

**Reasons for Women to Terminate a  
Pregnancy:  
a Qualitative Study**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

The right of women to exert a choice regarding their reproductive behaviour is a fundamental right within the context reproductive rights. Reproductive rights and health encompass the exertion of individual choice but also adequate, safe and accessible health care services. Within this framework, the right to abortion and the right to access to safe abortion services is an integral part of reproductive rights and health.

Reproductive rights and the right of women to choose the outcome of their reproductive behaviour, came to the foreground in terms of population policies and programmes that were concerned with rapid population growth. The widespread use of contraception and family planning programmes and the outcomes thereof, led to a focus on the rights of women in totality as well as the personal exertion of their choices.

It is important to investigate the reasons that lead women to make a decision to terminate a pregnancy. In terms of demographics, answers are provided in terms of statistical rankings and weightings but no focus is given to the personal situations, circumstances and experiences of women. This is crucial to be able to determine the reasons for women terminating a pregnancy as reasons and sets of reasons are intricately linked within primary and secondary relationships. No reason stands in isolation to another, and a holistic view of a woman's true and personal reality is required to understand why some women choose to terminate their pregnancy and other choose an alternate outcome.

## **OPSOMMING**

Die reg van vrouens om 'n keuse aangaande hulle reprodktiewe gedrag uit te oefen, is 'n basiese en fundamentele mense-reg binne die konteks van reprodktiewe regte. Reprodktiewe regte en reprodktiewe gedrag sluit onder andere die be-oefening van individuele keuses in, asook die toegang tot veilige en gehalte gesondheidsdienste. Binne hierdie konteks is die reg tot aborsie 'n integrale deel van reprodktiewe regte en gesondheid.

Die opkoms van reprodktiewe regte moet gesien word binne die konteks van bevolkingsbeleide en programme wat gemoeid was met bevolkingsgroei. Die beginsel van die beleide en programme was gesinsbeplannings en die gebruik van kontrasepsie. Die uitkoms van die sterk beklemtoning hiervan, het gelei tot 'n fokus op vroue-regte in totaal, asook vrouens se regte om hulle eie keuses te maak en die keuses uit te oefen.

Dit is van kardinale belang om die redes wat vrouens lei om hulle swangerskap te beëindig te ondersoek. In terme van demografie, word die antwoorde hierop voorgelê deur middel van statistiek, maar geen fokus op vrouens se persoonlike situasies, omstandighede of ondervindings, word in aanmerking geneem nie.

Om vas te stel wat die redes is wat daar toe lei dat vrouens besluit om hulle swangerskap te beëindig, is dit noodsaaklik om die redes en stel redes in verhouding tot mekaar te sien. Geen enkele rede is verantwoordelik vir die besluit om 'n swangerskap te beëindig nie. Redes en stelle redes beïnvloed mekaar in terme van primêre en sekondêre invloede, en dit bepaal hoekom sekere vroue besluit om hulle swangerskap te beëindig, terwyl ander vrouens 'n alternatiewe uitkoms kies.