

# Development of an Informative and Supportive Website for Fertility Support

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## BACKGROUND

- Infertility affected about 48.5 million people worldwide. In Taiwan, the prevalence was about 15% and number of females seeking medical treatment was about 4.7 times more than males.
- Women with fertility problems had higher rates of experiencing fertility related stress and emotional distress and lower quality of life. Yet, support could moderate the negative effects of stress on psychological distress and increase pregnancy rate of infertile women.
- While the Internet became a popular media for people to search information, seek advise, and obtain support, anonymous online support might be a good and convenient way to provide support for women with fertility problems.

## PURPOSES

To develop the Planned Pregnancy Source (PPS) website to provide information and support for females with fertility problems.

## METHOD

- Design: In addition to design and develop the PPS website, qualitative interview was applied to collect data from women with fertility problems to enhance the design of the website.
- Procedure
  - Pilot study: Fifteen informants underwent fertility treatments were interviewed in a pilot study, which explored their experience of infertility.
  - Design of the website
    - Three experts in the fields of obstetrics/infertility and nursing were invited to design the website.
    - Suggestions and needs for fertile information collected from the informants in the pilot study were used to design the PPS website. The PPS was more health-promotion driven than disease-treatment driven.
    - After a preliminary construction of the website, 20 women underwent fertility treatments were invited to navigate and use the website and gave comments about the website's design, easiness to use, and information provided.
    - Include not only texts but also graphs and short clips to increase infertile women's participation willingness.
    - Has both computer and smart phone versions.

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## RESULTS

- The website
  - Includes six domains: introduction about infertility, information center, my story, discussion forum, and resources.
    - The information center included pregnancy, infertility, and stress management module.
    - Anonymous infertility stories collected in the pilot study were posted in the "my story" module after getting permissions from the participants.
    - The discussion forum was linked to a private Facebook group where only women invited by the research team could join.
    - The resource center listed public resources with hyperlinks.
- The informants' comments
  - In general, the informants agreed that the website was easy to use, the flow was smooth, and information could meet the needs of women with fertility problems.
  - Some women suggested using more pictures/graphs to increase the attractiveness of the website, simplifying the information so lay people could understand, and adding information about up-to-date technologies of infertility and more life/living-related issues such as nutrition and exercise.
  - Although infertility is a serious issue, we were suggested to use an unserious way to talk about this serious topic.
  - Some women suggested adding information about parenting; however, since the main focus of the website was on fertility, information about parenting was not added to the website.
- Use of the PPS
  - In addition to read the information provides in the PPS, women with fertility problems can post their thoughts or stories on the Facebook that is connected to the PPS. For those who would like to be anonymous, the webmaster will post their comments after obtaining the women's agreements. We check and respond to all questions and comments every day.

## CONCLUSIONS

- Regardless of how information is provided, it is important to use the language that the users can understand. Pictures and graphs can be used to make the program attractive.
- We suggest testing the PPS with more women with fertility problems and reforming the PPS so it can be used by both males and females in future studies.
- Online voice discussion group may be another way to help women with fertility problems to share their experiences and gain support.