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KNOWLEDGE OF SUBFERTILITY AND SOCIO-CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON WOMEN WITH SUBFERTILITY IN CASTLE STREET HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN, SRI LANKA

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Subfertility is a major concern among women. Having a child is an essential part to complete a family therefore without a child is a serious issue to the family as well as to the society. In comparison to other countries, Sri Lankan population also more concerning on social, cultural, religious, spiritual content regarding subfertility, however, there are limited available research evidence regarding the impact of knowledge and socio-cultural influences such as perception, social discrimination and psychological status on women with subfertile in Sri Lanka. Therefore this study was aimed to identify the knowledge of subfertility, and according to socio-cultural influences, to determine perception, to describe the experience of the social discrimination and psychological status of women with subfertility who are attending subfertility clinics in Castle Street Hospital for Women (CSHW) Sri Lanka. A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out in a purposively selected participants (n=200) of who are attending in subfertility clinic CSHW. Data was collected to through pre-tested interview-administered questionnaire. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics. Ethical approval was obtained from the ethics review committee of CSHW. Findings revealed that nearly half (41%) of participants was in 30-34 age range and 8.5% of them were in more than 40 age. Majority of participants (86%) were Sinhala and more than half of them (53.5%) educated up to Advanced Level. More than half of them (56%) were unoccupied. Majority of participants had adequate knowledge about subfertility. Almost all of the participants (98%) knew that subfertility should be treated medically. According to the socio-cultural influences more than half of participants (78.5%) percept that have a test-tube baby and medicine for subfertility are socially acceptable. More than half of the participants (66%) have experienced social discriminations due to their subfertility. Nearly one third (74%) of women blamed by the society and 40% of them expressed limited participation to social functions. Majority were suffering from psychological discomfort and 34% have interfered that subfertility problem with their day-to-day life. Half of them (49.5%) said that they cannot move ahead without a child. Further studies are needed to explore this phenomenon in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Quantitative, Subfertility, Women, Social cultural context, Sri Lanka*