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Relationship between age and infertility in female population undergoing infertility treatments

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Abstract

The most important factor affecting a woman's chance to conceive and have a healthy child is age. As women ages their fertility declines. A study was conducted on a total of 300 married women undergoing infertility treatments at the selected infertility centres. The main aim of the research was to study the impact of age on infertility in female population. Information from subject was collected through a self constructed questionnaire and data gathered was age of subject and age of subject's husband, number of years the couple has been married, age at marriage and number of years since trying for baby. Regarding age it was seen that 51% of female were lying in the age group of 25-30 years of age, 17% were in the age between 31 years and 35 years. It was also seen that infertility was even seen in female below 25 years and above 26 years of age as 25% and 7% respectively. It was also seen that around half of the subjects (54%) got married even before they turned 20 years of age. Based on the study results it can be deduced that age have a significant impact on fertility in female. Although it might not be the only factor but are an important aspect which should not be ignored.

Keywords: Infertility, age, infertility treatment

Introduction

Childbearing and raising of children are extremely important events in every human's life and are strongly associated with the ultimate goals of completeness, happiness and family integration. It is widely accepted that human existence reaches completeness through a child and fulfils the individual's need for reproduction (Roupa *et al.*, 2009) [5]. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) (2015) a disease of the reproductive system defined "Infertility is achieve a clinical pregnancy after by the failure to 12 months or more of regular unprotected sexual intercourse". Infertility or inability to have children, affects both men and women of reproductive age in all parts of the world. For the individual, infertility has profound social and personal implications.

The most important factor affecting a woman's chance to conceive and have a healthy child is age. As women ages their fertility declines. As women grow older the likelihood of of infertility rises because likelihood of getting pregnant falls. Couples are delaying their efforts to have a family because of careers and because contraception allows them to wait until their circumstances are more ideal. Unfortunately, fertility decreases with ages of the male as well as the female. The older age at marriage often means contact with more sexual partners and sexually transmitted diseases which can damage the fallopian tubes. Endometriosis increases as more menstrual periods occur.

The effects of aging on egg quality and ovulatory function as well as an increased risk of disorders such as endometriosis results in decreased fertility as a woman are delaying child birth until their thirties and forties. In addition to a lower ability to conceive, older women are also are at greater risk of early pregnancy loss.

Methodology

A descriptive research was conducted on a total of 300 married women undergoing infertility treatments at the selected infertility centres. The study was conducted in the selected infertility centres and hospitals lying within the municipal limits of city of Jodhpur, Rajasthan. Permission was sought from the Directors of selected infertility centres of Jodhpur.

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Consent for the conducting the study was granted by three infertility centres. The patients were explained the purpose of the study and consent for the participation in the study was obtained from the subjects. Subjects were assured that anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained and that they can refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. An Informed consent form was signed by the investigator and the subjects willing for participation in the study individually. The subjects were interviewed and information was filled by researcher in the self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire collecting age related information included following components like:

1. Age of Subject and Age of Subject's Husband
2. Number of Years The Couple Has Been Married
3. Age at Marriage
4. Number of Years Since Trying for Baby

Age of subject and age of subject's husband was categorised into four sections: below 25 years, 25-30 years, 31-35 years and 36 and above years. Number of years the couple has been married has following categories for scoring: less than 5 years, 5-10 years and more than 10 years. For age at marriage categories were: less than 20 years, 20-25 years and 26-30 years. Number of years since trying for baby was categorised into three sections: last 2 yrs, 3-5 yrs and more than 5 yrs.

Result

To understand how and when age can be a factor may be causing infertility can arise and what lifestyle factors like age can affect it, a useful starting point is the identification of key factors that determine whether a man or woman will be

fertile, and when these are established. The study covered information of 300 female undergoing infertility treatments at various fertility centres.

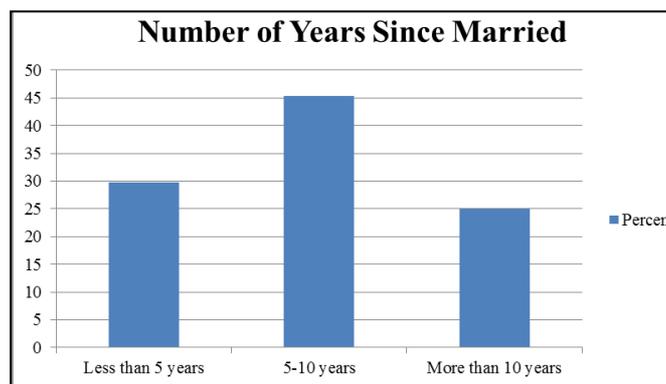
1. Age of Subject and Age of Subject's Husband

Regarding age it was seen that 51% of female were lying in the age group of 25-30 years of age, 17% were in the age between 31 years and 35 years. It was also seen that infertility was even seen in female below 25 years and above 26 years of age as 25% and 7% respectively. On the contrary seeing the age of subject's husband it was noticed that 14% were above 36 years and only 4% were below 25 years. Maximum husbands (50%) were of age group 25-30 years.

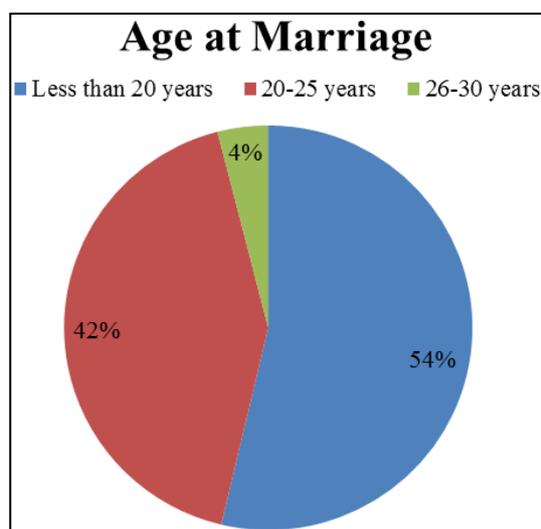
Table 1: Frequency Distribution and Percentage of the Sample According to Age

		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age of Subject	below 25 years	74	24.7
	25-30	154	51.3
	31-35	51	17.0
	36 and above	21	7.0
Age of Subject's Husband	below 25 years	12	4.0
	25-30	151	50.3
	31-35	94	31.3
	36 and above	43	14.3

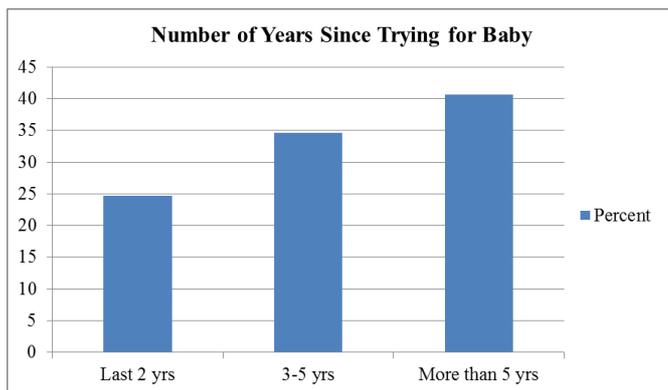
2. Looking at the number of years the couple has been married, 30% were married from less than 5 years and 25% were married from more than 10 years and were experiencing infertility.



3. It was also seen that around half of the subjects (54%) got married even before they turned 20 years of age.



4. The results also focus that around 60% of couples were trying for baby from more than last 3 years. One of the alarming findings was that more than half of the subjects (54%) got married before 20 years of age.



Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to study the relationship between age and infertility in female population undergoing infertility treatments. The study was descriptive in nature conducted on a total of 300 married women undergoing infertility treatments at the selected infertility centres and information was gathered from the subjects through self-structured questionnaire. A major finding of the study was that maximum sample of the study were below 30 years. This may be due to early marriages in the region from where the data was collected. In support of this finding study by (Blinder, Ehrmann, Haan, & Jansen, 2017) ^[1] concluded that women who married in early adolescence and childhood show a higher propensity towards most of the negative health outcomes as compared to women who married in middle adolescence. From the present study it can also be concluded that with the rise in age the prevalence of infertility also increases. It was noticed that large number of subjects and their husbands were having age more than 30 years causing infertility. Similarly studies also estimates that around one sixth to one third of the fertility declines are due to rising age at marriage (Harwood-Lejeune, 2001; Pal & Santoro, 2003) ^[3, 4].

Conclusion

Based on the study results it can be deduced that age have a significant impact on fertility in female. Although it might not be the only factor but are an important aspect which should not be ignored. The growing interest and amount of research in this field have made it evident that age has a significant impact on fertility of females.

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