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by Besari Adi Pramono

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WHY INFERTILITY PATIENTS CAME LATE TO INFERTILITY CLINICS (STUDY AT KARIADI GENERAL HOSPITAL)

Rahma Khusnul Khotimah^{1*}, Besari Adi Pramono², Suharto³, Yuli Trisetiyono²

¹Undergraduate Program, Faculty of Medicine, Diponegoro University, Semarang, Indonesia

²Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Faculty of Medicine, Diponegoro University, Semarang, Indonesia

³Department of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, Diponegoro University, Semarang, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author : E-mail: rahma.khusnul.rk@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Background: Infertility is an inability of a spouse to get pregnant within twelve months seeking pregnancy without using any contraception. The duration of infertility affects the chance to get pregnant. **Objective:** To identify the factors causing infertility patient came late to Clinic Merpati RSUP Dr. Kariadi. **Methods:** This study was an observational descriptive with a cross-sectional design. The data were obtained from medical records and questionnaires. Twenty-six respondents were infertility patients who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria and came to Clinic Merpati RSUP Dr. Kariadi in September 2020. **Results:** The number of infertility patients in September 2020 was 76 patients, 72,4% of them came to Merpati Clinic late. Most people came after being referred from the previous doctors. Three factors causing infertility patients came late were economic factors, a social factor, and another difficulty. **Conclusion:** Factors causing the late coming of infertility patients were economic factors, a social factor, and another difficulty

Keywords: infertility, late treatment, Kariadi General Hospital, causative factors, female infertility

INTRODUCTION

Having children is a dream of every married couple. The inability to get pregnant can cause many problems, such as economic problems and psychological problems.¹ Infertility is an inability of married couple to get pregnant after having routine sexual intercourse within twelve months without using any contraception.² WHO estimated 8 – 10% of fertile couples in the world experience infertility.³ About 2,6 million residents in Indonesia experience infertility.¹ Another research revealed that in 2013 the prevalence of infertility in Indonesia was 15 – 25%.⁴

Infertility is divided into primer infertility and secondary infertility. Primer infertility occurs when a woman has never been pregnant while secondary infertility occurs in a woman who previously has experienced of pregnancy.⁵ Many factors can cause infertility, such as female factors, male-factors, and idiopathic factors.⁶ Another book mentioned that the cause of infertility is divided into organic problems and non-organic problems. Organic problems are about abnormalities in women such as vagina disorders, uterus disorders, tuba disorders, or ovarium disorders.⁷ Non-organic problems are divided into age of women, frequency of sexual intercourse, and lifestyle. The age of women also affects the prognosis of infertility.^{7,8}

Kariadi General Hospital is a tertiary level of health services⁹. Late referrals are divided into late seeking aid, late identifying alert symptoms, and late

sending or taking appropriate treatment. Coming late to health services can lead to late diagnosis and late treatment that can worsen off prognosis of infertility. Health-seeking behaviors are divided into sick response and recovery seeking behavior.¹⁰

Aim of this study was to determine the factors that caused infertility patients came late to Kariadi General Hospital. Delay in treatment is defined as an advent of under thirty-age women to the tertiary level of health services after having infertility within 36 months or in over thirty-fifth-age women who experienced infertility within 24 months.¹¹

METHOD

This study was an observational descriptive with a cross-sectional approach. Samples were infertility patients in Merpati Clinic of Kariadi General Hospital who came in September 2020. Calculation of the prevalence of infertility and percentage of late arrival were obtained from medical records by looking at their age, history of infertility, history of marriage, and pregnancy history. Others data were taken from questionnaires of twenty-six respondents who met inclusion and exclusion criteria. All of the data were analyzed using descriptive analysis and reveal in tables, frequency, and percentage. This study has received the approval of ethics feasibility from the Health Research Ethics Commissions Faculty of Medicine of Diponegoro University.



RESULT

The number of infertility patients in September 2020 were seventy-six patients and the percentage of late arrival was 72,4%. Study used

questionnaires in 26 women, all of them were experienced infertility over three years and had previous examination in other medical facilities.

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents

8	Quantity (%)
Gender	
Female	26 (100%)
Age	
< 35 years old	18 (69,2%)
≥ 35 years old	8(30,8%)
Domicile	
Semarang City	11 (42,3%)
Outside Semarang City	15 (57,7%)
The distance between Kariadi General Hospital with and respondent house.	
< 30 km	14 (53,8%)
≥ 30 km	12 (46,2%)
The reason came to Merpati Clinic, Kariadi General Hospital	
Own desire	1 (3,8%)
Got a referral	25 (96,2%)
Duration of Infertility	
≥ 3 years	26 (100%)
Medical consideration before going to Merpati Clinic	
Considering medical expenses	3 (11,5%)
Lack of knowledge about fertility problems	5 (19,2%)
Do not have any complaints	3 (11,5%)
Symptoms have not bother the activities of daily living yet	2 (7,7%)
Unable to leave work	1 (3,8%)
Search some information via the internet or the nearest obstetricians	12 (46,2%)
Awareness of fertility problems before.	
Yes	16 (61,5%)
No	10 (38,5%)

The majority of respondents were <35 years old (69,2%), domicile outside Semarang City (57,7%), received a referral as a reason coming to Merpati Clinic (96,2%), and had comorbidities in form of cysts (58,5%). Before visited to Merpati Clinic, (46,2%) respondents searched for information via internet and nearest obstetricians. From 26

respondents, 16 respondents were aware of fertility problems, 20 respondents visited 1 – 2 medical facilities, and 17 respondents had been diagnosed of infertility before coming to Merpati Clinic, and 21 respondents had experienced infertility over 2 years when first diagnosed.

**Table 2.** History of the examination and using contraception

	Quantity (%)
Other examination before came to Kariadi General Hospital	
Yes	26 (100%)
No	0 (0%)
The number of medical facilities that have been visited	
< 3	20 (76,9%)
≥ 3	6 (23,1%)
Diagnose of infertility before came to Kariadi General Hospital	
Yes	17 (65,4%)
No	9 (34,6%)
The distance gap between the age of marriage and the first diagnose of infertility	
< 1 year	1 (3,8%)
1 – 2 years	4 (15,4%)
>2 years	21 (80,8%)
History of using contraception	
Yes	1 (3,8%)
No	25 (96,2%)
Types of contraception	
Condom	1 (3,8%)
Duration of using contraception	
< 1 year	1 (3,8%)

History of using contraception in type of condom was found in 1 respondent, less than 1 year. Three factors were found as causative factors such as economic problems (34,6%), social problem (7,7%), and another difficulty (23,1%). Economic problems such as expensive examination fees, expensive

medical expenses, and expensive transportation fees were complained by nine respondents. Social problem includes the absence of family support (7,7%) and another difficulty was the great distance of Kariadi General Hospital (23,1%).

Table 3. Causative factors of coming late and comorbidities

	Quantity (%)
Economic problems	
Yes	9 (34,6%)
Expensive examination fees	3
Expensive medical costs	3
Expensive transport fees	3
No	17 (65,4%)
Social problems	
Yes	2 (7,7%)
Lack of family support	2
No	24 (92,3%)
Others Difficulties	
Yes	6 (23,1%)
Kariadi General Hospital is far away	6
No	20 (76,9%)
Comorbidities	
Cyst	10 (58,5%)
Endometriosis	5 (19,2%)
Myoma	3 (11,5%)
Others	8 (30,8%)



DISCUSSION

There is not much data of the infertility cases in Indonesia, especially on women. Antonius Wahyudi reported 123 male patients in Soetomo General Hospital Surabaya were infertile, while Najakhatus Sa'adah found 83 infertility couples in Putri General Hospital.^{12,13} This study found 76 female patients experienced infertility and 72,4% percent of them came late to Merpati Clinic of Kariadi General Hospital. Late treatment was defined as the arrival of thirty-age women who experienced infertility over three years or two years on thirty-five old women.¹¹ This result was in line with Anastasia's research which reported 61,3% patients came after experience infertility over three years.⁶

Studies which aim to find factors causing patients infertility came late has not been widely published. From twenty question of the questionnaires, main reason of infertility patients came to Merpati Clinic was because their referral from previous medical services. That happened because most of patients were members of national health insurance of Indonesian. Every member who wants to get examination in tertiary level of health services must have referral letter from previous services, except in emergency cases.^{9,14}

Most of respondents looked for reference from internet and nearest obstetricians and all of them had previous examination before came to Kariadi General Hospital. This result was similar with the theory of health-seeking behavior where there is sick response that leads patient to search modern treatment by visiting health facility services.¹⁵

This study found that economic problems, social problems, and another difficulty causing the delay of infertility patients came to Merpati Clinic. The most popular problem was economic problems, the second was another difficulty, and the last was social problem. Economic problems consist of high medical costs, high examination costs, and expensive transport fees. Social problems in this study was lack of support from their family to undergo the treatment. Another difficulty that caused infertility patient delay their coming was the distance between Kariadi General Hospital with their homes. It was similar with the theory health-seeking behaviors that the great distance of health facilities makes them did nothing for response of their sickness.¹⁵ The limitation of this study was the

delay of the research time because it was hard to get license during pandemic.

CONCLUSION

In this study, seventy-six patients experienced infertility with the percentage of late arrival was 72,4%. The most arrival reason was because they got the referral. Before their first arrival in Kariadi General Hospital, most of them searched some information from internet and obstetricians. Causative factors that made their late arrival in Merpati Clinic were economic problems, social problem, and another difficulty.

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