

Measuring abortion incidence

The “Hospital record” method

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Data collection

- We observed 464 admissions for post-abortion care in 5 hospitals (equipped to treat abortion complications) during a period of four months in 2001. Questionnaires are filled by professionals.
- Among these 464 cases, 270 were collected at the Centre Hospitalier National Yalgado Ouedraogo (in comparison, 291 admissions for abortion have been collected by Ky (1998) at the CHN-YO during four months in 1997).

Application of the WHO protocol

- Applying the WHO protocol, we find 27% (73/270) of “certainly” induced abortions among the admissions collected at the CHN-YO in 2001 (while Ky, 1998 found 32% (94/291) of “certainly” induced abortions among the admissions collected in 1997 at the same hospital).
- The overall proportion of induced abortions among admissions for post abortion care is estimated by adding the three categories: “certainly induced”, “probably induced”, “possibly induced”.

Application of the WHO protocol (ctd)

- Using this definition, we estimate that 71% (328/464) of the recorded admissions (during 4 months) were induced.
- We multiply these 328 abortions by three to obtain an annual figure of hospital admissions for induced abortions in Ouagadougou (there are no seasonal variations in admissions for abortion: Ky, 1998; Tapsoba 1999; Ouattara 2003; Yameogo, 2003).
- We conclude that the five referral health centers of Ouagadougou admit 984 induced and 408 spontaneous abortions annually.

Comparing results from the confidants method with hospital data

- 👉 The confidant's method estimates that there are 1112 admissions for induced abortions in the city's five referral centers a year (or 929 assuming that all cases for which woman's health status was unknown were in fact uncomplicated).
- 👉 We estimated that 948 induced abortions were admitted in these hospitals in 2001, using hospital admission data collected during four months and the broad definition of induced abortion in the WHO protocol.

Comparing results from the confidants method with hospital data

- 👉 We conclude that both sources of data concord with an estimated 1000 hospitalizations for induced abortions a year in Ouagadougou's five referral centers

Difficulties and possible biases

- ➡ It's not always easy, even for professionals, to distinguish induced abortions from spontaneous abortions. To control this bias we estimated the number of expected spontaneous abortions annually admitted in the 5 referral centers using Singh and Wulf (1994) estimations of the number of pregnancies ending in spontaneous abortion within 13–22 weeks of gestation.
- ➡ In this study, following this procedure, we have seen that the expected spontaneous abortions annually admitted in the 5 referral centers is plausible

Difficulties and possible biases

👉 Even though the confidant's method and the hospital admission data concord, the results suggest that the WHO protocol underestimates the proportion of induced abortions among cases admitted for post-abortion care at younger ages, and overestimates it at older ages, because the share of spontaneous abortions among all hospitalizations for abortion should not be constant across ages. It should be weaker at younger ages, and stronger at higher reproductive ages, where women have fewer induced and more spontaneous abortions

Thank you for you attention

