

**Abstract for Poster Presentation at Rocky Mountain Public Health conference
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Working Title:

The Circumstances of Unintended Pregnancies: Spanish-speaking and English-speaking Women

Keywords: reproductive health, unintended pregnancy, racial/ethnic differences

Background/Purpose:

In 2002, REFT Institute, Inc., was asked to survey the background and experiences of women who had had unintended pregnancies and had chosen to terminate those pregnancies.

Objective:

The goal was to learn about the circumstances surrounding unintended pregnancies so that agencies could take action to lower the incidences of unintended pregnancies among Spanish- and English-speaking populations. A related purpose was to identify any differences between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking women who seek abortions that might be related to racial and ethnic disparities in circumstances and/or services.

Method:

Interviews in either English or Spanish, using closed and open-ended questions, were conducted with 120 women seeking a pregnancy termination. Spanish interviews were translated into English for analysis.

Results:

Statistically significant differences between language groups and/or differences from previous studies were uncovered in the following areas:

- ◆ Individual Characteristics
- ◆ Partner Characteristics
- ◆ Pregnancies and Births
- ◆ Attitudes Toward Reproductive Control
- ◆ Experience and Knowledge of Reproductive Technologies

Conclusions:

There are important differences between the two populations—English and Spanish speakers.

- ◆ Spanish speakers and their partners tended to be less educated and less employed.
- ◆ Spanish speakers were much more unified in their choices of top three reasons to have and not to have children than were English speakers.
- ◆ Spanish speakers used contraception less often than English speakers.
- ◆ In this sample, Spanish speakers had fewer non-live births compared to English speakers.

These differences can be leveraged in unique ways to help each population prevent unintended pregnancies.

For instance, educational outreach about contraception to stay-at-home Spanish speaking women with children may decrease the number of unintended pregnancies in this population. On the other hand, outreach to English speaking youth that educates them about the types of contraception available and ease of use might decrease the incidence of unintended pregnancies.

Although the two groups shared top reasons for having or not having children, English speakers' sentiments were more dispersed. Therefore, social marketing efforts aimed at Spanish speakers may have more impact than those aimed at English speakers because Spanish speakers' feelings about having/not having children are very similar to one another's.