

Abstract

Contraception is hailed as one of the most important health innovation that enables women and couples avoid unintended pregnancies. As such contraceptive prevalence is expected to be negatively associated with unintended pregnancy. However, one study examining the relationship between unintended pregnancy and modern contraceptive use globally has produced counter-intuitive results. This study draws on Demographic and Health Survey data from 206 country surveys to explore if this relationship holds when examined regionally and overtime. I find that the counter-intuitive relationship only holds for Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Using selected countries from SSA and other regions I find that the counter-intuitive relationship holds true at the earlier stages of the fertility transition. I conclude that the unexpected relationship between unintended pregnancy and contraception is only temporary in the early stages of fertility transition when the demand for contraception is higher than the ability of the health system to satisfy it