

ABSTRACT

Background : Out of global pregnancies, eighty-five million, a sizeable proportion (40%), were unplanned. Many of the unplanned pregnancies become unwanted and end in abortions (50%), miscarriage (13%) and unplanned birth (38%). In Sri Lanka, 95% of the unwanted pregnancies end in abortions. Abortion is a well-known cause for maternal mortality and morbidity world over. Unsafe abortion results in the deaths of 47 000 women every year and leaves millions temporarily or permanently disabled.

Objectives : To describe and determine association of some selected reproductive health educational opportunities and family planning services obtained by women with unwanted pregnancies and women who had avoided an unwanted pregnancy presenting at general practices in the city of Colombo

Methods : This is an unmatched case control study conducted in general practice-based study setting. Study population is women aged 18 – 49 years presenting at general practices in the city of Colombo. Total sample size was 405 which included 198 cases and 207 controls. Cases were women who have presented with unwanted pregnancies at general practices in city of Colombo. Controls were women presenting at general practices in the city of Colombo for other health problems. Subjects were selected four General practices using multistage cluster sampling. During the study period, all eligible women presented with an unwanted pregnancy were recruited as cases. For each case, next eligible women waiting for consultation for other problems recruited as controls. Data analysis was done by the plan using the software Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.

Results : There was statistically significant association between age category ($p=.005$), ethnicity ($p<.001$), parity ($p<.001$) and religion ($p<.001$) and unwanted pregnancy. Out of unwanted pregnancies 68.5% ($n=135$) were from the age group 25 – 39 years. It was found that women who were denied or delayed LRT following request made with a written consent were twice more likely to have an unwanted pregnancy than other women (OR infinity; 95% CI: 1.3 to infinity) and the association was statistically significant ($p=.011$).

Conclusion and recommendations: It is recommended that policy regarding LRT should be reviewed to avoid refusal and delays. Suggest further studies related to the same topic in order to obtain more insight related to the problem.

Keywords : Unwanted pregnancy- Abortion - Family planning Education- Family planning services