

P-361 Male narratives on infertility and the couple relationship: a qualitative analysis of men weblogs

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Study question: What are the perceptions and experiences of men regarding the way infertility affects the couple and their role in the marital relationship?

Summary answer: Men experience distress in witnessing their wives suffer both physically and psychologically. These concerns are accompanied by a sense of powerlessness in protecting their partners, challenging their traditional models of male masculinity.

What is known already: While much is known about women's psychosocial adjustment to infertility, there is little evidence on male adaptation. Previous studies have suggested that men can reveal higher scores of adjustment to infertility than women because they tend to contain their own emotions in order to support their wives. However, there is no data supporting this hypothesis. There is a need to better understand how men dealing with infertility perceive their role within the relationship.

Study design, size, duration: This study used a qualitative design. The target population were weblogs written in English by men who self-identified as diagnosed with infertility. We used the search query "male infertility blog" to begin a modified snowball sampling method and identified 27 weblogs posting entries from July 2004 to October 2010.

Participants/materials, setting, methods: Each weblog was archived chronologically, with data analysis ending at the date of data collection or at a positive pregnancy test, adoption, or for no explicit reason. The final sample was composed of 22 weblogs. Two coders analyzed and coded the entire data set using a grounded theory approach.

Main results and the role of chance: Bloggers were from 6 countries on 4 continents. Participants had on average 32.7 years, were in a marital union for 4.5 years, and were trying to conceive for 2 years at the beginning of their blogs. Besides the impact of infertility in the relationship, 5 other main themes emerged from the data and were mentioned by all participants: involvement in treatments; hoping for a pregnancy; acceptance of infertility; feeling integrated in a trying-to-conceive community; and the others don't get it. Bloggers described their relationship as close, assuming the responsibility for support within the relationship. Supportive behaviors were accompanied by the perception of insufficiency in comforting their partners and a sense that infertility is not as central to them as it is to their partners.

Limitations, reason for caution: Even though weblog data is unbiased by the research process, this sample might not be representative of men diagnosed with infertility due to bloggers traits. Social endorsement can also compromise validity and reliability of data.

Wider implications of the findings: These findings shed light on the ambivalence men can experience as they navigate the unexpected stress of infertility and try to correspond to traditional gender-based expectations to solve the couple problems. Mental health professionals should work with the couple addressing each member perceptions of how they are being supported and support the other. Additionally, educational interventions can be implemented to normalize the varied reactions men are likely to experience in facing infertility.

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P-362 Presentation of the time-lapse video of the transferred embryo and changes of psychological status during the implantation period

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Study question: The aim of this study was to assess psychological changes of the women with time-lapse (TL) based single embryo transfer (SET) from the time of video presentation of the transferred embryo by an embryologist to the time just after knowing the results of pregnancy test (PT).

Summary answer: Showing the TL video helped patients to understand the embryo quality and thus allowed relief in the period between embryo transfer (ET) and PT. However, the result of negative PT significantly brought the women regret for having watched the video and grief as if she had experienced miscarriage.

What is known already: The days between ET and PT are considered to be one of the most stressful periods for the female assisted reproductive technology (ART) patients. However, to our knowledge, there is no literature on the psychological changes during the implantation period for ART patients including those with repeated implantation failure. Our preliminary questionnaire revealed that most of the women were favourable for the TL video of the transferred embryo.

Study design, size, duration: The questionnaires were administered after urine sample was taken for PT. Two hundred and seventy-six fresh or frozen/thaw SET cycles were included. Patients filled out the first part of the questionnaire before the PT results were informed. The latter part was filled out after the results were informed.

Participants/materials, setting, methods: All the women with ET during this study period were included because TL videos were provided and SET was done for all the women. The embryologists in charge presented the TL videos. Patient self-evaluation of satisfaction was based on a scale of one to five at ET, pre-PT and post-PT.

Main results and the role of chance: Satisfaction (as Rank-4 and -5) was attained by 246 patients (89%) at ET and was maintained during the implantation period. In the patients with negative (compared with positive) PT, the satisfaction rank just after they knew the results (at post-PT) was decreased from the time of ET ($P = 0.0007$; Wilcoxon signed-rank test). More women with negative PT answered that they did not want to watch the video again if there was a next chance ($P = 0.0006$; Mann-Whitney U test). Parous women tend to be satisfied with the video at pre-PT ($P = 0.014$) and post-PT ($P = 0.003$). Prior history of miscarriage was not associated with degree of satisfaction at pre-PT ($P = 0.429$) and post-PT ($P = 0.501$).

Limitations, reason for caution: Lack of a control group is a limitation of the current study because we inform all the patients in advance that the TL videos were taken for each embryo of all the patients.

Wider implications of the findings: TL video presentation provided the women affection for the transferred embryo from its developing images as if it were a fetus already. However, such affection might suddenly change to deep sadness if PT was negative. Our data suggest that parous women might have ability to regard the transferred embryo as her fetus. TL video presentation also should be promising for the patients with repeated failure of implantation.

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P-363 What about the donor after conception – a qualitative study on the meaning of the anonymous sperm donor in heterosexual families

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Study question: What meanings do heterosexual couples attach to their anonymous sperm donor?

Summary answer: In the participants' family narrative, the donor was constructed as an abstract person, partly because of his anonymity and partly because they wanted to keep the donor at a distance.

What is known already: So far, many researchers studied disclosure decisions of DI families. The context of this research focus can be seen within the ongoing debate about the right of the child to know his/her genetic roots. This research tradition is mainly dominated by studies from countries where donor anonymity has been abolished. Current study aims to gather in-depth