

Title: Use of family planning methods among women of child bearing age: A case study of Kibera slum, Nairobi Province, Kenya

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Abstract: Family Planning (FP) is one of the most important interventions in reproductive healthcare as it contributes to the improvement of the health of women and children in developing countries, through provision of safe and effective means to reduce the number of births and high-risk pregnancies. In spite of efforts towards fertility control, there remains a substantial proportion of women in the reproductive age group (15-49 years) who are not using FP methods even though they do not want a pregnancy. About two-thirds of women of reproductive age (15-49 years), are at risk of unintended pregnancy. This results from either non-use or ineffective use of contraceptive methods. Provision should be made for women of all ages throughout their reproductive lives to be able to space and limit their births according to their abilities and desires. In Kenya, there has been a steady increase in Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) since 1980's but this has stagnated at 39% since 1998 and the reasons behind this are not well understood. This therefore prompted a cross-sectional descriptive study to be conducted at Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya to determine the factors that influence the use of FP methods among women of childbearing age. A total of 400 women attending the Mother-and-Child Health (MCH) clinics at different health facilities were included in the study. Data was collected using an interview schedule for the MCH clients and key informant interviews with the health care givers. Data was analyzed using the Scientific Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Chi-square test was performed to establish the relationship between variables. Most non-users (14.3%) were aged 15-19 years while the highest rate of usage was recorded amongst age group 30-34 (8.3%). There was a significant statistical relationship between age and use of FP methods ($\chi^2 = 50.33$; $df=6$; $p<0.001$). The majority of those not using FP methods were women with primary school level of education (32.3%) while women with at least university education formed the majority of those using FP (1.8%). There was a significant relationship between education level and use of FP ($\chi^2 = 20.1$; $df=5$; $p=0.001$). Majority of the respondents with one child (68%) were not using any method of contraception. Those with over four children formed the majority of FP users (12.8%). There was a significant relationship between the number of children of respondents and FP use ($\chi^2 = 20.21$; $df=3$; $p<0.001$). Most women with girls only had never used any FP method (18.5%) while those with boys only formed majority of those who had at least used one method of FP. A significant relationship was found between sex of children and use of FP methods ($\chi^2 = 10.76$; $df=2$; $p=0.005$). Women with a two-year birth plan formed the majority of FP non-users (14.7%) compared to those with a four-year birth plan. Results showed that there was a significant statistical relationship between birth plan and FP use ($\chi^2 = 22.88$; $df=5$; $p<0.001$). The initial source of information on FP to respondents was hospital/health centers which were indicated by (52.8%) and there was a significant relationship between initial source of information on FP and use ($\chi^2 = 43.81$; $df=6$; $p<0.001$). Most of the respondents disapproving of FP were non-users (11%) while large proportions of those using FP methods was recorded amongst women who approved of it (38.8%). The results revealed a significant relationship between women's opinion on FP and use ($\chi^2 = 181.92$; $df=4$; $p<0.001$). The results of this study suggest that there is a need to mount

community mobilization and sensitization programmes to help change the negative attitude towards the girl child if FP is to succeed and there is also need to encourage more women to attend school since education is a chief predictor of contraceptive use. The findings of this study will be of use to the policy makers and program planters in determining the issues that need to be stressed in the design of future family planning awareness campaigns.