Low level of fertility knowledge and infertility awareness among female healthcare workers (HCW): Audit of O&G HCW

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ABSTRACT
Introduction: It has been observed that delayed childbearing has led to an increasing incidence of infertility. Although there has been increasing public awareness to seek treatment, there is limited data on the level of knowledge in fertility awareness and affecting factors among healthcare workers (HCW). We seek to measure the quality of fertility knowledge and infertility awareness.

Methods: A cross-sectional study of a cohort of HCWs in our department. Self-administered questionnaires were used. Information on age and fertility, lifestyle factors influencing fertility, and knowledge of infertility and treatments were recorded from 200 female HCWs.

Results: Half (51.4%) of them agreed that increasing age negatively affects fertility. 40% overestimated the fertile age range and 80% underestimated the age of onset of fertility decline. Two-thirds (66.7%) of HCWs studied were aware of lifestyle factors influencing fertility. More than two-thirds (66%) demonstrated knowledge about infertility and its treatment. Less than half (44%) were aware of timely fertility assessment may be initiated. 71.5% of HCWs were overly positive about IVF success rates.

Conclusion: There is an overall misconception of the effect of aging on fertility despite good knowledge of fertility awareness. Further knowledge update and capacity building among healthcare providers is essential to further equip them to provide quality fertility care in creating parenthood.