

Prevalence of Psychiatric Disorders and Types of Personality in Fertile and Infertile Women

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Abstract

Introduction: It is estimated that about 10-15% of couples suffer from infertility worldwide, which is believed to be one of the most important life crises resulting in psychological problems and emotional stresses. This study examines the prevalence of psychiatric disorders and types of personality in fertile and infertile women referring to Vali-e-Asr Reproductive Health Research Center.

Materials and Methods: In this cross-sectional study, 150 infertile women from Vali-e-Asr Infertility Clinic and 150 fertile women from Imam Khomeini Hospital's Gynecologic Clinic were selected. Research tools included Symptom Checklist-90-Revised (SCL-90-R), Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) and a structured researcher-devised questionnaire.

Results: Noticeably, 44% of the infertile and 28.7% of fertile women were suffering from psychiatric disorders. The highest scores among infertile women upon SCL-90-R assessment were for paranoid ideation and depression, interpersonal sensitivity and the lowest scores were for psychoticism and phobic anxiety. Interpersonal sensitivity, depression, phobic anxiety, paranoid ideation and psychoticism scales were significantly more prevalent in infertile than fertile women ($p < 0.05$). Additionally, emotionally unstable personality disorder was more prevalent among infertile than fertile women, based on Eysenck Personality Questionnaire ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: The higher prevalence of psychiatric disorders in infertile women demands serious psychological support and attention by the medical team. Developing a rapid and reliable screening instrument for identifying patients at greater need for psychological support and the inclusion of counseling and supportive psychotherapy in the general therapeutic framework of infertility are of great importance.

Key Words: Demographic characteristics, Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ), Fertility, Infertility, Personality types, Psychiatric disorders, SCL-90-R, Stress.

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Received: Jul 9, 2008; Accepted: Dec 24, 2008