

Psychosocial Influences on Psychological Health of Assisted Conception Service Consumers in an African Context

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Abstract : Research Aims and Objectives In a typical African culture, pregnancy challenges after marriage is almost considered a taboo, leading to help seeking from different sources, including, recently, medical intervention through Assisted Conception. This method of conception is often frowned at, in most parts of Africa, based on gender expectations, culture, and religious practices. Consequently, psychosocial influences on the psychological health (depression, anxiety, and stress) of assisted conception patients is examined, as possible panacea for successful intervention. Theoretical Background In a customer satisfaction approach, the Need-based Theory establishes customer satisfaction in terms of product/service meeting a customer's needs. The Biopsychosocial Model integrates biological, psychological, and social factors for enhanced psychological health. The assisted conception patients, as consumers of medical intervention, would enjoy service satisfaction through enhanced psychological health. Research Design/ Methodology/ Approach Mixed research design adopted explored four FGDs of 6-8 participants, and an online survey using google forms. 100 (76% females), 40.99±7.63 years, were purposively sampled from two teaching hospitals in Nigeria, administering Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS), Quality of Marriage Index (QMI) and Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21), after ethical approval. Results Depression, anxiety and stress are more prevalent among the females, and males experienced better psychological health, basically due to cultural demands. Religiosity and marital relationship negatively impacted the psychological health of assisted conception service consumers, while older age improved psychological health. Limitations Variables studied and scope are limited, responses are one time stop with possible social desirability effect, and the sample size is relatively small. Implications for Research/Practice and/or Policy The knowledge of consumer and health psychology are integrated. Aligned with the study variables, blue prints on getting African customers satisfied with assisted conception services through reduced depression, anxiety and stress is emphasized. By sensitizing health care service providers to psychosocial issues among African assisted conception patients, their capacity and skills would develop in practice.

Keywords : Africa, psychological health, assisted-conception, psychological health

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