ADOPTION: A KAP STUDY AMONGST INFERTILE COUPLES

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INTRODUCTION

WHY THIS STUDY?

- Childlessness in India has risen by 50% since 1981(1).
- ICMR estimates the success rate of any ART procedure to be below 30% under the best of circumstances(2).
- Adoption remains a largely under researched field in India.

OBJECTIVES

- To find the knowledge, attitude and practice of the infertile couples about adoption as an alternate to ART.
- To bring out the difference between the opinion of the husband and wife regarding adoption.
- To make an attempt to enlist the reasons which are responsible for the low rate of adoption.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

- Study Design- Descriptive Cross-Sectional
- Study Setting- ART Center, Command Hospital, Southern Command, Armed Forces Medical College, Pune, Maharashtra, India
- Target Population- Infertile Couples
- Study Sample- 87 couples who visited the ART center for treatment from July 2011 to December 2011

S.No. Infertile Partner Total Infertile Subjects
1. Wife 65 65
2. Husband 14 14+14=28
3. Total Infertile Couples 87
Total Sample Size 123

Inclusion Criteria- 
- All infertile couples irrespective of duration of marriage/ infertility/ medical treatment.
- All cases of primary as well as secondary infertility.
- Exclusion Criteria- 
- Couples who were treated successfully.
- Couples who did not give consent.
- Ethical Considerations- Informed verbal consent obtained from all subjects and their confidentiality was strictly maintained.
- Data Collection Tool- Separate questionnaire for husband and wife having 36 and 28 questions respectively.
- Data Collection Method- In Depth Interviews were conducted separately for husband and wife to avoid duplication of data.

Pilot study: Pre-testing of questionnaire on 10 infertile couples was done and suitable modifications were made.

OBSERVATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUSBAND</th>
<th>WIFE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEAN AGE IN YEARS 32.58 +4.49</td>
<td>28.70 +4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEAN KUPPILWAMMY SCALE SCORE (OUT OF 29) 21.49 +2.91</td>
<td>17.91 +3.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOW DISTRESSING NOT BEING ABLE TO HAVE A CHILD IS (GRADE ON A SCALE OF 0 TO 10) 6.99 +0.31</td>
<td>8.46 +0.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEAN DURATION OF MARRIAGE IN YEARS 7.94 +3.77</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEAN YEARS OF MARRIAGE AFTER WHICH THE COUPLE HAS ENROLLED FOR ART 4.25 +0.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEAN DURATION SINCE THE COUPLE HAS ENROLLED FOR ART 3.72 +0.38</td>
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WHO IS A SUITABLE CHILD FOR ADOPTION?

< 6 MONTHS OLD (69%)

CONCLUSIONS

- Although 76% couples had a positive attitude towards adoption, only 54% were willing to adopt in case of failure of ART.
- Most (91%) recommended adoption as a good way to complete the family and most (93%) determined to adopt against the will of the society.
- Most (85%) felt that there is a pervasive social stigma attached to illegitimate children but most (72%) had no problems with adopting one.
- For most of the couples the suitable child should be less than 6 months of age, adopted through an agency, with good looks and skin color being similar to parents. With most, gender and biological parenting didn’t matter.
- Most of the couples (86%) felt that natural parenthood is better than adoptive parenthood, however, when asked, most of them (85%) opined that the adopted child, if given the right surroundings, can take the place of biological offspring.
- Knowledge and awareness about social agencies and procedures of adoption is poor (80% were not aware about process of adoption).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Infertile couples coming to ART centers should be provided with a complimentary brochure providing information about the procedure of adoption.
2. A medical-social worker should be deployed at ART center for resolving doubts about adoption.
3. Interested couples should be directed to a adoption agency working in the field of adoption for the purpose of pre-adoption counseling.
4. Social crusade and mobilization on adoption and removal of related myths and stigmas.

REFERENCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1. Information accessed at http://reutersurb linebacker
2. Information accessed at http://karadoc.org/in
3. Guidelines for Art clinics in India by the Indian Council of Medical Research, Centre of Medical Education and Research, New Delhi, Chapter 1, Introduction, Brief History of Art and Requirements of Art Clinics.