

Women's autonomy and unintended pregnancy: A cross sectional study among pregnant women of Shashemene town, Oromia, Ethiopia

Bitiya Admassu, Amsal Ferede and Tolassa Wakayo
Jimma University, Ethiopia

Background: Despite a decrease in overall fertility and an increase in contraceptive use, many women in Ethiopia still experience unintended pregnancies. Understanding the relationship between autonomy and unintended pregnancy is particularly important for Ethiopia, where patriarchy and social norms limit women's freedom to make important decisions in her life events.

Objective: The objective of this study is to assess relationship between women's autonomy and unintended pregnancy among currently pregnant women.

Methods: A Community based cross-sectional study was conducted in June 13-26, 2016 in Shashemene town, Ethiopia. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 385 pregnant women considering pregnant mother registration numbers from registration book of Health extension workers of each kebele as a sampling frame. Data were collected using pre-tested, structured questionnaire. Epi data 3.5.1 was used for data entry and STATA 12 applied for the analysis. Binary and multiple logistic regressions were done to assess the association between women autonomy and unintended pregnancy.

Result: A total of 385 pregnant women were included in the study. The overall prevalence of unintended pregnancy was 124 (32.2%). Women's autonomy is a significant predictor of unintended pregnancy; the odds of unintended pregnancies were higher for women who don't participate in household decision making (AOR=4.89, 95% CI: 2.40-9.98), who accept wife beating (AOR=2.7 95% CI: 1.39, 5.41), and who disagree with the reasons for refusing sex (AOR=5.7, 95%CI: 2.33, 13.73). Further, those women who had no media exposure (AOR=2.75, 95% CI: 1.43, 5.30), who had five or more than five pregnancy (AOR=12.19, 95% CI: 3.33, 44.60), and who had more than five family size (AOR 3.03, 95% CI: 1.01, 9.11) were at higher risk of getting unintended pregnancy.

Conclusion: The data suggests women with lower autonomy are at a greater risk of having unintended pregnancy. Improvement in women's autonomy and effective and efficient use of contraceptives may reduce unintended pregnancies as well as improve reproductive health outcomes.

Biography

Bitiya Admassu is an Assistant Professor of reproductive health at the department of population and Family Health with over nine years of experience in teaching and research at the department and in collaboration with other partner Universities. She has been engaged in teaching various courses at Post graduate and undergraduate level such as child health, maternal health, family planning, public health importance of STI/HIV, gender, health and development and adolescent sexual reproductive health. She has served the University by holding a Coordinator position for sexual and reproductive health for 4 consecutive years and worked as Ethical Review Committee under the College of Public Health and Medical Sciences for 3 consecutive years. She holds Masters of Public Health in Reproductive Health from Jimma University and she was a Fellow of Australian Leadership Award (ALA) Fellowships from April 2012- November 2012. She has ample experience conducting research in nutrition, TB, HIV/AIDS, malaria, maternal and child health, adolescent health, health systems, qualitative methods and systematic reviews in health. She has 10 publications on international peer reviewed journals. Currently, she is Principal Investigator of the WHO TDR funded project called "implementation research and knowledge management Training project". In addition, she is Co-investigator a project entitled Alliance Review Centers on Health Policy and Systems Research in Low- and Middle-Income Countries – Ethiopia Evidence Based Health Care Centre: Jimma University, Ethiopia. She is currently engaged in a research project called Body composition and growth in the first five years and their predictors: follow up of Ethiopian iABC cohort study. With this project she is enrolled as a PhD student in Human Nutrition in University of Copenhagen, Denmark .

oliviadynski@yahoo.com