Husbands' involvement in abortion in Vietnam

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Abstract: This study analyzes the involvement of men in abortion in Vietnam, where induced abortion is legal and abortion rates are among the highest in the world. Twenty men were interviewed in 1996 about the role they played in their wives' abortions and about their feelings and ethical views concerning the procedure. The results showed that both husbands and wives considered the husband to be the main decisionmaker regarding family size, which included the decision to have an abortion, but that, in fact, some women had undergone an abortion without consulting their husbands in advance. Parents and in-laws were usually not consulted; the couples thought they might object to the decision on moral grounds. Respondents' ethical perspectives on abortion are discussed. When faced with an unwanted pregnancy, the husbands adopted an ethics of care and responsibility toward family and children, although some felt that abortion was immoral. The study highlights the importance of understanding husbands' perspectives on their responsibilities and rights in reproductive decisionmaking and their ethical and other concerns related to abortion.
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