

A Study To Assess The Risk Factors And Psychological Impact Of Infertility Among Women Of Infertility Clinic In Selected Urban Area At Bhilai, (C.G.)

“A Study to Evaluate the Emotional Burden and Determinants of Infertility Among Women”

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Abstract:

Infertility is a significant reproductive health issue affecting women physically, emotionally, and socially. The present study aimed to assess the risk factors and psychological impact of infertility among women attending infertility clinics in selected urban areas of Bhilai, Chhattisgarh. A descriptive research design was adopted, and 60 women were selected from Shri Shankaracharya Institute of Medical Science Hospital and Pahlajani Women Hospital & IVF Center using appropriate sampling techniques. Data were collected using structured questionnaires on socio-demographic variables, risk factors, and psychological impact of infertility. Statistical analysis included frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and chi-square test. The findings revealed that the majority of women 40 (66.66%) had moderate risk factors, 17 (28.33%) had high risk factors, and 3 (5%) had low risk factors related to infertility. Regarding psychological impact, 47 (78.33%) women experienced moderate psychological impact, 7 (11.66%) had high psychological impact, and 6 (10%) had low psychological impact. The study concluded that infertility is associated with considerable psychological burden and multiple moderate-level risk factors among women, highlighting the need for early screening, reproductive health education, and counselling services to improve the quality of life of affected women.

Index Terms: *Infertility, Psychological Impact, Risk Factors, Women's Health, Reproductive Health, Infertility Clinic, Emotional Stress, Urban Women, Counseling, Quality of Life.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Infertility is a major reproductive health problem affecting millions of couples worldwide and has emerged as an important public health concern in recent years. Infertility is defined as the inability to achieve pregnancy after 12 months or more of regular unprotected sexual intercourse. It may affect both men and women; however, women often bear the greater emotional, social, and psychological burden associated with infertility. The condition can result from various biological, hormonal, environmental, lifestyle, and psychological factors. Common causes of female infertility include ovulatory disorders such as polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), endometriosis, blocked fallopian tubes, uterine abnormalities, thyroid disorders, obesity, infections, increasing maternal age, and unhealthy lifestyle habits such as smoking, alcohol consumption, poor diet, and stress.

Globally, infertility affects approximately 10–15% of couples of reproductive age, and the prevalence is gradually increasing due to changing lifestyle patterns, delayed marriages, urbanization, environmental pollution, and rising stress levels. In India, infertility has become a significant health issue, especially in urban areas where women are increasingly exposed to occupational stress, sedentary lifestyles, obesity, and delayed conception. Studies have shown that infertility not only affects reproductive health but also significantly influences the psychological well-being of women. Women experiencing infertility often suffer from anxiety, depression, emotional distress, low self-esteem, hopelessness, marital conflict, social isolation, and stigma. In many cultures, motherhood is considered an important aspect of a woman's identity and social status; therefore, the inability to conceive may lead to feelings of inadequacy, guilt, and societal pressure.

The psychological impact of infertility is often intensified by repeated treatment failures, financial burden, family expectations, and lack of emotional support. Women attending infertility clinics frequently experience chronic stress and emotional exhaustion while undergoing diagnostic procedures and fertility treatments. Despite advancements in assisted reproductive technologies and infertility management, awareness regarding infertility risk factors and psychological support services remains inadequate. Early identification of risk factors and timely counselling can help reduce emotional suffering and improve reproductive outcomes among affected women.

Therefore, it is essential to assess both the risk factors and psychological impact associated with infertility among women. Understanding these aspects can help healthcare professionals develop appropriate educational programs, counselling services, and supportive interventions for women undergoing infertility treatment. The findings of the present study may also contribute to improving reproductive healthcare services and enhancing the quality of life of infertile women. Hence, the researcher felt the need to conduct a study to assess the risk factors and psychological impact of infertility among women attending infertility clinics in selected urban areas at Bhilai, Chhattisgarh.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

"A Study To Assess The Risk Factors And Psychological Impact Of Infertility Among Women Of Infertility Clinic In Selected Urban Area At Bhilai, (C.G.)"

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the risk factors of infertility among women of infertility clinic in selected urban area at Bhilai.
2. To assess the psychological impact of infertility among women of infertility clinic in selected urban area at Bhilai.
3. To associate the psychological impact of infertility with selected sociodemographic variable.

IV. ASSUMPTION

1. The study assumes that there is significant risk factors of infertility among women in selected urban area.
2. The study also assumes there is significant psychological impact on women with infertility.

V. MATERIAL & METHOD

A quantitative research approach with a descriptive research design was adopted to assess the risk factors and psychological impact of Infertility among women attending infertility clinics in selected urban areas of Bhilai, Chhattisgarh. The study was conducted at Shri Shankaracharya Institute of Medical Science Hospital and Pahlajani Women Hospital & IVF Center, Bhilai. The target population included women attending infertility clinics, while the accessible population comprised women visiting the selected infertility clinics during the period of data collection.

A total of 60 women were selected using a non-probability convenient sampling technique. Women aged between 25–40 years, married for more than three years, willing to participate, and available during the data collection period were included in the study. Women with severe physical or mental illness and those unwilling to participate were excluded.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The tool consisted of three sections: Section I included socio-demographic variables such as age, education, occupation, religion, family type, duration of marriage, monthly family income, area of residence, and body mass index (BMI). Section II consisted of a checklist assessing risk factors of infertility, while Section III included a rating scale to assess the psychological impact of infertility among women. The content validity of the tool was established by experts in the field, and reliability was assessed using the split-half method, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.81, indicating that the tool was reliable for the study.

Formal administrative permission was obtained from the concerned authorities of the selected hospitals prior to data collection. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality of the collected information was maintained throughout the study. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to describe demographic variables, risk factors, and psychological impact, while chi-square test was used to determine the association between psychological impact and selected socio-demographic variables.

VI. METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data were organized, tabulated, and analyzed according to the objectives of the study by using descriptive and inferential statistics. Socio-demographic variables of the participants were analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution. The risk factors and psychological impact of Infertility among women attending infertility clinics were analyzed by calculating mean, mean percentage, and standard deviation. Inferential statistics such as chi-square test were used to determine the association between psychological impact and selected socio-demographic variables. The findings were presented in the form of tables and graphs for better interpretation and understanding of the results.

VII. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted among 60 women attending infertility clinics in selected urban areas of Bhilai, Chhattisgarh, to assess the risk factors and psychological impact of infertility. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

The findings related to risk factors of infertility revealed that the majority of the women, 40 (66.66%), had moderate risk factors, 17 (28.33%) had high risk factors, and only 3 (5%) had low risk factors of infertility. These findings indicate that most of the participants were exposed to moderate levels of reproductive, lifestyle, and medical risk factors associated with infertility.

The findings related to the psychological impact of infertility showed that the majority of the women, 47 (78.33%), experienced moderate psychological impact, 7 (11.66%) had high psychological impact, and 6 (10%) had low psychological impact. The results suggest that infertility had a considerable emotional and psychological effect on most of the participants, including stress, anxiety, emotional distress, and reduced self-esteem.

The association between psychological impact and selected socio-demographic variables was analyzed using chi-square test. The analysis revealed that selected demographic variables showed significant association with psychological impact of infertility at the level of $p < 0.05$, while some variables were found to be statistically not significant. The findings highlight that infertility not only affects reproductive health but also significantly influences the mental and emotional well-being of women.

Overall, the study findings conclude that women attending infertility clinics experienced moderate levels of infertility-related risk factors and psychological impact, emphasizing the need for early identification, counselling services, health education, and psychological support programs to improve reproductive and mental health outcomes among infertile women.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Health education programs regarding infertility and its risk factors should be conducted regularly in hospitals and community settings to improve awareness among women.
2. Psychological counselling services should be integrated into infertility clinics to help women cope with stress, anxiety, depression, and emotional distress associated with infertility.
3. Early screening and timely management of reproductive health problems such as PCOS, thyroid disorders, obesity, and menstrual irregularities should be encouraged to reduce infertility risk.
4. Lifestyle modification programs focusing on healthy diet, physical activity, stress management, smoking cessation, and avoidance of alcohol consumption should be promoted among women of reproductive age.
5. Family members and spouses should be included in counselling and awareness programs to provide emotional support and reduce stigma related to infertility.
6. Further studies with larger sample sizes and different research designs should be conducted in various settings to obtain more comprehensive findings regarding infertility and its psychological impact among women.

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