

Attitude towards infertility and its relation to depression and anxiety in infertile couples

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Abstract

Introduction: Different psychological aspects of infertility have been studied so far. The objective of this study was to determine the most common dimensions of attitude towards infertility in infertile couples and also to determine the relation between attitude towards infertility and age of couples, the time-span after marriage, educational achievements and infertility variables. Another objective of the study was to determine the relation between attitude towards infertility and degrees of depression and anxiety.

Materials & Methods: Among people who referred to Fertility and Infertility Center in Isfahan in autumn 2004, 55 cases (25 men and 30 women), who had neither children nor any adoption child but had been diagnosed infertile, were randomly selected and were asked to answer attitude towards infertility questionnaire and Beck's depression and anxiety inventories. The data were analyzed by SPSS software. Statistical methods such as correlation, descriptive analysis, variance and multiple regression analyses were employed.

Results: Based on the findings of the study, attitude towards having offspring and parental role with 69.1%, and attitude towards social acceptance with 54.5%, were the most prevalent dimensions of attitude towards infertility. In addition, attitude had a significant ($p < 0.05$) reverse relation to age but had no significant relation to time-span after marriage or the participants' educational levels. Results did not show significant differences in attitude towards infertility, when the participant, his/her spouse or both of them were infertile. Noting the regression analysis results, attitude towards life control and social acceptance are the most important factors determining depression severity ($p < 0.0001$), where life control, social acceptance, having offspring and parental role had greater effects on anxiety ($p < 0.0001$).

Conclusion: Many infertile couples put the highest emphasis on offspring and parental role and most of them had negative attitude towards social acceptance. Older people had less negative attitudes towards the variables. The participants' attitude towards infertility had no relation to time-span after marriage, educational levels or whether the participant, his/her spouse or both were infertile. Depression and anxiety in these couples were due to their attitude towards life control and social acceptance.

Key Words: Infertility, Attitude towards infertility, Depression, Anxiety

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