

Abstract

Recent sexual behavior surveys in the Ariaal community of Karare, Marsabit District, northern Kenya, indicate a rapid increase in male condom use among unmarried men and women. Increased condom use stems from the Kenyan government's expanding HIV/AIDS programs to the remote parts of northern Kenya, resulting in easier access to condoms. This paper employs a modified reasoned action approach model to analyze 2009 survey data to understand how Ariaal sexual culture adapts to this policy. Univariate analysis indicates that for unmarried men and women, condom use is more strongly linked to pre-marital fertility prevention than HIV/AIDS protection, reflecting the long-standing Ariaal proscriptive norm against pre-marital fertility. Multiple regression and path analysis show gender-specific pathways to condom use, reflecting established and emergent sexual behavior. For women, significant pathways include the ability to obtain condoms and to refuse sex without condoms. For men, social norms and beliefs/attitudes including concern for their sexual partners are important pathways.