

Pattern, known associated factors, and influence of socio-demographic factors on subfertility among couples attending gynaecology clinics at Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

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Background: Subfertility is a major issue all over the world and has become a common issue in Sri Lanka too. The aim of this study was to determine the pattern, prevalence of risk factors and influence of sociodemographic factors on subfertility.

Methodology: An institution-based descriptive study of sub fertility was conducted among 56 couples with a diagnosis of subfertility attending gynaecology clinics at Teaching Hospital Jaffna between November 2017 and January 2018. Consecutive sampling was used. Data were collected with an interviewer-administered questionnaire and data extraction form, and analysed using descriptive statistics (proportions, percentages) and the Chi Square test of independence.

Results: Fifty-six subfertile couples participated in the study. Among them, 62.5% presented with primary subfertility, and 37.5% presented with secondary subfertility. Over half of the couples (52%) had a coital frequency of <5 times/week, and 48% reported a coital frequency of <5 times/week on fertile days of the menstrual cycle. A little over a quarter of females (28.6%) were >35 years of age. Twenty-five percent of females and males were obese. The majority of participants had no known medical illness, although 48% of females had a gynecological condition, and 3.6% of males had erection/ejaculation problems. A quarter of females and 15% of males had a family history of subfertility. Nearly 20% of males were smokers, approximately 30% consumed alcohol, and nearly 40% had a history of exposure to excessive heat. More than 75% of female and males had not reached A/Ls with very few graduates in the sample. About two-thirds of couples had a family income of less than Rs. 37,000. There was no significant influence of sociodemographic factors on the risk factors or pattern of subfertility.

Conclusion: The results reveal a high proportion of primary subfertility than secondary subfertility, a fairly high prevalence of gynaecological conditions and obesity, with a large proportion of subfertile males consuming alcohol. Therefore public health efforts should target early identification and treatment of gynaecological conditions, obesity reduction and substance abuse prevention.

Keywords: Subfertility, risk-factors, Jaffna, Gynaecology