

Factors Contributing to Poor Utilization of Contraceptive Services by Youth in the Rural Communities of Mutale Municipality in Limpopo Province

by

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ABSTRACT

South Africa, like many other countries, is experiencing a high rate of youth pregnancy and its associated social ills, regardless of free contraceptive services. In rural areas, the rate is significantly higher as evidenced by the number of youth that fall pregnant at any given point; hence, there is poor utilization of contraceptive services in rural communities. The aim of this study was to determine the factors that contribute to poor utilization of contraceptives and contraceptive services in the rural communities of Mutale municipality Limpopo Province. A qualitative, explorative, descriptive and contextual design was used for this study. The target population was female youth between the ages of 16 - 20 years and community elders at Mutale municipality in the Limpopo Province. Non-probability sampling, using a purposive sampling technique was used to select 15 participants. In-depth, face-to-face interviews were conducted with youth aged 16-20 years and elders between 50 and 65 years using an unstructured question and data was guided by data saturation. Data were analyzed using an open-coding method. Permission to carry out the study was obtained from the University of Venda Research Ethics Committee and Limpopo Provincial Department of Health. Trustworthiness of the data was ensured by meeting the criteria for transferability, confirmability, dependability and credibility. The study found that some youth were troubled by perceived barriers that hindered them from using contraceptive services. Recommendations to the Departments of Health and Education as well as community leaders and further research were made based on conclusions drawn from the results. This may assist stakeholders to plan intervention programmes to ensure that the contraceptive services are better suited for marginalized youth in the rural areas.

Keywords: youth, rural community, contraception, contraceptive services