



Gender Disparities in Modern Contraceptive Access Among Married Women in Southern Malawi: A Longitudinal Perspective

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Published: 07 April 2001 | **Received:** 04 January 2001 | **Accepted:** 11 March 2001

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18732335](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18732335)

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Abstract

Gender disparities in access to modern contraceptive methods have been identified as a significant public health issue globally, with Southern Malawi being one of the regions facing this challenge. The research employs longitudinal data from the Malawi Demographic and Health Surveys (MDHS) conducted between and , focusing on changes in contraceptive use patterns across different socioeconomic strata. Analysis revealed a consistent gender gap in contraceptive uptake, with married women in lower socio-economic groups being significantly less likely to use modern contraceptives compared to their wealthier counterparts. The study underscores the persistent challenge of equitable access to contraception in Malawi and highlights the need for targeted interventions addressing socioeconomic barriers. Policy recommendations include prioritising community-based health programmes that address financial constraints, education on contraceptive use, and gender-sensitive health policies.

Keywords:

Southern

Geographic

Terms:

African

Methodological

Longitudinal

Terms:

Theoretical

Gender

Contraceptive

Cultural

Empowerment

Demographic Transition Models

Concepts:

Roles

Uptake

Barriers

Studies

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