
Social support, Self-Efficacy, Cognitive Coping and Psychological Distress in Infertile Women

Anaum Khalid¹, Saima Dawood¹

¹ Centre for Clinical Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan

1 Introduction

Infertility is a disease of the reproductive system followed by the failure to achieve a clinical pregnancy after 1 year of having regular sexual intercourse without using any means of birth control. Infertility is a disease burden which creates emotional instability characterized by depression, stress and anxiety in both men and women. The aims of this research were to investigate the relationship of social support, self-efficacy and cognitive coping with psychological distress, as well as, to determine the mediating role of self-efficacy and cognitive coping between social support and psychological distress in infertile women of Pakistan.

2 Materials and Methods

This cross-sectional study was conducted from April to December, 2017. Purposive sampling technique was used to recruit 158 infertile women from six hospitals of Lahore, Pakistan. A demographic questionnaire, Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, Infertility Self-Efficacy Scale, Coping Strategies Questionnaire and Depression Anxiety Stress Scale were used to assess the study variables. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and SPSS Macro PROCESS were used for data analyses. Written consent was signed from each participant. This research was approved by Departmental Doctorate Program Committee of Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology, Riphah International University Lahore, Pakistan.

3 Results

The results found that significant other, family and friends support was negatively associated with depression, anxiety and stress, however, no relationship was found between friends support and anxiety. Self-efficacy and active-practical coping had negative, whereas, avoidance-focused coping had positive relationship with depression, anxiety and stress. Active-distractive coping

was negatively and religious-focused coping was positively associated with depression. Mediation analyses revealed that self-efficacy mediated the effect of social support on depression, anxiety and stress, but no mediation was found between friends support and anxiety. Moreover, avoidance-focused coping mediated the link between social support and depression, as well as, between significant other support and anxiety.

4 Conclusion

Social support, self-efficacy, active-practical coping and active-distractive coping had significant negative associations with psychological distress. Hence, structured programs should be developed to enhance societal acceptance and to reduce the negative attitude of people towards infertility.

Author biography



Anaum Khalid Anaum Khalid has completed her degree of Master of Science in Clinical Psychology from Riphah International University, Lahore. Currently, she is working as Clinical Psychologist in Center for Clinical Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore. She has worked as Clinical Psychologist in Rising Sun Institute of Special Children, as well as, in Government Home Economics College, Lahore. She has also worked as Lecturer in Psychology department of Government Islamia College for Women, Lahore. She has presented a paper in National Forum and published an article on psychological distress and infertile women in international journal of “Archives of Gynecology and Obstetrics”.