**EDUCATION ON THE ABORTION LAW: IMPLICATIONS FOR CHOICE OF PLACE FOR ABORTION SERVICES IN GHANA**

**Fred Yao Gbagbo**

*University of Education, Department of Health Administration, P. O. Box 25, Winneba . Ghana. Mobile: +233(0)243335708. Email:* gbagbofredyao2002@yahoo.co.uk

**Background**

The Ghanaian abortion law (Act 29, sections 58-59 and 67), was modified in 1985 (Law No. 102 of 22 February, 1985). Although abortion is not explicitly legal in Ghana, some provisions made in the law suggest legality to increase access.

**Aims and Objectives**

This study explored Education on the abortion law and implications on choice of place for abortion servicesin Ghana.

**Methods**

The study was conducted in Accra metropolis, most densely populated urban metropolis in Ghana between January and December 2010 using retrospective, cross-sectional, community based design and mixed method approach to collect data from 401 randomly sampled women in January-June 2011. Data analysis was done using SPSS and STATA to test the hypothesis of the study and chi-square test for the significance of associations observed. Qualitative data obtained were paraphrased and/or presented verbatim to compliment the quantitative data collected. The Ghana Health Service gave ethical clearance for the study.

**Key Findings**

There was < 50 percent awareness the abortion law with about 43 percent of the respondents reporting that abortion was legal in Ghana. There was a significant association between educational attainment and knowledge about legal status of induce abortion among respondents who had secondary and higher education (x2=16.977; p=0.009). About 9 percent of respondents indicated that abortion was legal but did not correctly indicate any of the legal provisions for an abortion in Ghana but rather gave socio-economic justifications for abortion. There were no significant association between knowledge of the abortion law and respondents’ choice of place for abortion. A multinomial logistic regression shows that respondents who attained at least secondary level education were 2.7 (p<0.05) significantly more likely to know the legal status of abortion compared to those without any formal education. Less than 2 percent of respondents gave an accurate gestation period for legally permitted abortion and 72 percent indicated that abortion was legal stated that somebody’s consent is always required prior to an abortion. Opinions from the in-depth interviews showed variations in decisions on place for an abortion without considering legal implications for their choice of place.

**Conclusion**

Educational attainment impacts on understanding the abortion laws of Ghana for decision making on choice of place for services. Although facilities could be legally mandated to provide abortion services, legal mandates alone do not have significant implications on individuals’ choice of place for induce abortion in Ghana.