Psycho-Social aspects of infertility

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Abstract

In this review article, the research conducted on the social and psychological aspects of infertility have been divided into two groups: The first group of studies believe that infertility may have psychological causes (such as differences in personality and experiencing stress between infertile and non-infertile people). The second group of studies examine the psychological consequences by both qualitative and quantitative methods. In general, the qualitative studies describe infertility as a devastating experience, especially for women. The qualitative studies try to measure the psychological consequences hypothesis by standard tests. The studies have shown that infertile subjects are different from non-infertile subjects with respect to psychological distress, stress, depression, self-esteem, marital satisfaction and sexual satisfaction. However, in the quantitative studies compared to qualitative studies, there is more inconsistency in the literature. This may be due to both methodological problems (such as sampling, temporal dimension, control groups and cross-cultural variation) and theoretical (conceptual) problems. In the end, gender differences in infertility experience have been discussed and the review articles show that, in addition to psychological factors, we need to pay more attention to social and psychological aspects of infertility.

Key Words: Infertility, psychosocial factors, quantitative & qualitative studies.

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