

32nd World Congress on **Advanced Nursing Practice**
&
30th International Conference on **Pediatric Nursing & Healthcare**

August 19-20, 2019 Zurich, Switzerland

Motives for Abortion

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Background: In Israel, four criteria allow for legal abortion: women's age <17 or >40, fetal malformation, danger to the woman's health, unmarried woman or caused by rape.

Research Objective: To understand why women seek abortion, so as to build appropriate prevention/intervention programs.

Research Type: Cross-sectional study

Research Population: 102 women who applied to the Committee for Termination of Pregnancy at Galilee Medical Center, January-December 2013

Research Instruments: Questionnaire examining violence experienced by the woman, use of contraceptives, and motives for abortion.

Findings: The mean age of the women was 28.75 ± 7.25 years. Reason for seeking abortion: poor economic situation 53.7%, violence in the home 13.7%. 91.7% reported a poverty-level monthly income no income at all. 42.6% of women who experienced violence in the home had had previous abortion, as opposed to 36.8% who did not experience violence. 57.1% did not use contraceptives regularly. 21.5% cited the prohibitive cost of contraceptives. 18% of participants noted the importance of their attending nurse's presence at the Committee for Termination of Pregnancy.

Conclusions: The major reasons for abortion, poor economic situation and violence in the home, are not included in the legal criteria for abortion. There is a need to re-think public policy on cost of contraceptives and to educate the public on contraceptive use. Violence in the family is more likely to be identified if a nurse is present at the Committee for Termination of Pregnancy. Also, a nurse should advise on the purchase of contraceptives and instruct on their use.

Biography

Nasra completed her doctoral studies at the University of Haifa in the field of public health on the relationship between diabetes and cancer. For about 10 years she has been teaching at the Department of Nursing at Emek Yezreel College in addition to being the research coordinator of the nursing staff at the Galilee Medical Center.

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