

ABSTRACT

Background:

The study conducted was about “assessing utilization of modern family planning methods among women of child bearing age in Maridi County, South Sudan.” There is tremendous need for contraceptive use worldwide (PRB, 2011). Forty percent (40%) of all pregnancy-related deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa (UNDP, 2007). About 140 million (17%) women of child bearing age in developing countries are not using any method of FP, while 75 million (9%) are using less effective traditional methods. Maternal mortality rate in Maridi County is 2,327 deaths per 100,000 live births which is higher than the national maternal mortality rate of 2,054 (SS NBS, 2015). Reports of state ministry of health and integrated service delivery program (2016) indicates low utilization of modern FP methods by women of child bearing age in Maridi County despite existence of South Sudan FP policy (2013) which embraces access to FP methods and the right of choice for FP services.

Objectives:

To assess socio-cultural factors influencing utilization of modern FP methods, to determine supply chain for modern FP methods and to establish health system factors affecting the utilization of modern FP methods among women of child bearing age in Maridi County.

Methodology:

The study was descriptive cross-sectional study using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used. Quantitative and qualitative data helped to explain the outcome and process through descriptive, analytical and inferential statistics obtained from sample responses. A total of 64 women aged 15-49 years were randomly selected from Maridi County.

Results:

Majority (73%) of women of child bearing age in Maridi County used modern FP methods. There was significant relationship of knowledge of kinds of FP methods (X^2 8.111, p-value 0.004), and number of

times FP services were accessed (X² 6.665, p-value 0.083) on uptake of modern FP methods. Majority (72%) of the women used male condom as modern method of FP. Inadequate visits to FP clinics, existence of fears of side effects of modern FP methods, inconsistent supply of modern FP methods, inadequate skills of health workers in providing some modern FP methods and inadequate FP policy guidelines on modern FP methods contributed to low uptake of some modern FP methods.

Conclusions:

Majority of women of child bearing age in Maridi County used modern FP methods, knowledge of kinds of FP methods increased uptake of modern FP methods, infrequent visits to health facility to access FP services lowered uptake of some modern FP methods, most women of child bearing age in Maridi County used male condoms for FP, fear of side effects of modern FP methods contributed to low uptake of some modern FP methods, women of child bearing age had unsatisfied FP needs, inconsistent supply of modern FP methods contributed to low uptake of some modern FP methods, inadequate skills of health workers in providing some modern FP methods and inadequate policy guidelines on modern FP methods contributed to low awareness about some modern FP methods in Maridi County.

Recommendations:

Community leaders should empower girl child by allowing them stay longer in school as educated girl would make better reproductive health choices, Maridi County Health Department to integrate FP services with VCT, immunization sessions, ANC and post natal visits to increase opportunity for access, maintain consistent supply of modern FP methods, improve providers technical competence through in-service trainings, State Government to enforce gender equality and empower women and girls in society, improve awareness through mass media campaigns and outreaches by health workers and South Sudan Government to influence use of modern FP methods for birth control by including in the FP policy.