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## The perception on the health ethics concept of autonomy among Sri Lankan public

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Autonomy is associated with allowing or enabling patients to make their own decisions about which health care interventions they will or will not receive. The interpretation of 'autonomy' is highly doubted in a South Asian country like Sri Lanka when compared to 'western' concepts due to many influences. To identify the differences between the perceptions for autonomy in the Sri Lankan context vs. western context and to understand the factors that influences the autonomy of a healthcare seeker. Descriptive cross sectional quantitative study was done on 220 males and females between 18 years and above using convenient sampling in the Gampaha District, Sri Lanka with the use of a self-administered questionnaire. Among 206 eligible participants, majority of 148 were female. 122 respondents were married. Different aspects on autonomy were assessed and responses were classified as autonomously desirable and undesirable. The desirable response percentages were 68.4% for minor decision making, 50.5% for major decision making, 53.9 % for decision making for elderly family member, 55.3% for giving consent for one's child. However in many cases majority (35%-55.4%) opted to seek the opinions of their spouses, family, friends and relatives. A score was given for the desired answers given by them. Only one respondent have achieved nine out of nine, 15 respondents have got zero and majority of 38 have scored only six out of nine. The interpretation of autonomy differs and influenced by different external factors with the contexts that is referred to.