



Letter to the Editor


Letter to editor for article “Exploring knowledge, perception, and practices about exercise among women with infertility”

Dear Editor.

This is a comment on a published research on “If by exercising I can conceive; I would like to exercise”. Exploring knowledge, perception, and practices about exercise among women with infertility: A qualitative study.¹ A qualitative exploratory research of women’s views and behaviours of exercise in the setting of infertility provides useful insights into an understudied topic. However, various problems about study design and potential confounding variables must be addressed. One disadvantage is the limited sample size of 20 women, which may not provide a complete picture of the infertile community. The sample is rather homogeneous (mean age 30.9 ± 4.8 years, BMI 22.4 ± 1.9 kg/m²), therefore results cannot be generalised to women of diverse age groups, body shapes, or socioeconomic backgrounds. Furthermore, the study did not account for potential confounding variables such as comorbidities (e.g., polycystic ovary syndrome or thyroid disorders), prior infertility treatments, or psychological factors (e.g., stress, depression), which could influence both perceptions of exercise and likelihood of adherence to an exercise regimen.

A more general debate subject is: How do cultural and socioeconomic factors influence adherence to fitness programs designed to improve women’s reproductive abilities? How does the stigma surrounding infertility influence women’s fitness and health-care habits? How might programs be tailored to meet these challenges, particularly in areas where infertility is stigmatised and exercise resources are limited? Furthermore, how does the type of infertility treatment (e.g., IVF, IUI) influence women’s willingness and ability to exercise during treatment cycles?

In addition to this study, future research might look into the impact of various types of exercise (e.g., aerobic exercise, strength training, yoga) on infertile women’s health, physical and psychological results. A more diverse sample, including women from various cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, would provide a more accurate picture of how social and cultural factors influence exercise behaviour. One innovative strategy could be to leverage digital healthcare tools like

wearables to monitor and promote exercise adherence in real time, with a focus on how these tools can overcome the study’s identified limitations.

In terms of future research, longitudinal studies studying the long-term benefits of regular exercise on infertility results could be beneficial in determining whether regular exercise improves pregnancy rates over time. Furthermore, investigating the role of healthcare practitioners in encouraging and supporting regular exercise may aid in the development of more targeted therapies that are better suited to women’s needs and challenges. Expanding the study to include women who have completed ART would also help to better understand how exercise after treatment affects long-term fertility and overall health.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare no competing interest.

Reference

1. Shashwathi G, Rao BK, Bailey A, Kumar P, Ramachandra P. "If by exercising I can conceive; I would like to exercise". Exploring knowledge, perception, and practices about exercise among women with infertility: a qualitative study. *Braz J Phys Ther.* 2025;29(2), 101186. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bjpt.2025.101186>. Online ahead of print.

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