

Vulnerability to Reproductive Health Risks among On-street Women in Shashemene Town, West Arsi Zone, Ethiopia

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Abstract

The present research was meant to assessing the prevalence of reproductive health risks among homeless women in Shashemene town. A cross-sectional descriptive and explanatory study designs were used in which the overall processes of data collection, analysis and write-up all were taken place at a point of time between December, 2018 and February, 2019. 163 homeless women, selected on the basis of purposive sampling procedure have participated in the study. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected using survey and depth interview methods. While quantifiable data were entered in to SPSS version 20 for further analysis, qualitative data were transcribed, organized, and narratively presented after finding themes in the data. Despite a high prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS, it was found that the research participants have a good awareness about the disease. The prevalence of rape and abortion, on the other hand, found to be low in the study area (11.5% & 9.4% respectively). Correlation statistics have shown that patterns of undertaking voluntary testing and counseling was significantly associated to marital status (.186, $P < 0.05$, 95% CI), educational status (-.183, $P < 0.05$, 95% CI) and the number of children a woman gave birth to (.204, $P < 0.05$, 95%CI). On-street women in the study area were found to be highly vulnerable to reproductive health risks. The prevalence and distribution of HIV/AIDS is at its alarming state. Awareness about HIV/AIDS and its way of transmission is very high, with a fascinating experience of undergoing voluntary testing and counseling. Hence, counseling and psycho-social support, including the provision of reproductive health services to the target group deserves a serious attention.