



## ULTRASOUND SCANNING FOR FETAL MALFORMATIONS IN HANOI OBSTETRICAL AND GYNECOLOGICAL HOSPITAL, VIET NAM

### *Women's reproductive decision-making*

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The purpose of this research was to explore the factors influencing women's reproductive decision-making when their fetuses are diagnosed as "malformed fetuses" (qualitative study of 30 women, whose fetuses were diagnosed as "malformed fetuses" through three-dimension ultrasound scanning).

It found that women have a weak position in the process of their reproductive decision-making. Women's autonomy depends not only on the information and the style of counseling provided by the doctors but also on socio-cultural factors.

### Findings

- Women's perception about the reasons, types and consequences of the fetal malformation is an influence on their decision to terminate pregnancy.
- Women diagnosed with fetal malformation often did not receive adequate information about their fetus – they did not think they had a right to make their own decision.
- When deciding to choose between abortion or giving birth, women would usually rely on their families' decisions and doctors' opinions. The consequence of such uninformed decisions creates psychological wounds.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

- Women's family members and the society should support women's autonomy in making the decision herself.
- Counselling should be given when the malformed fetuses are detected as well as before and after abortion or giving birth.
- **Policy makers** - support commitments on empowering for women and asserting "a woman's right to choose".
- **Providers** - improve quality of counselling by training counselling knowledge and skills for health staff.
- **Community and women's families** - change attitude about women's right on making decisions.
- **Women** - empower themselves by improving their education and economic situation.

*"Decisions about my belly have to be made by myself."*



*A woman receiving three dimension ultrasound scan to detect fetal malformation. Often the women go without their partners.*

### Partners

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### Publication

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