

# Expanded education for women in Malawi does not lead to later childbearing

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The age at first birth in Malawi has remained constant from 1992 to 2010, despite expanded access to education for girls. Social demographer Monica Grant explores this finding in a new *Population Development and Review* paper, noting that it does not imply that women would have been better off in the absence of recent education policies.

Dr. Grant notes that young women in Malawi will hopefully be able to translate their expanded educational opportunities into [improved health](#) and well-being for their children, even without a rise in the age at first birth.

"The free primary education policy succeeded in bringing more children into school and helping them finish school faster; however, there are few alternatives to early childbearing when [young women](#) leave school," says Dr. Grant. "The gains in girls' schooling attainment were not only compromised by low school quality, but were also not accompanied by an increase in women's [economic opportunities](#)."

Provided by Wiley

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