



# Small shot, big deal

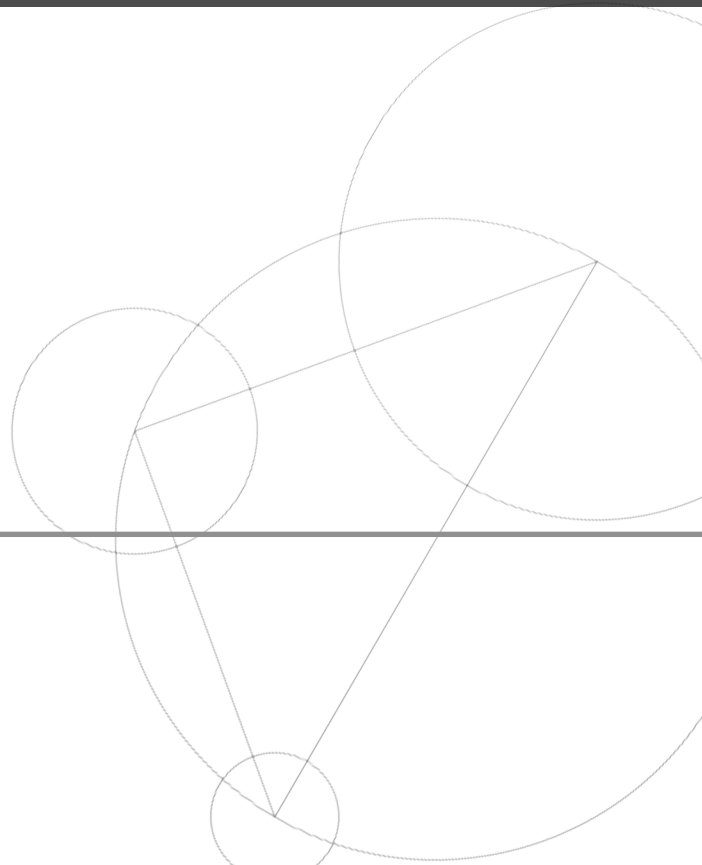
Unrecognized perceptions of the  
use of injectable contraception in India

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## **Abstract**

*Introduction:* Injectable contraception has gained increasing attention in programmatic efforts throughout India, though at the same time the method has been highly criticized by women and health groups. Notably, little effort has been made to truly listen to the end-users of injectables in the process. As such, prior investigation of the matter has almost exclusively been with the aim of expanding, not understanding.

*Study objectives:* In light of the gap in the literature this study seeks to explore how marginalized women from two rural areas of Uttar Pradesh perceive injectable contraception, and how their perceptions and use of the method can be understood in the context of their livelihood and specific external factors.

*Methods:* From June to August 2012, 42 interviews and observations were completed in two districts in western Uttar Pradesh, India among community women. Analysis of interviews was rooted in content analysis appropriate for exploring phenomena on which literature is limited. Additionally, relevant existing literature along with clinical and political guidelines were collected and reviewed. The conceptual lens consisted of three trails of thought: foucauldian concepts of governmentality, anthropological insights on biomedical technologies; and lastly the Health Access Livelihood Framework.

*Conclusion:* Respondents' perceptions of injectables were largely dependent on factors unrelated to reproduction. Firstly, women's use of injectables seemed to a large extent to be a rejection of other contraceptive methods rather than a selection of injectable contraception, most often due to intolerable side effects of other methods. Secondly, it appeared that respondents often lived within contexts where contraceptive incentivization by local health staff and domination by the family allowed no real contraceptive choice to the women.