

Abstract

Background: Comprehensive contraception uptake involving not only women but also their male partners is very vital if the projected decline in fertility rates by 2025 is to be attained. Men's involvement is of great essence if potential acceptability of contraception programs is to be achieved.

Objective: The main objective of the study was to assess the utilization of contraceptives among men aged 20-50 years in Mwembe estate, Kisii Town. **Methodology:** A cross-sectional study design was employed on 288 sampled men aged 20- 50 years. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the respondents for the study. The data was collected using structured questionnaires and key informant guides.

Data Analysis: Analyses of quantitative data was done in SPSS version 20. Chi-square test was used to measure the strength of associations between the various variables where a pvalue of \geq or < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Findings: Condoms and vasectomy were the modern contraceptive methods available to men. 99% of the study subjects had the knowledge on contraceptives but only 56% admitted consistent use. Among those who used, condoms were most preferred at 58% with traditional methods still being employed. Only 32% of respondents had objections to contraception, among which 16% based on religious, 12% on personal and 4% on cultural reasons. The use of contraceptives was closely associated with religion ($\chi^2 = 6.67$, $df = 2$, $PV = 0.036$).

Discussion: The high awareness levels (99%) can be attributed to technological advancements. Condoms use was leading (56%) because they were easily available and accessible, they required no prescription and they offered dual protection. Vasectomy service utilization was low (1%) as it had not been embraced in most societies. Religion was the major barrier of contraception (16%) since contraception was thought to be against God's will. Other men (14%) had personal reasons against contraception owing to the perceived side effects of female contraceptives in order to protect their women's health

Conclusion: Condoms were most common (70%) than other methods hence information on proper use of condoms should be given. Knowledge on contraception was high (99%) with low use (56%) hence more is required to bridge the knowledge-practice gap. Utilization of contraceptives still

low (56%) compared to that of developing regions (67%+). Religion, societal and personal holds hinder contraception practice. Recommendations: Innovations of other contraceptive options through research by government. Men should be encouraged to take up contraception with communication among partners being emphasized. Health personnel to adopt religious-based and individual-based FP promotion approaches.