	16.7	30.6	27.0	27	22.2	41	
	3	14.3	15.4	18.4	16.5	14	18.2	33.3	24.5	24.0	24	20.5	38	
Currently using Family Planning method	4+	42.9	50.0	47.4	47.1	40	24.2	16.7	22.4	22.0	22	33.5	62	
	User	33.3	19.2	57.9	40.0	34	84.8	66.7	59.2	69.0	69	55.7	103	
Total	Non User	66.7	80.8	42.1	60.0	51	15.2	33.3	40.8	31.0	31	44.3	82	
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	85	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100	100.0	185	

3.2.3 Education status

It was policy of the research to have the representation of educated and un-educated participants for FGDs. Table 3.2 showed that 93.4 percent of the participants had at least 5 grades of education, while the rest 6.6 percent of the participants were not educated. It is amazing to note that two fifth (40.4 percent) of the FGDs participants acquired upto secondary education and only one fourth (26.2 percent) had attained the secondary plus level. There are variations in educational level across the districts, as more than fifty percent of the participants attained upto secondary level of education in Chakwal. While, 32 percent of the participants had secondary plus level of education. When we compare this state of education with the participants from Sialkot, it is found that the participants there are a little less educated than Chakwal that is nearly 19.3 percent participants have education upto secondary plus level.

3.2.4 Fiqh of FGD participants

Two main Fiqh in Pakistan are Fiqh e Hanafia and Jafariya. Nearly three fourth (69.1 percent) of the participants belonged to Sunni Fiqh including Ahle Sunnat Wal Jammata and Hanafi Fiqh and Ahle Hadith while one fourth (25.4 percent) of the participants belonged to Fiqh e Jafariya. There were more Fiqh e Jafariya people in Chakwal (29 percent) than Sialkot district (21.2 percent). It is an interesting finding that 5.4 percent participants were not aware of their Fiqh; and all of them were residents of Sialkot district.

3.2.5 Children of FGD participants

Table 3.2 of the report exhibits data regarding children of FGD participants. For achieving desired level of sons people tend to have high parity, therefore, in our survey we have considered the number of children of FGD participants and it is observed that 5.4 percent participants had no children so far. More than one third of the participants (40.6 percent) had one-two children. More than half of the participants had 3-4 or more. Sialkot had high parity in its tehsils in this regard; as nearly half of the population has more than four children over there.

3.2.6 Contraceptive use

The knowledge and awareness of individuals toward contraceptive use are important in influencing their contraceptive behaviors, which can be changed (Westoff Bankole 1999). Recent research based on nationally representative survey confirms a strong association between contraceptive use, and the effects of social and demographic variables (Mahmood, N., Karin 1996). Keeping in view the importance of socio-demographic variables we have

observed the relationship in our survey. From total of 185 participants, the highest rate (84.8 percent) of contraceptive usage is in Tehsil Chakwal and the lowest (19.2 percent) is in Tehsil Pasrur, where half of the participants have 4+ children.

3.3 Socio-demographic characteristics of IDI respondents

Total sampled respondents of In-depth Interview (IDIs) were 36 with an equal representation from Sialkot and Chakwal districts. Twelve from Chakwal, 8 from Sialkot, 5 from Daska and Pasrur each, 4 from Talagang and 2 from Choa Saidan Shah. The main reason to observe the role of religious leaders in this research was to get their point of view about family planning because there exists a strong opinion that religious leaders have strong implication on all aspects of family planning programme in Pakistan. It is also believed that their opinion is widely considered and followed by the masses and it is an important factor in lowering the likelihood of contraceptive use. This suggests that the family planning programme should strive to clarify the misperceptions about family planning in the religion through enhancing motivational campaigns as well as seeking the cooperation and support of religious and community leaders, as this has been done successfully in other Muslim countries (Kamal and Fowler 1991; Sathar 1989). By keeping this element in front, the research study focused its concentration on assessing the attitude, perceptions and practices of the religious leaders regarding Islam and family planning. In this regard, it was pertinent to collect the demographic characteristics of this group, and they are positioned in detail in the following sub sections:

3.3.1 Gender distribution

Gender statistics presented in Table 3.3 indicates that out of 36 in-depth interviews of the religious leaders third fourth (66.7 percent) of respondents were males and one third (33.3 percent) were females. This was an integral part of the project to ensure representation of males and females religious leaders to have a gender perspective on Islam and Family Planning. It is important to mention that until recent past the religious leaders used to be men only. No doubt Khateeb and Imam Masjid is required to be a male but with the emergence of Madaris for women, we have a reasonable number of female religious scholars who are teaching and guiding in affairs related to Islam. Corresponding to the less number of female religious leaders, the resrach team could manage to include only one third of female religious scholars for IDIs .

3.3.2 Age distribution

The age analysis of IDI participants revealed an interesting finding that 14.3 percent of the respondents were in younger age group of 25-29 years, this showed that the young generation has tilt to become the religious leader. Half (51.4 percent) of the population was in the mid age group and one third (34.3 percent) of the respondents were in 45 plus age group.

3.3.3 Marriage pattern

It is a general perception that the Holy Quran emphasizes on the early marriage of males and females. Keeping this perspective in view, the marital status of the religious leaders was observed. Table 3.3 presents that majority of the respondents (91.7 percent) were married, while, a meagre number (5.6 percent) were widowed and 2.8 percent were unmarried. An important finding here is that none of the religious leaders was divorced and this proves the fact that Muslims believe that divorce is worst Halal thing in Islam and religious leaders do not believe in divorce. At national level also only 0.3 percent currently married females were divorced (Sultan, Baqui. 2008). Polygamy is legal in Pakistan and 1 out of 15 (7 percent) females reported that their husbands have other wives (Sultan, Baqui., 2008). The IDI data revealed that one religious leader had two wives.

3.3.4 Education status

It is generally considered that religious leaders are not interested in acquiring formal education, but our data negates this assumption as the average education level was reasonable among the religious leaders selected for in-depth interviews. Table 3.3 proves the fact that more than third fourth (77 percent) of the IDI participants had an education level of metric or above with 17.1 per cent having less than matric education. Similarly, only 5.7 percent had received informal education, 37.1 percent matric, 17.1 percent FA, 2.9 per cent had attained up-to BA standard education. A significant percentage i.e. 20 percent of the religious leaders reported to have the Master's Degree. More informal education level was found in Daska Tehsil of Sialkot district.

3.3.5 Fiqh

The sample of religious leaders included scholars from both sects Shia & Sunni. One-fifth (22.6 percent) of the religious leaders were selected from Jafariya sect. As mentioned earlier, that Chakwal has more density of Shias, therefore half of the Fiqh e Jafariya religious leaders originated from Choa Saidan Shah - Chakwal.

3.3.6 Income status

It was observed during the in-depth interviews that as far as any income generating activities are concerned, the target population of religious leaders are working for living other than an individual who is trying to determine his/her career path. However, a noticeable percentage (97 percent) of religious leaders claimed to be employed. A good number of religious leaders, that is, 39.4 percent are earning more than 10,000 per month and 39.4 percent are earning 3,000 to 5,000 rupees per month. Daska religious leaders are the richest among all, as 75 percent of them earned more than 10,000 rupees per month. A relatively higher percentage of Sialkot religious leaders were employed as compared to Chakwal. The apparent reason seems to be more availability of certain jobs for them as Sialkot is an industrialist and business oriented city.

Among the females, both in Chakwal and Sialkot areas, majority either stayed home according to the social norms or claimed to be unemployed. Even in the unemployed category, the respondents were not sure whether they had desire to work or they were actually seeking employment. As majority had some level of education and there might be a possibility that they were looking for appropriate employment.

Table 3.3: Background Characteristics of IDIs Respondents

Background characteristics	Sialkot					Chakwal					Total	
	Daska	Pasur	Sialkot	Total		Chakwal	Choa Sadian Shah	Tala Gang	Total		Percent	Number
				Percent	Number				Percent	Number		
Sex												
	Male	80.0	62.5	66.7	12	66.7	--	100.0	66.7	12	66.7	24
	Female	40.0	37.5	33.3	6	33.3	100.0	--	33.3	6	33.3	12
Age of Respondent												
	25 - 29	40.0	12.5	16.7	3	9.1	50.0	--	11.8	2	14.3	5
	30 - 34	--	20.0	5.6	1	27.3	--	--	17.6	3	11.4	4
	35 - 39	--	20.0	11.1	2	--	--	50.0	11.8	2	11.4	4
	40 - 44	--	20.0	11.1	2	54.5	50.0	25.0	47.1	8	28.6	10
	45 +	60.0	62.5	55.6	10	9.1	--	25.0	11.8	2	34.3	12
Marital Status												
	Unmarried	--	12.5	5.6	1	--	--	--	--	--	2.8	1
	Married	100.0	75.0	88.9	16	91.7	100.0	100.0	94.4	17	91.7	33
	Widowed	--	12.5	5.6	1	8.3	--	--	5.6	1	5.6	2
Education												
	<Matric	--	20.0	5.9	1	25.0	--	50.0	27.8	5	17.1	6
	Matric	--	20.0	23.5	4	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	9	37.1	13
	FA	25.0	25.0	29.4	5	8.3	--	--	5.6	1	17.1	6
	BA	--	12.5	5.9	1	--	--	--	--	--	2.9	1
	MA	25.0	25.0	23.5	4	16.7	50.0	--	16.7	3	20.0	7
	In-Formal	50.0	--	11.8	2	--	--	--	--	--	5.7	2
Sect												
	Ahl-e-Sunnat	75.0	75.0	73.3	11	90.0	50.0	75.0	81.3	13	77.4	24
	Fiqh e Jafariya	25.0	25.0	26.7	4	10.0	50.0	25.0	18.8	3	22.6	7
Income												
	No income	--	20.0	6.3	1	--	--	--	--	--	3.0	1
	3000-5000	--	40.0	37.5	6	36.4	50.0	50.0	41.2	7	39.4	13
	6000-9000	25.0	--	6.3	1	27.3	50.0	25.0	29.4	5	18.2	6
	10,000+	75.0	40.0	50.0	8	36.4	--	25.0	29.4	5	39.4	13
Sons												
	0	25.0	20.0	15.4	2	16.7	50.0	--	16.7	3	16.1	5
	1	--	20.0	7.7	1	16.7	--	25.0	16.7	3	12.9	4
	2	25.0	40.0	38.5	5	50.0	--	25.0	38.9	7	38.7	12
	3	25.0	--	15.4	2	16.7	50.0	25.0	22.2	4	19.4	6
	4+	25.0	20.0	23.1	3	--	--	25.0	5.6	1	12.9	4

Background characteristics	Sialkot					Chakwal					Total	
	Daska	Pasrur	Sialkot	Total		Chakwal	Choa Sadlan Shah	Tala Gang	Total		Percent	Number
				Percent	Number				Percent	Number		
Daughters	50.0	--	--	15.4	2	--	50.0	--	5.6	1	9.7	3
	--	20.0	25.0	15.4	2	41.7	--	50.0	38.9	7	29.0	9
	25.0	--	50.0	23.1	3	50.0	--	25.0	38.9	7	32.3	10
	25.0	20.0	--	15.4	2	8.3	50.0	--	11.1	2	12.9	4
	--	60.0	25.0	30.8	4	--	--	25.0	5.6	1	16.1	5
Children - Total	20.0	--	--	5.9	1	--	50.0	--	5.6	1	5.7	2
	--	--	--	--	--	16.7	--	--	11.1	2	5.7	2
	--	20.0	14.3	11.8	2	--	--	25.0	5.6	1	8.6	3
	20.0	20.0	28.6	23.5	4	25.0	--	--	16.7	3	20.0	7
	60.0	60.0	57.1	58.8	10	58.3	50.0	75.0	61.1	11	60.0	21
Language	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	18	91.7	100.0	100.0	94.4	17	97.2	35
	--	--	--	--	--	8.3	--	--	5.6	1	2.8	1
Ethnicity	--	50.0	25.0	30.0	3	--	--	--	--	--	17.6	3
	--	--	25.0	10.0	1	--	--	--	--	--	5.9	1
	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	5	100.0	--	--	14.3	1	35.3	6
	--	--	--	--	--	--	50.0	--	14.3	1	5.9	1
Others	50.0	--	--	10.0	1	--	50.0	100.0	71.4	5	35.3	6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	10	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	7	100.0	17

3.3.7 Parity of IDI respondents

And God has made for you mates from yourselves and made for you out of them, children and grandchildren. Al - Nahl (16: 7-2) these verses suggest that tranquility is an important purpose of family life and is achieved through marriage. Also, while procreation is expected in marriage to maintain the human race, sexual relations in marriage need not always be for the purpose of having children. Literature proves that religious leader of any religion are pro natalist and more inclined to have large number of children. This fact is also proved by our study results. The data reveals that majority (90 percent) of the religious leaders had more than 3 to 4 children and the similar pattern prevailed in all the districts irrespective of the caste or creed or area, as in a number of cases the religious leaders had 8-9 children.

3.3.8 Ethnicity

The data regarding language and ethnicity revealed that majority of the religious leaders speak Punjabi language, especially in Sialkot, while 8 percent in Tehsil Chakwal spoke some other language. The largest ethnic group found among the clergy was Gujar (35 percent), followed by Rajput (18 percent), Awan, Raja and Arian (6 percent).

3.3.9 Contraceptive use

It is also argued that religious beliefs in Pakistan are not favorable to the practice of family planning and contribute to a lack of self-efficacy in limiting family size. Based on the information from the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey of 1990-91, about 13 percent of women cite "religion" as a reason for not intending to use contraception in the future, while the percentage among husbands is higher, (18 percent generally and 22 percent for husbands over 30 years of age). In terms of 'the ideal number of children', about 60 percent of both husbands and wives give "up to God" as a response; this percentage is unprecedented in both previous national surveys and among the 30 other DHS country surveys that have been completed thus far (Ali and Rukanuddin 1992). While PDHS (2008) informs that 5 percent women cite that there is religious prohibition in the use of family planning methods, 28.4 percent said its up to God to bless them with children; this shows religious influence on people (Ahmed, Askar, 2008)

It is amazing that data of the sampled religious leaders reflects that despite the misinformation that religious leader in Pakistan are against contraception, nearly half of them were using contraceptive. The results of other studies also show that religious beliefs are important in lowering the likelihood of contraceptive use both among urban and rural women. This suggests that the programme should strive to clarify the misperceptions about family

planning in the religion through enhancing motivational campaigns as well as seeking the cooperation and support of religious and community leaders, as this has been done successfully in other Muslim countries (Kamal and Fowler 1991; Sathar 1989).

FAMILY PLANNING KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES AT HOUSEHOLD LEVEL

The level of knowledge about family planning methods is important because adequate information about the available methods of contraception enables couples to develop a rational approach to planning their families. (Ahmed and Mumtaz, 2008). An assessment of knowledge and use of contraceptive methods, therefore, constituted one of the primary objectives of this study that leads to observe knowledge of the males & the females about the practices of family planning in the light of Islam. This chapter captures the perceptions of married males and female's knowledge, ever and current use of contraception, source of information and motivation, reasons of non use and intentions to use family planning in future. Furthermore, exposure to family planning messages and contents conveyed by these messages is also a part of this chapter. To support the arguments where appropriate, additions and comparisons are also made with the findings of FGDs.

4.1 Knowledge of family planning

The role of advocacy and awareness efforts to spread the messages of family planning has always been under heavy debate in Pakistan. Amidst a state of controversy the present research focused on getting the reality through empirical evidences. The responses of the respondents regarding their source of knowledge about family planning are discussed below.

Table 4.1 shows that over all 96.6 percent respondents have the knowledge of family planning in districts of Sialkot and Chakwal. Percentage of male respondents having family planning knowledge was comparatively lower than females in Sialkot. In Chakwal the same trend is followed. The Women are more exposed to family planning than men and their knowledge on the subject was slightly higher than the later.

A comparative review of the respondent's knowledge about family planning reveals that 96.6 percent of the sample from Sialkot and Chakwal has basic understanding of the concept of family planning. Some variations of small magnitude have been reflected in the results across the sex of the respondents and geographical location. In other words, 96.8 percent females in comparison to 93.5 percent of males in district Sialkot had knowledge of family planning's concept and practices. Whereas in Chakwal this gap has been very narrow with 98.7 percent for females and 97.2 percent for males. The data collected regarding the factor of knowledge about family planning reflects that women are more exposed to family planning than men.

To observe the knowledge of general public about family planning the views of FGDs participants were also obtained. It was observed from the findings of FGDs that 86.5 percent were aware about the family planning whether they were practicing it or not. A female respondent of FGD conducted in Chakwal argued that “*Family planning is to plan number of children and management of birth spacing*”. One of the male from Sialkot mentioned that “*Family planning means to plan children according to the income and other sources*”. Another male from urban area of Chakwal said that “*In my opinion family planning means to plan two or three children according to the resources*”. A female respondent of FGD conducted in Chakwal shared her knowledge about family planning and said that “*The mutual decision of husband and wife about the total number of children to be born and the period of spacing between two births called family planning*”.

Table 4.1: Knowledge of Family Planning and Source of Motivation among General Public

Family planning knowledge and Use		Sialkot			Chakwal			All		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Knowledge about family planning	Yes	93.5	96.8	95.2	97.2	98.7	97.9	95.4	97.8	96.6
	No	6.5	3.2	4.8	2.7	1.3	2.0	4.6	2.2	3.4
Source of Knowledge	Radio	34.3	1.6	18.2	16.1	24.6	20.3	25.1	13.3	19.3
	Television	71.5	56.5	64.1	83.6	76.4	80.0	77.6	66.7	72.2
	News paper/pamphlets	28.5	15.1	22.0	12.4	2.4	7.4	20.4	8.6	14.6
	Friend	25.3	9.3	17.5	15.9	5.4	10.7	20.6	7.3	14.0
	Spouse	9.3	22.7	15.9	1.3	5.4	3.4	5.3	13.9	9.5
	Parents	1.4	5.5	3.4	0.2	6.1	3.1	0.8	5.8	3.2
	Other relatives	0.7	11.1	5.8	3.4	6.4	4.9	2.0	8.7	5.3
	Health/family planning person	34.8	61.6	48.0	61.6	65.8	63.7	48.3	63.8	56.0
	Ulema	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.6
	Any meeting	0.8	3.5	2.2	2.5	0.3	1.4	1.7	1.9	1.8
	Never heard	--	0.7	0.3	--	--	--	--	0.3	0.2
	Others	0.7	2.3	1.5	0.5	2.2	1.3	0.6	2.2	1.4
Ever use of family planning	Yes	47.9	65.0	56.3	59.0	66.2	62.6	53.5	65.6	59.5
	No	52.1	35.0	43.7	41.0	33.8	37.4	46.5	34.4	40.5
Current use of family planning	Yes	44.8	51.6	48.1	50.6	49.5	50.0	47.7	50.5	49.1
	No	55.2	48.4	51.9	49.4	50.5	50.0	52.3	49.5	50.9
Motivated to use family planning	Spouse	8.0	29.8	18.7	7.2	12.6	9.9	7.6	21.0	14.2
	parents	0.2	1.1	0.6	--	1.2	0.6	0.1	1.1	0.6
	Other relatives	0.3	2.5	1.4	0.5	1.0	0.8	0.4	1.7	1.1
	Friend	2.5	1.6	2.1	9.0	1.5	5.3	5.8	1.5	3.7
	family planning/Health person	28.0	26.2	27.1	38.5	38.7	38.6	33.3	32.6	33.0
	Ulema	0.2	--	0.1	0.3	--	0.2	.3	--	0.1
	Others	5.4	2.8	4.1	5.0	3.0	4.0	5.2	2.9	4.1
	No one	3.7	--	1.9	--	0.7	0.3	1.9	0.3	1.1

The Planners and implementors of family planning programs have always remained concerned about the efficacy of sources to impart the information. The responses of the participants in this regard have been discussed as follows.

It is important to mention that research provided multiple choices to the respondents "television" appeared to be the most important and the result given in the Table 4.1 reflects independent percentage for each source of imparting knowledge about family planning. In both districts 72.2 percent of the respondents claimed "television" as a source of knowledge about family planning. It is important to mention that 80 percent of the respondents from Chakwal and 64.1 percent from Sialkot claimed "television" as the source of knowledge. Gender disparities are more visible in Sialkot with a difference of 15 percent between the males (71.5 percent) and (56.5 percent) in the females. However, in Chakwal this difference appeared lower i.e. 83.6 percent for the males & 76.4 percent for the females. The combined ratio for both districts reflected a gap of 11 percent, representing males on the higher side.

Health and family planning person has occupied second place as a source of knowledge. Fifty six percent of the respondents have acknowledged their efforts in extending knowledge on family planning. In Sialkot the percentage of female beneficiaries (61.6 percent) is much higher than the males (34.8 percent). This rounds up to 48 percent of the respondents in Sialkot which is much lower than Chakwal (63.7 percent). The access to health and family planning person as a source of knowledge for both sexes in Chakwal is not as wide as in Sialkot, 61.6 percent for males and 65.8 percent for females. The other source of knowledge included "radio" 19.3 percent "print media" 14.6 percent, friends 14 percent, and spouse 9.5 percent. It is important to mention that gender disparities in access to these sources have shown a variety of results. For 34.3 percent of the male respondents from Sialkot radio was the source, where as only 1.6 percent of the female respondents attributed that to radio. The result obtained from Chakwal showed a reversal of the order for the male and the female respondents, as it reflects 16.1 percent for females and 24.6 percent for males, which reflects that females in Chakwal, listen to radio much higher than the females in Sialkot. The combined results for both Districts reflected that 24.1 percent of the males and 13.3 percent of the female respondents claimed radio as a source of knowledge, which is definitely misleading in the case of District Chakwal.

The male dominance is highly visible in case of newspapers/pamphlets as a source of knowledge in both districts i.e. 28.5 percent for male and 15.1 percent for female in Sialkot and 12.4 percent vs. 2.4 percent for male and female in Chakwal, respectively. Almost, same

pattern can be observed in the case of friends. In case of spouse, greater number of female respondents claimed their husband as a source of knowledge than the males. Fourteen percent of the females reported their husbands as a source of knowledge in comparison to 5.3 percent of the males. The most surprising result surfaced in case of Ulema as a source of knowledge. Only 0.6 percent of the sample claimed Ulema as their source of knowledge about family planning. This weak base of knowledge source is extremely important for establishing a relationship between Islam and family planning.

4.2 Practices of family planning

The population in Pakistan has increased manifold affecting not only the socio economic dynamics of a family but the whole country as well. Over population is a serious problem that represents an obstacle for Pakistan's sustainable development.

By planning their families, people can better distribute resources, time, and care among the members of the family. When a couple responsibly decides the number of children, they want and can take the responsibility, they obtain a clearer perspective of the family life that they expect to have. Consequently, a family is able to enjoy benefits such as having better communication with each other, sharing important moments, and strengthening family ties and providing education to their children and to understand the Islamic teachings as well.

Pakistan's general level of education is very low due to a large population who do not even complete the primary education. A major reason for this problem is an un-planned family size. If a couple with insufficient economic resources has many children, it is obvious that they will not be able to give them an adequate living. A clear evidence of this is the high number of children on the streets asking for money. On the other hand, a planned family helps increase the living standards among the children. Therefore, children will be given a chance to be competitive in the constantly changing world.

There exists a great confusion regarding the practices of family planning methods owing to different claims by different national and international agencies involved in promotion of family planning in Pakistan. However, there exists a general consensus that more than half of the population of reproductive age has practiced family planning methods at some point of time.

The results presented in Table 4.1 also confirm these trends. More than half of the respondents (59.5 percent) reported about the use of family planning methods. As mentioned earlier that majority of the females possess knowledge of family planning, so is the trend

reflected in usage of family planning knowledge. The results of the survey have reflected that 65.6 percent of the female respondents from both districts have ever used family planning methods. The percentage of female practitioners is almost 12 points higher than the male (53.5 percent). The higher trends in female respondents have been confirmed from the responses collected from both districts. However, the lowest response for ever use of family planning methods was recorded from the males of district Sialkot which is 47.9 percent.

The survey also probed about the current status of use of family planning methods in both the districts. The collected responses reflected that at the time of survey 49.1 percent of total sample was using some kind of family planning method. The highest rate of usage was reported by the females of district Sialkot (51.6 percent).

Moreover, the data presented in Table 4.1 shows that the current use of family planning methods in both districts amongst the female population is slightly higher (50.5 percent) than the male, (47.7 percent). The similar question was asked from the participants of FGDs and findings showed that 56 percent were using the contraceptives.

Being a discouraged topic in social interactions, it was equally important to get knowledge about the source of motivation for the use of family planning methods. There has been and there is still a debate going on about the efficacy of motivational campaigns by various stakeholders including media, program implementers and, above all, the MoPW. Among the respondents who claimed to make an ever use of family planning methods, one third (33 percent) of them reported family planning/Health workers as the source of motivation. The responses from Sialkot and Chakwal indicated a wide gap for this source of motivation. In case of Chakwal, 38.6 percent of the respondents claimed "family planning/health program personal" as a source of motivation whereas only 27.1 percent of the respondents from Sialkot confirmed this source. This indicated about the disparities in out-reach, efficiency and social mobilization of the motivational efforts in both the districts.

The second major source of motivation has been claimed as the "spouse". Overall 14.2 percent respondents reported that their life partner motivated him/her to use family planning methods. It is interesting to note that 29.8 percent females of Sialkot district claimed their husbands as a source of motivation as compared to 12.6 percent females of Chakwal. The overall percentage of females claiming husbands as source of motivation (21.0 percent) is almost three times higher than a situation where males claimed that they were motivated by their wives (7.6 percent). There is a wide gap amongst the two districts regarding spouse as

the source of motivation. Only 9.9 percent of the respondents of Chakwal claimed spouse as a source in comparison to 18.7 percent in Sialkot. It is important to reiterate that above discussion is based on the responses of the group of respondent who fall under the category of ever use of family planning methods i.e., 59.5 percent of the total sample.

In both districts, 3.7 percent of the respondents who claimed ever use of family planning methods reported that their source of information has been “friends”. The male respondents in both districts remained 5.8 percent in comparison to females as 1.5 percent. The highest percentage for “friends” as a source of motivation was reported by males of Chakwal district (9.0 percent). Only 4.1 percent of the respondents reported about “other sources” as a source of motivation. The participants of FGDs also supported the importance of family planning/health personnel for the promotion of family planning methods as the main source. One of the female participants suggested that “LHWs and LHVs should be trained in the field of family planning in the light of Islamic teachings so that they can provide better knowledge to women about family planning” (Talagang, Chakwal).

4.3 Use of contraception

Contraception refers to preventive measures in order to deliberately stop or reduce the likelihood of pregnancy or child birth. The main objective of all family planning programs is the adoption of contraceptions to control undesired and exaggerated child births to attain a balance between resources and population at household as well as national level. There exists a large variety of contraceptives including temporary and permanent prevention of pregnancy. The research dedicated a reasonable number of queries related to the prevalence and usage of contraceptives in the sample area.

Table 4.2: Ever Use of Contraceptive Methods

Ever use of contraceptive methods	Sialkot			Chakwal			All		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Any method	47.7	65.0	56.2	58.6	65.8	62.2	53.2	65.4	59.2
Female sterilization	5.9	2.8	4.4	3.2	4.5	3.9	4.6	3.7	4.1
Male sterilization	0.7	0.2	0.4	--	--	--	0.3	0.1	0.2
Pills	4.1	7.7	5.9	15.4	14.1	14.8	9.8	11.0	10.4
IUD	2.7	9.9	6.2	5.4	15.5	10.4	4.0	12.7	8.3
Injectables	4.8	12.3	8.5	8.7	16.0	12.3	6.7	14.2	10.4
Implants	0.2	0.2	0.2	1.3	0.8	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.6
Condoms	30.4	33.6	32.0	36.3	34.8	35.6	33.4	34.3	33.8
Rhythm	--	1.1	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.3
Withdrawal	3.2	6.2	4.7	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.0	5.5	4.7
Others	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.3

Table 4.2 displays answers of the questions related to the ever use of family planning methods. Referring to the data in Table 4.2, it is evident that 59.2 percent of the sample reported that they have used family planning methods at any stage of their reproductive life. Chakwal respondents showed higher tendency in contraceptive use to attain a balance between resources and population than Sialkot (62.2 percent and 56.2 percent respectively). The females appeared more in usage of contraceptives in both districts than the males. However, this gap was more significant in Sialkot (a difference of 17.3 points) than in Chakwal (a difference of 7.2 points). According to 33.8 percent respondents, condom was the most popular method ever used, followed by pills and injectables (10.4 percent each). One-third (35.6 percent) of Chakwal respondents confirmed the usage of condoms as compared to a slightly less percentage of Sialkot (32.0 percent). The usage of pills in sampled districts showed a large variation, as this exercise was reported by 14.8 percent for Chakwal and only by 5.9 percent for Sialkot. The same trend was observed for injectables in Chakwal, where 12.3 percent users were using this method against 8.5 percent users in Sialkot. It is an interesting fact that the use of pills and injectables is more prevalent in females than males. The method of withdrawal is practiced by a relatively less population in both geographical locations. IUD, again, is more practiced in Chakwal (10.4 percent) than Sialkot (6.2 percent). It is important to mention that sterilization cases reported for women were higher than men, which reflects sterilization as predominantly a female domain. Other methods including implant and rhythm were reported by less than 1 percent of the respondents.

Respondents were also asked about their current use of contraception. As indicated in Table 4.3 that nearly half of them were using some kind of family planning method, however, females are more frequent (50.3 percent) in usage of any method than males (47.7 percent). Condom was the most commonly used method, which is practiced by majority (24.4 percent) of the respondents or by their spouses. While other methods are used by a nominal percentage of the respondents.

Table 4.3: Current Use of Contraceptive methods

Current use of contraceptive method	Sialkot		Total		Chakwal		Total		All		Total	
	Male	Female	Percent	Number	Male	Female	Percent	Number	Male	Female	Percent	Number
Female Sterilization	6.8	4.9	5.9	68	4.7	4.5	4.6	55	5.7	4.7	5.2	123
Male Sterilization	0.5	0.4	0.4	5	--	--	--	--	0.3	0.2	0.2	5
PILL	2.4	4.0	3.2	37	8.9	6.7	7.8	93	5.6	5.4	5.5	130
IUD	1.4	6.0	3.6	42	2.7	5.4	4.0	48	2.0	5.7	3.8	90
Injectables	2.9	6.9	4.8	56	3.4	7.2	5.3	63	3.1	7.1	5.1	119
Implants	0.2	--	0.1	1	.5	0.2	0.3	4	0.3	0.1	0.2	5
Condoms	26.8	23.1	25.0	289	26.8	20.7	23.8	283	26.8	21.9	24.4	572
Rhythm	--	0.9	0.4	5	--	0.2	0.1	1	--	0.5	0.3	6
Withdrawal	3.7	5.3	4.5	52	3.7	3.5	3.6	43	3.7	4.4	4.0	95
Other	0.2	0.2	0.2	2	--	0.7	0.3	4	0.1	0.4	0.3	6
Any	44.8	51.6	48.1	557	50.6	49.2	49.9	594	47.7	50.3	49.0	1,151

Almost similar kind of pattern was noted in both the districts. It has been observed that over all current use of injectables, IUD, pills, female sterilization and withdrawal is slightly higher among the female respondents than the male respondents who reported that their spouses are currently using these contraceptive methods; while the utilization of other methods was negligible.

In Sialkot one-fourth of the respondents mentioned that they were current users of condoms followed by female sterilization (5.9 percent), injectables (4.8 percent) and withdrawal (4.5 percent), while other methods were used by a nominal percentage of the respondents. In Chakwal the widely used methods were condom (23.8 percent) and withdrawal (3.6 percent), whereas the other methods were reported by a small percentage of the respondents. In Sialkot more females were currently practicing family planning methods. The percentage of male respondents currently using different methods was slightly lower than the females. In Chakwal the situation is slightly different and gives a mix picture of current use of contraception. Use of condoms is more common among males (26.8 percent) followed by pills (8.9 percent). The injectables were also used by more females than males. While no noticeable variation is found in other methods.

The findings of FGDs show that 55.7 percent FGD participants were the current users of *some kind of family planning method*, which is confirmed by their views given during the FGDs. One of the FGD participant discussed that *“Three months injection is better but we are currently using condoms”*. (Female FGD, Chakwal). A male from Chakwal informed

that *"I am currently using condom"*. Another user reported that *"I am current user of IUD and Condom"* (Female FGD, Chakwal). The quotations discussed and highlighted that people have the knowledge about different methods and they have also shared their experience of different ever used methods along with their current methods.

4.4 Reasons for non use of contraception

As mentioned above more than half of the respondents were not using the contraception. Consequently, the reasons why they were not using family planning methods are of great interest, especially when the point comes around investigating the phenomenon in terms of religious teachings and their relationship towards the use of family planning methods.

Table 4.4 presents the percentage of currently married respondents who are not using any method owing to different reasons. For instance, 45 percent respondents reported that they wanted to have more children followed by 9.3 percent of respondents mentioned that it is "against Islam". Other commonly cited reasons were "no sex", "health concerns", "up to God" and "interferences with body's normal processes". Some major variations are found by sex and region. In Sialkot, the major reason for non-usage of family planning method was a desire for more children (40.1 percents). The second main reason was reported that it is "against religion" (9.1 percent) followed by "no sex" (7.3 percent), "health concerns" (5.9 percent) and other reasons were given by a small percentage of respondents.

In Chakwal the "desire for more children" was more strong, as mentioned by half of the respondents, who were resistant towards adoption of family planning methods. The other reasons shared by this group of respondents were: family planning is "against Islam" was reported by 9.6 percent of the respondents followed by the views that family planning "interferes with body's normal processes" (7.6 percent) and 5.6 percent had a fatalistic approach that it is "up to God". Other reasons for non usage were around health concerns, and infertility, however, they were reported by a negligible percentage of respondents.

Table 4.4: Reasons for Non Use of Contraceptive Methods

Reasons for non-use	Sialkot			Chakwal			All		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Wanted Children	44.0	34.2	40.1	46.5	54.7	50.2	45.1	44.5	44.9
Infrequent sex	5.2	3.0	4.3	1.2	1.5	1.3	3.4	2.3	2.9
No Sex	3.9	12.6	7.3	0.4	5.0	2.5	2.4	8.8	5.0
Menopausal/Hysterectomy	1.0	0.5	0.8	--	--	--	0.5	0.3	0.4
Infertile/Can't Get Pregnant	1.0	5.5	2.8	1.6	5.0	3.1	1.3	5.3	2.9
No Menstruation After Birth	0.3	3.5	1.6	--	1.5	0.7	0.2	2.5	1.2
Breastfeeding	2.0	3.5	2.6	--	3.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	2.0
Health Concerns	7.2	4.0	5.9	3.7	3.5	3.6	5.6	3.8	4.8
Interferes With Body's Normal Processes	--	4.5	1.8	7.8	7.5	7.6	3.4	6.0	4.5
Respondent	0.7	0.5	0.6	--	--	--	0.4	0.3	0.3
Husband/Wife	--	2.5	1.0	--	5.0	2.2	--	3.8	1.6
Others Opposed	--	0.5	0.2	--	--	--	--	0.3	0.1
Against Religion/Islam	13.7	2.0	9.1	10.2	9.0	9.6	12.1	5.5	9.3
Upto God	5.2	1.5	3.8	8.6	2.0	5.6	6.7	1.8	4.6
Knows No Method	0.3	--	0.2	2.9	--	1.6	1.4	--	0.8
Knows No Source	0.3	--	0.2	0.8	--	0.4	0.5	--	0.3
Fear Of Side Effects	0.3	1.0	0.6	1.2	2.0	1.6	0.7	1.5	1.1
Lack of Access/Too Far	--	--	--	1.2	0.5	0.9	0.5	0.3	0.4
Costs Too Much	0.3	--	0.2	0.4	--	0.2	0.4	--	0.2
Inconvenient To Use	--	0.5	0.2	0.8	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.4
Others	8.1	14.6	10.7	11.8	3.0	7.8	9.8	8.8	9.3
Don't know	3.6	--	2.2	1.2	--	0.7	2.5	--	1.5

In Sialkot “desire for more children” is mentioned by higher percentage of males. It shows that males wanted more children, presumably due to reasons: a) for them children are the earning hands or b) they want to complete their family according to their planned number of children. About three times more women (12.6 percent) than men (3.9 percent) informed that they were “not having sexual relationship” with their spouse. “Infertility” was mentioned by

slightly higher percentage (5.5 percent) of women followed by “interferes with body’s normal processes” (4.5 percent) and “no menstruation after birth” and “breastfeeding” (3.5 percent). Other prominent reasons were mentioned by higher number of males like 13.7 percent males cited the reason that it is “against our religion” and Islam does not permit to practice family planning, while only 2 percent women supported this argument. Seven percent males reported “health concerns” as their major reason of non use of family planning methods and 5.2 percent said that due to “infrequent sex” and it “depends upon God”.

In Chakwal visible variation is found among the views of the male and the female respondents. “Desire for more children” is mentioned by higher percentage of females (54.7 percent) than males (46.5 percent). Family planning “interferes with body’s normal processes” and “health concerns” were reported by same percentage of the male and the female respondents while “no sex” was cited by more females (5 percent) than males (0.4 percent). Reasons “against our religion” (10.2 percent) and “depends upon God” were reported by higher percentage of males (8.6 percent).

Findings of FGDs show that 44.3 percent participants were not using any method. They had reservations about the practice of family planning as majority of them thought that it is “against Islam”, it was mentioned by those respondents who were against family planning. A respondent said that *“family planning is prohibited in Islam” (Male FGD, Sialkot)*. In the same way a female from Chakwal mentioned that *“In Islam sterilization and abortion is a sin”*. In a FGD conducted in Sialkot, a female participant discussed that *“from the Islamic point of view, no method is allowed in Islam”*.

It is observed from the quotations that lack of religious knowledge among the people on the issue of family planning under the light of Islam puts a bar on the usage of family planning methods.

4.4.1 Future intentions for non use of contraception

Table 4.5 of the study displays the percentage of currently married female/male respondents who do not intend to use contraceptive method in future by the main reason why they don’t intend to use. Data shows that majority of the (16.5 percent) non users reported that Islam oppose family planning, so they do not intend to use the contraceptives in future. Common reasons for not intending to use were “up to God” (12.4 percent). “Health-concern” and “infertile” were mentioned by 9.7 percent of the respondents. The percentages of respondents cited other reasons were very nominal. It is obvious from the Table 4.5 that males were more

concerned about the opposition of Islam (25.7 percent) regarding the use of family planning in both the districts. Followed by the fatalistic approach, "up to God" (15.6 percent) and due to "health concern" (12.2 percent). The other reasons were cited by more females, "infertility" (13.7 percent) followed by "husband's opposition", "health concerns" (7.3 percent) and "fear of side effects" (5.9 percent).

In Sialkot commonly cited reasons were "against the religion" (17.4 percent) followed by "infertility" (10.4 percent), "infrequent sex (9.5 percent) "health concern" (7.5 percent) and "up to God" (5.8 percent). While in Chakwal major reasons were "up to God" (20.4 percent) followed by family planning is "against the religion" (15.4 percent), "health concern" (12.9 percent), "infertility" (9 percent), and "husband's opposition" (5.5 percent) and "fear of side effects" (5 percent),

The data presented in Table 4.5 also helps to observe variations among the male and the female responses. In the district of Sialkot, males were more concerned about the religious perspective of family planning practice and 32 percent males cited that it is against the religion" followed by "health concern" (12 percent) and "up to God" (9.6 percent). About one-fifth (19 percent) of the females explained that they are "infertile/can not get pregnant so there is no need to use any method and had "no menstruation after birth" was mentioned by 6 percent of women. In Chakwal district, the most common reasons observed among the males were "up to God" (22.3 percent), "against the religion" (18.8 percent), "health concern" (12.5 percent) and "infertility" (10.7 percent), while the percentage of females was slightly lower who cited the same reasons.

Table 4.5: Reasons for Nonuse of Contraceptive Methods in Future

Reasons for Nonuse in Future	Sialkot				Chakwal				All			
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
			Percent	Number			Percent	Number			Percent	Number
Infrequent Sex	9.6	9.5	9.5	23	7.1	4.5	6.0	12	8.4	7.3	7.9	35
Menopausal/Hysterectomy	0.8	3.4	2.1	5	--	--	--	--	0.4	2.0	1.1	5
Infertile/ Cant Get Pregnant	2.4	19.0	10.4	25	10.7	6.7	9.0	18	6.3	13.7	9.7	43
No Menstruation After Birth	--	6.0	2.9	7	--	1.1	0.5	1	--	3.9	1.8	8
Breastfeeding	3.2	1.7	2.5	6	0.9	--	0.5	1	2.1	1.0	1.6	7
Upto God	9.6	1.7	5.8	14	22.3	18.0	20.4	41	15.6	8.8	12.4	55
Respondent opposed	3.2	0.9	2.1	5	1.8	1.1	1.5	3	2.5	1.0	1.8	8
Husband opposed	--	3.4	1.7	4	--	12.4	5.5	11	--	7.3	3.4	15
Against Religions/ Islam	32.0	1.7	17.4	42	18.8	11.2	15.4	31	25.7	5.9	16.5	73
Knows No Method	--	0.9	0.4	1	--	--	--	--	--	0.5	0.2	1
Health Concern	12.0	2.6	7.5	18	12.5	13.5	12.9	26	12.2	7.3	10.0	44
Fear of Side Effects	--	4.3	2.1	5	2.7	7.9	5.0	10	1.3	5.9	3.4	15
Lack of Access/ Too Far	--	--	--	--	0.9	--	0.5	1	0.4	--	0.2	1
Cost too much	--	--	--	--	--	1.1	0.5	1	--	0.5	0.2	1
Interferes with boys normal processes	--	2.6	1.2	3	2.7	6.7	4.5	9	1.3	4.4	2.7	12
Other	16.8	25.0	20.7	50	13.4	10.1	11.9	24	15.2	18.5	16.7	74
DK	8.8	--	4.6	11	3.6	1.1	2.5	5	6.3	0.5	3.6	16

In FGDs the participants highlighted various reasons for nonuse of family planning methods in future. The most common view was explained from the Islamic perceptive that family planning is not allowed in Islam. Some quotes from FGDs are given below to express the views of general public.

“In Islam family planning is not allowed and as Allah says in the holy Quran, *“kill not your children for fear of poverty”* (Female FGD, Sialkot). This statement expressed the views of a female that family planning is not allowed and to kill newborns through induced abortion especially after 4 months of pregnancy with the fear of hunger is also a sin and considered as murder. “It is a Hadith that marry with a woman who produce more children” (Male FGD, Chakwal). According to this statement in Islam the concept to marry with a fertile woman leads to increase in Muslim community in the world. “This (family planning) is an idea and concept of the west and is taken as sin in Islam”. (Female FGD, Chakwal). People thought that the idea and the concept of family planning is associated with the western world and non Muslims (who are against Islam); always try to destroy the Muslim generations so they have created and started a campaign to control the world population. *“According to the holy Quran the soul destined to be born can not be stopped by any means”* (Male FGD, Chakwal). People have faith that the ultimate decision and power is with God so all means of birth control are useless or ineffective.

4.5 Exposure to family planning messages

For some time, the Population Welfare Programme has been using the electronic media to inform the population about family planning issues. However, it was found through PDHS survey that despite the rigorous media campaign, 56 percent of the currently married women 15-49 stayed uninformed of the family planning messages. (PDHS-2006-07).

Table 4.6: Access to Family Planning Messages

Read/heard a family planning message on	Sialkot			Chakwal			All		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Radio	27.7	1.0	14.3	3.8	13.5	8.7	15.8	7.3	11.5
Television	43.7	44.2	43.9	31.6	40.7	36.1	37.6	42.5	40.0
News Paper/Pamphlets	19.3	8.8	14.1	1.3	0.8	1.1	10.3	4.8	7.6
Sign Boards	14.3	0.5	7.4	--	0.3	0.2	7.2	0.4	3.8
Friend	8.7	2.3	5.5	2.2	0.8	1.5	5.4	1.6	3.5
Spouse	2.7	9.3	6.0	1.0	2.3	1.7	1.8	5.8	3.8
Parents	--	1.3	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.7	0.3	1.1	.7
Relatives	0.2	3.8	2.0	1.2	2.3	1.8	0.7	3.1	1.9
Health/family planning Person	14.3	28.7	21.5	18.0	33.6	25.8	16.2	31.1	23.6
Ulema	--	--	--	0.2	--	0.1	0.1	--	0.0
Any Meeting	--	1.7	0.8	--	0.3	0.2	--	1.0	0.5
Not Heard	44.7	34.5	39.6	52.4	36.2	44.3	48.5	35.4	42.0

To gauge the effectiveness of such media on the dissemination of family planning information, the respondents were asked whether they had heard or seen a family planning message through any medium in the month preceding the interview.

Table 4.6 shows that overall 42 percent of the respondents have not been exposed to a family planning message through any medium. The percentage of male respondents (48.5 percent) is higher as compared to the female respondents (35.4 percent) who have not been exposed to family planning message. While, on the whole in both the districts 40 percent respondents have seen family planning messages on television followed by health/ family planning persons (23.6 percent), radio (11.5 percent) and print media (7.6 percent). When we compare the over all situation of male and female responses it is found that females are more exposed to media messages through "Television", "health /family planning personnel" and "spouses" than males. While exposure through "radio", "news papers/pamphlets" and "sign boards" were higher in males. This indicated that electronic media and interpersonal communication have a powerful impact on women exposure to family planning messages. Another interesting fact is around print media, which is found more popular in terms of exposing the family planning messages among males.

In Sialkot exposure to family planning messages is higher than Chakwal. The percentage of respondents reported about "health and family planning personnel" as their source of exposure; is slightly lower (21.5 percent), than in Chakwal (25.8 percent). It was further found that "Electronic and print media" were the popular sources of exposure to family planning messages among males. While, exposure through intrapersonal communication was higher among females, however, TV is equally popular among the male and the female respondents in Sialkot. In Chakwal the situation is slightly different as exposure through all the sources was higher among females.

The FGDs respondents also reported that media and health personnel are the better medium of information. *"Media and lady health worker (LHW) provide useful information but still we need more information through them"* (Female FGD, Sialkot). The family planning programme should target the both medium including radio/ TV and health/ family planning personnel to achieve their goals.

Table 4.7 shows information about the messages conveyed through the media.

Table 4.7: Nature and Contents of family planning Messages

Read/heard a family planning message on	Sialkot			Chakwal			All		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Limiting the Family	37.2	53.0	45.1	16.0	31.6	23.8	26.6	42.3	34.4
Higher Age at Marriage	1.0	9.2	5.1	0.3	3.8	2.1	0.7	6.5	3.6
Spacing of Children	17.0	20.2	18.6	13.7	24.5	19.1	15.3	22.4	18.8
Use of Contraceptives	0.2	8.2	4.2	1.0	13.0	7.0	0.6	10.6	5.6
Welfare of Family	13.5	7.0	10.3	9.3	4.7	7.0	11.4	5.8	8.6
Maternal and Child Health	1.5	3.3	2.4	3.0	12.5	7.8	2.3	7.9	5.1
Less Children Mean Prosperous Life	6.0	7.2	6.6	16.0	18.7	17.4	11.0	12.9	12.0
More Children Mean Poverty and Starvation	0.3	6.7	3.5	2.5	1.2	1.8	1.4	3.9	2.7
Importance of Breastfeeding	--	0.2	0.1	0.3	6.7	3.5	0.2	3.4	1.8
Others-1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Others-2	0.2	--	0.1	--	--	--	0.1	--	0.0
Don't Know/Not Remember	--	--	--	--	0.7	0.3	--	0.3	0.2

A majority of the respondents who heard or saw a family planning message in the month of preceding the interviews said that the message was about “limiting the size of the family” (34.4 percent), 18.8 percent understood the message as “birth spacing”, 12 percent mentioned that message conveyed the concept of “small family that leads to prosper life” and 8.6 percent said the message informed about “welfare of the family”. More than 5 percent said that the message promoted the “use of contraception” and “mother and child health”. Some variations are observed by sex. For instance, overall percentage of females is higher who mentioned that messages promoted to “limit the family size”, “birth spacing”, “small family prosperous life”, “contraceptive use”, “maternal and child health” and “welfare of the family” while variation in other reasons were negligible.

In Sialkot nearly half (45.1 percent) understood the messages as “limiting the family size” followed by ‘birth spacing’ (18.6 percent), “welfare of the family” (10.3 percent), “less children lead to prosperous life” (6.6 percent) and only 5.1 percent mentioned that family planning messages promote the “idea of late marriages”.

When we compare the percentages of male and female respondents it is found that the percentage of women is higher who understood and conveyed the messages on “limiting the family size”, “birth spacing”, “late marriages” and “use of contraception”. Only the percentage of males is two times higher (13.5 percent) than females who perceived and conveyed the message as “welfare of family”. While other messages were reported by a small number of males and the variation between male and female percentages were nominal.

Level of understanding of the message as “limiting the family size” is lower in Chakwal (23.8 percent) than Sialkot district. Followed by “birth spacing” (19.1 percent), “less children lead to prosperous life” (17.4 percent), “MCH”(7.8 percent), “welfare of the family” and use of contraception” (7 percent). Percentages of other reasons were nominal.

Percentage of the females, who understood the message as “limiting the family size” and “birth spacing” was two times higher than the males. Followed by “fewer children lead to prosperous life” (18.7 percent) and in males this percentage is slightly lower (16 percent). Thirteen percent women understood the message as “use of contraception” and “MCH” while the percentages of males were negligible. “Importance of breastfeeding” and “higher age at marriage” was mentioned by the female respondents, while understanding of the males on this point was not clear.



Fertility is of special significance in context of Islam as it has direct implications on decisions related to different aspects of family welfare. Therefore, it is of prime importance to understand public perceptions, which refer to their gender, economic status, family size, etc. Human fertility is closely related to people's social environment and determinants like education, income levels, status of women, female mobility, access to health services, age at marriage knowledge and practice of family planning, as well as belief system. Although several national, international studies have elaborated the relationship between fertility and social indicators, but all of these parameters have not been equally explored, and the role of religion is one of the relatively neglected areas, yet. Many of the findings discussed in earlier and latter parts of this report indicate that people of Pakistan are generally supportive of reproductive health education and are aware of large family's social, physical and economical implications. But due to socio-cultural barriers, the population lacks awareness and conceptual clarity concerning many reproductive health issues with respect to Islam.

This chapter presents information on general public and FGD participant's perceptions, attitudes and practices in the light of background variables and analysis of the predominant inter-linkages between family planning and Islamic teachings and their implications on the fertility behavior. Following sections of this chapter deal with these interlinkages in detail.

5.1 Number of children ever born and desired number of children

Table 5.1 presents the distribution of currently married respondents according to number of living children and by ideal number of children. Desired number of children among women is an important indicator, which helps the service providers in the sector to strategically plan the reproductive health and family planning programmes. During the study, a general sense of awareness among the interviewees regarding the benefits of small family was found. However, the study data reveals that a large number of married females had 4 to 6 children whereas some did not had any children, so far. Understandably, as the age of the wife went up so did the number of children, however, very few respondents reported more than 6 children. But a few had even 8 to 9 children.

The Table 5.1 also presents a comparison of self desired number of children of the male and the female respondents and actual parity between the number. The males bracket reveals that one-fifth (21.6 percent) of them desired upto 4 children, whereas more than one-fourth of the

females (27.3 percent) has desired for 4 children, showing the females wanted to have their family size relatively larger than their husbands. The others include “upto God” showing the pro fatalistic attitude. It is amazing that less than 3 percent of the females and about 3.4 percent of the males have no desire for children. This is an important point for the program people to provide access of family planning methods to those people who have no desire for children. According to PDHS the national total fertility rate is 3.9; therefore it confirms that people desire for large families (PDHS, 2008). There is also a gap between the attributes and practices of the respondents concerning their fertility behavior. For instance, the respondents promote small families and desires 4 or less children but actually had large families. The differentials in different level of education by males and females shows that educated women are more likely to have smaller number of children than the educated males.

It is important to mention here that the category of respondents who let God to decide about the family size have relatively smaller size families as only 44 percent of the males have 5+ children and only 25 percent of the females by virtue of falling in this category have more than five children. In other words, the respondents who claimed that their family size will be according to the will of ‘God’ about one-third of them have 4 children. This fact reveals that there might be some unconscious phenomena which helped them to keep their family sizes upto 4 children. Around one-fourth percent of the respondents belonging to this category have one child; one-fifth percent are having two children and about one fourth percent is having three children.

Table 5.1: Number of Living Children by Ideal Number of Children

Sex of respondent/Number of Ideal children		Number of children						Total
		0	1	2	3	4	5+	
Male	0	4.4	1.1	2.1	2.2	2.6	7.1	3.4
	1	--	1.6	0.4	--	--	0.4	0.4
	2	18.9	29.1	30.9	4.9	5.7	5.3	15.0
	3	17.8	22.0	24.9	42.6	8.3	8.3	20.8
	4	21.1	15.4	12.9	21.1	44.3	17.7	21.6
	5	--	1.1	4.7	1.8	3.1	9.8	4.1
	6+	4.4	2.7	0.9	0.9	2.6	7.1	3.1
	Others	26.7	25.8	21.9	26.0	33.3	44.0	30.4
	No information/missing	6.7	1.1	1.3	0.4	--	0.4	1.1
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Female	0	7.6	2.3	.8	4.9	1.9	2.2	2.8
	1	1.5	0.6	--	--	--	--	0.2
	2	25.8	30.1	35.4	13.1	12.0	9.4	20.1
	3	24.2	26.7	26.3	31.1	13.4	11.2	22.0
	4	25.8	15.9	14.8	25.0	50.7	30.8	27.3
	5	6.1	1.7	1.6	1.6	5.7	8.0	3.9
	6+	3.0	0.6	0.4	1.6	2.4	12.5	3.5
	Others	4.5	22.2	20.2	22.1	13.4	25.4	19.8
	No information/missing	1.5	--	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The qualitative research results support this point of view that children are God given. A female says *"It is upto God to bestow us with any number of Children, who are we to decide"* (FGD, Pasrur). Another male was of the view that *"our religion says that we should produce a large number of children"* (FGD, Sialkot). A male from Chakwal district expressed his views that *"It is prophet's order that marry those women who can produce lot of children"* (Talagang, Chakwal).

Table 5.2: Reasons for Son's preference

Reasons for Son preference	Male	Female	Total
To face enemies	9.9	34.3	21.5
For inheritance	27.0	18.4	22.9
Earning hands	45.6	29.3	37.8
Old age security	51.7	53.6	52.6
Others	3.0	11.3	7.0

Table 5.2 reveals the reasons given by the respondents for son preference. More than half of the respondents require more sons as means of old age security (52.6 percent), followed by earning hands (37.8 percent), then heirs (22.9 percent) and finally to face enemies 21.5 percent). Table 5.2 also demonstrates difference of responses between the females and the males respondents but there is a similar pattern in some cases. A higher number (53.6 percent) of females wanted more sons, with slight variation in the perceptions of the males (51.7 percent) as an old age security whereby 45.6 percent males desired larger families for earning hands also. But a noticeable percentage (34.3 percent) of female respondents also desired four to five sons to face enemies, followed by a small number of (9.9 percent) of males. Inheritance is a very important issue but a small number of people want more sons to inherit their property (27 percent males and 18.4 percent females). A fatalistic approach to child bearing is evident among a small minority of women. About 11.3 per cent of women and 3 percent males stated that the decision to give birth to more sons is up to Allah (God). A female respondent from Sialkot expressed her view as *“Children are given by God. He determines what is in your fate and the decision is not ours but his.”*

Referring to the interviews of religious leaders the general perception appeared that some of them are least concerned with higher number of sons or son preference. Some of the religious leaders (8 percent) are orthodox and believe in son preference. A religious leader belonging to rural areas of Sialkot said that *“In Islamic point of view boys are preferred because males are superior”*. Another view was *“Boys are demanded more because they are carrier of name and breed”* (IDIs, Chakwal). The views of progressive religious leaders were different as they do not believe in son preference. Three male and one female scholar shared their

views as *"Girl is God's Rehmat and boy is naimat, so there is no difference in both"*. It is God's will, whom so ever he bestow with; either girls or boys (IDI urban, Sialkot).

5.2 Status of family planning in islam

Literature review argues that contraception is not mentioned in the Quran; but in the Hadith a tacit approval for azl (coitus interruptus or withdrawal) is reported to be given by the Prophet (PBUH). Thus Hazrat Jabir, one of his companions relates as reported in Sahih Bukhari "We used to have recourse to azl during the days of the Prophet while the Quran was being revealed. He came to know of it but he did not prevent us from doing so".

The results based on the responses of general public are shown in Table 5.3. On the whole, nearly half of the respondents stated that family planning is approved in Islam. Regional variations depicts that in Chakwal more respondents (55.6 percent) quotes approval of family planning than Sialkot (43 percent). One third (33.7 percent) of the respondents said that Islam disapproves family planning, while a meager number (1 percent) stated that family planning is allowed in certain conditions, followed by one percent that there is no statement in Islam regarding practice of family planning. About 2.8 percent of the respondents admitted that they do not know about Islamic teachings in this regard. However, the male and the female respondents were of different view in this regard, as more than half of the females (60.1 percent) confirmed about approval of family planning in Islam, while less percentage of the males (38.5 percent) were in favor of the statement that Islam approves family planning. On the other hand, a female religious scholar from Chakwal expressed her view as; more males i.e., 40 percent said Islam disapproves family planning than females (28 percent, showing the difference of 12 percent).

Regional variations are quite wide, where more than half of the respondents of Chakwal said Islam approves family planning as compared to Sialkot, where public had a little different view and 43 percent said that Islam approves family planning. Data shows that more people in Sialkot (46.5 percent) categorically said that Islam disapproves family planning. Now, the interesting fact is that FGDs and IDIs participants had two different set of views on the matter of family planning under the light Islam. Those who were of the view that Islam opposes family planning, describe their knowledge as follows:

One female and two male respondent stated that *"Islam does not allow family planning Practice;as it is stated in the Quran that do not kill your children due to fear of expenses"* (FGD, Sialkot). Another view shared by a participant was *"family planning is allowed but*

younger generation is getting indulged in bad habits; boys use condoms and girls adopt abortion that way, illegal relation is protected. However, there is no clear cut order regarding family planning" (FGD, Chakwal). A male respondent from Talagang Tehsil of Chakwal said that "It is the idea of the west and Islam prohibits family planning and it is a sin". A different perspective was shared by a male respondent from Sialkot "family planning is Haram (forbidden). There is no such concept in Islam, the Prophet (PBUH) has stated that I will be proud of my large number of followers". By referring family planning as a practice of non-Muslims, a male of Talagang said that "family planning and Islam does not have any connection, as it is practice of Kuffar, yahudo nasara and it is wrong" (FGD, Chakwal). A female shared her views as "Sterilization or limiting births is prohibited in Islam" (FGD, Sialkot).

Another male showed his feelings and was concerned by saying "Maulvis will never allow family planning, as they will term it as Haram but now it is the need of time" (FGD, Sialkot). However, some of the participant said that family planning is allowed in Islam, they were of the view that: "Ladies should be taught in 'Dars' (religious congregations) and gents may be educated in Juma prayers about temporary methods of family planning because there are examples of such practices in Islam" (Female, Sialkot).

During FGD, a male participant stated that "Nowadays a change in ideas has occurred, even the religious leaders are using family planning and they do not consider it bad" (FGD, Chakwal). Another example was "Temporary method like spacing is allowed but limiting births is a sin" (FGD, Chakwal). One of the participants informed that "Temporary methods of family planning are allowed in Islam" (female, Sialkot). Information on birth spacing was given by a female "Abstinence and spacing of two and half years is allowed through breast feeding" (FGD, Chakwal).

Table 5.3: Islamic Perspectives about Family Planning

Perception about family planning & Islam		Sialkot				Chakwal				All			
		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
				Percent	Number			Percent	Number			Percent	Number
Status of family planning in Islam	Islam Approves family planning	27.3	58.7	43.0	516	49.7	61.4	55.6	666	38.5	60.1	49.3	1182
	Partially Approves family planning	9.0	2.0	5.5	66	14.5	16.9	15.7	188	11.8	9.4	10.6	254
	Disapproves family planning	55.0	38.0	46.5	558	23.5	18.0	20.8	249	39.3	28.0	33.7	807
	In certain conditions	1.0	0.5	0.8	9	5.2	0.7	2.9	35	3.1	0.6	1.8	44
	Silent on the issue	2.3	0.3	1.3	16	2.5	--	1.3	15	2.4	0.2	1.3	31
	Others	0.7	--	0.3	4	0.7	--	0.3	4	0.7	--	0.3	8
	DK	4.7	0.5	2.6	31	3.3	2.8	3.1	37	4.0	1.7	2.8	68
Newly married couples allowed to use family planning	Yes	15.8	13.2	14.5	174	22.5	15.9	19.2	230	19.2	14.5	16.8	404
	No	70.7	83.7	77.2	926	58.1	78.5	68.3	818	64.4	81.1	72.7	1,744
	DK	10.5	2.2	6.3	76	18.4	4.3	11.4	136	14.4	3.3	8.8	212
Islam emphasizes on breast feeding for birth spacing	Yes	95.0	87.8	91.4	1,097	90.8	68.8	79.8	956	92.9	78.3	85.6	2,053
	No	2.2	10.8	6.5	78	7.8	29.0	18.4	221	5.0	19.9	12.5	299
	DK	1.8	0.5	1.2	14	0.7	1.7	1.2	14	1.3	1.1	1.2	28
Islam allow deliberate efforts to stop birth	Yes	10.3	5.8	8.1	97	13.9	30.4	22.1	265	12.1	18.1	15.1	362
	No	78.2	94.0	86.1	1,033	80.6	67.1	73.9	885	79.4	80.6	80.0	1,918
	DK	10.0	--	5.0	60	4.8	2.5	3.7	44	7.4	1.3	4.3	104
Islamic status of family planning services	Halal	58.3	59.5	58.9	707	56.4	84.3	70.4	843	57.4	71.9	64.6	1,550
	Haram	25.7	34.0	29.8	358	16.7	9.2	12.9	155	21.2	21.6	21.4	513
	Makrooh	2.7	3.8	3.3	39	19.2	1.2	10.2	122	10.9	2.5	6.7	161
	DK	12.5	1.8	7.2	86	7.3	4.7	6.0	72	9.9	3.3	6.6	158
Effective person for advocacy of family planning	Doctor	23.7	27.7	25.7	308	29.4	41.9	35.6	427	26.5	34.8	30.7	735
	LHW	26.2	47.8	37.0	444	26.7	41.6	34.1	409	26.4	44.7	35.6	853
	Ulema	36.5	13.0	24.8	297	31.9	10.4	21.1	253	34.2	11.7	22.9	550
	Teacher	7.2	4.3	5.8	69	6.7	2.5	4.6	55	6.9	3.4	5.2	124
	Other	2.2	6.3	4.3	51	4.2	1.7	2.9	35	3.2	4.0	3.6	86
	DK	3.5	0.8	2.2	26	0.8	1.7	1.3	15	2.2	1.3	1.7	41

An overview of in-depth interviews with the religious leaders reflects that all of them shared the view that Islam does not allow unconditional practices of family planning. The views of religious leaders are also in contradiction with the beliefs of general public on several aspects of family planning. For instance, the responses given by general public regarding family size favors smaller units, whereas the religious leaders have a mixed perspective. A male religious leader from rural area of Pasrur stated that *“Islam does not preach small family norm and there is no harm in having large family”*. Other quotation is *“Having a Large family is not wrong but if a person does not have resources, then its better to a have small family size, rather than having so many kids who become thieves or create problems in the society”*.

A Maulana from Sialkot voiced his opinion in a way, *“Islam does not preach small family, there are more problems of small family and large family has more benefits”*. Another religious leader from the same district expressed a different perspective, *“large number of children can’t be brought up properly, as they will stay deprived due to scarcity of resources”*. Some religious leaders had explained that if there are problems of feeding or provision of basic needs to the family then there is no harm in limiting the size of the family and shared *“In a large family if there is no earning hand and are many people to consume; there will be problems” (IDI, Chakwal)*

The respondents were also asked whether newly married couples are allowed to use family planning methods. In response nearly three-fourth (72.7 percent) of the respondents did not favor it. More females (81.1 percent) than males (64.4 percent) had a confirm belief that newly married couples (64.4) should not adopt family planning according to the teachings of Islam. As far as the regional variations are concerned, it was observed that Sialkot people are more rigid as three-fourth of the respondents said that newly married couples should not adopt family planning as compared to the respondents from Chakwal (68 percent).

5.2.1 Breast feeding for birth spacing

Islam emphasizes on breast feeding which in turn promotes birth spacing. Imam Al-Ghazali - an 11th century Islamic theologian, jurist and philosopher- was of the opinion, that mother must breastfeed each child for up to two years, therefore, while she is lactating and to avoid another pregnancy, couples should practice birth control methods.

Table 5.3 presents that a large number (85.6 percent) of the general public (Household) respondents reported that *breast feeding is allowed in Islam as a method for birth spacing*, while sexual differentials described wide difference of 15 percent , and regional differentials

shows that Sialkot people are more inclined towards Islam presenting a difference of 10 percent . Overall it is observed that there is consensus and nearly all people agreed to breast feeding as a birth spacing tool. To support the issue the qualitative data gathered through FGDs indicates that respondents are of the view that breast feeding is the only method of birth spacing. The evidences from FGDs reflect that mothers should breast feed their young ones to achieve the target of birth spacing as mentioned by a female that *“Spacing is allowed in Islam and God has advised two and half years spacing between children through breast feeding”* (FGD, Sialkot). A female participant of a FGD conducted in Chakwal is of the view that *“family planning is allowed in Islam and withdrawal method prevailed in the Prophets time and the Quran has emphasized on breast feeding due to which there is two and half years compulsory birth spacing”*. Referring to the Quran in general, a male from Sialkot said that *“The Quran says that mothers should breastfeed their young ones for two and a half years”*.

5.2.2 Provision of birth control in islam

People’s views were gathered about the issue of birth control where Islam allows the deliberate efforts to stop birth. Four-fifth (80 percent) of the respondents did not agree with the statement, while only 15.1 percent supported the view that it is allowed in Islam. Women were more positive (18.1 percent) than men (12.1 percent) on the point that Islam does not forbid birth control. However, there was a nominal percentage of the respondents, who had no knowledge about the issue. Same trends were found at regional level. For example in Sialkot almost all the female respondents (94 percent) had a clear view that it is not permitted in Islam while three-fourth (78.2 percent) of the males have same perceptions.

In Chakwal percentage of the males was higher (80.6 percent) than the females (67.1 percent), who strongly recommended that deliberate efforts to stop birth is not allowed in Islam. The similar views were also observed in the analysis of FGDs. As mentioned, by a woman that *“deliberate efforts to stop birth by couples is a sin”* (Chakwal).

5.2.3 Status of family planning services

When status of family planning services was asked from the respondents with reference to Halal or Haram. It is interesting to report that about 64.6 percent of the general public respondents claimed that family planning services are ‘Halal’ (allowed) in Islam. One-fifth (21.4 percent) said that it is Haram and a meager number (6.7 percent) said that it is makrooh. Sexual differences presented a more rigid picture of the males as one-fifth of the respondents said the family planning services are Haram (21.2 percent) or makrooh (10.9 percent).

The response in favor of “Halal” was much higher from the females (71.9 percent) than the males (57.4 percent). Around 70 percent of the sampled population from Chakwal stated it “Halal” as compared to lesser percentage (59 percent) from Sialkot. About 7 percent of respondents from both districts reported that they do not know about the Islamic position of family planning services whether it is “Halal” or “Haram”.

5.2.4 Advocacy of family planning

After taking the point of view of people about family planning and Islam they were asked about the most effective person for the advocacy of family Planning. Most of the people said that health persons including “doctors” (31.7 percent) and “LHW” (35.6 percent) are the most effective persons for promoting family planning. Second preference was Ulema (22.9 percent) followed by the “teachers” (5 percent) and then “others” (3.6 percent). This presents a firm belief of people in Ulema, who were given the second priority for promoting family planning. In our system teachers are also considered very important for promoting any idea therefore, teachers were also recommended for advocacy of family planning as they deal with young generation. The reason behind this notion was that from initial stage youth may be sensitized in favor of family planning so that when they become parents it would be easier for them to adopt family planning.

The gender segregated data presents a different scenario showing that females have more faith in health service providers as four-fifth (Doctors 34.8 percent; LHW 44.7 Percent) of the women wanted doctors and LHW to promote family planning while males preferred Ulema (34.2 percent) for effective advocacy of family planning. More males (6.9 percent) preferred teachers for Advocacy of family planning than Females (3.4 percent). Similar is the case for Sialkot and Chakwal, in both areas highest percentage of males preferred teachers for advocacy of family planning than females.

Whereas the issue of regional difference is concerned, Sialkot people are more religious minded as one-fourth (24.8 percent) of them viewed that Ulema can take over the advocacy role for promoting the message of family planning, while in Chakwal one-fifth (21.1 percent) of the respondents said that Ulema can be the preferred advocates for promoting family planning.

5.3 Status of abortion in the light of Islam:

Abortions do have grave physical consequences for females besides having moral and ethical implications for the society as a whole. Therefore, it was considered necessary to ascertain

the level of understanding of females about it. Keeping this in view, the female respondents were asked about their knowledge of abortion in the light of Islam. When literature was searched on abortion, we found that the Muslim scholars who favor abortion often quote a Quranic verse as well as a Hadith of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), which suggests, that life begins 120 days after conception. The most recent formulation on abortion, given by the grand Mufti of Egypt and Rector of Al-Azhar reads: "During the first four months, fetal life is not believed to be human. Thus, juristic consensus exist that abortion after four months amounts to taking a life, but this limit may be set aside, if the mother's life is at risk. (Al-Dardir, A.M. and Ahmed, Wajihuddin, 1982). On the basis of Quranic verse: "Allah charges no soul except to its capacity". The Quran, verse 2:286. Abortion is considered bad in nearly all religions and societies since ancient times. Now trend is changing but with out any solid reason abortion is still a taboo in Pakistan. A set of questions relating to allowance of abortions were asked in the survey and interesting results were obtained in response. For instance, the data revealed that 95.1 percent respondents were of the view that abortion is a murder.

Table 5.4 revealed very little differentials with reference to background characteristics. Nearly all respondents (96 percent) said abortion is a murder, followed by abortion allowed before four months (2.5 percent), then in the first month (0.7 percent) finally not allowed (0.2 percent). But there exists a clear correlation between the age, education level and Islamic knowledge. As age increases people's views about general issues on Islam and family planning became less rigid. As the education level went up, the idea of abortion taken as a murder in Islam went down especially in categories of higher education attainment from 98.8 percent to 92.3 percent. Similar set of information was found from the qualitative side of the research.

Regional difference is wider as nearly all respondents in Sialkot (98.6 percent) said that abortion is a murder, while Chakwal respondents had a little different view with a difference of 5 percent as 93.5 percent quoted abortion is a murder, and 4.5 percent said abortion is allowed in first four months of pregnancy. Various Muslim Jurists showed little differences in their view points on the matter, as 94.9 percent of Fiqh e Jafariya said abortion is a murder and 97.4 percent Sunni theologians said that it is a murder reflecting that Fiqh e Jafariya theologians have liberal view point as compared to Sunni theologians.

The FGDs conducted in both the districts highlighted the respondent's knowledge and perceptions in the words, "Abortion is a crime and a chronic sin, precautionary methods may

be adopted” (Male, Chakwal). *“Intended or induced abortion is a sin and equal to Murder” (Male Sialkot). Now-a-days females become aware of the sex of the child through ultrasound and adopt induced abortion just to have sons; it is like the practice of killing girl child in pre Islamic society”(Male Sialkot).* Whereas some Participants favored that abortion is allowed in certain conditions, for example if the woman’s health is at risk. Further views in this regard are reported as under:

“If mother’s life is in danger than abortion is allowed” (Female Chakwal). “It is a sin but allowed in case of emergency” (Male Sialkot). “Saving one’s life is the duty of every Muslim, if a person already has 4-5 children then abortion may be allowed to save mother’s life” (Male Chakwal). “If a doctor recommends or a child is abnormal then abortion is allowed” (female Sialkot).

Table 5.4: Status of Abortion in the Light of Islam

Background characteristics		Islam allowed abortion				Total			
		Not allowed	In 1st month	Before 4-months	After 4-months	Don't know	Abortion consider as Murderer	Percent	Number
District	Sialkot	0.3	0.3	0.5	--	0.4	98.6	100.0	1,194
	Chakwal	0.1	1.2	4.5	0.2	0.5	93.5	100.0	1,193
Place of residence	Urban	0.1	0.5	1.9	--	0.3	97.2	100.0	747
	Rural	0.2	0.8	2.8	0.1	0.5	95.5	100.0	1,640
Sex	Male	0.1	0.7	3.7	0.2	0.8	94.6	100.0	1,194
	Female	0.3	0.8	1.3	--	0.2	97.5	100.0	1,193
Age	< 20 years	--	--	--	--	5.6	94.4	100.0	18
	20 – 24	0.6	--	2.2	--	0.6	96.7	100.0	180
	25 – 29	0.4	1.3	1.3	--	--	97.0	100.0	470
	30 – 34	--	0.4	2.8	--	0.7	96.1	100.0	544
	35 – 39	--	1.2	3.3	--	--	95.5	100.0	491
	40 – 44	0.3	--	3.2	0.5	1.3	94.7	100.0	379
	45 – 49	--	0.9	1.9	--	--	97.2	100.0	211
	50 – 54	--	1.2	3.7	--	--	95.1	100.0	82
	No information	--	--	--	--	--	100.0	100.0	12
Marital status	Currently married	0.2	0.7	2.6	0.1	0.5	96.0	100.0	2,337
	Widow/Divorced/separated	--	--	--	--	--	100.0	100.0	34
Level of Education	No education	0.5	0.5	--	--	0.2	98.8	100.0	406
	Upto primary	0.2	0.7	2.0	--	0.7	96.3	100.0	403
	Upto Middle	0.2	0.9	0.9	--	0.2	97.8	100.0	461
	Upto Secondary	--	0.5	3.5	--	0.5	95.6	100.0	661
	Secondary +	--	1.1	5.5	0.4	0.7	92.3	100.0	452
	DK/missing	--	--	--	--	--	100.0	100.0	4
Respondent's Fiqah	Fiqh e Hanafia	--	0.6	4.9	0.3	0.4	93.8	100.0	774
	Fiqh e Jafariya	0.6	0.6	3.8	--	--	94.9	100.0	157
	Ahl-e-Haddith	--	--	--	--	1.1	98.9	100.0	93
	Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal Jamaat	0.2	0.8	1.1	--	0.4	97.4	100.0	1,342
Respondent get paid	Yes	0.1	0.9	4.0	0.2	0.7	94.2	100.0	1,288
	No	0.3	0.5	0.8	--	0.2	98.2	100.0	1,078
Spouse's Level of Education	No education	0.2	0.4	1.6	--	0.4	97.5	100.0	514
	Upto primary	0.3	0.9	2.4	0.3	1.2	94.9	100.0	335
	Upto Middle	0.2	1.4	2.1	--	0.2	96.1	100.0	439
	Upto Secondary	0.2	0.2	2.3	0.2	0.3	97.0	100.0	656
	Secondary +	--	1.1	4.6	--	0.5	93.8	100.0	438
	DK/missing	--	--	--	--	--	100.0	100.0	5
Respondent's spouse get paid	Yes	0.2	0.8	1.4	--	0.2	97.4	100.0	1,253
	No	0.1	0.6	3.7	0.2	0.8	94.6	100.0	1,130
No. of children: Sons	0	0.2	0.2	2.6	--	0.4	96.5	100.0	461
	1 – 2	0.2	0.8	3.2	0.1	0.5	95.1	100.0	1,459
	3 – 4	--	0.9	0.2	--	0.5	98.3	100.0	423
	5+	--	--	--	--	--	100.0	100.0	44
Daughters	0	0.2	0.6	1.8	--	0.3	97.1	100.0	616
	1 – 2	0.2	0.9	2.9	0.2	0.5	95.4	100.0	1,293
	3 – 4	0.2	0.5	2.2	--	0.2	96.8	100.0	406
	5+	--	--	4.2	--	1.4	94.4	100.0	72
Both sexes	0	0.6	--	3.2	--	--	96.2	100.0	158
	1 – 2	0.1	0.8	2.6	--	0.4	96.1	100.0	844
	3 – 4	0.2	0.7	2.7	0.2	0.8	95.4	100.0	882
	5+	--	0.8	1.8	--	0.2	97.2	100.0	503
Total		0.2	0.7	2.5	0.1	0.5	96.1	100.0	2,387

Employment status also changes the mind set of people whether it is their employment or spouse employment. When employment was observed we found that people (94.2 percent) who are working had difference of 4 points with those who are not working. Where as job of the spouse has negative effect. The persons whose spouse is working were more of a view that abortion is a murder (97.4 percent) than non working (94.6 percent). The number of children presents a little difference of only three points between people with no children and 4 plus children. Overall not many variations are found with the back ground characteristics with reference to abortion.

5.4 Citations about family planning

In the earlier part of this chapter, People's views were discussed in the very context of their knowledge on Quranic citations; either in favor or against the family planning. Social issues and the views of various Islamic school of thoughts regarding abortion were also highlighted. The information also encompassed the regional as well as sexual differentials. The data in Table 5.5 presents that more than half (57.3 percent) of the respondents were not able to present any citation in support to their statement that Islam favors family planning, in which there were more females (62 percent) than males (52.7 percent). Similar is the case for citation against family planning, as nearly all (89.1 percent) respondents were not able to give proof of what they were stating that Islam is against family planning. This is one of the very important findings of the study which reflects upon the link of Islamic knowledge with family planning practices.

Table 5.5 presents the percentage of distribution of respondents according to their knowledge about citations from the Holy Quran/Hadith on family planning and shares their source of knowledge by sex and area.

Table 5.5: Source of Islamic Teaching's Knowledge

Citation from the Holy Quran/Hadith		Sialkot			Chakwal			All		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Citation in favor of family planning	Yes	3.0	15.3	9.2	7.3	2.8	5.1	5.2	9.1	7.1
	No	39.3	46.2	42.8	66.1	77.8	72.0	52.7	62.0	57.3
Citation against family planning	Yes	9.2	13.0	11.1	5.0	2.5	3.8	7.1	7.8	7.4
	No	88.0	80.2	84.1	92.0	96.2	94.1	90.0	88.2	89.1
Source of Islamic knowledge about family planning	Family	8.2	19.8	14.0	10.9	42.7	26.8	9.5	31.3	20.4
	School/Madrassa's	4.3	18.8	11.6	12.2	2.0	7.1	8.3	10.4	9.3
	religious leaders	27.3	21.8	24.6	45.4	12.0	28.7	36.4	16.9	26.6
	Own Readings	11.3	8.8	10.1	10.7	13.0	11.9	11.0	10.9	11.0
	Print/Electronic Media	33.7	25.0	29.3	22.0	30.4	26.2	27.9	27.7	27.8
	Friends	11.8	7.5	9.7	16.5	11.5	14.0	14.2	9.5	11.8
	Relative	1.7	11.5	6.6	2.8	31.4	17.1	2.3	21.4	11.8
	Others	12.7	22.2	17.4	18.5	14.4	16.4	15.6	18.3	16.9
No Knowledge	18.7	2.8	10.8	3.3	1.8	2.6	11.0	2.3	6.7	

5.4.1 Source of islamic knowledge

The main sources of Islamic teachings on family planning were “print/electronic media” (27.8 percent), “religious leaders” (26.6 percent), “family” (20.4 percent), “own readings” and “friends” (11.8 percent each). According to the qualitative information collected through FGDs, the main source of knowledge is health professionals and media. The responses of the FGD participants are footed as under:

“Our knowledge is updated through media and LHW” (Male FGD, Sialkot). “We watched Islamic Programs on TV. It is an effective source of information” (Female FGD, Chakwal).

5.5 General practices and islamic views on family issues

The information regarding Islamic views on various aspects of family which infect have direct relationship with the study, was also collected from the sample population. The views of selected respondents were gathered about the family issues like girl’s education, age at marriage, number of children, birth spacing etc. in the light of Islam. Besides their perception on these issues according to Islam, they were asked to share their own practices in this regard. Whether they follow the Islamic teachings or act according to their cultural norms and practices? Table 5.6 provides data about their actual practices regarding some important family issues.

Table 5.6: Practice regarding Family Issues

Practices regarding Family issues		Sialkot				Chakwal				All			
		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
				Percent	Number			Percent	Number			Percent	Number
Females in family get education	Yes	92.7	91.7	92.2	1,106	97.0	99.3	98.2	1176	94.8	95.5	95.2	2,282
	No	6.3	8.0	7.2	86	2.8	0.7	1.8	21	4.6	4.3	4.5	107
	DK	--	0.2	0.1	1	--	--	--	--	--	0.1	0.0	1
Age when got married	< 13	--	0.8	0.4	5	0.2	1.0	0.6	7	0.1	0.9	0.5	12
	13 – 15	.2	5.3	2.8	33	0.8	7.0	3.9	47	0.5	6.2	3.3	80
	16 – 18	6.8	35.3	21.1	253	5.8	35.2	20.5	246	6.3	35.3	20.8	499
	19 – 21	18.0	28.5	23.3	279	18.4	27.5	23.0	275	18.2	28.0	23.1	554
	22 +	74.8	30.0	52.4	629	74.6	29.2	51.9	622	74.7	29.6	52.2	1,251
	Don't know/missing	0.2	--	0.1	1	0.2	--	0.1	1	0.2	--	0.1	2

5.5.1 Female education in the family

Nearly all (95.2 percent) respondents from both the districts reported that females of their families were getting education and their families tried their best to facilitate them. No noticeable variations are found by sex. In Sialkot majority (92.2 percent) of the respondents mentioned that girls are getting education in their families. Only a nominal percentage (7.2 percent) said that their girls are not getting education and the reasons could be limited economic resources or opposition of female education etc.

In Chakwal the situation was better than Sialkot. Almost all the respondents were in favor of female education and their family girls were getting formal education in different institutions. However the percentage of female education in Chakwal is (6 percent) higher than reported for Sialkot.

5.5.2 Age at marriage

On Marriage “Among His signs is this, that he created for you mates from among yourselves that you may dwell in tranquility with them” The Quran, verse 30:21. Although one finds no general references in the Quran and Hadith regarding the right age of marriage, however, some scholars have argued, that if a girl is married at too young age, an element mentioned in the Quran of “dwelling in tranquility” could be missing. Furthermore, since both the partners are expected to give their consent for marriage, the element of 'free consent' will be missing when the girl is too young at marriage. Consequently, Imam Abu Hanfia –who today has the largest following among the major Schools of Islamic thought- while writing in the 8th century AD, suggested 17 years, as an age of marriage for girls and 18 years for boys. According to him, this age bracket is sound to judge each other.

Respondents were asked about the age when they got married. The data was collected on the actual practices of marriage pattern with reference to age. This data also provide grounds to compare the views and practices of the people. In both the districts more than half (52.2 percent) of the respondents mentioned that they got married at the age of 22 and more years. This was followed by age group of 19-21 years (23.1 percent), 16-18 years (20.8 percent) and 13-15 years (3.8 percent). It is observed that women who got married in the age group of 13-15 years were twelve times higher (6.2 percent) than males (0.5 percent). It means that males rarely got married in this age of puberty, where as females were victimized by early age marriages. A majority of females (35.3 percent) reported that they started their marital life when they were very young, almost (16-18) years of age. More than one fourth (28 percent) of them started their marital life at the age of 19-21 years, whereas only (18.2 percent) of the males got married in this age. In our society 19 to 21 years of age is considered too early for boys' marriage because he can not run a house hold and unable to take the responsibility of his family while mostly 16 to 18 years old girl is expected to take care of her children, husband and husband's family. The data indicates that three-fourth (74.7 percent) of the men got married in the age of 22 and more as compared to (29.6 percent) of women. It is culturally accepted that at this age the boy must take the responsibility of his family and should act like a mature person.

In Sialkot marriages in early age <13-15 years were not much popular (3.2 percent). Half of the respondents got married at the age of 22 and more years followed by 19-21 years age group (23.3 percent) and 16-18 years age group (21.1 percent). It is found that no male got married before 13 years of age, while 5.3 percent females got married in the age of 13-15 years. This is found too early for men and the percentage for this age bracket is just 6.3 percent. The majority of females got married in the age of 16-18 years (35.3 percent) while majority of the males got married in the age of 22 years and above.

In Chakwal half (51.9 percent) of the respondents were 22 and above years of age when they got married followed by the age group 19-21 years and 16-18 years. In Chakwal more females, (8 percent) reported that they got married before attaining 15 years of age, whereas nominal percentage of males fall in this category. The same trend is followed in Chakwal, where majority of the males got married at 22 years of age and majority of the females got married in the age group of 16-18 years. This pattern is equally observed in Chakwal and Sialkot.

5.5.3 Importance of girls education in islam

Over all 99.2 percent respondents agreed that Islam emphasizes on girl's education. The similar trend was observed in Sialkot and Chakwal districts.

Table 5.7: Views about Family Issues in the Light of Islam

Views on Family issues		Sialkot				Chakwal				All			
		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
				Percent	Number			Percent	Number			Percent	Number
Emphasis on female education	Yes	99.3	99.0	99.2	1,190	99.0	99.5	99.2	1,189	99.2	99.2	99.2	2,379
	No	0.3	0.7	0.5	6	0.8	0.2	0.5	6	0.6	0.4	0.5	12
	DK	0.2	0.2	0.2	2	--	0.3	0.2	2	0.1	0.3	0.2	4
Ideal age for marriage	< 13	0.3	1.5	0.9	11	0.5	2.3	1.4	17	0.4	1.9	1.2	28
	13 – 15	5.2	5.5	5.3	64	10.2	11.7	10.9	131	7.7	8.6	8.1	195
	16 – 18	50.0	54.8	52.4	629	54.6	60.4	57.5	689	52.3	57.6	55.0	1,318
	19 – 21	26.7	20.8	23.8	285	17.7	15.0	16.4	196	22.2	17.9	20.1	481
	22 +	17.3	17.2	17.3	207	16.7	9.2	12.9	155	17.0	13.2	15.1	362
	Don't know/missing	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.3	1.3	0.8	10	0.4	0.8	0.6	14
Favor small family	Yes	33.3	63.3	48.3	580	51.6	59.6	55.6	666	42.5	61.5	52.0	1,246
	No	57.2	35.5	46.3	556	40.7	37.6	39.1	469	49.0	36.5	42.7	1,025
	DK	9.0	1.2	5.1	61	7.5	2.8	5.2	62	8.3	2.0	5.1	123
Provision to plan the number of children	Yes	3.0	18.5	10.8	129	10.7	10.4	10.5	126	6.8	14.4	10.6	255
	No	91.0	80.3	85.7	1028	75.6	82.0	78.8	944	83.3	81.2	82.2	1,972
	DK	5.3	1.2	3.3	39	13.4	7.3	10.4	124	9.3	4.3	6.8	163

5.5.4 Ideal age for marriage in islam

Table 5.7 explains that according to the respondents more than half (55 percent) of them had the views that ideal age for marriage according to Islamic teachings is 16 to 18 years followed by 19-21 years (20.1 percent), 22+ years (15.5 percent) and <13-15 years of age group (9.3 percent).

Majority of the females (57.6 percent) informed that according to Islamic point of view one should get married between the age of 16-18 years, while the male respondents also agreed on this age group. However, their percentage (52.3 percent) was slightly lower than the females. More males (22.2 percent) mentioned the age group 19-21 years and 17 percent reported the age of 22 years suitable for marriage by Islamic point of view. On this issue variation by sex was not prominent.

In Sialkot and Chakwal the most recommended ideal age group for marriage according to Islam was 16-18 years. In Sialkot females having this view was slightly higher (54.8 percent) then the males 50 percent, who reported about the same age group. However, the male

respondents, who shared that 19-21 years of age was ideal for marriage were slightly higher (26.7 percent) than the females (20.8 percent) having the same idea. There was no difference of opinion about the age range of 22+ years for marriage by any sex. In Chakwal more than half (57.5 percent) of the respondents mentioned the ideal age 16-18 years followed by 19-21 years (16.4 percent), 22+ years (12.9 percent) and < 13-15 years (12.3 percent). The age group <13-15 years was reported by more females (14 percent) than males (10.7 percent). The male respondents were slightly higher than the female respondents, who reported about the age group 19-21 years and 22+ more years.

5.5.5 Views about size of the family

According to half (52 percent) of the respondents, Islam favors small family size. However, the responses are little different between Sialkot and Chakwal. In Chakwal there is difference of 15 points on the matter that Islam favors small family size, as 55 percent respondents talked in the favour while 39 percent disagreed to the notion. Whereas, in Sialkot there is not much difference in opinion on the idea of small and large family size from the very perspective of Islam.

5.5.6 Provision to plan the number of children

The respondents were asked about their knowledge of Islamic views to plan the family size. In response, more than four-fifth (82.2 percent) of the respondents confirmed that there is no provision to plan family size in Islam. However, one-tenth (10.6 percent) of the total supported the idea. While, 6.8 percent mentioned that they had no knowledge about it. It is observed that females with the view of planned family size were two times higher (14.4 percent) than the males (6.8 percent). Similar trend is followed at regional level. In Sialkot females were six times higher (18.5 percent) than males (3 percent) who viewed that Islam allow to plan the family size. While in Chakwal no noticeable variations were observed.

5.6. Community Ulema's point of view about family planning

The views of respondents were obtained about the perception of community Ulema on family planning issues, which are presented in Table 5.8. Over all one third (38.9 percent) of the respondents viewed that the community Ulema and Maulvis are in favor of family planning and allow its services and practice in their community . While majority (47.2 percent) responded that their community Ulema and Maulvis will never allow family planning practices in their respective communities. On the other hand 13.5 percent reported that they

do not have any idea and knowledge about the opinion of Ulema on the family planning issue.

If we compare the gender differentials, it is obvious from the Table 5.8 that more than half (51.5 percent) of the women were more confident that the Ulema/Maulvis of their area support the family planning programme. This finding gets strength from the statements of female FGD participants from Chakwal *“Progressive Maulvi does not forbid us from the use of family planning practice” (Chakwal), “Our local Maulvi knows about family planning. He is convinced and motivated to practice family planning” (Chakwal).*

Only one fourth (26.4 percent) of the male respondents mentioned that community Ulema permitted the use of family planning methods, while majority of the males (55.0 percent) have the perception that Maulvis are against family planning practices in their area. Their views are reflected in the statements that they made in FGDs, *“Maulvis will not allow us to adopt family planning because it is Haram, a rich man can feed his kids but a poor faces problem” (Sialkot)* and *“Ulema say it is unnatural act” (male, Sialkot)*. In Chakwal one of the FGD participant also reflected the same view, while saying *“Our area Maulvi says children are divine gift and it is up to Almighty to decide the number of children”*.

Analysis of data conducted at the district level, shows that in Sialkot, only one third (30.8 percent) of the respondents were of the view that local Maulvis are not against family planning; while more than half (56.7 percent) of them shared that community Ulema will never allow family planning to be promoted in the area. However, about 12 percent of the respondents showed their ignorance regarding this matter.

Table 5.8: Community Views about Ulema/Maulvi on Family Planning Issues

Perception of community Ulema on Family planning issues		Sialkot				Chakwal				All			
		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
				Percent	Number			Percent	Number			Percent	Number
Ulema/ Maulvi in the area allow family planning	Yes	*	*	30.8	370	*	*	47.1	564	*	*	38.9	934
	No	67.0	46.3	56.7	680	43.1	32.6	37.8	453	55.0	39.4	47.2	1,133
	DK	18.3	6.2	12.3	147	17.9	11.5	14.7	176	18.1	8.8	13.5	323
Ulema give lecture on family planning in Juma Sermon	Yes	4.8	13.5	9.2	110	5.0	7.0	6.0	72	4.9	10.3	7.6	182
	No	91.0	83.7	87.3	1,048	90.2	86.3	88.2	1,057	90.6	85.0	87.8	2,105
	DK	3.8	1.8	2.8	34	4.3	6.2	5.3	63	4.1	4.0	4.0	97
Frequency of lectures in Juma sermon	Often	1.5	8.7	5.1	61	0.8	3.2	2.0	24	1.2	5.9	3.5	85
	Rarely	2.7	2.0	2.3	28	4.0	2.3	3.2	38	3.3	2.2	2.8	66
	DK	0.2	0.7	0.4	5	--	0.2	0.1	1	0.1	0.4	0.3	6
Ulema/ Maulvi has a clear opinion in favor of family planning	In Favor	8.2	26.5	17.3	208	16.0	44.2	30.1	361	12.1	35.4	23.7	569
	Against	46.7	31.0	38.8	466	19.4	24.5	22.0	263	33.0	27.8	30.4	729
	Silent	13.0	10.3	11.7	140	25.0	17.2	21.1	253	19.0	13.8	16.4	393
	Never Discuss	25.8	27.0	26.4	317	36.4	6.5	21.5	257	31.1	16.8	23.9	574
	DK	5.7	3.7	4.7	56	2.7	7.2	4.9	59	4.2	5.4	4.8	115

In Chakwal percentage of the respondents, who had the knowledge about positive behavior of community religious leaders for family planning practices (47.1 percent) was higher than Sialkot (30.8 percent). In a female FGD conducted in Tehsil Chakwal it was found that most of the females agreed on favorable behavior of the community Maulvi as they say “Maulvi sahib is in favor of family planning”. In the same way respondents having no knowledge about the religious leader’s perception and their permission to use family planning, was slightly higher in Chakwal.

Overall comparison of both the districts reveals that Maulvis were not against family planning and never forbid people to adopt family planning. However, there exists a wide spread understanding that family planning practices are in contrast with Islamic teachings. However, it is one’s own choice and decision to practice it, as it is discussed by an FGD participant, “Some religious leaders are in favor of family planning as they say that mother should feed their kids for two and half years in terms of family planning” (Male, Sialkot).

When we analyze the respondents by sex, the females in Sialkot were three times higher (47.3 percent) than the males (14.3 percent) who viewed that local Ulema allowed family planning. While two third of the males (67 percent) responded that Maulvis did not allow

family planning in their area. In this context, the percentage of males was three times higher (18.3 percent) than the females (6.2 percent) who were unaware of the prevailing situation of their area. Majority (55.6 percent) of women in Chakwal were aware that community Ulema had allowed family planning while majority of the males (43.1 percent) informed that family planning is not allowed by religious leaders in the area. The phenomenon was prevalent in Chakwal, too, where the males were higher in number than the females, who did not know the real situation prevailing in their areas regarding Ulema's perceptions about family planning.

5.6.1 Discussion on family planning issue in juma sermons

The respondents were asked if Ulema of their communities ever discussed family planning issue in the Juma sermons. It was basically to identify the level of interest of religious leaders in the promotion of family planning as well as those who allow family planning in the communities ever talked about it publicly. More than four fifth (87.8 percent) of the respondents informed that Ulema never discussed family planning issues in Juma sermons to convince and guide the people in the light of Islam. The similar information was found from FGDs that "*We have not seen any Maulvi talking about family planning*" (Male and female FGDs, Chakwal and Sialkot.). Another common saying was that "we never heard about religious leaders talking on this issue in any Khutba" (Male and Female FGD, Chakwal and Sialkot). Only (7.6 percent) reported that Ulema discussed family planning issues in Juma sermons in the light of Islamic teachings. A nominal percentage (4 percent) of respondents reported that they do not have any knowledge about it. Gender comparison shows that majority (90.6 percent) of the male respondents reported the fact that this issue is never discussed in Juma sermons. A higher number (85 percent) of females also supported the view that Ulema never discussed family planning in the Juma sermons. Overall a nominal percentage of male and female respondents mentioned that Ulema discussed family planning during Juma sermons, i.e. only 7.6 percent.

In Sialkot only 9.2 percent responded that Maulvis discussed the family planning in Juma sermons. While four fifth of the respondents of Sialkot confirmed that this issue was never discussed. A nominal percentage of respondents (2.8 percent) said that they did not have such information. The number of respondent who emphasized that Ulema give lectures on family planning in Juma sermons was lower in Chakwal than Sialkot. More than four fifth (88.2 percent) of the respondents; shared that this issue was never discussed in Juma sermons in their respective communities.

As far as the gender differentials are concerned the Table 5.8 displays that females were about three times (13.5 percent) more aware about the discussion or lectures delivered on family planning in Juma Khutba than the males (4 percent) in Sialkot district. It is surprising that women were more concerned and aware about the discussions held in Juma sermons, despite the fact that they do not offer Juma prayer in mosques. A large number of males did not agree on the point that any discussion ever took place on family planning issues in Juma Khutba. The percentage of males was three times higher (3.8 percent) than the females (1.8 percent) who had no knowledge about it.

In district Chakwal, the nominal variations are observed in the male and the female responses. For instance, the females having positive view that family planning was discussed during Juma sermons by the community Ulema was slightly higher (7.0 percent) than the males (5.0 percent). Hence, no noticeable variations are found by sex in Chakwal but the variation by sex is observed, when we compare the data collected from both the districts. As discussed earlier that the percentage of Sialkot female respondents was higher than the males of Sialkot and both respondents of Chakwal. Probably their interpersonal communication was stronger, so that they were aware of the contents of Juma Khutba.

5.6.2 Frequency of lectures in juma sermons

A small percentage of respondents mentioned that the Ulema delivered lecture on family planning issue in Juma sermons. When they were probed about the frequency of lectures, then 3.5 percent respondents shared that the community Ulema frequently delivered lectures on family planning as compared to 2.8 percent respondents, who said that the lectures were rarely given to the public in Juma sermons. On the whole, data shows that there is a nominal variation between the male and the female responses.

Over all females were five times (5.9 percent) higher than the males (1.2 percent) who highlighted the frequent lecture of Ulema on family planning. Whereas, the males who shared the rare frequency of lectures by the community Ulema on the matter of family planning, were slightly higher (3.3 percent) as compared to the females (2.2 percent). At regional level, in Sialkot percentage of respondents who stressed on frequent lectures in Juma sermons were two times higher (5.1 percent) than the respondents mentioned about their infrequent lectures (2.3 percent). Whereas in Chakwal, the percentage of respondents agreed on infrequent lectures was slightly higher (3.2 percent) than the respondents (2.0 percent) in favor of frequent lectures given in Juma sermons by community Ulema. In Sialkot, the females who described the frequency of lectures in Juma sermons on family planning were

about 8 times higher (8.7 percent) than the males, on the other hand, the male respondents, who mentioned the lesser frequency of lectures on the issue, were slightly higher as compared to the females. While, in Chakwal more women 3.2 percent were in favor of frequent lectures than males whereas more males stressed on rare lectures on family planning in Juma sermons by local Maulvis. The data analysis highlighted that source of female knowledge about the frequency of lectures delivered in Juma Khutba by the local maulvies needs further investigation.

5.6.3 Opinion of local ulema on family planning issue

As the role of Ulema is perceived more important in the promotion of family planning programme, so was the need to explore a clear picture of public perceptions about the local Ulema's position about the practice of family planning methods.

In both districts the majority (30.4 percent) of respondents have shown opinion that their local Ulema were totally against the family planning. However, nearly one-fourth (23.7 percent) respondents stated that Ulema of their areas are in favor of family planning programme and they never opposed any family planning practice in the community. Whereas less than one-fifth (16.4 percent) of the respondents mentioned that Ulema predominantly kept silent on the issue and hardly expressed their views in public. Nearly one-fourth (23.9 percent) of the respondents reported that the issue was never discussed. While a nominal percentage (4.8 percent) reported that they had no knowledge about the perception of local Maulvis. Overall one-third (35.4 percent) of the women argued that their local Ulema are in favor of family planning, whereas almost the same percentage of men (33 percent) emphasized that Ulema oppose family planning and they never allowed its practice.

Nineteen percent males informed that Ulema remained silent on the issue while the females having same opinion were slightly lower (13.8 percent) in percentage. The male respondents who explained that Ulema never discussed the issue were two times higher (31.1 percent) than the females (16.8 percent).

In Sialkot, majority (38.8 percent) of respondents quoted that the community Ulema are against family planning. However, one-fourth (26.4 percent) of the respondents pointed out that they never discussed about the issue. Nearly one-fifth (17.3 percent) of them declared that Ulema are in favor of family planning and found to be supportive. About one-tenth (11.4 percent) of the respondents revealed that Ulema kept silent on family planning issue. Whereas, a nominal percentage (4.7 percent) of males and females responded that they do not

know any thing about it. In Chakwal, situation is relatively better, where majority (30 percent) of the respondents approved that local Ulema are supportive for family planning practices. Nevertheless, one-fifth (22 percent) of the respondents indicated that Ulema oppose family planning and almost the same proportion talked about the silent attitude of Ulema on this issue.

The Table 5.8 depicts that in Sialkot the responses of females were more positive by explaining that Ulema favor the use of family planning (26.5 percent), whereas, only 8.2 percent of the males shared that Ulema favor family planning. Nearly half (46.7 percent) of the males revealed that Ulema oppose family planning, while the females having the same views were relatively lower (31 percent). It is important to surface that there is not much variation in the opinion of the male and the female respondents, who reported that Ulema reserved their opinion and never discussed the matter. In Chakwal, females were three times (44.2 percent) higher than the males, who pointed out that Ulema were in favor of family planning. One-fourth (24.5 percent) of the female and one-fifth (19.4 percent) of the male respondents indicated that Ulema opposed family planning. While the opposite percentage of the males and the female's respondents had the opinion that local Ulema stayed silent on the issue. Furthermore, a higher percentage of females (36.4 percent) reported that this issue was never discussed. Whereas, the male respondents having same perception; was in a nominal number.

The FGDs participants also supported the quantitative research when they were asked to share their views about Maulvis. They said "*No Maulvi has ever told us anything about the family planning*" (Male FGD Sialkot). Another view that "*Maulvis will not allow us to adopt family planning because it is Haram, he can feed his kids but the problem lies with the poor man*" (Male FGD, Sialkot). One of the females mentioned that "*Our area Maulvi says children are the gift of God and it is up to him to decide the number of children for the family*" (Chakwal) A male shared "*Ulema says it is an unnatural act*" (Sialkot). Another perception was "*Ulema in their Meetings talk against family planning and confirms that it is against Islam*" (Female FGD, Chakwal).

While some of the people explained that few progressive Maulvis supported family planning and allowed it; as discussed by a participant, "*Forward looking Maulvi does not forbid us from the use of family planning methods*" (female FGD, Chakwal). A participant explained that "*Ulema in Iran have allowed family planning after consensus (Ijتهاد), therefore our Maulvis should also do the same with the help of Ijتهاد and Islamic books*" (female FGD,

Chakwal). One of the participants showed his positive views, by saying “Islamic teachings talk about better nurturing of children and in the wake of adverse economic conditions of our country religious leaders are changing their views, too.” (Male FGD, Sialkot). A suggestion was given that “All over the world, before making any decision a consensus is developed, if Pakistan Government would have consulted Ulema from the beginning we would have seen a drastic change” (Male FGD, Chakwal).

5.7 Suggestions to promote family planning in the light of Islam

The respondents were asked for their suggestions with regards to promotion of family planning. In response, 93 percent of the respondents gave suggestions, while only 5.7 percent of them showed reluctance.

Table 5.9: Suggestions Regarding Promotion of family planning in the Light of Islam

Suggestions		Sialkot				Chakwal				All			
		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
				Percent	Number			Percent	Number			Percent	Number
Permissio n of family planning activity in the area	Yes	88.3	97.0	92.7	1,112	92.3	94.5	93.4	1,119	90.3	95.7	93.0	2,231
	No	9.3	3.0	6.2	74	6.5	4.0	5.3	63	7.9	3.5	5.7	137
	DK	2.2	--	1.1	13	.8	1.5	1.2	14	1.5	.8	1.1	27
Most effective institutions	Mosque	20.7	6.3	13.5	162	14.4	11.7	13.0	156	17.5	9.0	13.3	318
	Madrassa	12.8	24.2	18.5	222	13.9	36.6	25.2	302	13.3	30.4	21.9	524
	Formal Education Institute	45.7	28.8	37.3	447	45.6	24.7	35.1	421	45.6	26.8	36.2	868
	Others	14.3	39.7	27.0	324	22.4	22.5	22.5	269	18.3	31.1	24.7	593
	DK	6.5	.7	3.6	43	2.8	4.0	3.4	41	4.7	2.3	3.5	84

On the question which institution can effectively promote the message on family planning, one third (36.2 percent) of the respondents shared that educational institution is the best place, followed by the opinions on Madrassa (21.9 percent) and then mosques (13.3 percent). However, there are large variations by sex in terms of responses, as males’ preferred educational institutions while the females preferred Madrassa for promoting family planning.

Unexpectedly, Sialkot areas had higher percentage (37.3 percent) of the people, who favor educational Institutions as the most effective institution to promote family planning as compared to the respondents from Chakwal (35 percent).

The chapter unfolds perceptions and practices of the religious leaders with reference to Islam and family planning, it also reveals the background characteristics of this very group determined under sex and sect. The three factors mentioned above are very important in broader terms for establishing the socio-cultural perspective of the respondents. It is pertinent to share that there is always a range of determinants that shape the over all body of knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of human beings about some particular domain, so is the case of study's respondent group. For instance, if we talk about the over all knowledge and perceptions of the sample religious leaders population, then the facts expose that there are heterogenous socio – cultural and economic factors involved in the shaping the views that this group expressed. As few of them are government employees and remained the part of the formal sensitization campaigns launched by MoPW on the issue of family planning. While the several others never tapped any opportunity in this domain.

6.1 Knowledge and practices of family planning

During in-depth interviews, Ulema were asked about their knowledge of family planning and its practices. Table 6.1 depicts that in Sialkot and Chakwal districts almost 97.2 percent Ulema have knowledge of family planning; while only one (2.8 percent) religious leader mentioned that he does not know about it. Another fact is around the knowledge of family planning among the male and the female religious leaders, where data reveals that male Ulema are slightly lower (95.8 percent) in percentage than the female religious leaders (100 percent) in terms of their knowledge on the issue. The study also provides data according to the sect. Almost all the Sunni Ulema were aware of family planning, as compared to one-fifth (88.9 percent) part of Ulema from Fiqh e Jafariya, who had knowledge about the issue.

Following statements expose the fact that Ulema have knowledge about family planning. As one of the female religious leaders said *“I have knowledge of Contraceptives; there are pills, injections, operation for females, abstinence and operation for males” (Female IDI, Urban, Sialkot)*. While, a male religious leader shared *“I do not know modern methods but I am aware of old methods like withdrawal” (Male IDI, Urban, Chakwal)*.

Table 6.1: Ulema's Knowledge and Use of Family Planning

Knowledge and Use of Family Planning by Ulema		Sect				Total		Sex				Total	
		Ahl-e-Sunnat		Fiqh e Jafariya				Male		Female			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Knowledge of family planning	Yes	27	100.0	8	88.9	35	97.2	23	95.8	12	100.0	35	97.2
	No	--	--	1	11.1	1	2.8	1	4.2	--	--	1	2.8
Contraceptive use	Ever used	12	44.4	3	33.3	15	41.7	8	33.3	7	58.3	15	41.7
	Current Use	3	11.1	1	11.1	4	11.1	4	16.7	--	--	4	11.1
	Never Use	12	44.4	5	55.6	17	47.2	12	50.0	5	41.7	17	47.2
Reasons for non use	Breastfeeding	25	8.0	--	--	34	5.9	23	4.3	11	9.1	34	5.9
	Against religion	25	8.0	3	33.3	34	14.7	5	21.7	11	--	34	14.7
	Interference in body's normal processes	25	4.0	--	--	34	2.9	--	--	11	9.1	34	2.9
	Others	25	12.0	9	11.1	34	11.8	3	13.0	11	9.1	34	11.8
Intension to adopt family planning in future	Yes	9	52.9	3	42.9	12	50.0	8	50.0	4	50.0	12	50.0
	No	8	47.1	4	57.1	12	50.0	8	50.0	4	50.0	12	50.0

6.1.1 Contraceptive use

A common perception is that Ulema oppose family planning, but the results of IDIs reveal that two-fifth (41.7 percent) of the interviewed Ulema were ever users of family planning methods in the past. Whereas, one-tenth (11.1 percent) of them are the current users. However, nearly half (47.2 percent) of them mentioned that they never used any family planning method.

More than half (58.3) of the female religious leaders had ever used family planning methods, whilst only one-third (33.3 percent) of the male Ulema reported that they used family planning methods at some point in the past. Further more, it was found that only 16.7 percent male Ulema were currently using family planning as compared to the female religious leader, where not a single one reported the current usage of contraceptives. On the whole, half of the male Ulema shared that they never used family planning. Where as, less than half (41.7 percent) of the female religious leaders reported that they never practiced any contraceptive method.

More than two-fifth (44.4 percent) of the Ahle Sunnat and one-third (33.3 percent) of the Ulema from Fiqh e Jafariya were the users of contraceptives in the past. While the percentage of current users of both sects was the same (11.1 percent). Ulema of Ahle Sunnat were slightly lower (44.4 percent) who never used family planning method than the Ulema of Fiqh

e Jafariya (56.6 percent). As commented by a Shia Maulvi that *"It is not allowed in our Fiqh but have heard that withdrawal is allowed in Sunni school of thought"* (Male IDI Urban, Sialkot). Another religious leader said that *"Ahle Hadith are against it but Ahl-i-Tashi consider it Jaiz (allowed in Islam)"* (Male IDI, Urban, Sialkot).

The collected information reflects what ever Ulema preach and tell about family planning to the people, in reality they are practicing family planning by themselves.

6.1.2 Reasons for non use

The Ulema told in their in-depth interviews about the reasons and causes of their non use of family planning methods. It was observed that most important causes shared were breast feeding and the notion that "family planning is against religion". The data analysis of IDIs reveals that 14.7 percent Ulema reported that Islam opposed family planning. As mentioned by the respondents in Chakwal and Sialkot districts that *"There was no concept of family planning in the Holy Prophet's times. This is an idea of modern age; and that the Holy Prophet liked women who can give birth to numerous children"* (Female, IDI Chakwal and Sialkot). Followed by "breast feeding" (5.9 percent) the reason that family planning practices "interfere with body's normal processes" (2.9 percent) and "other" reasons were mentioned by 11.8 percent of the Ulema. Majority of Maulvis (21.7 percent) recorded "religion" as the reason for non use followed by "other" reasons (13 percent) and "breast feeding" (4.3 percent). About 9.1 percent of the female religious leaders said that their main reasons for non use were "breast feeding" "family planning interferes with the normal process of body" and "other reasons." Two females and one male religious leader had the concept about family planning that *"It is a sin according to Islam"* (IDI, Sialkot and Chakwal).

According to Sunni Ulema only 8 percent were of the view that Islam does not allow family planning practices and they never used it. While the percentage of Fiqh e Jafariya Ulema is four times higher (33.3 percent) than those, who stressed that Islam forbids the use of family planning. "Breast feeding" as the reason of not using any method was mentioned by a small percentage of Ahle Sunnat Ulema (8 percent) followed by "interference in body's normal process" (4 percent). While about one-tenth of Sunni and Shia Ulema gave some "others" reasons for non use.

6.1.3 Future intentions for contraceptive use

It was observed that half of the Ulema were totally against the use of family planning while remaining half of them had some intentions to use family planning methods in future. Similar

trend was found amongst the male and the female religious leaders. Majority of Sunni Ulema (52.9 percent) and less than half (42.9 percent) of the Shia Ulema mentioned their positive intentions to practice family planning methods in future. As one of them mentioned, "*Male sterilization is not good whilst all other methods are allowed. Withdrawal was in practice from the beginning of Islam. Currently I am not using but I will practice it in future*" (Male IDI Urban, Chakwal).

6.2 Views on family issues in Islamic perspective

Views of religious leaders were recorded for the study on important family issues like; number of children, family size, son preference and age at marriage in the light of Islam.

6.2.1 Number of children allowed in islam

The religious leaders were inquired of their opinion about the number of children allowed in Islam. In response out of 36 respondents, 34 (94 percent) said that the number of children is not fixed in Islam. If we look in to the desegregated data on the basis of sect, then it exhibits that all the Fiqh e Jafariya respondents replied that it is not fixed, however, few Sunnis (7.4 percent) viewed that it is fixed. The sexual differential presented here gives a different picture; as all the males were of the view that number is not fixed in Islam but nearly one-fifth (16.7 percent) of the women were saying that number of children is fixed in Islam and there is no need to challenge the Islamic teachings. The region wise difference is similar in Sialkot and Chakwal on this matter.

6.2.2 Concept of small family

The religious leaders were also asked whether the concept of small family size exists in Islam or not. In response, more than four-fifth (83.3 percent) of the Ulema said that there are advantages of small family size. If we analyse the responses on the basis of school of thoughts, then Sunni Ulema appeared more progressive as 85.2 percent of them said that there are advantages of small family in comparison to 77.8 percent Shia religious leaders. As far as the sexual differentials are concerned, majority of the women (91.7 percent) said that there are advantages of small family size as compared to the males whose percentage is 12 points less than their counterparts belonging to the opposite sex. The religious leaders are of the view that "*Islam teaches balance for every thing in life, including family size*" (Male IDI, Rural, Sialkot). But the verbatim of few Maulvis from Sialkot negated the advantages of small family and phrased that "*do not kill your children due to the fear of poverty, if people have resources, then, they should have larger families*" (Male IDI, Rural and Urban, Sialkot). Another participant's observation was "*Islam preaches that marry a woman who*

can produce a lot of children (Male IDI, Rural, Sialkot). The different opinions of the religious leaders state that there exists a variation in views about size of the family.

Table 6.2: General Perception about related factors in the Light of Islam

Perception in the light of Islam		Sect				Sex				Total	
		Ahl-e-sunnat		Fiqh e Jafariya		Male		Female			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	percent
Number of children is fixed	Yes	2	7.4	--	--	--	--	2	16.7	2	5.6
	Not	25	92.6	9	100.0	24	100.0	10	83.3	34	94.4
Advantages of small family	Yes	23	85.2	7	77.8	19	79.2	11	91.7	30	83.3
	No	4	14.8	2	22.2	5	20.8	1	8.3	6	16.7
Problems due to large family size	Yes	22	81.5	8	88.9	19	79.2	11	91.7	30	83.3
	No	4	14.8	1	11.1	4	16.7	1	8.3	5	13.9
	No view	1	3.7	--	--	1	4.2	--	--	1	2.8
Son preference	Yes	2	7.4	1	11.1	3	12.5	--	--	3	8.3
	No	24	88.9	8	88.9	21	87.5	11	91.7	32	88.9
	No view	1	3.7	--	--	--	--	1	8.3	1	2.8
Age for the marriage given	Yes	24	88.9	7	77.8	21	87.5	10	83.3	31	86.1
	No	3	11.1	2	22.2	3	12.5	2	16.7	5	13.9

6.2.3 Problems due to large family size

Large family has different consequence on the economic status as well as living status of the families. Our religious leaders also realize that there are certain problems of having larger families. Only five percent of them had no children, otherwise they had large families, even upto nine children. Therefore, more than four-fifth (83.3 percent) of the religious leaders agreed on having problems due to large family. As expected, the sexual variation shows that less (79.2 percent) male Ulema were aware of problems of large family than the females (91.7 percent). The reason may be that females had to keep children and run the household, where as males are responsible to earn for the households economy. Variations by sect exhibits that more Shias (88.9 percent) than Sunnis (81.5 percent) said that large family is a problem. A male respondent expressed his view that: *“As there are problems due to large family, our religion preaches that family size should be kept small and mothers should breast feed their girls for two and a half years and boys for two years”* (Male IDI, Rural, Sialkot). On the matter of large family size, another religious leader said that *large families results in scarcity of resources and promote unrest along with creating marital problems”* (Male IDI, Rural, Sialkot).

6.2.4 Son preference

Table 6.2 also provides information regarding son preference and shows that less than one-tenth (8.3 percent) of the respondents said that they preferred sons over daughters. However, an interesting fact revealed in the study was that none of the female religious leaders favored the notion of son preference, whereas 12.5 percent males preferred sons. The sectarian difference reveals that more Shias 11.1 percent had son preference than Sunnis (7.4 percent). Overall it was observed that son preference does not prevail in the religious leaders. As they showed strong belief in Islamic teachings which states that girls are blessings and boys are gift of God so both should be welcomed. Still it is encouraging that the views of religious leaders are changing with regard to family issues. There is variety of views in favor of boys, as one male religious leaders said: *“from Islamic point of view boys are preferred because males are superior”* (Male IDI rural, Sialkot). Another respondent shared, *“boys are demanded more because they are carrier of name and breed”* (Female IDI, Chakwal). Some religious leaders were found more progressive in views and were not affected by the sex of the child as they commented *“girl is Gods Rehmat (blessing) whilst boy is Naimat (gift). There is no difference in both”* (Male IDI, Chakwal). Another religious leader from urban areas of Sialkot commented that *“It is Gods will, whom so ever he bestows with girls or boys”*.

6.2.5 Age at marriage in islam

Table 6.2 has the details of the respondents about the preferred or right age for marriage of boys and girls in Islam. Here the responses of the females closely corresponded with the male respondents. Most of the religious leaders had same view that age for marriage is given in Islam as most of them said that Islam preaches that males and females may get married when they reach at the age of puberty. The data demonstrates that nearly 86.1 percent of the respondents said that age for marriage is given in Islam. Similar is the view of males and females with a difference of only 5 points i.e. 83.5 and 87.5 percent for females and males respectively. The data reveals that in nearly all family issues Shias are more religious than Sunnis in nearly all discussed ideas and statistics reveal the difference of 11 points; 77.8 to 88.9 percent for Sunnis and Shias respectively.

The religious leaders who believed in mature age of marriage said that *“If boys and girls get married at an appropriate age then they perform their responsibilities with maturity, otherwise very young couples face coping problems”* (Male IDI urban, Chakwal). But the perception of some other Maulvis is that *“Islam orders that when a person reaches the age of puberty,*

he/she must get married. The age for puberty is 9-12 for girls and 14-18 for boys”, (Male IDI, Urban Chakwal, rural Sialkot). However, Ulema of urban and rural areas expressed their feelings by saying “There is one Hadith that if a girl or boy is not married after puberty then the parents will be punished for the children’s mistakes or sins” (Male IDI Urban and Rural, Sialkot). Another view was that “*A girl should be married just after her first menstruation*” (Male IDI, Urban, Sialkot). Some female religious leaders who deliver *daras* (sermons) relaxed the rules a little and shared their views as “*There should be early marriage but not so early that children can’t carry out their responsibilities so for females age should be 21 to 22 and for males 25 to 28*” (Female IDI, Urban, Sialkot and Chakwal).

6.3 Participation in family planning sensitization conference by mopw

Ministry of Population Welfare (MoPW) conducts sensitization sessions for Ulema to create awareness on family planning among them. These sessions are conducted with the objective of utilizing their services for creating awareness around Islam and family planning at the broader community level. One of the objectives of this study was to consult the Ulema, who had been sensitized by MoPW on the matter and to assess: their level of information, their perceptions and attitudes towards the phenomenon. However, it became difficult to locate Ulema according to the address list provided by the District Population Welfare Officers. Nonetheless, research teams managed to reach more number of the MoPW training participants in Chakwal than Sialkot. On the whole 67 percent of the religious leaders who were interviewed for the study had attended the MoPW training sessions.

Table 6.3: Perception of Ulema Sensitized by MoPW about the Conference and its effect on Family Planning Programme

Views of sensitized Ulema		Sect				Sex				Total	
		Ahl-e-sunnat		Fiqh e Jafariya		Male		Female		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Attended any family planning sensitization by MoPW	Yes	6	75.0	--	--	5	71.4	1	50.0	6	66.7
	No	2	25.0	1	100.0	2	28.6	1	50.0	3	33.3
Objective of the seminar/conference /session/meeting	To create awareness about family planning	3	60.0	--	--	3	60.0	--	--	3	60.0
	To eliminate misperceptions about family planning	1	20.0	--	--	1	20.0	--	--	1	20.0
	Gave no information	1	20.0	--	--	1	20.0	--	--	1	20.0
View of different Fiqh regarding family planning	Yes	1	20.0	--	--	1	20.0	--	--	1	16.7
	No	4	80.0	1	100.0	4	80.0	1	100.0	5	83.3
Importance of role of religious leaders	Yes	2	40.0	--	--	2	40.0	--	--	2	33.3
	No	3	60.0	1	100.0	3	60.0	1	100.0	4	66.7
Consensus building	Yes	2	40.0	--	--	2	40.0	--	--	2	33.3
	No	3	60.0	1	100.0	3	60.0	1	100.0	4	66.7
Activity helpful in convincing public	Yes	4	80.0	--	--	4	80.0	--	--	4	80.0
	No	1	20.0	--	--	1	20.0	--	--	1	20.0
Impact of sensitization on the role of (Ulema)	Positive	4	66.7	--	--	4	80.0	--	--	4	66.7
	Negative	2	33.3	--	--	1	20.0	1	100.0	2	33.3
Sensitization of religious leaders	Yes	5	83.3	--	--	5	100.0	--	--	5	83.3
	No	1	16.7	--	--	--	--	1	100.0	1	16.7
Sensitization of religious leaders is helpful in the promotion of F P	Yes	4	66.7	--	--	4	80.0	--	--	4	66.7
	No	2	33.3	--	--	1	20.0	1	100.0	2	33.3

6.3.1 Objective of the sensitization conference

Three-fifth of the Ulema who have attended any sensitization session of MoPW said that main objective of the workshop was to create awareness of family planning. While one-fifth (20 percent) of them shared the information that the main objective of the workshop was to eliminate or clear misconceptions about family planning. However, one-fifth of them found to have no knowledge about it. The differentials from the sect and sex also show similar trends. As the male religious leaders shared their information about the conference as, *“The main idea of the conference was to provide family planning information; the workshop was to sensitize people about family planning in the light of Islam”*. While, Other religious leaders

described their knowledge of sessions by saying *“In our society religious leaders, and Maulvis and Pirs (spiritual healers) have lots of followers, and those who have attended sensitization sessions, if they come forward and promote family planning then it would be easier to remove misconceptions existing in minds of the people”* (Male IDI, Urban , Sialkot).

6.3.2 Views of different fiqh’s about family planning

The views of different Fiqh’s were also asked from the respondents. In this regard, very few (16.7 percent) of them had shared their views, as most of them kept the tight lips on the matter. Similar kind of information was received in the sexual as well as sect differentials. For in stance, a Sunni IDI participant, when explored, revealed his feelings and said *“It is not allowed in our Fiqh but has heard that withdrawal is allowed in Sunni Fiqh”*. One Shia said that *“family planning is allowed in Islam, however, Ahle Hadith are against it whilst Ahl-i-Tashee consider it jaiz (allowed in Islam)”*.

6.3.3 Importance of role of religious leader’s in family planning

When the religious leaders were asked about the importance of their role in family planning, then majority of them said that they have an identity and role in this issue. One-third (33.3 percent) of them expressed their views that religious leaders had a very important role in the lives of the people. However, one of the participants revealed his negative views about the role as he said that *“Real Ulema are those who only work for the gratification of God”* (Male IDI, Urban , Sialkot). Some of the female religious leaders admitted the fact that religious leaders can have a positive roles, for example *“If some Aalim has real knowledge of the Quran & Hadith and wants to preach the knowledge righteously, he will not be against family planning”* (Male IDI, Chakwal). Another female scholar said that *“In my opinion the Ulema who use family planning should guide general public as they are the role models and people must follow them”*. The IDI participants said that the role of Ulema is very crucial as people follow them blindly. They further said that the religious leaders can do research to explore the matter of family planning under the teachings of Islam and explain the do’s and dont’s to the general public in detail. They also suggested that *“Juma sermons or Daras is good forum to talk about social issues and convince people”* (Male IDI, Sialkot). A female participant suggests *“Maulvi should talk about family planning in Juma Khutba and explain it in details in the light of Islam and Female religious leaders should discuss it in Milad, Daras or whenever they teach the holy Quran to girls”* (IDI , Sialkot).

6.3.4 Consensus building

Importance of Ijtihad and consensus building cannot be denied. When the religious leaders were asked about their views on building a consensus among the religious leaders of all sects and schools of thoughts, then one-third (33 percent) of them replied in affirmative about building a consensus, while others disagreed.

The participants who had positive views on the matter of family planning shared *“we conduct Islamic IJTAMAH, which is attended by females and we guide them in the light of Islamic knowledge”* (Female IDI Urban, Sialkot). A male religious leader thought that *“There is need to bring together religious leaders of all sects, so as they can discuss ideas and have consensus on one point of view. “If religious leaders are convinced, then followers will be automatically convinced”* (IDI, Chakwal). Some males pointed put *“There is need for consensus but sensitization workshops from MoPW never held after 2007”* (Male IDI, Rural, Chakwal).

6.3.5 Sensitization activity helpful in convincing public

The Ulema were asked either the activity conducted by MoPW was helpful in convincing the general public or not. In response, it was found that four fifth (80 percent) of the participants who replied the question had impression that the activity was helpful in changing minds of the people. In the words of IDI participants *“we observed that religious leaders and Maulvis have blind followers, if they come forward and promote family planning then it would be easier to convince them”* (Male IDI Urban, Sialkot).

6.3.6 Impact of sensitization on the role of ulema

The sensitization programs and activities are having effect on the minds and lives of the people. It is having a long lasting impact as even kids are aware of the consequences of increase in population growth and larger families. Religious leaders also accepted the fact that *“I have learned that the society’s ideas are traveling faster than the thinking of our Ulema, Our thinking is improvised but we will adopt permissible right things and leave ideas prohibited by Islam”* (Male IDI, Rural Chakwal). One of the IDI participants agreed that *“sensitization has increased my knowledge, I was aware about family planning in the light of Islam but now I have knowledge from medical point of view, too.”* (Male Chakwal)

A couple of respondents shared that merely the small number of sensitization sessions with limited number of seats are not enough for a large number of religious leaders, to spread the information in this domain, frequent number of events should be organized. As one of the participants shared, *“The activities conducted by MoPW were limited in number; and a few*

Maulvis could attend it whilst the representative religious leaders were not invited". (Male IDI, Chakwal)

The religious leaders commented that the sensitization sessions are helpful for advancement or campaigning on family planning. From the ones who had responded to this question two-third (66.7 percent) of them confirmed the idea that sensitization is helpful. As one of the participants shared, *"My thinking have been improved and my superstitions and misconceptions are cleared"* (Male IDI, Talagang).

One participant opened his feelings with a positive note that *"If this kind of workshops and sensitization meetings continue then we can predict improvement"* (Male IDI, Rural, Chakwal). Some of the Participants proposed, *"There should be teams to work for promotion of family planning in the light of Islam"* (Male IDI Rural, Chakwal). *"I promote family planning and give advice to people in my community and also ask them to go to the centers"* (Female IDI, Urban, Chakwal).

6.4 Views of government employed ulema

The question of having employment with the government was asked from all the religious leaders and in response very few affirmed the question. However, among the respondents who work with the government, half of them have the work experience of 1-5 years while the and the other half is working for more than 15 years. The interesting point was that there was no female or Fiqh e Jafariya religious leader working as a Government servant.

Table 6.4: Govt. Employee Ulema's views on Family Planning Issue

		Sect		Sex		Total	
		Ahl-e-Sunnat		Male			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of years in Govt. service	1-5	1	50.0	1	50.0	1	50.0
	15+	1	50.0	1	50.0	1	50.0
Instruction from Govt. to discuss family planning issues in Khutba	No	2	100.0	2	100.0	2	100.0
Report to Govt. about the instructions	No	2	100.0	2	100.0	2	100.0
View about Govt. Policy on family planning	Favor	1	50.0	1	50.0	1	50.0
	Against	1	50.0	1	50.0	1	50.0

When the religious leaders were asked whether they had received any instructions from the Govt. to talk about the issues regarding Islam and family planning, all replied in negative. Similar is the case for males and Sunni's, *"I have been working for twenty years as Govt.*

servant but I have never been involved or asked to report about my views and services about family planning” (IDI Urban, Sialkot) and (IDI, Chakwal). In the IDIs, religious leaders were inquired whether they are asked to report to Govt. about their work. The religious leaders did not have any knowledge about any set of instructions regarding reporting to the government about any family planning issue. The views of the religious leaders are important in making policies and having influence on the general public. The half (50 percent) of them were against the government policy on family planning while the other half (50 percent) was in its favor.

6.5 Role of religious leaders

Ulema were asked about their perception regarding the role of religious leaders in the promotion of family planning practices. In response, majority (74.3 percent) of them accepted that they can play a positive and constructive role in the promotion of family planning according to the teachings of Islam. Further more, they can guide people around birth spacing and the conditions under which Islam allows family planning along with discussions on the Islamic methods for birth spacing. A female religious leaders said that *“If an Alim has real knowledge of the Quran and Hadith and who really want to preach right knowledge he will not be against family planning” (IDI, Urban, Chakwal).*

Only one-fourth Ulema thought that Maulvis can not help in the promotion of family planning and some have the idea that it is not their duty to work on this issue. *“If Maulvis will use family planning method he will not tell anybody because it is against Islamic teachings” (Female IDI Urban, Chakwal and Male IDI Urban, Sialkot).*

Percentage of the male was slightly higher (78.3 percent) than the female religious leaders (66.7 percent) who mentioned that they can play their part to convince people about family planning by providing them information about the Islamic values of family planning. The same trend was found at the level of sect. Where Sunni Maulvis are slightly higher than Shia Maulvis who felt that Ulema can play a constructive role to promote family planning because people listen to them and have faith in them. One of the female religious leaders from Chakwal said during her in depth interview *“religious leaders are the only hindrance in the promotion of family planning, if they preach about family planning then problem may be solved” (IDI, Urban, Chakwal).*

Table 6.5: Perception about Role of Religious Leaders

Perception about Role of Religious Leaders		Sect				Total		Sex				Total	
		Ahl-e-Sunnat		Fiqh e Jafariya				Male		Female			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Religious leaders can play role in promoting family planning	Yes	20	76.9	6	66.7	26	74.3	18	78.3	8	66.7	26	74.3
	No	6	23.1	3	33.3	9	25.7	5	21.7	4	33.3	9	25.7
Any Activity regarding Family Planning in Community	Yes	9	36.0	1	12.5	10	30.3	9	42.9	1	8.3	10	30.3
	No	16	64.0	7	87.5	23	69.7	12	57.1	11	91.7	23	69.7
Willingness to discuss Family Planning issues on communication	Yes	15	65.2	4	80.0	19	67.9	14	77.8	5	50.0	19	67.9
	No	8	34.8	1	20.0	9	32.1	4	22.2	5	50.0	9	32.1
Most effective person/group for the advocacy of Family Planning	Teachers	3	11.5	--	--	3	8.6	2	8.7	1	8.3	3	8.6
	Doctors/LHVs/LHWs	9	34.6	2	22.2	11	31.4	4	17.4	7	58.3	11	31.4
	Media	3	11.5	3	33.3	6	17.1	5	21.7	1	8.3	6	17.1
	Religious Leaders/Spiritual Healer	11	42.3	4	44.4	15	42.9	12	52.2	3	25.0	15	42.9
In favor to change old pattern and practices regarding Family	Yes	20	87.0	7	87.5	27	87.1	18	90.0	9	81.8	27	87.1
	No	3	13.0	1	12.5	4	12.9	2	10.0	2	18.2	4	12.9

6.5.1 Participation in family planning activity

Ulema, who were in favor of their participation in promotion of family planning were asked if they have ever participated in any activity of family planning in their respective community. More than two-third accepted that they never indulged in such activities while less than one-third recorded that they have taken interest in the family planning activities and participated in them. Percentage of male was five times (42.9 percent) higher than female religious leaders (8.3 percent) who participated in any family planning activity while almost all (91.7 percent) the female religious leaders reported that they had never participated in such activities. Half of the Ulema mentioned about their non participation in the family planning activities in the past. The feelings conveyed by a Maulvi reflected *“I am happy that I got the chance to attend the meeting arranged by FWA and I also discussed the issue”* (IDI, Sialkot). Sunni Ulema were three times more progressive (36 percent) than Shias (12.5 percent), who actively participated in the family planning activity some times in the past. While majority of the respondents from both sects never participated in any activity.

It was observed from the IDI’s analysis that two-third (67.9 percent) of the respondents mentioned that they are ready to discuss the family planning issue in the community according to Islamic values. Because it is the need of hour and Ulema should help people to

survive according to their resources. Some of the religious leaders said that if they were asked or provided a chance to impart family planning knowledge they would have been a willing worker, *“I did not have a chance but if am provided with an opportunity, I will positively do advocacy for family planning” (Female IDI Urban, Sialkot and Male IDI, Chakwal).*

A female religious leader emphasized that *“religious people can act positively if media remind them of their responsibilities. They should appear on TV and talk about family planning then people will listen to them as they have regard, love and respect for the religious leaders” (IDI Urban, Chakwal).* Only one-third of the respondents showed some reservations to discuss this issue publicly, as one of them said, *“I think this is not my field and I believe that I should not do advocacy for family planning as it is forbidden in Islam” (Male IDI Urban, Sialkot and Chakwal).* Another one said *“We have not done any Advocacy for family planning” (Female IDI Urban, Sialkot and Chakwal).*

Males were more willing to discuss family planning issues among people (77.8 percent) than the female religious leaders (50 percent). It was also observed that Shia Maulvis were more concerned about it and willing to talk on family planning (80 percent) than the Sunni Maulvis (65.2 percent).

6.5.2 Advocacy for family planning

Ulema discussed that the most effective persons for the advocacy of family planning are religious scholars and spiritual healers. They can motivate people in the light of Islam. They can talk on different forums about the practice of family planning. People have faith in them. As one of the religious leaders mentioned that *“We guide females about family planning in Milad and Daras meetings”*. Nearly half (42.9 percent) of the interviewed religious leaders have given the same opinion. Whilst, one third (31.4 percent) of them thought that doctors and other personals from health and family planning departments will be more effective for advocacy for family planning; followed by media (17.1 percent) and teachers (8.6 percent).

The words of a female religious leader would reflect upon this as *“religious leaders are the only hindrance in the promotion of family planning, if they preach about family planning then problems may be solved. The male respondents* considered that religious leaders are most effective (52.2 percent) followed by media (21.7 percent), Doctors (17.4 percent) and teachers (8.7 percent). According to female religious leaders, doctors and health/ family planning personnel (58.3) can be more effective for advocacy of family planning followed by religious leaders (25 percent), teachers and media (8.3 percent). Sunni Ulema suggested that

first of all religious leaders are important (42.3 percent), followed by Doctors LHV/midwives (34.6 percent) then teachers and media (11.5 percent), who can play an effective role. Shia Maulvis also gave preference to religious leaders for this purpose (44.4 percent), followed by media (33.3 percent), doctors /LHV/midwife (22.2 percent) and according to them teachers are not important at all for family planning advocacy.

It was also asked from Ulema that, in their opinion, either there is any need to change old patterns regarding family planning. In response, more than four-fifth (87 percent) of the religious leaders agreed that old cultural patterns and set of values regarding the practice of family planning should be changed. They further said that this issue should be discussed in the light of Islam and provide a solid base to change old patterns and adopt new ideas. The similar trend was assessed on the basis of sex and sect and no noticeable variations were observed. As suggested by a religious leaders that *"I am convinced about modernism, new ideas should be adopted with the old ones as they facilitate mankind , and a human being should change himself according to the circumstances"* (Male IDI Rural, Chakwal).

6.6 Religious leaders views about general public

Majority of the religious leaders (66.7 percent) believed that public is in favor of family planning. However, 13.9 percent of them were of the view that people are against family planning and one-fifth (19.4 percent) of them mentioned that they never discussed family planning with people.

According to four-fifth (83.3 percent) of the female religious leaders, general masses are motivated to use family planning. As a female religious leader from Sialkot expresses her views, *"In our area females use family planning methods and even the wives of Maulvis practice it"*. Only 16.7 percent of the respondents thought that people will oppose family planning. However, one of the Maulvis shared his negative views and said *"If I am not convinced than how can I say that people around; are in favor. In my opinion, people oppose family planning"* (IDI Urban, Sialkot). As compared to female religious leaders, percentage of the males was slightly lower than those who perceived that people are in favor of family planning. While more than one-tenth (12.5 percent) of them reported that people opposed family planning. While, more than one-fourth mentioned that they never discussed about family planning issues in public. A male respondent discussed that *"It is difficult to discuss family planning issues in public, so I never talked about the issues"* (IDI, Chakwal).

The perceptions of Ulema about public views on family planning issues were also analyzed by sect. Where, it was found that three-fourth (74.1 percent) of the Sunni Ulema are more confident that people support family planning than the Shia (44.4 percent) Ulema. While Shia Maulvis were five times higher (33.3 percent) than Sunni Maulvis (7.4 percent) who stated that people opposed family planning practices. The analysis shows that Shia Maulvis were higher in percentage who never discussed about family planning than Sunni Ulema. The analysis highlighted the fact that 22.2 percent of Shia and 18.5 percent of Sunni religious leaders never discussed about the issue.

Table 6.6: Perception and Interaction of Ulema with FWCs

Perception and Interaction of Ulema		Sect				Sex				Total	
		Ahl-e-Sunnat		Fiqh e Jafariya		Male		Female			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	percent
View of People about family planning	Favor	20	74.1	4	44.4	14	58.3	10	83.3	24	66.7
	Against	2	7.4	3	33.3	3	12.5	2	16.7	5	13.9
	Never Discussed	5	18.5	2	22.2	7	29.2	--	--	7	19.4
Knowledge about FWC in the area	Yes	24	88.9	7	77.8	21	87.5	10	83.3	31	86.1
	No	3	11.1	2	22.2	3	12.5	2	16.7	5	13.9
Interaction with FWC in the area	Yes	12	44.4	2	22.2	7	29.2	7	58.3	14	38.9
	No	15	55.6	7	77.8	17	70.8	5	41.7	22	61.1
Opinion on working of FWC in the area	Against	4	14.8	1	11.1	4	16.7	1	8.3	5	13.9
	Favor	20	74.1	7	77.8	16	66.7	11	91.7	27	75.0
	No view	3	11.1	1	11.1	4	16.7	--	--	4	11.1
View about the religious leaders practicing family planning	Favor	9	37.5	5	55.6	10	47.6	4	33.3	14	42.4
	Oppose	9	37.5	3	33.3	5	23.8	7	58.3	12	36.4
	No view	6	25.0	1	11.1	6	28.6	1	8.3	7	21.2

During discussions majority of the Ulema (86.1 percent) shared the presence of FWC in the area. As mentioned by a Maulvi that “*Yes there is a centre and workers also visit us*” (Male IDI Urban Chakwal). Another Maulvi said “*Yes there is a centre and LHW comes to our house and give us information*” (Female IDI Rural, Chakwal).

However, 13.9 percent of the religious leaders were found unaware of the family welfare centre working in their community. The same views were expressed by both male and female religious leaders that “*I have seen signs and bill boards but do not know about any centre*” (Male and female IDI Rural, Chakwal). On the whole, no significant variation is found by sex.

Study data revealed that Sunni Maulvis were more aware of presence of FWC in their area (88.9 percent) than Shia (77.8 percent) Maulvis. Another interesting fact was around the Shia

Maulvis, who had no knowledge about FWC (22.2 percent) and they were two times higher than Sunni Maulvis (11 percent). It was further noted from the IDI's that two-third (61.1 percent) of the religious leaders reported that they had no interaction with staff of FWC with reference to their work. As confirmed by a female religious leader that *"There is a centre in our area but I do not visit the center, LHW comes to my house but we do not talk"* (Female IDI Rural, Chakwal).

On the other hand one-third (38.9 percent) of the respondents agreed that they meet FWC staff and confirmed their interaction with FWC of their area. In this regard, it was found that female religious leaders were higher in percentage (58.3 percent) that had some interaction with the staff of FWC than the male (29.2 percent) religious leaders. Ulema having no interaction with the FWC staff were about two times higher (70.8 percent) than the females (41.7 percent). Same wording was written by many others, as *"No one from FWC came to visit me"* (Female IDI Rural, Pasrur, Choa Saidan Shah, Sialkot and Male IDI Rural, Chakwal, Talagang). Data revealed that Sunni Maulvis were two times higher than the Shia Maulvis who had interaction (44.4 percent) with FWC in the area. As one of the Shia Maulvis said, *"There is a centre but we never talked to the staff there"* (Male IDI, Rural, Daska).

Data from IDIs revealed that only 13.9 percent Ulema opposed the activities and work of FWC for the promotion of family planning. While majority, three-fourth (75 percent) of them told that they were in favor of FWC working in the area for the betterment of the people and society. While, one-tenth (11.4 percent) of them had no idea and opinion about it. It is important to note that 16.7 percent males and only 8.3 percent females opposed working of FWCs, whilst on the other hand 91.7 percent females supported working of FWCs in comparison to 66.7 percent males. However, religious leaders expressed their views and supported the working of family planning centre in the community and said *"It is good that they are working for the welfare of community"* (IDI, Sialkot). Another participant supported the view by saying *"I am not against the family planning workers in our area"* (Female IDI Urban, Chakwal) and *"I will be very happy because family planning worker can create awareness among people"* (Female IDI Urban, Chakwal).

Nearly half (42.4 percent) of the Ulema supported those religious leaders who practiced family planning methods and said that they appreciate them. However, one-third (36.4 percent) of the respondents opposed them, whilst one-fourth of the Ulema held their views back. It was also found that nearly half (47.6 percent) of the Ulema have more favorable

perceptions about religious leaders practicing family planning then the female religious leaders (33.3 percent). Data reflected that one-fourth of the Maulvis were against the religious leaders who practiced family planning. While, the religious leaders who have no views about the religious people practicing family planning was about four times higher than the rest of the respondent group. Furthermore they showed the attitude that they don't interfere in others personal matters. An Alima highlighted her supportive views and said, *"In my opinion the Ulema who use family planning should guide general public as they are the role models and people follow them"* (Female IDI , Chakwal).

Study data also reveals that more than half (55.6 percent) of the Shia Maulvis were in favor of those leaders who practiced family planning. While one-third (37.5 percent) of the Sunni Maulvis supported them. Another fact is that the percentage of Sunni Ulema was slightly higher than the Shia Ulema who opposed such Maulvis. Similarly, Sunni Maulvis were two times higher than Shia Maulvis who do not care about such things and keep no views about such Maulvis who practice family planning.

6.7 Suggestions about role of religious leaders

Ulema's suggestions were also sought to improve the role of religious leaders on the issue of family planning. In this regard, a great majority of them (87.5 percent) suggested that the role of religious leaders can be improved by using their services for the promotion of programme. While, 12.5 percent of them disagreed with this idea and mentioned that the role of religious leaders can not be effectively used for family planning programmes.

Table 6.7: Suggestions about Role of Religious Leaders

Suggestions about Role of Religious Leaders		Sect				Total		Sex				Total	
		Ahl-e-Sunnat		Fiqh e Jafariya				Male		Female			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Role of religious leader can be improved	Yes	21	87.5	7	87.5	28	87.5	20	95.2	8	72.7	28	87.5
	No	3	12.5	1	12.5	4	12.5	1	4.8	3	27.3	4	12.5
Perception of general public about Family Planning in the light of Islam	Yes	23	95.8	7	87.5	30	93.8	19	90.5	11	100.0	30	93.8
	No	1	4.2	1	12.5	2	6.3	2	9.5	--	--	2	6.3
Through research	Yes	23	26.1	8	12.5	31	22.6	21	14.3	10	40.0	31	22.6
Through Dialogue	Yes	23	13.0	8	50.0	31	22.6	21	23.8	10	20.0	31	22.6
Awareness of general public	Yes	18	78.3	3	37.5	21	67.7	16	76.2	5	50.0	21	67.7
	No	5	21.7	5	62.5	10	32.3	5	23.8	5	50.0	10	32.3
Most effective people/group to change the opinion of general public	Politicians/Numberdars / Landlords	7	30.4	4	50.0	11	35.5	9	42.9	2	20.0	11	35.5
	Teachers	4	17.4	--	--	4	12.9	1	4.8	3	30.0	4	12.9
	Religious Leaders	5	21.7	3	37.5	8	25.8	5	23.8	3	30.0	8	25.8
	Media	2	8.7	--	--	2	6.5	1	4.8	1	10.0	2	6.5
	Discussions	5	21.7	1	12.5	6	19.4	5	23.8	1	10.0	6	19.4

Almost all the Ulema (95.2 percent) were convinced that the role of religious leaders should be improved for family planning program, while female religious leaders were lower (72.2 percent) in percentage, who suggested the same solution to promote family planning program. The important point here is that no variations are found in this area by sect.

Religious leaders from Chakwal and Sialkot further shared, “*religious leaders can play an important role, they should do research in family planning and find reasoning what is allowed or prohibited in Islam and then explain to the general public in detail*” (Female IDI, Urban, Sialkot and Male IDI, Urban, Chakwal) A female religious leader communicated her feelings that “*In my opinion the Ulema who use family planning methods should guide general public as they are the role models and people follow them*” (ID, Chakwal).

6.7.1 Perception of general public about family planning

Ulema also expressed their views about people’s perception on the phenomenon of family planning. As almost all (93.8 percent) Ulema mentioned that people approve family planning and no visible variations in this regard are found by sex. As spoken by a respondent, “*People are of the view that Maulvis should teach Islamic knowledge about family planning*” (Male IDI, Urban, Sialkot).

Sunni Maulvis were more confident that people have positive views about family planning (95.8 percent) than the Shia Maulvis (87.5 percent). As one-fourth of the Ulema discussed that family planning issues can be solved through further research on this subject in the light of the Quran and Islamic values. Consultative dialogues on the theme can also bring better solutions to the problem. This idea was expressed by one of the participants in these words *“If a Maulvi has real knowledge of the Quran and Hadith and he really wants to preach it, he will never be against family planning” (Female IDI, Urban, Chakwal).*

Study reveals that female religious leaders were three times (40 percent) more convinced about the importance of research than Ulema (14.3 percent) who favored that through research the issue can be solved. Whilst the Sunni Maulvis who recommended for in-depth research in Islamic perspective were two times higher (26.1 percent) than Shia Maulvis (12.5 percent). However, on the whole one-fourth (22.61 percent) of the respondents suggested that through dialogue better results can be obtained while no visible variations were found by sex. However, the percentage of Shia Maulvis were four times (50 percent) higher than Sunni Maulvis (13 percent) who were in favor of dialogue based solution by Ulema to resolve misperceptions regarding family planning program.

6.7.2 Need to create awareness in general public

Majority of the religious leaders (67.7 percent) suggested that to create awareness in general public about family planning and its benefits will be more useful for better results and religious leaders can play a vital role in this awareness campaign through out the country. However, three-fourth (76.2 percent) of the male and half of the female religious leaders agreed that through awareness campaign by the religious scholars family planning programme can be successful in our society. They further said that people are unaware of the religious values regarding family planning. Whilst one of them said, *“It does not depend on new or old ideas; it is necessary that people should be guided according to the Islamic teachings” (Female IDI, Rural, Chakwal).*

The data analysis of in-depth interviews highlights that Sunni Maulvis pay more attention to awareness activities on family planning as compared to Shia (37.5 percent) Maulvi, who agreed that Ulema should create awareness on family planning issue in the light of Islam.

6.7.3 Most effective group/person to change the opinion of public

While answering the question that who can be the most effective person or group to change public opinions. Ulema highlighted that the influential persons like politicians, numberdars

and landlords can be most effective (35.5 percent) to change the opinion of general public because of their high status in the society. The ranking was followed by religious leaders (25.8 percent), through “discussions” (19.4 percent), “with the help of teachers” (12.9 percent) and “media” (6.5 percent) as the important ways to bring change in the thinking of people. A Maulvi suggested by saying “*I believe that religious leaders, media and influential persons are more effective to bring change in the attitudes of masses*” (IDI, Chakwal). In the opinion of Maulvis the “politicians”, “numberdar” and “landlords” are most effective while for female religious leaders “teachers” and “religious leaders” can effectively change the thinking of general public. When we analyze the data by sect then it is found that Sunni and Shia Maulvis have the same opinion that “politicians”, “landlords” and “numberdar” have the power and close coordination with public at different levels, so they can play an important role to convince the public on this issue.

However, it is important to remember that religious leaders on average are better-educated than the general public, and this accomplishment is positively correlated with the approval of family planning. Among religious leaders, education is positively associated with the understanding that Islam permits family planning; and nearly 93 percent of those with a postgraduate education hold this view, as compared to 70 percent of those who did not continue their formal education beyond secondary school. Among the general public too, educational attainment and approval of family planning were positively correlated. When the analysis was restricted to those who had earned a university degree, male religious leaders were less likely than other men to believe that family planning was acceptable (82 percent vs. 91 percent). While, there were no differences between well-educated women in both the groups.



7.1 Summary of the findings

Carol Underwood (2000) analyzed in a recent publication that Muslim religious leaders are often viewed as real or potential obstacles to family planning, whereas there are some others who claim that this is not the case with every Muslim scholar. This dichotomy demands for a thorough scientific investigation to ascertain the reality. Therefore, the research at hand was designed to study the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and practices of Muslim scholars about family planning and how they differ from the ones, held by the general public. Although Islamic religious leaders had different reasons than the general public to justify the use of contraceptives, yet they are as likely as others in the population to approve family planning. However, as a general perception, Muslim religious leaders are often viewed as real or potential obstacle to family planning.

A pilot study on “Islam and family planning: Perceptions and Practices” was conducted in two different districts, namely Sialkot and Chakwal of Punjab province. The information was gathered from rural and urban areas through quantitative and qualitative research methods. The study involved in-depth qualitative research with the aim to yield data for understanding effects of different factors on the perception, behavior and practices related to Islam and family planning. The research tools utilized were structured questionnaires, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. Mostly the qualitative research tools were used parallel to the quantitative survey to strengthen the quality of information, especially regarding the attitudinal and behavioral aspects of the respondents.

Target group in the study was comprised of two broad categories: the first one was from general public, in which the respondents were males between of the age group of 15-54 and the females between the age group of 15-49 from thirty households each in 80 localities of the two selected districts. While, the second category was comprised of religious leaders, having a representation from both the sexes. To correspond the demographic composition of Pakistan, it was planned that the respondents from both sects; Shia and Sunni will be covered. It was also intended to get the views of those religious leaders who were sensitized by MoPW about the family planning program.

In most of the Muslim states, the family planning program is offering voluntary choice to the eligible couples. Whereas, promotional campaigns are designed, developed and launched for

creating an effective awareness on these issues. Different studies in Pakistan have, however, revealed that in spite of high level of awareness, the contraceptive prevalence rate is still much lower than the desired level (MoPW, 2005). It was further learnt that one of the major reasons quoted by people for non use of contraception is Islamic point of view on family planning (PDHS, 2008). Thus, there was a dire need to further explore the issue in detail.

So, the research in hand has helped to unfold the cultural and social beliefs that mould the Pakistani people's perceptions, attitudes and behavior towards Islam and family planning. The study further investigated all possible aspects related to general public' and religious leaders' knowledge and practices through a multi-dimensional approach of baseline information supplemented with detailed interviews. The quantitative side of the research formulated the main framework, while the qualitative part filled in the information that form background reasons behind the numbers. This study also assessed the level of awareness on the subject among the sample population through the application of various indicators.

The study also encompassed information from general publics' perceptions, attitudes and practices in the light of background variables and to analyze the predominant inter-linkages between family planning and Islamic teachings and their implications on the fertility behavior.

It is important to share here that Islam and family planning has not been talk of the day yet; either by scholars and religious leaders or in the religious arena. The religious leaders, policy makers and intellectuals did not take responsibility to hold talks or discussions on Islam and family planning and made it the most forgotten area. This situation helped to create misconceptions, misunderstandings, lack of interest on the part of stake holders, which generated disinformation on this topic and it became a land of gossips and false interpretations from those, who were neither scholars nor religious leaders or policy makers. Further more. This confused state results in creating the communication gap between all.

Another salient feature of this study is the target population, which presented an age structure of respondent's predominantly from the age group of 25 to 34 with few participants from the elderly age group. The trend was similar in both districts, showing that our sample was covering a good representation from all age groups. All the respondents were currently married so they freely discussed the issue of family planning. The literacy rate was high and most of the respondents were engaged in some income earning activities and also had paid jobs.

Most of the people were blessed with at least one child; therefore, they were potential users of family planning methods and gave views on this issue. The knowledge base was nearly universal confirming the knowledge of family planning observed in Pakistan (NIPS, 2008). Islamic knowledge was based just on their perceptions without any back up of citations or references from the Quran on Hadith. TV was the main source of family planning knowledge which they possessed and main source of motivation was either the health personnel or husbands. A comparison of self desired number of children of the male and female respondents and actual parity revealed that the females wanted to have their family size relatively larger than their husbands. The reasons for non use of contraceptives alluded to the prevailed thoughts around factors like: 'up to God, and high desires from the females to have more sons as an old age security. However, the later factor had slight variations in terms of perceptions from the males who desired more sons to have more earning hands. This set of information revealed from the data exposed that cultural affect on the phenomenon of large family size was more than religious affect, and religion was used as a support mechanism in this regard.

Based on cultural norms and values which were mostly derived from religion, the perceptions were created and fabricated at all possible levels, therefore, a perception at household level did not match with community level and the community level perceptions did not coincide with the regional and the national level. Even they do not reflect synergy with the views of the religious leaders. The findings of this study had repeatedly confirmed that the knowledge of general public was not based on authentic Islamic teachings. While, the research team on the basis of its observations can share that the knowledge base of communities in both the districts was constructed by indigenous knowledge, cultural understanding, unauthentic sources and cultural practices. However, the vibrant base of knowledge among individuals has helped them to adopt family planning practices. However, the situation appeared extremely interesting during the study when few respondents claimed that "family planning is forbidden in Islam" but when asked to refer any authentic Islamic teachings, majority of them failed to quote a single reference.

On the whole, more than half of the respondents stated that family planning was not approved in Islam. If we interpret it positively, it means that half of the population approved family planning program. However, the regional variations have depicted that in Chakwal more respondents quoted the approval of family planning than Sialkot. While, one-third of the respondents said that Islam disapproves family planning, as compared to the meager number

who stated that family planning is allowed in certain conditions and there is no statement in Islam regarding use of family planning. A few of the respondents admitted that they do not know about the Islamic teachings in this regard, therefore, as it was stated earlier, people do not have any supportive material from the Quran, which forbids family planning. However, breast feeding as a medium for limiting number or birth spacing was also quoted by a large number. Nonetheless, the general public respondents reported that it was recommended in Islam as a method for birth spacing, while sexual differentials described wide differences. To support the issue, qualitative data gathered by the FGDs indicated that respondents were of the view that breast feeding is the only Islamic method of birth spacing. The evidences from FGDs reflected that mothers should breast feed their young ones to achieve the target of birth spacing. However, it was found that for general public, it was difficult to discuss the issue of family planning in front of others or relatives so people were using the practice of breast feeding as a shield. The status of family planning program as Halal or Haram was very important to be ascertained through respondent's views. So, the responses to this question depicted that nearly all the respondents said that family planning is forbidden and they also confirmed the idea that abortion is a murder. Nevertheless, a few of them agreed that abortion is allowed till fourth month of the pregnancy; whereas some of them said it is allowed in the first month only. However, the percentage of this group was very small because despite of their belief, they were afraid to quote it in the public.

According to general public, the main sources of knowledge on Islamic teachings and family planning were print/electronic media, religious leaders, family, readings and friends but nobody had quoted that they have received information from the Quran or Hadith. Most of the respondents agreed that Islam emphasized on girl's education and similar views were received from Sialkot and Chakwal districts. More than half of the females informed that according to Islamic point of view, one should get married at age of 16-18 years while male respondents also agreed on this age group but their percentage (52.3 percent) was slightly lower than the females. It is worth mentioning here that in actual, the respondent reported that their marriages took place at the age of 23-24. This information also reflected that perceptions are different from practices and also not according to Islamic teachings. They use more cultural norms than the Islamic teachings.

Economic productivity of the male also played vital role in determining age at marriage. When the public quote religious leaders they say that family planning, as understood in Islamic perspective, did not oppose marriage or the begetting of children, nor did its concept

implied disbelief in the doctrine of fate and divine dispensation--for Allah Almighty has bestowed reason upon man to enable him to distinguish between the useful and the harmful, and to help him follow the path that would assure him happiness in this world as well as in the world here after. To assume that Shia and Sunni religious leaders were homogenous in their thoughts, then it would be wrong. There existed a lot of variety with reference to their knowledge, interpretation and practices. In certain areas, Shias appeared more flexible where as in other areas Sunni religious leaders reflected more open point of view. Even in the interpretation of age at the time of marriage some of them recognized the fact that age at marriage should be around 20 years and this point of view is more constructed by cultural and economic parameters than the religious ones.

The concept of family size was also probed from the respondents which revealed that half of the respondents were of the view that Islam favors small family while the other half was against the idea of small family size. The respondents also informed that Ulema are rigid and they never discussed family planning issues in Juma sermons to convince and guide people in the light of Islam. The similar information was provided by the FGDs participants. In Sialkot the responses of females were more positive as they informed that the Ulema favor the use of family planning whereas comparatively lesser males told that Ulema favored family planning. The respondents also revealed the fact that Ulema can be more effective for promotion of family planning along with the health and educational institutions.

Gender face of the issue

It was also found in the study that patriarchal society has a deep effect on family planning practices. A gender disparity was extremely visible in this regard. To opt for the family planning methods was generally considered a domain of females, and particularly, those methods which involve chemical or surgical effects. There is no denial to the fact that reproductive system of females is much more complicated, intricate and prone to various diseases in comparison to the males. In this situation a logical decision would have been to save the female from extra burden of family planning methods. But the results of the study showed that major practices particularly those methods which involve any side effects, the female were asked to adopt. A very prominent example that can be quoted here is the prevalent rate of sterilization method. Our study has revealed that sterilization amongst the males (0.2 percent) was much lesser than the females (4.2 percent). Another factor which highlighted the gender discrimination surfaced during the research was that in a majority of cases decisions to adopt family planning method were made by men and executed by women.

The female folk were not allowed to make independent decisions even in those situations where their lives were at stake. Some of the FGDs revealed that men were exploiting women in the name of Islam. For instance, it was noticed that women were kept deprived of making decisions around abortions, where they had serious health risks involved in keeping the pregnancy. Even the female religious leaders did not endorse access of a female to FWCs. It was admitted by a female religious leader for not having any conversation with a LHV, when she even visited her residence. It was an interesting finding that female religious leader shifted their burden of advocacy and awareness to the male counter parts, whereas, being a female they can be more trust worthy to talk/discuss family planning issues. It got revealed from the data that the ordinary housewives were more inclined towards the adoption of family planning methods, which in actual they have to adopt by challenging the patriarchal norms and values. Even being conscious about the effects of this revolt, they were exercising family planning methods without bringing it into the knowledge of their males.

The perceptions and practices of religious leaders also presented a dichotomy. The study has enfolded the perceptions and practices of religious leaders with reference to Islam and family planning along with their back ground characteristics regarding sex and sect. It was also found that like the general public, majority of the Ulema had knowledge of family planning. Moreover, it was revealed that Ulema were also the 'ever users' of family planning methods and even some of them were the current users, but the fact remained that still nearly half of them never used contraceptives. The Ulema reported that Islam opposed family planning but contrary to this statement they also promote "breast feeding" and withdrawal. A majority also accepted that Ulema can play a positive and constructive role in the promotion of family planning according to the teachings of Islam.

Finally, there is no denial to the fact that there existed a relationship between Islam and family planning but when this claim was translated into practice, there existed a wide gap, as people say family planning is prohibited in Islam but 58 percent of the general public and religious leaders are using contraception that reflects the fact, "what is usually said, is not always practiced".

Information was also collected regarding the involvement of Ulema in the promotion of family planning programs. Only one-third of them confirmed their interest in the family planning activities. While, two-third of the mentioned that they are willing to discuss the family planning issues in the community according to Islamic values. Ulema also discussed that the most effective persons for the advocacy of family planning would be the religious

scholars (Ulema, Maulvis and spiritual healers), which in reality is different from the perspective of the general public who preferred educational institutions for the promotion of family planning. Ulema agreed that old cultural pattern and set of values regarding the practice of family planning should be changed.

The study has showed that more than half of the Ulema believed that public was in favor of family planning. According to data, there were only 13.9 percent Ulema who had the view that general public was against the concept and practices of family planning. It was also encouraging to note that majority of the Ulema knew the presence of FWC in the area and only a few were unaware of the family welfare centre working in their community.

It was also found that more than half of the Ulema were against the religious leaders who practiced family planning methods and they mentioned that they were not in favor of them. There were some Maulvis who were of the view that Islam, as the religion of pristine nature, has never opposed to what is good to man. Indeed, it has always been ahead in the efforts towards the achievement of this good so long as it is not in conflict with the purposes of Allah's law. But those who opposed the notion had said that the Muslims required multiplication of their numbers in order to defend the mission of Islam against the adversaries threatening it. However, one-fourth of the religious leaders expressed no views about such religious leaders, who practiced family planning.

Most of the Ulema favored that the role of religious leaders can be improved by using their services for the promotion of program, but few disagreed with this idea and mentioned that religious leaders cannot play any role in this regards. Majority of the Ulema were aware of the fact that to create knowledge of family planning in the light of Islam in general public, Ulema can play a vital role throughout the country. This negates the generally prevailing perception of the people that all Ulemas were against the family planning program. Some of the Ulema also highlighted the fact that most effective group / person to change the opinion of public can be the influential persons like local politicians, numberdars, landlords and other notables of the society. They can play an effective role in changing opinions of the general public because people listen to them due to their high status in the society. The religious leaders placed themselves after this group of influentials.

A great majority of the religious leaders (94 percent) said that the number of children has not been fixed by Islam. The data according to the sect exhibits that all of the Fiqh e Jafariya respondents replied that it was not fixed but few Sunnis (7 percent) was of the view that it is

fixed. Only five percent of the religious leaders had no children otherwise they had large families and in few cases they had nine children, therefore, more than four-fifth (83 percent) of the religious leaders agreed to the point that various problems occur due to large family size. The concept of son preference also prevailed as males preferred sons and more Shias had notion of son preference in their minds. Most of the religious leaders had same view that age for marriage is given in Islam as most of them said that Islam preaches that males and females must get married when they reach the age of puberty.

Religious leaders role to promote family planning is of prime importance but has not been streamlined even the Ulema sensitized by MoPW were not on the right direction to clear the misconceptions regarding family planning and dissemination of knowledge or use of family planning. However, no follow up mechanism was developed by MoPW to evaluate their practices after sensitization. It was also difficult to find Ulema who attended sensitization sessions conducted by MoPW to conduct interviews with them. In Sialkot, particularly, majority of them were not traceable even through the addresses and contact numbers given.

It was found that the religious leaders do believe in building a consensus among the religious leaders of all sects and schools of thoughts. As some of them commented about the benefits of sensitization sessions which they found helpful in advancing the knowledge on family planning programs. While, four-fifth (80 percent) of the Sunni religious leaders acknowledged the benefits of sensitization efforts taken by the government. It was found that some of the religious leaders in the sample were government employees and their length of service ranged from 1 to 15 years. However, none of the female religious leaders was found employed with the government. When the religious leaders were asked whether they had received any instructions from the Government regarding the spread of family planning message, all replied in negative. Some of the religious leaders were of the view that if they were asked to impart family planning knowledge to the masses, they will be a willing worker.

Difference of knowledge between males and females

Results of the study revealed that females were more in the practice of family planning methods. It was also observed that male had more knowledge about Islamic teachings regarding family planning. The respondents were fully aware about the effects of family planning practices on the reproductive systems of a male and female. They repeatedly stressed that the health of a female is more affected by family planning practices than a male.

There existed a difference in justifying the use of contraceptives by the religious leaders than the general public; however, they approved family planning on the same patterns as did the masses. The findings reported contradictions regarding the notion that Muslim religious leaders were more resistant to family planning than the community at large. It was reiterated by the general public that religious leaders should continue to provide ethical guidance to their communities as together they can confront the changes that scientific and technological innovations have brought. It was also suggested by the masses to have an access to the interpretations that religious leaders make and it should be shared with the communities as the tenor and text of their communication.

7.2 Recommendations

This research uncovers the issues, which have never been studied in any previous studies in Pakistan. It provides the evidence based facts to the readers on behavioral and attitudinal issues of general public and religious leaders on the subject of Islam and family planning. Further more, majority of the recommendations given below have also been reiterated by the informants in the qualitative and quantitative information collected for this study.

Suggestions for religious leaders

- The study results suggested that religious leaders should be educated about family planning program in the light of Islam as well as Islamic interpretations discussed/used in other Muslim countries.
- A series of debates on various aspects of family planning amongst religious leaders from different Fiqh should be organized by different religious schools of thoughts.
- To enhance the knowledge base of religious leaders, recent research on family planning and other family issues should be made an integral part of religious studies curriculum.
- Religious leaders are required to change their conventional and historical posture about family planning and to enhance their subject knowledge they should participate in the events organized by the civil society organizations.
- Ulema should adopt relatively non-controversial concepts to discuss family planning programs like birth spacing through breast feeding which will definitely help to open up debate on other related issues.

- Heads of religious schools of thoughts and Muftis can help the community level religious leaders by adopting a clear position on several aspects of family planning program, in clear and easily understandable language, in their public speeches and writings.
- Religious leaders should eliminate confusions on knowledge and practices of family planning by adopting a standard and authentic source of education and information. Self centered interpretations of the knowledge acquired from different sources is causing a great deal of confusion which gets exacerbated when reaches the common man, therefore, religious leaders' clarity on all issues is of prime importance.
- The concept of birth spacing is well accepted by Ulema in Pakistan. However, the idea of family planning is mostly rejected since the term has come to be associated with limiting family size which is seen as being against the teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. So, the religious leaders should educate people about the concept of birth spacing in the light of Islam.
- Nikah Registrars can be involved as there is a good opportunity to provide Islamic information about the issue as part of Nikah sermon.
- Weekly TV programs/talk shows on family planning by having Ulema as discussants in them can positively influence the mindset of viewers at large.
- Ulema through their religious institutions can acquire literature from other Muslim countries on the experiences that they respectively attained from their formal family planning programmes and the good practices can be shared here in the religious gatherings.
- Female Religious leaders also have a larger access to female audience through the occasions of Mehfil-e-Milad, Daras and other religious ceremonies. They should effectively utilize these opportunities for providing knowledge on family planning programs from health and family welfare perspectives.

Suggestions for government agencies

- There is a dire need to enhance the knowledge base of religious leaders about family planning issues to bring about positive behavioral and attitudinal changes in the communities at large. *Programs like sensitization of Ulema should be more frequent, widespread and extensive in nature.*

- A follow up for back stopping and monitoring of sensitized religious leaders should be made an integral part of the family planning program.
- Most of the Ulema are willing to discuss issues related to birth spacing and woman's health so there is an urgent need to take them on board.
- Religious leaders are interested in the training program of MoPW and also like to receive some scientific knowledge on the subject to analyze it in the Islamic perspective to motivate the general public.
- Imam Masjids (both the Government employees and others) should be trained by different line departments on what and how to communicate this sensitive information in their sermons and ensure that they are actually incorporating these issues in their addresses.
- Ulema are aware of modern contraceptive methods, however the health implications of these methods are not known to them. So, awareness trainings in this domain should be started by MoPW. Furthermore, sensitized Ulema can be requested to facilitate sessions in the community trainings.
- Religious leaders should be encouraged to write articles in the newspapers and other public awareness mediums of high readership. In this way, writings of the top religious leaders can be a source of reference not only for the local ulemas but also for the common man.
- Educational institutions can play a vital role to enhance the importance of family planning programs. Refresher courses for teachers should be arranged on the family planning issues to create awareness among students. Family planning should be introduced as a subject course at college and university level.
- It is suggested that FWC staff should organize more community meetings for males and females separately. As these events will enable the people to overcome their apprehensions on the problem in an informed manner.
- Family planning concepts with respect to Islamic teachings may be telecasted to explain which method is allowed and which is not. Moreover, misconceptions about the complications and its effects on reproductive system of men and women may also be clarified through media and interpersonal communications.

- The staff involved in family planning programs should be trained on social mobilization techniques, interpersonal communication and motivational practices. For instance, LHWs can be involved in the programme as they have household level outreach nationwide.
- Family planning programs should be explained in a very easily understandable language so that less educated and illiterate people also can understand its details.
- There should be printed material and literature regarding Islam and family planning in religious institutions for guidance and consultation.
- National heroes from different fields like sports, film, education, politics and religion may be involved in the promotional campaigns for family planning.
- MoPW should launch Ulema's sensitization programme at the national scale and the religious leaders from all schools of thoughts and sects can be converged on one point of view to promote the message of family planning across.
- Progressive Ulema, Maulvis and Nazims can be involved in advocacy on the subject; with the message for communities around implications that large family size put on resources.
- Islamic knowledge should be imparted to the family planning workers with references from the Holy Quran and sayings of Prophet (PBUH) in favor of family planning.
- The advertisements on TV, radio and print media on the subject of family planning should be kept culturally and religiously sensitive as majority of the respondents claimed them embarrassing and inappropriate, especially when they watch them with the extended family and children.

Suggestions for general public

- Over inflated social and cultural taboos related to the concept and practices of family planning program should be excluded as part of social responsibility towards a national cause. This process can be initiated by the enlightened and progressive community groups, who are pro to the concept of family planning.
- Gender disparities should be minimized by providing equal learning opportunities to girls, as they are the future mothers.

- The pressure to opt the family planning practices on women should be reduced and the men should be encouraged to come forward with the adoption of safe family planning methods like condoms, which hardly has any health implications on any sex partner.
- The general public should be mobilized to participate in the educational/informational activities related to family planning organized by various public and private stakeholders..
- Women activist approach should be encouraged by the communities to facilitate the family planning education/information in the communities at large.

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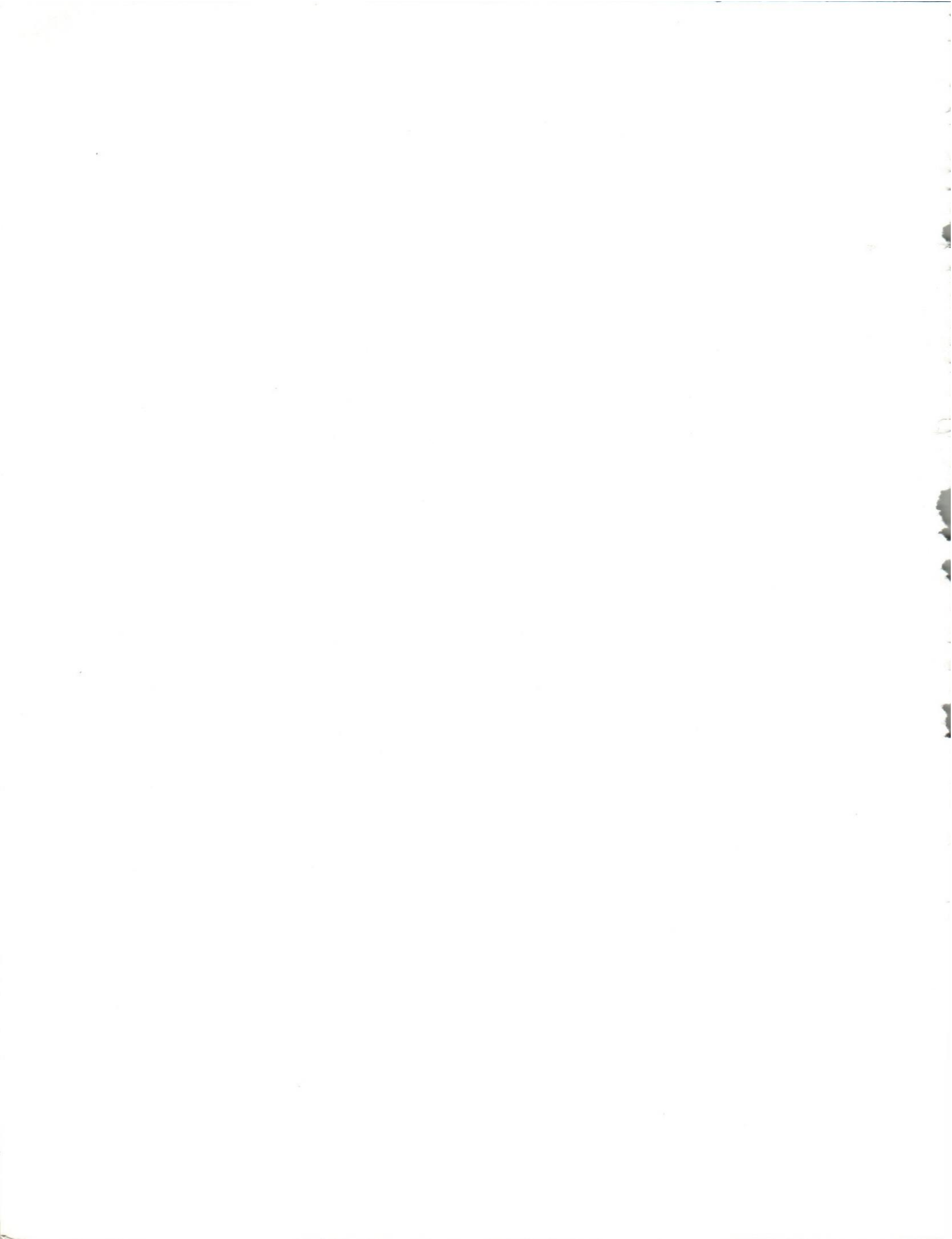
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APPENDIX A

List of Project Staff

S.No.	Name / designation	
Core Team/Staff		
1	Dr. Sajid Ahmad	Executive Director (Former)
2	Mr. Amanullah Bhatti	Project Director / Director (R&S)
3	Ms. Aysha Sheraz	Principal Investigator / Fellow
4	Ms. Rabia Zafar	Deputy Principal Investigator / Associate Fellow
5	Mr. Faateh ud Din Ahmad	Computer Programmer
6	Mr. Zafar Iqbal Khan Niazi	Secretary (M&F)
7	Mr. Muhammad Arif	Accountant (NIPS)
8	Mr. Muhammad Imran	Coordinator
9	Mr. Saadia Perveen	Office Coordinator / Intern
Data Entry Operator		
10	Muhammad Muniyam Rehman	Data Entry Operator
12	Muhammad Atif	Data Entry Operator
Field Staff		
Team 1:		Sialkot
13	Imran Ibrahim	Supervisor
14	Mirza Adnan	Interviewer
15	Safia Sayal	Interviewer
16	Zanib Zahoor	Interviewer
Team 2:		Sialkot
17	Hassan Raza	Supervisor
18	Amar	Interviewer
19	Shabana Shafat	Interviewer
20	Shaista Qaisar	Interviewer
Team 3:		Chakwal
21	Asad Raza	Supervisor
22	Ghulam Samdani	Interviewer
23	Aysha Shafique	Interviewer
24	Farhat Ara	Interviewer
Team 4		Chakwal
25	Kashif Kamran	Supervisor
26	Muhammad Farooq	Interviewer
27	Shagufta Hameed	Interviewer
28	Shazia Kalsoom	Interviewer
Team 5:		
29	Fozia Anjum	Editor
30	M.Amir	Editor
31	Mohsin Nadeem	Editor



Focus Group Discussion Guide

Issues for focus group exploration:

I. Prevailing knowledge of family planning in islam:-

- Knowledge about FP.
- (What is FP and contraceptives)—Modern / Traditional methods for male and female.
- Knowledge about FP in the light of Islam.
- Are there any FP issues against Islam?
- Idea the type of FP methods allowed in Islam.
- Do you know any citations in the Holy Quran/ Hadith in favor/against FP.?

II. Practice:-

- Are you using any FP method for birth spacing or to stop births?
- Type of method.
- Is it allowed in Islam?
- Opinion that how to resolve FP issues in the light of Islam?
- Opinion about the most effective persons or group for the advocacy for FP in the light of Islam.
- Are you convinced to change opinions and practice patterns in the past?
- Views about religious leaders practicing FP.
- What has convinced the community people and religious leaders to change opinions and practice patterns in the past?
- Is termination of pregnancy allowed due to some reasons?

III. Role of religious leader:-

- Have you listened to any discussion regarding Islam and FP by any religious leader?
- What is your view that religious leader have role in promoting FP at individual and community level?
- Did Ulema in your area give address on population welfare?
- Did Ulema in your area give speech on Islam and FP in Juma sermons?
- Have you listened to a discussion regarding Islam and FP on radio by any religious leader?

IV. Suggestions:-

- How FP can be promoted?
- How to improve the role of religious institutions regarding FP?
- How to change people's perceptions & practices of FP in the light of Islam?
- How to involve opinion makers in promotion of FP practices.

Personal Identification Form for FGD participants.

Name of District & Code: _____

Name of Tehsil & Code: _____

Date: _____

Sr. No.	Names	Age	Education (No. of Classes Passed)	Marital Status(Currently Married-1, Ever Married-2)	No. of Children	Currently using FP method 1 yes 2 No
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

Moderator Name: _____ Note Taker Name: _____

Time: _____ To _____



Indepth Interview Guide for Ulama

Personnel characteristics

- Name, age, language, Sect, ethnic group, education, marital status, place of residence, Income, number of children & number of wives.

I General perception about related factors: -

- What is your idea of family size? Does Islam guide about this?
- In your opinion what are the advantages of small family?
- In your opinion are there any problems due to large family?
- Would you like to have more sons then daughters?
- In your opinion what is the right age for female/male to get married?

II Knowledge of family planning in islam: -

- What is your concept of family Planning?
- What do you think about the FP in the light of Islam?
- When it originated with the background of Islam?
- Do you know any citations in the Holy Quran/Hadith in favor /against family planning?
- Do you know about any method for birth spacing or to stop births (for male and females)?
- Are there any FP methods allowed in Islam?
- Is there difference of opinion in different fiqah regarding FP?
- What are the views of people around you about FP and Islam (elderly, peer group, molvis and wives)?
- Do you know the location of any family welfare center and has the FWA interacted with you?

- What is your view if a family planning worker/facility operates in your area/community?

III Practice: -

- Have you ever used any contraceptive method?
- If yes which is the method?
- If no why?
- If not using would you like to adopt Family Planning in future?
- What are your views about religious leaders practicing FP?

IV Role of religious leader: -

- Can religious leaders play a role in promoting FP?
- Have you ever done anything in community regarding FP?
- If yes; please give details?
- If No; why not?
- Did any body from population welfare ever contact you to attend any activity about FP?
- Would you like to discuss about population issues on communication medium like Radio, TV, public meeting etc.?
- What is your opinion about the most effective persons or groups for the advocacy of FP in the light of Islam?
- Are you convinced to change opinions and practice patterns in the past?

V Sensitization of ulema by MoPW

- Have you ever attended any F.P sensitizing session seminar/conference arranged by MoPW?
- What was the objective of the seminar/conference?
- What you have learned?
- How this sanitization facilitated you in convening people about FP practices?
- Do you feel any difference in your role after sensitization?

- What do you think that all the religious leaders and molvis should be sensitized gradually?
- What do you think that this exercise will help to promote FP at grass root level?

VI For Government employee ulema

- Since how long are you a government servant?
- Have you ever received instructions from the govt. to talk about FP issues in Khutba?
- Do you report the govt. regarding the instructions?
- What ways you have adopted for promotion of FP?
- What are your views about government's policy on FP.

VII Suggestions: -

- How can you improve the role of religious leaders for the promotion of FP?
- How to change the perception of people about FP use in the light of Islam?
- How to resolve FP issues in the light of Islam?
- Are there any community people in your area and religious leaders to change opinions and practice patterns in the past?

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF POPULATION STUDIES
ISLAM AND FAMILY PLANNING

EVER MARRIED MALES AGE 15- 54 & FEMALES AGE 15-49

IDENTIFICATION																												
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<p>Introduction and Consent</p> <p>AssalamoAlaikum. My name is _____ and I am working with (NIPS, Islamabad). We are conducting a research about Islam & Family Planning issues. We would very much appreciate your participation in this research. I would like to ask FP practices in the light of Islam. The questionnaire usually takes between 30-40 minutes to complete. All of the answers you give will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shown to other people. Participation in the research is voluntary. If I ask any question you do not want to answer, tell me and I will go to the next question; or you can stop the interview at any time. However, we hope you will participate in the reseach since your views are important.</p> <p>At this time, do you want to ask me anything about the research? May I begin the interview now?</p> <p>Signature of interviewer: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>RESPONDENT AGREES TO BE INTERVIEW... 1 RESPONDENT DOES NOT AGREE TO BE INTERVIEWED 2 → END</p>																												

SECTION 1. RESPONDENT'S BACKGROUND

101	In what month and year were you born?	MONTH <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> DON'T KNOW MONTH 98 YEAR <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> DON'T KNOW YEAR 9998	
102	How old are you?	AGE IN COMPLETED YEARS <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
103	What is your current marital status? Are you married, divorced, widowed, or separated?	MARRIED 1 WIDOWED 2 DIVORCED 3 SEPARATED 4	
104	Did you ever attend school? What is the highest (grade) of schooling you have passed?	GRADE <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> DON'T KNOW 98	
105	Can you please tell me the fiqah you belong to?	FIQUA HANFIA 1 FIQUAH JAFRIA 2 AHL-E-HADDITH 3 AHL-E-SUNNAT 4 WALJAMAAT 4	
106	Are you doing any work for which you get paid?	YES 1 NO 2	→ 108
107	How much?	< 3000 1 3000 - 5000 2 5000 - 10000 3 10000+ 4 DON'T KNOW 8	
108	Did your (last) spouse ever attend school? What was the highest (grade/form/year) he/she completed at that level?	GRADE <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> DON'T KNOW 98	
109	Is your spouse doing any work for which he/she get paid?	YES 1 NO 2	→ 111
110	How much?	< 3000 1 3000 - 5000 2 5000 - 10000 3 10000+ 4 DON'T KNOW 8	
111	How many children do you have? If None, Record '00'	SONS <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> DAUGHTERS <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> TOTAL <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	

112	<p>HAS LIVING CHILDREN <input type="checkbox"/> NO LIVING CHILDREN <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If you could go back to the time you did not have any children and could choose exactly the number of children to have in your whole life, how many would that be? PROBE FOR A NUMERIC RESPONSE.</p> <p>If you could choose exactly the number of children to have in your whole life, how many would that be?</p>	<p>NONE 00</p> <p>NUMBER <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>OTHER _____ 96 (SPECIFY)</p>	<p>→ 201</p> <p>→ 201</p>
113	<p>How many of these children would you like to be boys, how many would you like to be girls and for how many would the sex not matter?</p>	<p>BOYS GIRLS EITHER</p> <p>NUMBER . <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>OTHER _____ 96 (SPECIFY)</p>	<p>→ 201</p>
114	<p>CHECK 113:</p> <p>MORE SONS <input type="checkbox"/> MORE DAUGHTERS OR EITHER <input type="checkbox"/></p>		<p>→ 201</p>
115	<p>What are the reasons for having more sons?</p>	<p>TO FACE ENEMIES A</p> <p>FOR INHERITANCE B</p> <p>EARNING HANDS C</p> <p>OLD AGE SECURITY D</p> <p>OTHER _____ X (SPECIFY)</p>	

SECTION 2. FAMILY PLANNING

201	Did you know about Family Planning?	YES 1 NO 2	→ 301
202	From where did you hear about family planning?	RADIO A TELEVISION B NEWS PAPER/ PEMPHELET C FRIEND D SPOUSE E PARENTS F OTHER RELATIVES G HEALTH/FP PERSON H ULLAMA I ANY MEETING J OTHERS X NEVER HEARD Y	
203	Have you/your wife ever used any family planning Method?	YES 1 NO 2	→ 208
204	Which method you/your wife ever used?	FEMALE STERILISATION A MALE STERILISATION B PILL C IUD D INJECTABLES E IMPLANTS F CONDOM G RHYTHM H WITHDRAWAL I OTHER X (SPECIFY)	
205	Are you/your wife currently doing something or using any method to delay or avoid getting pregnant?	YES 1 NO 2	→ 208
206	Which method are you/your wife currently using?	FEMALE STERILISATION 01 MALE STERILISATION 02 PILL 03 IUD 04 INJECTABLES 05 IMPLANTS 06 CONDOM 07 RHYTHM 08 WITHDRAWAL 09 OTHER 96 (SPECIFY)	
207	Who motivated you/your spouse to use family planning method?	SPOUSE A PARENTS B OTHER RELATIVES C FRIEND D FP/HLTH PERSON E ULLEMA F OTHER X (SPECIFY) NO ONE Y	→ 211

208	Can you tell me why you/your wife are not using a method?	<p>BIOLOGICAL REASONS WANTED CHILDREN A INFREQUENT SEX B NO SEX C MENOPAUSAL/HYSTERECTOMY D INFERTILE/CAN'T GET PREGNANT E NO MENSTRUATION AFTER BIRTH..... F BREASTFEEDING G HEALTH CONCERNS H INTERFERES WITH BODY'S NORMAL PROCESSES I OPPOSITION TO USE RESPONDENT J HUSBAN/WIFE K OTHERS OPPOSED L RELIGIOUS REASONS AGAINST RELIGION/ISLAM M UPTO GOD N LACK OF KNOWLEDGE KNOWS NO METHOD O KNOWS NO SOURCE P FEAR OF SIDE EFFECTS Q SOCIAL REASONS LACK OF ACCESS/TOO FAR R COSTS TOO MUCH S INCONVENIENT TO USE T OTHER X (SPECIFY) DON'T KNOW Z</p>	
209	Do you think you/your wife will use a contraceptive method to delay or avoid pregnancy at any time in the future?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8	→ 211 → 211
210	What is the main reason that you think you will not use a contraceptive method at any time in the future?	<p>FERTILITY-RELATED REASONS INFREQUENT SEX/NO SEX 11 MENOPAUSAL/HYSTERECTOMY 12 INFERTILE/CAN'T GET PREGNANT..... 13 NO MENSTRUATION AFTER BIRTH..... 14 BREASTFEEDING 15 UP TO GOD, CAN'T CONTROL 16 OPPOSITION TO USE RESPONDENT OPPOSED 21 HUSBAND OPPOSED 22 OTHERS OPPOSED 23 AGAINST RELIGION 24 LACK OF KNOWLEDGE KNOWS NO METHOD 31 KNOWS NO SOURCE 32 METHOD-RELATED REASONS HEALTH CONCERNS 41 FEAR OF SIDE EFFECTS 42 LACK OF ACCESS/TOO FAR 43 COSTS TOO MUCH 44 INCONVENIENT TO USE 45 INTERFERES WITH BODY'S NORMAL PROCESSES 46 OTHER 96 DON'T KNOW 98</p>	

SECTION 3. PERCEPTIONS & PRACTICE ABOUT ISLAM AND FAMILY PLANNING

301	Does Islam emphasize on female education?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8	
302	Do the females in your family get education ?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8	
303	What is the ideal age for female to get married in Islam?	Age <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> DON'T KNOW 98	
304	What was your age when you got married? (Age in complete years)	Age <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
305	Does Islam favour small family size?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8	
306	Is there any provision to planned the number of children in Islam?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8	308
307	How many children?	NO OF CHILDREN 1 SONS <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> DAUGHTERS <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> TOTAL <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> GOD'S WILL 2 DON'T KNOW 8	
308	What should be the interval between one pregnancy and the next in Islam?	Years Months <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> DON'T KNOW 9998	
309	What is the age difference between your last two children?	NO. OF MONTHS 1 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> NO. OF YEARS 2 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> SINGLE CHILD 995 NO CHILD 996 DON'T KNOW 998	
310	Is FP allowed in Islam?	ISLAM APPROVES FP 1 PARTIALLY APPROVES FP 2 DISAPPROVES FP 3 IN CERTAIN CONDITIONS 4 SILENT ON THE ISSUE 5 OTHERS 6 SPECIFY DK 8	312 313

311	Do you know any citation in the Holy Quran /Haddith in favour of family planning?	YES 1 NO 2			
312	Do you know any citations in the Holy Quran /Haddith opposing family planning?	YES 1 NO 2			
313	What is your main source of Islamic knowledge about FP?	FAMILY A SCHOOL/MADRASSAS B RELIGIOUS LEADERS C OWN READINGS D PRINT/ELECTRONIC MEDIA E FRIENDS F RELATIVE G OTHERS X NO KNOWLEDGE Y			
314	Is it allowed in Islam that newly married couple can delay the birth of their first child?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8			
315	Do you think that Islam emphasize on breast feeding for birth spacing?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8			
316	Does Islam allows to do any deliberate efforts to stop birth?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8	→ 318		
317	Why ? (For Yes & No in Q316): _____ _____	<table border="1" style="float: right; margin-right: 20px;"><tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table> DON'T KNOW 98			
318	Do you think that induced abortion is considered as murder of a child in Islam?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8	→ 320 → 320		
319	According to your Islamic knowledge till what month Islam allow the abortion?	NOT ALLOWED 1 IN 1st MONTH 2 BEFORE 4 MONTHS 3 AFTER 4 MONTHS 4 DON'T KNOW 8			
320	What is the Islamic status of FP services?	HALAL 1 HARAM 2 MAKROOH 3 DON'T KNOW 8			
321	Who is the most effective person for advocacy of Family Planning in the light of Islam?	DOCTER 1 LHW 2 ULAMA 3 TEACHER 4 OTHERS 5 (SPECIFY) DON'T KNOW 8			

322	Do you permit any activity regarding FP in your area?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8	
323	Do Ulama/Maulvi in your area allow Family Planning?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8	
324	Do Ulama give lecture on FP in Juma Sermon?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 8	→ 326
325	How often?	OFTEN 1 RARELY 2 DON'T KNOW 8	
326	Does your Ulama/Maulvi has a clear opinion in favour of FP?	IN FAVOUR 1 AGAINST 2 SILENT 3 NEVER DISCUSS 4 DON'T KNOW 8	
327	How to change the perception of people about FP use in the light of Islam? _____	<input type="text"/> DON'T KNOW 98	
328	Opinion that how to resolve FP issues in the light of Islam? _____	<input type="text"/> DON'T KNOW 98	
329	What is the suggested role of Ulama for the promotion of FP? _____	<input type="text"/> DON'T KNOW 98	
330	Which institution is most effective for the promotion of FP?	MOSQUE 1 MADRISA 2 FORMAL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS 3 OTHERS 6 (SPECIFY) DON'T KNOW 8	
331	How to improve the role of institutions regarding the promotion of family planning in the light of Islam _____	<input type="text"/> DON'T KNOW 98	

INTERVIEWER'S OBSERVATIONS

TO BE FILLED IN AFTER COMPLETING INTERVIEW

COMMENTS ABOUT RESPONDENT:

COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

ANY OTHER COMMENTS:

SUPERVISOR'S OBSERVATIONS

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: _____ DATE: _____

EDITOR'S OBSERVATIONS

NAME OF EDITOR: _____ DATE: _____



National Institute of Population Studies
Government of Pakistan
Islamabad

