



Unwanted Births and Child Development

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DESCRIPTION

Pregnancies which occur at the time of conception are known as unwanted pregnancies. It is either unfortunate or unwanted. It has been noted that of the 213 million pregnancies worldwide, 40% were unwanted. Furthermore, induced abortions accounted for 50% of unwanted pregnancies, which is unsafe in many nations with restrictive abortion regulations. Women who undergo unsafe abortions frequently experience severe complications include haemorrhage (heavy bleeding), incomplete abortion (failure to remove all foetal tissue from the uterus), infection, urinary perforation, injury to the vaginal system and internal organs, and more. Unwanted pregnancy very frequently leads to unplanned births and miscarriages.

To achieve the UN Millennium Development Goal of improving maternal health, it is crucial to prevent unwanted pregnancies. Numerous studies have shown that children of unplanned pregnancies have a range of social and health issues. These children get insufficient prenatal care and vaccinations. They don't even receive adequate breastfeeding, which results in worse physical health. Low birth weight and a high risk of preterm are 1.41 times more likely in children from unplanned pregnancies. Additionally, they perform worse in terms of behavior and education and have a less connected mother-child bond. According to the National Family and Health Survey (NFHS-3) results from 2015-2016, 58.6% of children under the age of five are anemic and 35.8% are underweight. State-by-State, the percentage of underweight children varies, it is highest in Bihar (43.9%), Jharkhand (47.8%), and Madhya Pradesh (42.8%) and lowest in Mizoram (12%), Manipur (13.8%), and Sikkim (14.2%). When unplanned births are taken into consideration, the bad health status of children in the nation may become

more problematic. Studying the impact on children's health of the 21% of unplanned pregnancies reported by the NFHS-3 would be crucial.

Recently, it has been discovered that unplanned pregnancies have a negative impact on childhood immunization based on retrospective and prospective data from India. The majority of research looking at correlates of the intention status of women's pregnancies in India has been based on data gathered from cross sectional surveys and using retrospective fertility intentions. Furthermore, there are currently no studies that have worked on the national level considering all the states of India. Furthermore, the current situation of unwanted pregnancies is not covered by these studies. Therefore, using nationally representative prospective cross sectional data, this study analyses the impact of unplanned births (measured using prospective technique) on child healthcare and growth in India.

Since most mothers don't pay much attention to their unwanted children, they receive insufficient immunizations and breastfed throughout the early years of growth. The same is true for children's physical growth, as underweight births are more common in unplanned pregnancies. Children's physical deficiency may impair their cognitive development, which also has a negative impact on academic achievement and school dropout rates. The low rate of breastfeeding and full immunization among unwanted children indicates that women are not providing sufficient care to their children from infancy. One reason could be that mothers have less emotional attachment to their unwanted offspring. In India, unwanted pregnancies frequently result in neonatal and infant death. Thus, preventing unwanted pregnancies on a personal level improves the wellbeing of mothers and children.

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