

EDITORIAL

INFERTILITY TREATMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRY

Western countries believe that overpopulation is the major problem of developing countries. They think that contraception and fertility control should be policy of resource-poor countries. This conviction was and still is the main barrier to consider infertility treatment in resource-poor countries.

But in developing country having children is a social obligation, due to the family (-in-law) and the community. In these countries children secure one's marriage, confer social status, guarantees rights of property and inheritance, assist with labor, offer social security in old age and provide continuity by maintaining the family name. Egalitarian societies, people want children as part of their life plan and they suffer when they cannot fulfill this wish. However, because parenthood has deeper social rooted in developing countries, the social and psychological consequences of involuntary childlessness are often more severe and largely impact on the lives of men and especially women.

In a Conference on Population and Development in 1994 in Cairo adopted a definition of reproductive health that integrates both fertility control and infertility treatment in family planning. Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide on it. Family planning implies both avoiding unwanted children and having wanted children. So the infertility treatment in the context of reproductive health and family planning is crucial for the ethical evaluation.

A utilitarian could defend that it is the best to cure infertility by providing ART in developing countries to maximize happiness and well-being. Other perspective can be taken for these negative consequences of infertility in developing countries. These are – 1. Focus on changing the existing moral and social order so that infertile people will no longer be ostracized and discriminated. 2. Measures should be adopted to diminish the pronatalist ideology and its undesirable consequences. This can be done by providing education to women to obtain a job which gives them an alternative route to increase their self-esteem and to ensure economic independence and security.

Like infertility, in India, China and some other countries, mother who has only daughter are often undergo ostracism, a reason for a man often divorce to his wife, face beating, risk for suicide or fatal accidents. The main argument against this analogy is that wanting a child is acceptable while wanting a child of a certain sex is unacceptable.

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