

**MEDICO-SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN TERMINATING
THE PREGNANCY**

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***Abstract.** The specially designed anonymous survey was performed in 300 women living in the Republic of Uzbekistan who decided to terminate the pregnancy. The medico-social characteristics of women terminating the pregnancy correspond to general population in the majority of parameters. Many women have low contraceptive competence, mistaken opinion and incomplete information about the harm of abortion. One third of abortions are the consequence of contraceptive failure. One fourth of abortions finish the first pregnancy. The main reasons of termination of pregnancy are social and economic problems, unwillingness to change the way of life, lack of correspondence of age with idea of optimal term for pregnancy, instability of family relations. The comparative analysis of reasons of abortion in Uzbek women showed that the main reason is instability of family relations and pregnancy in single women.*

Despite the notable success of contraception, approximately 40-50 million abortions are performed annually in the world. It has long been proven that artificial termination of pregnancy causes serious violations of women's reproductive health and causes significant economic damage from. According to WHO, about 13% all cases of maternal mortality, which is 70 thousand women, are caused by complications after abortion. The problem of abortion arises in adolescence and ends only with the completion of a woman's fertile period. According to the prevalence of abortions, Uzbekistan belongs to the territories with a relatively low frequency of abortions compared to other subjects of the Central Asia. So, in 2023, the abortion rate was 32.6 per 100 births, or 17.5 per 1,000 women of fertile age. Despite this, against the background of negative trends

in marriage and divorce rates, low standard of living of the population, low prevalence of culture, insufficient scientific and educational potential, the problem of forming a social policy, including the fight against abortion, is acute in the republic.

Keywords: *women, abortion, the Republic of Uzbekistan, medico-social characteristics, reproductive behavior.*

The purpose of the study

To assess the conditions, lifestyle, reproductive behavior of women of the Republic of Uzbekistan, terminating pregnancy by abortion.

Materials and methods of research

An anonymous survey of 300 women living in the Republic of Kalmykia who decided to terminate their pregnancy by abortion was conducted using specially developed statistical forms «Questionnaire of a woman terminating pregnancy» containing 28 questions of the program.

Results and their discussion

The study showed that the average age of women who terminate pregnancy is 30.2 years. The largest age group consisted of women aged 25-29 years (29.3%) and 35 years and older (29.0%). The share of aborting pregnancies under the age of 20 accounted for 8.0%, including 1.0% under the age of 18. The majority of women who decided to terminate pregnancy by abortion were patients with secondary specialized (42.8%) and higher (30.1%) education, working in working positions (26.8%), employees (26.4%) and housewives (25.7%). When analyzing the social status of women, attention is drawn to the fact that with a very high unemployment rate in the republic (12.5%), the unemployed in the study group of women were only 3.1%. Women who are in a registered marriage most often terminate pregnancy with an abortion: their proportion was 53.5%, 21.2% were living in a civil marriage, 13.5% were unmarried and had not been married before, 10.1%

divorced and 1.7% are widows. The majority (73.9%) already had children, including 28.6% two children, 13.0% have three, and 3.3% have four or more. However, more than a quarter (26.1%) did not have children, and by having an abortion, they risk that they may not have children in the future. The Republic of Uzbekistan has a very low material standard of living of the population – the share of the population with incomes below the subsistence minimum is 35.4%. Among women who terminate pregnancy, 27.2% indicated that their financial situation is below average, including 5.2% — that they live in poverty. Thus, the proportion of women, having a low material standard of living, in the group surveyed corresponds to the general population ($t < 2$). At the same time, against the background of a high proportion of women, having a low financial situation, a very significant group (14.6%) of patients who indicated that they have no problems with money (12.5%) or even consider themselves rich (2.1%) is singled out.

These facts indicate a significant stratification of the population of the republic in terms of living standards. Among women who decided to have an abortion, only 2.6% often consumed alcohol (several times a week), while 53.1% practically did not use it. The situation with smoking is much worse – only 47.6% of respondents answered that they currently do not smoke and have never smoked before, however, 9.1% smoked regularly at the time of the survey, 31.8% smoked, but not regularly, and 11.5% used to smoke, but quit at the time of the survey. For more than half of the women (50.3%), this was not the first abortion, including 30.1% — the second, 12.4% – the third, 4.3% – the fourth, and 3.3% — the fifth or more. At the same time, 23.3% of women decided to end their first pregnancy with an abortion. In most cases (56.3%), the pregnancy that women decided to end with an abortion came from a legitimate husband, 17.6% — from a "civil" husband, 12.6% — from a permanent and 6.7% — an accidental sexual partner, 1.1% — as a result of rape, but 0.7% did not know, from whom they got pregnant, and 5.0% did not want to answer the question. As practice shows, none of the methods of contraception that exist today guarantees one hundred percent protection from unwanted pregnancy. The actual effectiveness of even such a

seemingly reliable means as a condom is far from an absolute result and in real conditions is 80-90% with an average probability of pregnancy of 12% [6]. The data we obtained confirm this position – among women who terminate an unwanted pregnancy, 32.3% indicated, that they were regularly protected, and for them the pregnancy that occurred can be considered a contraceptive failure, 38.3% were protected, but not regularly, and only 29.4% were not protected from pregnancy. Those who were protected from pregnancy most often used a condom (62.7%), an intrauterine device (17.3%) and oral means (9.3%). In order to avoid unwanted pregnancy, it is not enough to have contraceptives, you need to be able to choose the most suitable and be able to use them correctly. Women's self-assessment of their knowledge about the ability to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancy, conducted on a five—point scale, showed that respondents rate them very low - by an average of 3.8 points, while 5.7% consider them bad and 30.0% - only satisfactory. This alignment of assessments is quite understandable, since only 40.0% received the bulk of knowledge on this issue from reliable sources – 27.2% from doctors and 12.8% at school, while 44.4% replenished their knowledge base by self-training (10.8% from the Internet, 20.0% from print media, 8.0% from Mass media and 5.6% from other sources) or from such dubious sources, which are girlfriends (6.8%) or parents (8.8%). A lot has been written about the dangers of artificial termination of pregnancy for a woman's health in both special and popular literature, a lot is said about it in the media, on the Internet and other sources available to every woman, but not all women believe this. To the question: "Do you think abortion will affect your health in the future?" 8.2% answered that it will not. However, the majority still believe that there is a risk to their further health: 50.5% answered that it may affect, and only 21.7% are firmly convinced that it will (19.6% found it difficult to answer this question). Thus, more than a quarter of women (27.8%) have an erroneous idea about the harm of abortion to a woman's health (8.2%) or are insufficiently informed on this issue (19.6%). Despite the fact that most women who decide to terminate their pregnancy with an abortion are aware of the possible harm to their further health,

they go for an abortion. It was important to find out the reasons for this. 93.3% of respondents answered the question about the main most significant reasons why a woman decided to terminate this pregnancy, the remaining 6.7% did not want to answer the question. The conducted anonymous survey showed (Table. 1) that the main reasons why women go for an abortion (the woman had the opportunity to indicate several reasons at once) are problems of a socio-economic nature, which account for 69.6% of the responses in total — material instability (29.3%), housing problems (22.5%), uncertainty about the future (13.2%), inability to arrange a child in a nursery, kindergarten (4.6%). An important role among the causes of abortions is played by the unwillingness of women to change their lifestyle (18.5% of responses): "The birth of a child will interfere with my education, work" (9.6%), "The birth of a child will change my whole life (I will have to give up many habits, become more responsible, be ready to become a role model, etc.)" (8.9%). Health problems account for 16.1% of the responses. 15.7% of respondents believe that their age is not suitable for the birth of a child: "I am no longer at the age to give birth" (7.9%), "I am not ready to have a child, I am too young for this" (7.8%). Unstable family relationships account for 12.5% of the responses – the absence of a legitimate husband: "I don't want to be a single mother)" (7.1%), problems in relations with the father of the child: "The father of the child wants me to have an abortion" (5.4%). Other reasons are not so important. As a result of the survey, it was found that Uzbekistan women are the main reasons why they decided to terminate their pregnancy, there are socio-economic reasons. Next, have: unwillingness to change their lifestyle, health problems, age inconsistency with ideas about the optimal timing of the birth of a child and instability of family relations. Women have unstable family relationships in second place (25.0±4.4responses per 100 women), mostly related to the absence of a legitimate husband ("I don't want to be a single mother" - 13.5±3.5 per 100).

Conclusion

The medical and social characteristics of women who terminate pregnancy, according to most parameters, correspond to the general population. Many women

of the Republic Uzbekistan has low contraceptive literacy, misconception and insufficient information about the dangers of abortion, and therefore, in almost a third of cases, abortion is a consequence of contraceptive failure, almost a quarter of women end up with an abortion for the first pregnancy. The leading reasons why women decide to terminate pregnancy are problems of a socio-economic nature. In addition, the unwillingness to change your lifestyle, health problems, age discrepancy with ideas about the optimal timing of the birth of a child, instability of family relations are of great importance.

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