MEDICAL CHANNEL

Original Article

ISSUES OF THE ISSUELESS MALE PATIENTS
A clinical cross-sectional study on childless patients. Hyderabad

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ABSTRACT:

Objective: Pakistan is a male dominant society where male enjoys his status and is responsible for economic supports and completion of the family. This study describes the males reporting at Psychiatric out Patient Clinic with history of issuelessness (Infertility). This piece of research focuses the issueless males to assess the biological (Semen analysis) and social areas (Marital difficulties) in a group of hospital attending males.

Design: Cross-sectional study.

Place & duration of study: The study was carried out in Liaquat University Hospital Hyderabad, from August 2007 to July 2008.

Subjects & Method: All 46 male patients that were attended psychiatric out patient (OPD) for psychiatric morbidity and detected issueless (childless) screened for psychiatric disorder by administering General Health Questionnaire. Required psycho-social variables and diagnoses were recorded on a semi-structured proforma.

Result: 22 cases (47.82%) showed gross biological defect in semen analysis while 52.17% patients showed the normal limits. 11 cases (23.91%) were polygamous for the reproduction purposes, 10.86% case met with divorce but soon remarried, while 24 cases had no socio-medical problems.

Conclusion: Issueless ness (infertility) damages the social life of the male. Failure of reproduction, may lead to develop marital difficulties as in this study 19.56% cases went for second marriage, 10.86% cases divorced without knowing cause of infertility while 52.17% showed normal limits of their semen analysis but did not reproduce. While 22 cases showed gross biological defect, Oligospermia 32.60% and Azospermia 15.21%. Therefore this alarming situation is looking for the mental health professional for their attention and concentration.

Keyword: Issuelessness, male, marital status, social difficulties, Biological basis.

INTRODUCTION

Infertility is the inability of a couple reproductive age group to achieve pregnancy within 12 months of unprotected intercourse, however the impact of issueless ness (infertility) on the psychosocial wellbeing of the family has attracted the researchers all over the world and Pakistan is not an exception to it, which is an important country for its socio cultural diversities and varieties of the social taboos[1, 2, 9].

In Pakistan, similar to most of the Asian communities, having children is an essential part of stable marital relationship. Children, particularly sons, are regarded as source of income and security in old age[3]. Family system in Pakistan seems to be stronger and very significant in marriage profile, without difference into rural and urban segment of population.

According to Griffin and Wilson (1994), infertility could be defined as the inability to achieve a pregnancy after one year of unprotected intercourse. Conception should normally be achieved within 12 months in about 80% of couples without contraceptive

measures whereas about 20% of couples attempting their first pregnancy have a problem achieving it with the same period[4]. Failure to produce children is the challenge to the manliness of the males and female is always considered responsible for not a success to reproduce. Therefore, males enjoy the dominancy in family[8, 9], while the rural population of Pakistan where joint family system dominants also victimizes the males. However reproduction is well thought-out as female's issue[5].

In Pakistani society the expectation of family is more for the male child, while male child is focused at early age to flourish family values, tradition and promote the generation and support father/ parents in terms of economy therefore issue of to be the issueless is more hurting phenomena in the family scenario especially keeping in view the 68% rural population and low literacy rate[6, 14]. This topic for research study purpose issuelessness has been less addressed by the mental health professionals. Reports have shown that about 6% of adult males are believed to be infertile[3]. However, about 40-90% of male infertility is considered to be due to deficient sperm production[7].

METHODS & MATERIAL:

Forty six cases of issueless males were recruited and separated from the total of 135 patients at the psychiatric out patient's clinic of Liaquat University Hospital, LUMHS, Hyderabad for the socio biological assessment, during the period of 1st, August 2007 to 31st, July 2008.

The socio demographic data was collected on semi structure proforma and written consent was taken from all separated cases and the confidentiality was maintained. All cases were referred to Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences Hospital Diagnostic & Research Laboratory at Hyderabad for semen analysis and standard protocol of sample was assured. No attempt have been made to assess the spouses clinically and not involved in the study (They are the part of in other study). SPSS Version-10 was used to compute descriptive statistics.

Inclusion Criteria: Couples who had lived together for at least 12 months and couples who had undergone the required investigations were included in the study.

Exclusion Criteria: Couples who had not lived together for at least 12 months were deferred investigation and treatment. There were couples who present with infertility but had not undergone the required investigations. All chronic psychotics issueless cases have not been included in the study cases.

RESULT:

This study of 46 male cases has assessed the issues of the issueless patients, making 34% of the total 135 cases. The Average age remained 46 years and range was between 34 to 59 years (Table No-1). Semen analysis data showed 22 cases with gross defective semen problem, while 52% were within the normal limit (Table No-2). Table No-3 shows marital status in which 76% cases were monogamous and 11 males had more marriages. 05 cases experienced divorce but very soon remarried. Duration of marriage remained 03 to 22 years.

DISCUSSION:

This is the first ever clinical assessment, to our information, on issueless cases specially the males. This is a very important socio medical problem of this society, where males are said to be the dominant persons in the family and community as well.

TABLE NO-1
Socio Demographic Profile verses Cases

N=135

S. No	Variable	No of cases	Percentage
1	Total issueless cases	135 (89 female cases)	65.92%
2	Male cases	46	34.07%
3	Age range	34 to 59 years	
4	Average age	46.36 years	

Males (34%) seem to be less in total cases as compared to females

TABLE NO-2
Semen analysis verses Cases

N=46

S. No	Variable	No of cases	Percentage
1	Normal limit	24 cases	52.17%
2	Oligospermia	15 cases	32.60%
3	Azospermia	07 cases	15.21%

52.17% cases were within the normal limit of semen analysis

TABLE NO-3
Marital Status verses Cases

N=46 cases

Percentage 34.07%

S. No	Variable	No of cases	Percentage
1	Mono gamy	35 cases	76.08%
2	Bi gamy	09 cases	19.56%
3	Poly gamy	02 cases	4.34%
4	Divorce	05 cases	10.86%
5	Duration of marriage	03 to 22 years	

10.86% cases divorced but remarried, while 76.08% remained dominantly monogamous.

Table No-1 shows that 46 males cases are less number as compared to female 89 cases, which denotes that possibly the males are held less responsible for the failure of reproduction and childlessness, where multiple international studies shows that 40-90% male infertility is considered to be deficient sperm production[7]. While females cases are usually asked for the investigations first and then blamed for the failure of reproduction but never points out the male. Age range was 34 to 59 years and average age was around 46 years, shows the impact of childlessness (infertility) started hurting the man quite lately and females were asked and blamed for infertility reasons.

Table No-2 discusses 22 cases showed gross defective semen

analysis, where 07 cases (15.21%) cases were suffering from Azospermia. It is known through the research over this topic that 15% of the couples are facing infertility problems and more than a quarter of infertility problems due to the male factors. Semen analysis is the most important laboratory investigation for men assessing the infertile couples.

Oligo-astheno-teratozoospermia is the most severe type of infertility with the least semen parameters[11]. 24 cases found to be normal at their semen analysis but remained issueless. Psychiatric services seem to be less in Pakistan especially for the rural population Pakistan, therefore lack of community education and understanding the psychosocial problem increasing the magnitude of this sexual disorder[10].

Table No-3 describes the social areas of cases in which 35 cases i.e. 76% were monogamous. This number also includes 05 cases of the divorce but soon remarried and reason remained the failure to produce and had defective semen analysis. 19.56% cases (09 patients) were bigamous and 02 cases were polygamous.

11 cases are significant numbers, who have gone for the second and third marriages for the purpose of children, did not given weight to biological assessment of semen analysis and had social belief that the females are the defective to produce due to poor educational background and cultural value system prevailing in Pakistani society. 05 cases meet with divorce as the spouse did not compromise to be the issue less. This paper proves that dominate group of male cases showed no gross biological defect in their semen analysis but remained issueless[3].

The research work of Peshawar study on the frequency of infertility was 12% and the male factors were responsible in 45% of the total cases, Where 19.39% male cases Oligospermia and 13.80% were Azosperamia[12]. However in this study the defective sperm finding detected was 47.81%.

The desires of children vary quite grossly in different cultures of the world. However in the western countries attitudinal differences also have reflected confusion as Westoff & Higgins (2009) concluded their study "Some measures of gender egalitarianism in some countries appear to be positively associated with higher fertility, while other measures are negatively associated"[13, 14], but dominant Pakistani community believes in children and preferably males.

It is a well known fact that childlessness (infertility) is one of the most stressful conditions among married population of Pakistan, where religious and cultural value system prevails quite strongly and further research is suggested in his field to provide more scientific information.

CONCLUSION:

The study conducted in the group of hospital attender's male patients at psychiatric out patient clinic LUH, Hyderabad shows the childlessness is a frequent stress in the community without keeping in view the gender differences. On laboratory investigation 24 cases (52.17%) showed normal limits of their semen analysis but did not reproduce. While 22 cases showed gross biological defect, Oligospermia (32.60%) and Azospermia (15.21%). 35 cases were monogamous also included 05 divorces while 11 cases met with more than one marriages for the purpose of fertility but remained issueless. The study demands the larger scale research work in the community of Pakistan.

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