

## Stress Phenomenology Study in Infertility Women at Halim Fertility Center Medan in 2017

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**Abstract :** Infertility is a prone crisis that will affect various aspects of one's life. It is normal when infertility couples experience the bad feeling that affects their self-confidence and self-image. Having a child is important for most societies and marriage means to get off spring. In some societies, the married couples will feel incomplete without a child. This study used qualitative method with phenomenology strategy. The study was conducted at Halim Fertility Center Medan with 4 infertile women as informants. Data was collected by in-depth interviews, and data analysis used were reduction, presentation and conclusion. The results of study indicate that similar stressors were experienced by three of informants, namely post-married psychological condition, social, economic, and religious stressor. However, the Informant-3 did not experience economic stressor for she had a stable economic condition, Informant-1 and informant-2 did not experience a religious stressor and show the inner peace, they admitted that they felt more closer to God, and their marriages are more than 8 years. The informants-3 and 4 are still experiencing religious stressor because their marriages are 4 years. The conclusions of this study indicate that there are many factors that can lead to infertile women. However the family and relatives support is helpful to prevent infertility in women

**Keywords :** Stress, Infertility

Date of Submission: 09-05-2018

Date of acceptance: 25-05-2018

### I Introduction

Infertility is a prone life crisis that affect various aspects of marriage life. It is normal when infertility couples experience unsafe feeling that affects self-confidence and self-image. According to The National Infertility Association, some of the symptoms that may occurs are sadness and depression<sup>[1]</sup>. Almost every couple in the world wants a child, but unfortunately there are many couples without children. Nearly 80 million world couples population (10-15%) experience infertility<sup>[2]</sup>. Having a child is important for almost couples and marriage means to have children, Married couples will feel incomplete without child. According to the cultural background and religiosity of the community, the child has several functions. First, the child as a symbol of fertility and success. Most of Indonesian communities believe that more children means wealthy. The delay in parenthood and having child is considered as a failure. Second, the child as the offspring. Third, children as friends and entertainers. Fourth, every child is God's gift and gift that should not be abandoned

Fifth, the devoted child will pray and help their parents, and the sixth, child have a very important social role, the children strengthen the family bonds, children are a source of family motivation to set a better future. Thus, women without child are considered as disabled women and unlucky carriers<sup>[3]</sup>.

More than 70 million couples suffer from infertility worldwide. The occurrence is greater in developing populations. World Health Organization (WHO) estimated 8-12% of couples with infertility problems during their reproductive years, two millions new infertile couples were arose each year and this number continues to increase<sup>[4]</sup>.

In addition, factors that may affect the infertility are age, stress, poor diet, heavy exercise, overweight or underweight, poor environmental conditions (air and water pollution), as well as health problems associated with hormonal changes<sup>[5]</sup>.

Common causes of stress in infertile women are as follows:

#### 1. Post-Married Psychological Condition

In marriage, the couple will use the 'we' pattern relation where there is no longer the term "me" or "you". It is means that husband and wife is complement of each other for the shake of happiness, because marriage is a legitimate bond.

Things that should be considered, that the marriage phase occurs in marriage life, thus the contract of couple should be renewed. In the "we" relationship pattern, the sensitivity between couples should be discussed. A husband may ask her wife whether her expectations about the husband's actions were satisfied, as well as the wife. Thus, the couples without children may take some adjustments and should be optimistic to have a child as one of their marriages goal<sup>[6]</sup>.

**2. Social Stressor**

Social stressors in couples without children are questions about themselves. The un warm questions emerges from their parents, parent in-laws or communities <sup>[7]</sup>.

**3. Economic Stressor**

Family financial problems is one of difficulties faced by infertile couple. It leads to difficulties in finding information about infertility conditions, health checks and drug purchases <sup>[8]</sup>.

**4. Religious Stressor**

It is the experience of injustice that God let the couples in infertile conditions <sup>[8]</sup>. The number of infertile couples in Indonesia can be calculated from the number of marriage women without children who are still alive. In Indonesia alone Infertile couples in 2013, there are 50 million couples or 15 -20% of marriage couples are infertile <sup>[9]</sup>.

Based on a preliminary survey conducted by researchers at Halim Fertility Center in Medan, 9 of 10 infertile women experienced the stress because of their infertility. Their stressor emerges by comparing their self to their relatives marriage - couple who have the children. Their stress also resulted from the demands of the family. One of informant consider their infertility as injustice of God. However the more stressor, the more the women infertility.

**II Methods**

This study used qualitative research method with phenomenology strategy. Phenomenological strategy is a study that describe, investigate, and comprehend the essence structure of phenomenon based on the experience of individual about a particular phenomenon <sup>[10]</sup>. There are four informants in this study. The Informants criteria used in this study have been adjusted to the purpose of research. The criterias are women who have in marriage more than 3 years, without children, and medically have healthy reproductive organs and willing to participate in this study. Those women conducted the examination at Halim Fertility Center Medan and willing to share their experiences.

Data collection method used in this study is by in-depth interview. The data was collected by face to face interview with informants.

**III Result And Discussion**

The selection of informants based on the principle of conformity and adequacy of informants who have knowledge related to the topic of research and the ability to describe all phenomena related to the research topic.

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**Table 1. Informan Characteristics**

No	Age (Years)	Education	Informant Number	Psychological Condition After Marriage	Social Stressor	Economic Stressor	Religious Stressor
1.	37	Bachelor	101	Experience	Experience	Experience	unexperience
2.	41	Diploma	102	unexperience	Experience	Experience	unexperience
3.	29	Bachelor	103	experience	Experience	unexperience	Experience
4.	32	Bachelor	104	unexperience	Experience	experience	Experience

**Informants' Statement Regarding Psychological Condition Factor After Marriage**

The statements of 4 informants revealed that they have psychology change after marriage because of their desire to have children in marriage.

It can be concluded that 3 of 4 informants, argued experiencing the psychological change because of childlessness. The demands of people in their circle become one of their stressors, while 1 informant admitted unaffected by the childlessness as long as her husband standby and supportful. She admits they waiting for a child.

It is in line with Murray and Mc Kinney<sup>[11]</sup> that the psychological impact on women who experience infertility is that couples feel tainted and embarrassed because of infertility, the infertility experience makes them isolated that lead to stress and anxiety in various aspects of daily life.

#### **Informant Statement on Social Stressor Factors**

All informants admitted experiencing social stressor because they feel different from others, by assuming other people are luckier, because they got gift from God, while they were not. This reason ingevoke a sense of greater desire to have a child in a short time, that lead to stress and anxious when their expectation was not met quickly. The people around infertile couple may the source of stress, because they frequently asked questions about their childlessness. It results to the shame and unconfident of infertile couple.

The results of research conducted by Lee<sup>[12]</sup> about the infertile couples in Thailand revealed the increasing of anxiety and tension in women who experience infertility. This anxiety and tension interfere in dealing with others because of an excessive suspicion when talking to others and easily up set if there are statements of others who are considered offensive to her self-esteem as a woman.

#### **Informants Statement Regarding Economic Stressor Factors**

Three of 4 informants argued experiencing economic stressor. Those informants argued that the infertility medicines is expensive, while 1 informant argue not experiencing economic stressor because she has a stable finance and family support.

This is in accordance with Tabong and Adongo<sup>[4]</sup>. which suggests that regardless of infertility medical causes, women receive a major error in reproductive decline and they suffer personal grief and frustration, social stigma, exclusion and serious economic hardship, it is seen in informants who are experiencing deep stress because they feel abandoned and their economic needs are not met.

#### **Informants Statement Concerning Religious Stressor Factors**

From the informant's statement, it can be concluded that 2 of 4 informants argued that everything is already arranged by God, thus God knows when the best time for them to have children. While 2 of informants argued that they feel disappoint because God has not answer their prayers quickly, it made them stressed.

This also in line with Tabong and Adongo<sup>[4]</sup>, that infertile couples facing various health problems, experiencing many psychological symptoms such as anxiety, difficulty in interpersonal relationships, frustration, anger, aggression and others, especially for those who experience failure in the treatment. Generally, women exhibit higher levels of stress than men in infertile couples. Women feel more disenchantment than men.

### **IV Conclusion**

The result of study showed that most of informants experienced the similar stressors, they are post-marriage psychological condition, social, economic, and religious stressor, unless the informant-2 and informant-3 who did not experience economic stressor because she has sufficient finance to take fertility treatment. The informant-1 and informant-2 did not experience religious stressor because they feel the inner peace and has a close relationship with God. The admitted, it is resulted from the longer marriage. While informants 2 and 4 are still experiencing religious stressor because they are 4 years in marriage.

### **Acknowledgements**

Acknowledgments the authors convey to Halim Fertility center Medan where the location of data collection which has given the opportunity to the authors to conduct research in this region. We also would like to convey our gratitude to Mrs.Namora Lumongga Lubis and Mrs. Asfriyati, for the guidance in this study process.

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Nona Try Agista. "Stress Phenomenology Study in Infertility Women at Halim Fertility Center Medan in 2017." *IOSR Journal of Nursing and Health Science (IOSR-JNHS)* , vol. 7, no.3 , 2018, pp. 20-23.