Reviewer’s report

Title: Is a woman's first pregnancy outcome related to her years of schooling? An assessment of women's adolescent pregnancy outcomes and subsequent educational attainment in Ghana

Version: 0 Date: 02 Oct 2016

Reviewer: Emily Sullivan

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript.

Overall, I found the manuscript to be of added value to the body of evidence on adolescent reproductive health, especially as it strongly makes the case for access to reproductive health services, including abortion services, as critical to keeping girls in school.

One area to consider revision is in the decision to combine miscarriage and stillbirth as "spontaneous abortion". We know that a large proportion of stillbirth's occur during delivery. Therefore, the impact on education would be similar to that of a live birth. This is reflected in the findings. However, if the data allows, I would suggest separating miscarriage from stillbirth, or express this as a limitation of the data.

I feel the discussion around of "ambition" or lack there of, casts blame to those who become pregnant. This fails to acknowledge a lack of empowerment or families investment in their daughters. For instance, she may have ambitions but her decision to remain in school is not her own. I suggest a reframing this aspect of the manuscript.

The analysis of the various age cohorts allows for a discussion on changes in educational attainment over time, and the need to still focus on access to education. However, other than this contribution, I found the age cohort analysis to be somewhat limited in its added value to the said aim of the study - determining if pregnancy outcomes is related to years of schooling.

Based on the findings of this study, there should be a clearer recommendation to ensure that young women have access to contraception and safe abortion. Currently it states "focus on preventing pregnancies". Another recommendation I would suggest is that there be further research to assess what proportion of girls are in school when they become pregnant, or if they have already dropped out and then become pregnant after leaving school. This would help to determine a potential intervention's emphasis and timing.

Thank you for you contributions to this vital body of evidence.
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