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Burnout in Assisted Reproduction Professionals: The Influence of Stressors in the Workplace

Background/objectives: Most of the research in assisted reproduction has focused on the stressful situation experienced by women or couples looking for a desired pregnancy; however, the stress experienced by assisted reproduction professional teams is seldom studied. The present study aims to evaluate burnout and its relationship with workplace stressors among assisted reproduction professionals. **Methods:** A cross-sectional design was used to conduct an online self-assessment national survey, sent to all members of the Spanish Association for Fertility. The questionnaire contained sociodemographic and occupational questions about stressors in the workplace and the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-HSS) to assess the three subscales of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. **Results:** The percentages showing high emotional exhaustion and depersonalization in the whole sample were 41.8% and 43.2%, respectively. Additionally, low personal accomplishment was displayed in 42.6% of the respondents. Embryologists stand out for presenting the highest percentages of burnout (emotional exhaustion = 72.1%; depersonalization = 48.1%; low personal accomplishment = 48.1%), whilst psychologists showed the lowest percentages in high emotional exhaustion (32.3%) and depersonalization (24%), and gynecologists in low personal accomplishment (28.5%). Working under pressure was the stressor most experienced by the sample (76.6%) and the one that better predicted the three subscales of burnout. **Conclusions:** This study highlights the close relationship between high levels of burnout and workplace stressors and shows the need to reduce workplace stressors to improve the well-being of professionals working in assisted reproduction, and, consequently, that of the patients they look after.

Keywords: assisted reproduction professionals; burnout; depersonalization; emotional exhaustion; personal accomplishment; working under pressure.

Biography

I am a General Health Psychologist, Psycho-oncologist and Fertility Psychologist. For the past 23 years I have dedicated my professional life to psychological care, carrying out cognitive-behavioural therapy in my practice or in multidisciplinary teams. I extended my training to the fields of Psycho-Oncology and Infertility with two Master's degree. Intense involvement in the Spanish Fertility Society, belonging to different interest groups as well as to the National Register of the SEF. I attend fertility-related events, working to raise awareness. I am currently doing my PhD at the University of Valencia in the Department of Clinical and Health Psychology