Reviewer’s report

Title: Determinants of unintended pregnancies in rural Ghana

Version: 4 Date: 19 March 2014

Reviewer: Easmon Otupiri

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Date: March 07, 2014

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Discretionary revisions:

The study title suggests that it was conducted in a rural setting in Ghana. However, the study area (Mfantseman municipality) has equal proportions of urban and rural populations. Additionally, Saltpond and Mankessim are described as semi-urban by the authors. The authors may want to have a second look at the study title.

Minor essential revisions:

1. Abstract

   Method: please replace the word ‘district’ with ‘municipality.’ Change ‘regression analysis’ to read ‘regression analyses.’ Change ‘socio-demographic characteristics’ to read ‘factors’ since not only socio-demographic characteristics are listed. Please replace ‘present pregnancy’ with ‘current pregnancy.’

   Results: when making comparisons to show how good or bad one thing is in relation to another, it is preferable to use the term ‘compared with’ rather than ‘compared to.’ Please replace all crude ORs with AORs. ‘No past experience’ should read ‘no past experience.’ Please write ‘PPFP’ in full.

   Conclusion: ‘Living with partner in the same house’ was not shown to be a risk factor for unintended pregnancies. The final statement appears to have been adopted from a previous study, and should be modified to reflect a key recommendation from the current study.

2. Background

   Paragraph 1 – ‘Low and Middle Income’ should read ‘Low- and Middle-Income.’ UNPFA should be written in full. The last statement of the paragraph is not reader-friendly, please rephrase.

   Paragraph 2 – ‘physical abuse and violence of women’ should read ‘physical abuse and violence against women.’ ‘Available data suggests’ should read
Available data suggest. Please provide a reference for the statement on induced abortions and related complications as most common outcomes of unintended pregnancies.

3. Methods and materials
Paragraph 1 – Mfantseman is described as a district rather than a municipality. A few lines on the maternal health profile of the municipality will help readers appreciate the context.
Paragraph 2 – please provide a sentence to explain the term ‘semi-urban.’

4. Results
Paragraph 1 – why is the term ‘semi-rural’ is used for Mankessim and Saltpond.

Major compulsory revisions:
1. Methods and materials
Please explain how the 1914 sample size was achieved. Were all the women approached, and 1914 agreed to participate? What was the refusal rate?

Tables
Table 1 – the sample size for the various variables varies from 1,769 to 1,904 even though the study sample size is given as 1914. No explanation is offered for this discrepancy. What type of #2 test was performed?
Table 2 – please provide the data for all variables in addition to the reference variable. Why is the age variable grouped into 15-19 years versus >19 years? Is the age variable treated as a continuous or categorical variable? There are asterisks in the table but no explanation is provided.
Table 3 – odds ratio should be reported as adjusted odds ratio (AOR). Figures for the variables ‘past experience with PPFP’ ‘Exclusive breast feeding’ and ‘Rhythm’ do not appear in the table. There appears to be a mix up in the figures reported for the variable ‘period of wait before next pregnancy’ – the reference variable has data.

The study did not identify any limitations, a section on limitations should be provided.

Is there any reason why the study was conducted between January and April?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.