

ABSTRACT

Although knowledge of contraceptive methods among sexually active men and women is high, contraceptive prevalence among currently married women aged 15-49 years in Kenya is estimated at 39%, compared to that of Trans-Mara West sub-County; Narok County which stands at a paltry 14%. The aim of this study was to assess the factors influencing utilization of family planning methods in Shankoe, Trans-Mara West subCounty, Narok County. Specifically, the study sought to evaluate the level of contraceptive utilization, assess factors influencing the use of family planning methods and establish knowledge gap on use of family planning methods in Shankoe subLocation. This research adopted a mixed methods approach. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 360 respondents in Shankoe sub-Location out of a target population of 5145. Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Data analysis was done using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.0. The data were presented by the use of tables and figures for the purpose of giving a pictorial view of the results. Those respondents aged 25-35 years in reference to > 50 years were more likely to use family planning methods (OR =0.97, 95% CI [0.43-2.20] p=0.002) than those participants who had > 50 years of age (OR =0.33, 95% CI [0.10-1.03] p=0.057) who were less likely to use family planning methods. Respondents aged 25-35 years had secondary education and understood more on family planning methods than age bracket ~ 50 years whose members had not gone to school (OR =1, 95% CI [0.19-5.20] p=0.001) compared to participants with no education (OR =0.19, 95% CI [0.03-1.34] p=0.098). Overall, the study found that, the main barriers to the use of family planning methods amongst couples in Shankoe, Narok County were: age, accessibility, religion, education, culture and occupation. The results of this study may inform the Kenya ministry of health and other stake-holders on strategies and approaches that may improve uptake of family planning methods in Trans-Mara county and similar settings in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa where family planning uptake remains below national and international targets.