

Much of the research literature about the use of family planning generalizes contraceptive use among all women, using age as a covariate. In Uganda, a country with divergent trends in modern family planning use among younger and older married women, we hypothesize that factors associated with contraceptive use operate in a fundamentally different way among married women in two age groups: 15-24 and 25-34. We tested this hypothesis using data from the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) in 2006 and 2011.

We restricted the sample from each round to fecund, non-pregnant married women age 15-34 who were sexually active within one year prior to the survey, resulting in a sample of 2,802 women in 2006 and 2,814 women in 2011. In Uganda, as in most countries, the level of modern contraceptive use is much lower among younger married women compared with older women.

We used logistic regression to model the relationship between selected independent variables and the outcome variable (current use of modern contraception) for each group of women in each year. We found that the key factors associated with current use of modern contraceptives among younger married women age 15-24 in both 2006 and 2011 were residence and desire for children, while among women age 25-34, the significant factors associated with contraceptive use in both rounds were education level, household wealth and desire for children.

The findings suggest that increasing secondary education for women and improving the livelihood of the population overall is important. Family planning programs should be intensified to meet the needs of young married women in rural areas of the country.

Keywords: Family planning, modern contraception, DHS, Uganda, young women, age differences