

**“UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOLOGY OF INFERTILE COUPLE AS A TOOL TO
GROW IVF CLINIC PATIENT NUMBERS”**

by

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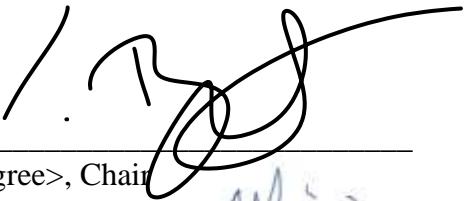
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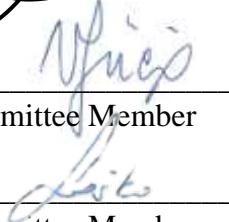
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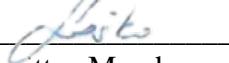
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ABSTRACT

“UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOLOGY OF INFERTILE COUPLE AS A TOOL TO GROW IVF CLINIC PATIENT NUMBERS”

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2023

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Within the context of the competitive healthcare industry, in vitro fertilization (IVF) clinics face multifaceted challenges in achieving and sustaining growth and success as businesses. While medical expertise undoubtedly plays a critical role, there is a growing realization that a broader understanding of the business dynamics, patient experience, and the integration of innovative technologies is essential. This research problem centers on identifying the pivotal factors and strategies that influence the business growth and success of IVF clinics. The landscape of healthcare is continuously evolving, driven by advancements in medical science, changing patient demographics, and heightened consumer expectations. In this rapidly shifting environment, IVF clinics are no exception and are confronted with the imperative to adapt and thrive. Traditionally, the success of IVF clinics has been primarily measured in terms of clinical outcomes, such as pregnancy rates and healthy births. However, a more holistic view is emerging, recognizing that the business aspects of these clinics are integral to their overall prosperity. Medical expertise forms the foundation of IVF clinics, and their clinical outcomes are paramount. Yet, the business of IVF extends beyond medical proficiency. A nuanced understanding of the business landscape is indispensable for navigating the intricacies of healthcare economics, insurance reimbursements, and regulatory compliance. To thrive, IVF clinics must blend medical excellence with astute business acumen. Patient experience is another pivotal dimension that directly impacts the success of IVF clinics as businesses. Patients

embarking on the challenging IVF journey often grapple with emotional and financial stress. Clinics that prioritize compassionate, patient-centered care are more likely to engender trust and loyalty. Positive patient experiences not only lead to higher patient retention but also generate word-of-mouth referrals, a potent driver of business growth. Furthermore, the integration of innovative technologies plays a transformative role in shaping the future of IVF clinics. Advancements in assisted reproductive technologies, electronic health records, and telemedicine are revolutionizing the way clinics operate. Embracing these technologies can enhance operational efficiency, improve patient care, and expand the reach of IVF clinics. Overall, the business success of IVF clinics is a multidimensional endeavor that necessitates a comprehensive approach. This research endeavor seeks to unearth the critical factors and strategies that underpin the growth and prosperity of IVF clinics. By examining the intersection of medical excellence, patient experience, and technological innovation, this study aims to provide valuable insights that can empower IVF clinics to thrive in the evolving healthcare landscape. Ultimately, the holistic success of IVF clinics not only benefits the clinics themselves but, most importantly, the individuals and couples who entrust them with their dreams of parenthood.

Keywords: Infertility, IVF, Business psychology, client satisfaction, psychology, patient number, IVF clinic business, marketing strategies, emotional factors, growth strategies, ethical considerations, peer supply.

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In the landscape of modern healthcare, both hospitals and patients have placed an increasing emphasis on the significance of service quality. The healthcare industry has evolved significantly over the past few decades, and hospitals are now confronted with the challenge of meeting heightened patient expectations in the face of intense competition and elevated service quality standards. Recognizing the value of service quality has become paramount in delivering superior care to patients.

In the field of healthcare services research, a primary obstacle revolves around recognizing the elements that form the foundation of service quality. This issue was explored by (Kalaja, Myshketa and Scalera, 2016) in their 2016 study. Grasping these key determinants holds significant importance in the assessment, management, and augmentation of how customers perceive service quality, especially within healthcare environments. By precisely identifying these crucial factors, medical institutions can concentrate their endeavors on enhancing these facets, thereby better meeting the expectations and requirements of their patients.

Service quality in healthcare holds paramount importance for both healthcare institutions and patients alike, as underscored by (Meesala and Paul, 2018) in their 2018 study. This emphasis on service quality is particularly pertinent in the context of infertility, a global predicament faced by couples. Infertility is compounded by factors such as delayed parenthood and limited access to fertility treatments, thus giving rise to a widespread problem that affects many. Effectively addressing these intricate challenges necessitates the adoption of a comprehensive strategy that spans advancements in medical techniques,

policy revisions, and enhanced support mechanisms for individuals and couples grappling with infertility.



Figure 1.1:

Why patient satisfaction is important and how to increase it?

The study by (Meesala and Paul, 2018), conducted in 2018, reaffirmed the critical role of service quality in healthcare. It shed light on the need to identify and understand the specific elements that underpin service quality within healthcare settings, offering valuable insights for hospitals and patients alike. This focus on service quality is not confined to the conventional healthcare sphere; it extends to specialized areas like infertility treatment.

Infertility, a global issue affecting countless couples, is characterized by a multitude of complexities. These include delayed family planning and limited access to fertility treatments, creating a pervasive challenge. Effectively addressing these multifaceted issues

requires a holistic approach that encompasses advancements in medical techniques, revisions in healthcare policies, and bolstered support structures for individuals and couples navigating the challenging landscape of infertility.

The landscape of assisted reproductive technology (ART) has experienced remarkable strides in recent years, offering a beacon of hope to couples and individuals navigating the intricate challenges of infertility. At the forefront of this progress, in vitro fertilization (IVF) clinics stand as vital institutions, providing specialized care and guidance to those embarking on the journey to parenthood. However, this realm of medical intervention is not devoid of its share of obstacles, particularly when it comes to a pivotal aspect: the conversion of initial enquiries into committed clients.

Building confidence with couples during the initial stages of inquiry is a crucial challenge that IVF facilities must overcome. The complexity of IVF procedures themselves is where this problem really gets complicated. Despite the intricacy and efficiency of these treatments, the impossibility of a 100% success rate remains a stark reality. The complex interactions between physiological and environmental factors, along with the individual circumstances of each patient, highlight the intrinsic unpredictability of the conception process. The financial commitment associated with IVF procedures frequently constitutes a significant hardship for many prospective patients, adding to the complexity and calling for careful assessment.

The culmination of these difficulties is a moment of transition from an exploratory inquiry to a fully involved client, which is fraught with uncertainty. Couples and individuals visit IVF facilities looking for answers to their reproductive problems while harboring a variety of hopes, worries, and questions. However, the inability to provide a clear guarantee of achievement leaves these potential clients at a crossroads with doubt

clouding their judgment. In the world of IVF clinics, there is a rather low conversion rate from inquiry to commitment because the cost consequences heighten their hesitations.

The intricate dynamics at play between prospective clients and IVF clinics highlight the multifaceted challenges these healthcare institutions must confront. In today's fiercely competitive landscape, achieving success goes beyond medical proficiency; it hinges on the capacity to navigate the intricate web of emotional, psychological, and financial complexities that individuals and couples grapple with when contemplating IVF treatments. Thus, this study with a specific focus on unraveling the essential factors and strategic approaches that drive the transformation of inquiries into committed clients embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the patient journey within the realm of IVF clinics. This research recognizes the nuanced interplay between medical science and human emotions, where the decision to embark on an IVF journey is laden with hopes, fears, and uncertainties. As IVF clinics endeavor to strike a balance between clinical excellence and patient-centered care, understanding these multifaceted aspects becomes paramount. The ultimate goal is to empower IVF clinics with insights that enhance their performance, expand their client base, and, most importantly, contribute to fulfilling the dreams of parenthood for countless individuals and couples worldwide.

By examining these multifaceted challenges and opportunities, this study aspires to shed light on the intricate dynamics at play and provide insights that can empower IVF clinics to enhance their performance, grow their client base, and ultimately contribute to the fulfillment of the dreams of parenthood for countless individuals and couples. In a healthcare landscape where success is measured not only in clinical outcomes but also in the ability to address the holistic needs of patients, this research endeavors to bridge the gap between medical excellence and the patient-centered approach required for sustainable growth and success in the world of IVF clinics.

1.2 Research Problem

Within the context of the competitive healthcare industry, in vitro fertilization (IVF) clinics face multifaceted challenges in achieving and sustaining growth and success as businesses. While medical expertise undoubtedly plays a critical role, there is a growing realization that a broader understanding of the business dynamics, patient experience, and the integration of innovative technologies is essential. This research problem centers on identifying the pivotal factors and strategies that influence the business growth and success of IVF clinics.

Sub-Problems:

1. **Market Dynamics and Competitive Analysis:** A core sub-problem involves examining the broader market dynamics in the fertility healthcare sector. Understanding the competitive landscape, including the entry of new clinics, shifts in patient preferences, and the impact of regulatory changes, is essential. Investigating the strategies employed by competitors and their effectiveness in attracting and retaining patients can offer valuable insights for clinics seeking growth.
2. **Financial Strategies and Socioeconomic Considerations:** In the diverse financial landscape of IVF patients, clinics must navigate the challenge of setting standardized treatment costs. This sub-problem delves into the impact of varying financial backgrounds on clinics' pricing models and their ability to cater to patients from different socioeconomic strata. It also explores the implications of IVF's elective nature, which often leads couples to explore alternative methods before seeking medical intervention, impacting patient age and medical complexities.

3. **Technological Integration for Efficiency:** The integration of innovative technologies and digital solutions within clinic operations is central to increasing efficiency and patient accessibility. This sub-problem focuses on how the adoption of technologies such as telemedicine, virtual counseling, and online support platforms can streamline processes, reduce operational costs, and expand the reach of fertility treatments.
 4. **Patient-Centered Care and Emotional Support:** Infertility and IVF treatments are emotionally charged experiences. This sub-problem emphasizes the importance of a patient-centered approach that addresses emotional needs. Investigating how clinics can provide comprehensive patient support, including empathetic counseling and stress management programs, is vital for enhancing patient satisfaction, fostering trust, and encouraging positive word-of-mouth marketing.
 5. **Quality Assurance and Ethical Practice:** Ensuring the highest standards of care is fundamental to clinic success. This sub-problem explores the significance of maintaining rigorous quality control measures within the laboratory, where critical IVF procedures occur. Additionally, it focuses on the ethical considerations of patient-centered care, emphasizing the continuous monitoring of patient feedback to refine strategies while upholding ethical standards.
 6. **Staff Competence and Training:** The competence and experience of clinic staff, including reproductive endocrinologists, embryologists, and support personnel, are pivotal. This sub-problem assesses how the expertise of the medical team influences the clinic's reputation and patient outcomes. It also considers the benefits of providing ongoing training to clinic staff to address emotional needs effectively.
- By addressing these sub-problems, this study aims to provide a comprehensive perspective on the multifaceted aspects that impact the growth and success of IVF clinics

as businesses. The insights and recommendations generated will guide clinics in making informed decisions, implementing effective strategies, and thriving in the competitive landscape of fertility healthcare.

1.3 Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the critical factors and strategies that influence the growth and success of in vitro fertilization (IVF) clinics. In an era marked by evolving healthcare dynamics, increased competition, and shifting patient expectations, there is a pressing need for IVF clinics to not only deliver high-quality medical services but also effectively operate as sustainable businesses.

1.3.1 To Navigate Competitive Market Dynamics

The ability of IVF clinics to handle the competitive market dynamics within the field of fertility healthcare is one of the main goals of this research. This research aims to provide clinics with insights into the competitive forces at work by undertaking a thorough investigation of the broader market landscape, including the appearance of new clinics, changes in patient preferences, and shifting regulatory frameworks. This knowledge will assist clinics in creating practical plans that will give them an advantage, draw in more patients, and promote long-term growth.

1.3.2 To Optimize Financial Strategies

The research seeks to assist IVF clinics in optimizing their financial strategies. The diverse financial backgrounds of IVF patients pose a challenge for clinics when determining treatment costs. The purpose here is to explore how varying financial considerations impact pricing models and how clinics can accommodate patients from

different socioeconomic strata while ensuring financial sustainability. Additionally, the research delves into the elective nature of IVF procedures, investigating its influence on patient age and medical complexities. It aims to provide insights into flexible pricing models and targeted marketing strategies that can effectively address these challenges.

1.3.3 To Harness Innovative Technologies

Another central purpose of this research is to encourage the integration of innovative technologies and digital solutions within IVF clinic operations. The research seeks to explore how the adoption of technologies such as telemedicine, virtual counseling, and online support platforms can lead to increased efficiency, reduced operational costs, and broader accessibility of fertility treatments. By identifying the role of technology in enhancing clinic operations, this research aims to facilitate clinics in embracing digital transformations to remain competitive and responsive to patient needs.

1.3.4 To Prioritize Patient-Centered Care

Patient satisfaction and experience are pivotal in healthcare. This research aims to emphasize the importance of a patient-centered approach within IVF clinics. It seeks to explore how clinics can address the emotional needs of infertile couples, who often undergo emotionally charged experiences. The purpose is to investigate comprehensive patient support programs, including empathetic counseling and stress management initiatives, which can significantly enhance patient satisfaction, foster trust, and stimulate positive word-of-mouth marketing.

1.3.5 To Uphold Quality Assurance and Ethical Practice

Maintaining the highest standards of care and ethical practice is of utmost importance in healthcare. The research endeavors to shed light on the significance of stringent quality control measures within the laboratory, where critical IVF procedures occur. Additionally, it aims to address the ethical considerations of patient-centered care. By promoting the continuous monitoring of patient feedback to refine strategies while upholding ethical standards, this research aims to ensure the reputation and trustworthiness of IVF clinics.

1.3.6 To Enhance Staff Competence and Training

The competence and experience of clinic staff, including reproductive endocrinologists, embryologists, and support personnel, are pivotal in IVF success. The research seeks to assess how the expertise of the medical team influences the clinic's reputation and patient outcomes. Additionally, it explores the benefits of providing ongoing training to clinic staff, enabling them to address emotional needs effectively. The purpose is to enhance staff competence and, by extension, the overall quality of care delivered to patients.

Henceforth, the purpose of this research is to provide actionable insights and recommendations that empower IVF clinics to thrive as businesses within the dynamic healthcare landscape. By addressing the aforementioned objectives, this research aims to equip clinics with the knowledge and strategies needed to achieve growth, deliver exceptional patient experiences, and uphold ethical practice standards in the competitive realm of fertility healthcare.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is multifaceted, as it extends its impact to various stakeholders within the domain of in vitro fertilization (IVF) clinics and the broader healthcare industry. The study's findings and recommendations hold substantial importance in several key aspects:

1.4.1 Enhancing Clinic Growth and Sustainability

One of the primary areas of significance lies in the potential for clinics to enhance their growth and sustainability. In an increasingly competitive healthcare landscape, clinics face numerous challenges, including patient acquisition, satisfaction, and business viability. By providing insights into the critical factors that influence clinic success, this study equips clinics with strategies to thrive in a challenging environment. The significance here is in helping clinics expand their patient base, increase operational efficiency, and ensure financial sustainability.

1.4.2 Improving Patient Experiences

At the heart of this study is the objective of improving patient experiences within clinics. Infertility and the IVF journey are emotionally charged experiences, and patients often seek not only medical expertise but also empathy and support. The study's significance lies in its potential to enhance patient satisfaction and well-being by emphasizing the importance of a patient-centered approach. By providing actionable recommendations for clinics to address emotional needs and deliver comprehensive support, this research contributes to a more positive and empathetic healthcare environment.

1.4.3 Promoting Ethical Practice

Ethical considerations are paramount in healthcare. This study underscores the significance of maintaining ethical practice within clinics. It highlights the importance of continuous monitoring of patient feedback and the refinement of strategies to ensure that clinics uphold the highest standards of care. The significance here is in safeguarding the reputation and trustworthiness of clinics, thereby promoting ethical practices within the broader healthcare industry.

1.4.4 Harnessing Technology for Efficiency

The integration of technology within healthcare is a significant trend. This study explores the significance of adopting innovative technologies and digital solutions within clinics. By providing insights into how technology can improve efficiency, reduce operational costs, and enhance accessibility to fertility treatments, this research helps clinics stay competitive in the digital age. The significance is in enabling clinics to harness technology effectively to meet the evolving needs of patients.

1.4.5 Fostering Collaborative Research

Collaboration between clinics and research institutions is a crucial avenue for advancing healthcare practices. This study emphasizes the significance of collaborative efforts, such as multicenter studies and knowledge sharing, in the field of fertility healthcare. By fostering collaboration, clinics can benefit from collective insights and best practices, ultimately enhancing the quality of care. The significance is in promoting a culture of collaboration and continuous learning within the healthcare community.

1.4.6 Navigating Diverse Patient Populations

Diversity is a hallmark of modern societies, and it extends to patient populations seeking IVF treatments. This study recognizes the significance of understanding and catering to the diverse needs of patients from varied cultural backgrounds. By acknowledging cultural nuances and preferences, clinics can better serve their patient populations. The significance is in promoting inclusivity and accessibility of fertility treatments to a broader demographic.

1.4.7 Strengthening Industry Reputation

Finally, this study holds significance in strengthening the reputation of the healthcare industry as a whole. By promoting patient-centered care, ethical practice, and the integration of technology, the study contributes to a positive industry image. The significance is in portraying clinics as compassionate, technologically advanced, and ethical healthcare providers, which can, in turn, attract more patients and foster industry growth.

So, the significance of this study transcends the boundaries of individual IVF clinics. It extends to patients, healthcare professionals, researchers, and the broader healthcare industry. By addressing critical factors and strategies that influence clinic success, this research has the potential to reshape the IVF landscape, enhance patient experiences, and contribute to the sustainable growth of clinics in the ever-evolving healthcare ecosystem.

1.5 Research Problem and Questions

1.5.1 Research Problem:

The research problem at the core of this study is to identify strategies and service enhancements that can empower clinics to grow their business by improving the overall patient experience, attracting new clients, and retaining existing ones. This inquiry delves into the dynamic healthcare industry, where heightened patient expectations and fierce competition necessitate a deep understanding of the elements that contribute to clinic success.

1.5.2 Research Questions:

1. What are the most effective marketing strategies to attract new clients to a healthcare clinic?
2. How can clinics enhance the patient experience to improve satisfaction and retention rates?
3. What are the key factors that influence patients' decisions when choosing a healthcare clinic?
4. What role does online presence and digital marketing play in expanding a clinic's reach and visibility?
5. How can clinics leverage patient feedback and reviews to enhance their reputation and attract more clients?
6. What are the trends in healthcare technology adoption that can contribute to clinic growth?
7. How can clinics tailor their services to meet the specific needs and preferences of different patient demographics?

8. What strategies can clinics employ to differentiate themselves from competitors in a saturated healthcare market?
9. How does the quality of customer service impact a clinic's ability to attract and retain clients?
10. What partnerships or collaborations with other healthcare providers or organizations can clinics explore to expand their patient base and services?

The research aims to address critical questions related to the growth and success of healthcare clinics. These questions include understanding the factors influencing clinics' abilities to set treatment costs and accommodate diverse patient demographics, exploring the impact of emotional factors on patients' decisions and satisfaction, assessing the significance of clinic staff and laboratory standards, investigating the adoption of advanced technologies, and emphasizing the importance of a patient-centric approach and ethical practice. Through a comprehensive analysis of these questions, the study aims to provide valuable insights and recommendations for clinics seeking to expand their businesses, improve patient experiences, and maintain ethical standards in the competitive healthcare industry.

CHAPTER II:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical framework

2.1.1 Creating a Hospital Sustainability Concept

How can the socio-ecological concepts that were first created on a global scale be effectively applied to organisations, especially in the setting of hospitals? It becomes essential for the authors of (Weisz *et al.*, 2011) to create an analogous framework fit for the mesoscale, where organisations such as hospitals operate, in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of the complex interplay between society and nature. In this environment, organisations' ability to foster long-lasting ties with their surrounds over a lengthy period of time is a crucial requirement for their continued functionality. Contrary to a global perspective, the majority of organisations maintain fewer close ties to the natural world and instead focus on building connections with a wide range of actors or stakeholders inside their social context.

Hospitals include a diverse range of stakeholders, including people like patients and employees (who are a part of the hospital's internal environment) as well as interactions with the government, the economy, and civil society (who make up the hospital's exterior environment) (Hee Lee and Yoon, 2021). A hospital demonstrates sustainability when it refrains from deferring or moving concerns to its social and natural environments, in accordance with the previously described criteria. It is crucial to retain a broad perspective in order to fully assess the effects of an organization's systemic actions on both the organisation and its environment.

Let's look at the practise of premature or unprepared patient discharge to give the idea of hospitals externalising problems a more vivid illustration. This practise transfers responsibility for managing a patient's overall sickness from the hospital to the patient,

their family, and eventually other healthcare service providers. These problems can occasionally get out of hand to the point where patients need to be readmitted as inpatients to the hospital. Such unsustainable hospital practises not only result in wasteful expenditures that have an impact on the larger economy, but they also cause unwarranted resource consumption, burdening patients and their families.

By building on these theoretical pillars, the political idea of sustainable development, which acknowledges the connection between environmental issues, social injustices, and economic development. This idea can be modified and applied in organisational contexts, particularly as demonstrated by the sustainability triangle (fig. 2.1). Therefore, (Weisz *et al.*, 2011) suggest a modified variation of the "global" sustainability triangle adapted to the unique setting of hospitals. System dynamics and the interconnections between hospitals and their social and environmental settings are centrally stressed in this adaptation.

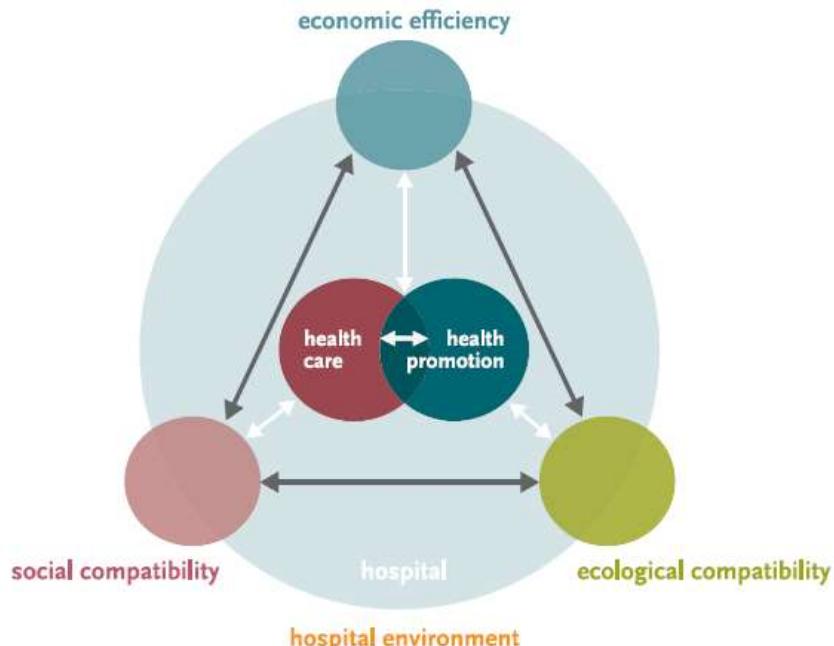


Figure 2.1:
*Sustainability triangle for hospitals (Weisz *et al.*, 2011)*

Healthcare, which includes hospital operations, and health promotion, an emerging service, make up the centre of this modified triangle. These services exhibit some degree of overlap and exert influences on, as well as are influenced by, the three sustainability dimensions relevant to both internal and external hospital environments. These dimensions are intrinsically interrelated. Consequently, the pursuit of sustainable development within individual hospitals involves optimizing various quality criteria. Service provision must consider not only the quality of healthcare and health promotion but also factors related to economic efficiency, social compatibility, and environmental responsibility.

Although several hospitals have already adopted these standards to differing degrees, the socio-ecological sustainability concept for hospitals stands out for its unique method of integrating these various elements into an all-encompassing framework.

A. Integrating sustainability into the core of operations

Clinical care standards are the main factor that greatly influences the basic operations of hospitals (Rasche, Margaria and Floyd, 2017). The opportunities provided by developments in the clinical and technology domains largely influence these criteria. Hospital administrators, owners, and financial backers simultaneously focus on business-related issues, such as initiatives to increase cost effectiveness, look into funding possibilities, and, particularly in the case of private hospitals, manage cost-revenue dynamics. However, in order to create a "sustainable hospital," a number of other requirements need be established and carefully considered:

1. Contribution to Environmental Preservation:

To actively contribute to environmental preservation, hospitals must adopt a multifaceted approach. This begins with efficient resource management, encompassing sustainable practices like energy-efficient technologies, water conservation, and waste

reduction strategies (Bianchi and Technology, 2023). Additionally, hospitals can implement green building designs, optimize energy use, encourage eco-friendly commuting options, and make environmentally conscious procurement choices. Education and advocacy play a pivotal role, with hospitals raising awareness among their communities and collaborating with environmental organizations to support policies and initiatives that further the cause of environmental preservation. Collectively, these efforts reduce the hospital's ecological footprint and foster a more sustainable healthcare sector. Henceforth, hospitals have a vital role to play in environmental preservation by curtailing resource utilization, implementing green practices, and advocating for sustainability. By integrating these approaches into their operations and fostering environmental awareness, hospitals can contribute significantly to the broader goal of protecting and preserving the natural world.

2. Economic Cost Reduction:

To achieve economic cost reduction within hospitals, a comprehensive approach is necessary. This entails optimizing operational efficiency through measures like streamlined administrative processes, reduced energy consumption, and waste minimization. By investing in energy-efficient technologies and infrastructure, hospitals can substantially lower utility expenses (Dion and Evans, 2023). Furthermore, implementing sustainable procurement practices, such as sourcing environmentally friendly products and services, not only aligns with sustainability goals but also reduces long-term costs. Hospitals should also explore innovative financing models and partnerships that allow for cost-effective investments in sustainable healthcare infrastructure. By lowering their operational expenses and financial burdens, hospitals can contribute to economic cost reduction at both the institutional and national levels. Overall,

the pursuit of economic cost reduction in hospitals necessitates a holistic approach that encompasses energy efficiency, waste reduction, sustainable procurement, and innovative financing. By adopting these strategies, hospitals can not only improve their own financial health but also make a significant contribution to the broader goal of reducing costs incurred by the national economy.

3. Mitigation of Social Burdens:

Mitigating social burdens within hospitals involves addressing various aspects of patient care and community well-being (Kumari *et al.*, 2020). Internally, hospitals should prioritize patient-centered care to enhance the overall experience for individuals and their families. This includes fostering a culture of empathy, effective communication, and support for patients dealing with physical and emotional challenges. By implementing policies and practices that prioritize patient well-being, hospitals can minimize the psychological and emotional burdens often associated with healthcare experiences. Externally, hospitals should engage with their communities and take a proactive role in promoting public health and education. This can involve initiatives such as health awareness campaigns, partnerships with local organizations to address social determinants of health, and offering resources for underserved populations. By extending their commitment to social responsibility beyond their walls, hospitals contribute to reducing societal burdens related to healthcare access, disparities, and overall community well-being. In doing so, hospitals play a crucial role in fostering healthier and more equitable societies.

"Sustainable decision-making" should holistically assess these dimensions by meticulously evaluating different options, taking into account their associated side effects and long-term consequences (Kandakoglu, Frini and Ben Amor, 2019). In essence, a

(more) sustainable development within a hospital setting entails an improvement in services concerning at least one of these dimensions when compared to the status quo, without adversely affecting the others. The best case scenario would be to find solutions that concurrently improve each dimension. This method emphasises the externalisation of the problem to different contexts or stakeholders, which makes it easier to mitigate unintended consequences.

Implementing this strategy successfully necessitates ongoing observation of the relevant environment and a thorough analysis of the key short- and long-term repercussions connected to hospital services. Higher-level organisations, such hospital associations or healthcare systems, also play a significant role in supervising and vetting these features, even though hospital administration is primarily responsible for implementing this type of monitoring and integration.

B. Contemporary Hospital Practise

Initiatives referred to as "green hospitals" have become increasingly prevalent on a global scale since the mid-1990s. Popular networks like Health Care Without Harm and the Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care are included in these programmes. When it comes to hospital sustainability, specific ecological techniques have received the most attention. Unfortunately, these methods frequently ignore the social component and are typically not included in the processes used to make healthcare decisions. The main goals of sustainability initiatives are to reduce costs and improve the environmental sustainability of hospital support services.

There is a complementing movement known as the Health Promoting Hospital (HPH) movement that runs concurrently with the "green hospital" movement. The HPH movement pushes hospitals to take on new duties in primary care, preventive care, and

health promotion in order to change their traditional functions. This paradigm change is in line with concepts of empowerment and engagement in health promotion. Notably, the International HPH Network and the International Union for Health Promotion and Education have recently placed a greater emphasis on sustainable development.

The transformation of hospitals from publicly managed institutions to cutting-edge, commercial companies is among the most significant changes that have occurred in recent years. Politics' need to keep costs in check has contributed to this transformation. In this setting, quality management systems have been implemented to track many facets of service delivery, such as cost effectiveness.

However, it's crucial to acknowledge that cost containment cannot rely solely on enhanced efficiency. Medical and technological advancements have increased both the supply of healthcare services as well as their demand, which is mostly driven by the rise in chronic degenerative diseases. While there are valuable strategies within the hospital setting to address specific facets of sustainability, these solutions have often been pursued independently and lack systematic integration. Consequently, there is a need to connect these one-dimensional sustainability efforts comprehensively.

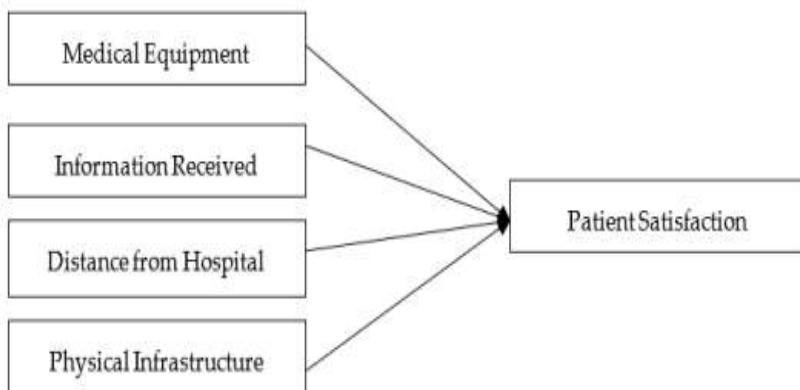
2.1.2 Conceptual foundation

The realm of physical services pertains to the perception patients hold of the hospital's environment, encapsulating factors such as cleanliness and the overall ambiance. Numerous scholars who have delved into the impact of physical facilities on service quality have underscored the dual significance of both the service itself and its physical attributes. This encompasses a spectrum of considerations including physical safety, strategic facility location, and preserving patient privacy. Patients direct their attention to a range of

elements including the external aesthetics, internal layout, ambient atmosphere, architectural design, and structural integrity of the hospital.

Remarkably, attributes such as the demeanor of the staff, the caliber of facilities provided, and the convenience of the facility's placement emerged as the most appealing aspects to patients. To ensure an elevated level of patient satisfaction, nurture public confidence, and create a positive lasting impression of the hospital, healthcare administrations must dedicate efforts to curating an enhanced healing environment staffed by adept professionals. This integration of expert personnel and a supportive environment can greatly contribute to the patient's overall experience, making them feel well-cared for and valued.

Theoretical frameworks, as portrayed in Figure 2.2 (Lewis, 1991), help to visually comprehend the intricate relationships underlying these concepts. By cognizantly managing these physical aspects, hospitals can exert a substantial influence on patient contentment and the broader perception of their services, which in turn can potentially translate into greater patient retention and positive word-of-mouth endorsements, vital for fostering business growth and sustainability in the healthcare landscape (Lewis, 1991).



*Figure 2.2:
The study's conceptual foundation*

The findings from a subsequent investigation carried out by Hammarberg et al. (Verhaak, Smeenk, Evers, *et al.*, 2007a) revealed that, despite comparable overall health between women who were unsuccessful and those who succeeded, unsuccessful women tended to have less positive treatment experiences. Although research has examined the emotional experiences of both partners, the majority of these studies have primarily focused on women's emotions during the course of treatment. Evidence indicates that women react more intensively to infertility and its treatment compared to men (Niederberger, 2016). Women reported higher levels of stress and dissatisfaction related to treatment than men. A recent longitudinal study found that women exhibited greater anxiety and sadness following unsuccessful IVF attempts, in contrast to men. Nevertheless, as indicated by Boivin et al. (Boivin et al., 2012), both men and women demonstrated a similar pattern of emotional responses after their first IVF procedure, albeit with women displaying heightened emotional reactions.

Patient contentment comprises a feeling of satisfaction in many areas of healthcare service. These include the hospital's level of cleanliness, the standard of nursing care, the knowledge of medical professionals, waiting times, staff friendliness, the availability of medications, and the incorporation of cutting-edge technology. Consumer satisfaction is greatly increased by factors like excellent nursing care, efficient information sharing, courteous staff, satisfying meals, comfortable waiting areas, easily accessible health-care literature, open cost structures, and overall superior hospital services. Loyalty in the healthcare industry depends on the presence and maintenance of these elements (Meesala and Paul, 2018).

A number of factors affect patient satisfaction in private healthcare facilities. These consist of good administrative procedures, rigid sanitary requirements, routine doctor and nurse visits, cordial service staff, successful complaint resolution, and prompt service

delivery. On the other hand, expensive treatment costs, pointless medical tests, a lack of permanent specialised doctors, and a deficit of knowledgeable and experienced nursing staff can all contribute to patient unhappiness. According to Moons, (Moons, Waeyenbergh and Pintelon, 2019), key aspects of healthcare services that have a significant impact on patient satisfaction include the calibre of the infrastructure, the condition of the medical equipment, the affordability and excellence of the services, the calibre of the nurses and staff, the accessibility of medications, and the proximity to healthcare facilities. The timeliness of outpatient department services, the behaviour of laboratory staff, the accessibility of hospital pharmacies, and the overall cost of services are other factors that significantly influence patient satisfaction (Nilakantam et al., 2021).

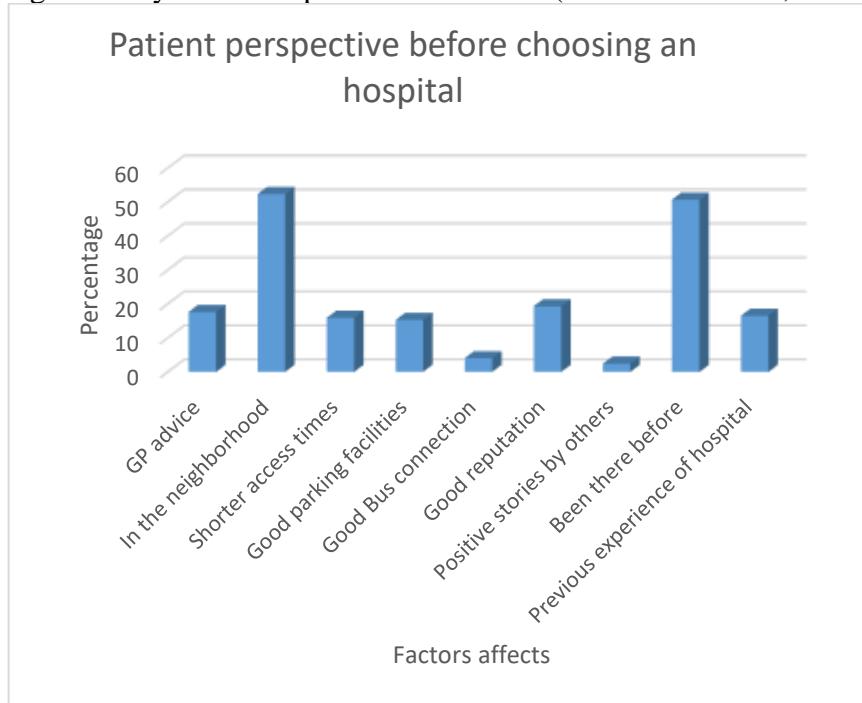


Figure 2.3:
Factors affect the choice of a hospital

2.2 Theory of Reasoned actions

2.2.1 The Issues Affecting India's Public Hospitals, Their Causes, and Potential Solutions:

Every person in the country is significantly affected by the healthcare industry. However, it is clear that the government has not given this sector enough attention or funding, especially when we look at public healthcare spending. With only 1.34% of the country's GDP going towards public healthcare, India now has the lowest public healthcare spending among the BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). In spite of a small improvement from 1.04% in 2010 to 1.34% in 2012, it still lags behind other developing countries. The private sector, which dedicated 2.71% of the GDP to healthcare in 2012, has filled the gap left by the government in the healthcare sector.

Table 2.1.

BRICS Health Expenditures for 2012

Nation	Public Health Exp (% of GDP)	Public Health Exp (% of Total Health Exp)*	Total Health Exp (% of GDP)*
India	1.34	33	4.05
South Africa	4.22	47.9	8.8
Russia	3.84	61	6.3
China	3.02	56	5.4
Brazil	4.32	46.4	9.3

The percentage of inpatient and outpatient cases that are managed by the private sector is a notable indicator of its dominance. From 40% in 1986 to 62% in 2004, the private sector's proportion of hospitalisation cases increased in urban areas, while it went from 40% to 58% in rural areas (Chakravarthi *et al.*, 2010).

Hospitals were a major contributor in 2012, accounting for 71% of all healthcare income in the nation. Private hospitals made up 74% of all hospitals and 40% of all hospital

beds. In comparison, only 19% of healthcare spending was spent at government hospitals, with private institutions accounting for the remaining 81% (IBEF, 2015). The estimated market for private hospitals in India reached \$54 billion by the end of 2014, growing at an estimated pace of 19.7% between 2009 and 2014.

Significant private hospitals have risen in numerous metropolises, Tier I, and Tier II cities across India over the past 15 years. Typical examples include hospital chains like Max and Apollo. For instance, Apollo Hospitals, which started off in 1983 with 150 beds available, has since grown to include 8,313 beds (IBEF, 2015). Similar to this, Max Hospitals, founded in 2000, currently have 1,973 beds available (IBEF, 2015). It is crucial to rigorously scrutinise private hospitals' operations as they continue to develop significantly, especially in light of rising concerns about patient recruitment methods and treatment delivery.

A. Managing Patients

Hospitals play a vital role in delivering healthcare services to patients. These services ideally rely on scientific evidence, including lab reports and patient histories, as well as the expertise of doctors, which is shaped by their understanding of this scientific evidence. To sustain themselves, private hospitals must also ensure their financial viability. This dual objective of profitability and quality patient care should ideally coexist harmoniously. However, in recent times, concerns have arisen within the medical community regarding the prioritization of profit over patient well-being.

It is becoming more and more obvious that decisions about patient treatments and procedures are mostly influenced by business interests. Insights from healthcare professionals and scientific facts frequently appear to be given second-class treatment. Doctors who were interviewed for a report by Support for Advocacy and Training to Health

Initiatives (SATHI), a non-governmental organisation devoted to health rights, discuss the pressures they encounter to meet predetermined goals. In order to increase the hospital's revenue, these targets can include carrying out a specific number of treatments or surgeries or keeping patients in the hospital longer than is strictly necessary (Kelkar, 2021).

For example, doctors sometimes resort to utilizing procedures like ultrasonography excessively to generate more revenue (Berger, 2014). This hospital system often operates akin to a factory, with healthcare services such as surgeries, x-rays, and laboratory tests being the products. While the physical infrastructure and equipment serve as the factory's infrastructure, doctors, nurses, and other employees serve as the workforce. Medications are the raw materials, and the associated costs of these elements contribute to the input costs. Patients, in this scenario, bear these costs and may even be charged extra to bolster the hospital's profit margin.

The minimum number of operations, lab tests, and other treatments is determined by an optimisation process that places more emphasis on cost containment and achieving a specific profit margin than on the patients' actual healthcare needs. Because of this, physicians frequently face a conflict between their loyalty to their employers and their commitment to their patients (Jesani, 2014). Conflicts resulting from this divided loyalties frequently end with the interests of the patients being compromised.

A striking parallel can be drawn between a doctor facing scrutiny for failing to meet a target set by the chief executive officer of a super-specialty hospital and a production manager pressured to meet production quotas in a corporate setting (Sharma and Datta, 2023). Both situations highlight the growing influence of profit-driven approaches in healthcare, raising important questions about the ethical and patient-centric nature of medical practice.

B. Main Challenges Confronting a Public Hospital

Public hospitals currently face a set of significant challenges, including:

1. Inadequate infrastructure.
2. Insufficient staffing.
3. Overwhelming patient demand.
4. Uncertain service quality.
5. Elevated out-of-pocket expenses.

1. Inadequate Infrastructure:

The recommendations made in the 1946 Bhore Committee Report serve as the foundation for the nation's current public healthcare system. However, there has been a considerable delay in the construction of the general population's healthcare system, both in terms of the suggestions made by the committee's and the core notions they convey. The "three-million plan" and the "ten-year plan," two separate phases that the Bhore Committee had envisioned for the implementation of its recommendations.

The "three-million plan" delineated the essential healthcare infrastructure required to cater to the requirements of a standard Indian region inhabited by three million individuals. This blueprint was designed for gradual implementation over a span of three to four decades. The committee initially prioritized a shorter "ten-year plan" due to their recognition of resource constraints, encompassing factors such as workforce availability and financial limitations, when rapidly establishing such infrastructure. Conducting a comparative assessment among the "ten-year plan," the "three-million plan," and the present state of the public health infrastructure in the nation provides valuable insights.

The committee's extensive scheme for advancing healthcare services in India aimed to attain a ratio of 1.03 beds per 1000 population within a decade of implementing the strategy, in contradistinction to the 0.24 beds per 1000 population during the British India

era. The enduring objective was to realize a rate of 5.67 beds per 1000 individuals over a span of 30 to 40 years. The committee also took care to emphasize:

There are doubts regarding the sufficiency of the nation's healthcare infrastructure when we look at the ratio of hospital beds to people in India and compare it to numerous noticeably less developed countries. Surprisingly, a number of sub-Saharan nations, including economically struggling countries like Timor-Leste, appear to have better numbers in this area.

2. Deficient Manpower:

The issues brought on by a weak healthcare infrastructure are made worse by the shortage of healthcare workers. Regional disparities, urban-rural differences, and imbalances between the public and commercial healthcare sectors are just a few of the ways this insufficiency expresses itself. On the one hand, physicians and other healthcare workers are reluctant to practise in rural areas. Contrarily, a sizeable section of the healthcare workforce, especially in urban regions, is drawn to the dominant, profit-driven private healthcare sector, rendering their services essentially inaccessible to the majority of the underprivileged population of the nation.

It's crucial to emphasise that there is a shortage of healthcare workers besides just doctors. In contrast, several nations, such as the Soviet Union following the Bolshevik revolution and China, addressed the doctor shortage by educating and deploying a sizable number of paramedical public health staff to neglected areas.

The absence of a comprehensive and well-coordinated healthcare workforce policy exacerbates the shortage of personnel. As indicated by (Nandan, Nair and Datta, 2007)(Rao et al., 2011), this kind of policy should encompass a range of aspects, including forecasting workforce requirements, generating the workforce, training, recruitment, career

progression, supportive oversight, skill enhancement, placement in underserved regions, retention, and transfers. Interestingly, despite numerous government committees emphasizing the necessity of such a plan, dating back to the Bhore Committee Report of 1946, the problem persists (Thakur, 2011).

3. An overwhelming patient load:

Public hospitals at the secondary or tertiary level are currently having trouble keeping up with a significant patient influx in larger cities. Slums have grown and marginalised groups with no access to basic amenities, such as healthcare, have emerged in India as a result of the country's rapid and unplanned urbanisation. Inadequate urban health infrastructure, hospital overcrowding, ineffective outreach programmes, a lack of a functional referral system, and the requirement for standardised norms and criteria for urban healthcare provision are just a few of the difficulties this situation has brought about for the urban healthcare landscape (John, 2008). These difficulties are further complicated by elements including social marginalisation, a lack of information about contemporary healthcare services, and budgetary limitations.

The underwhelming performance of subcenters, Primary Health Centres (PHCs), and Community Health Centres (CHCs) exacerbates these difficulties. In turn, this puts a considerable strain on the infrastructure of hospitals in larger cities and towns as more and more people from rural areas seek out these facilities for their curative healthcare needs.

The primary, secondary, and tertiary tiers of the Indian healthcare system are connected via a referral system. This configuration makes it easier to appropriately direct patients whose demands are more complex than those of primary or secondary healthcare facilities to higher-level facilities for specialised care. It is crucial to stress that this referral

system encourages active cooperation rather than exclusivity among the many healthcare tiers, which is essential for the thorough growth of the healthcare service network.

4. Ambiguity in Service Quality:

The quality of care invariably declines as the number of patients exceeds the capacity of the healthcare infrastructure. Consider the "Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalaya," a children's hospital run by the government in East Delhi. As the first public hospital in the capital to earn accreditation from the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals (NABH), it accomplished a key milestone. The hospital, however, found it difficult to sustain its level of service as the influx of patients outstripped its capacity. Despite continued attempts, it is still difficult to secure money for necessary infrastructure expansion to handle the rising patient load (Bajpai, 2014).

Public hospitals have seen a deterioration in services over the past 20 years, coupled with more general problems with the growth of the country's public health infrastructure. Neoliberal policies, which have an impact on both the healthcare sector and the entire economy, are linked to this reduction. In order to support the private healthcare industry, these regulations have transformed public hospitals, bringing them into line with their procedures.

This change within public hospitals has led to the contracting out of a number of functions, including security, laundry, cleaning, kitchen services, and eventually even diagnostic and treatment services, through public-private partnerships. The slow introduction of user fees is a crucial component of this privatisation impact (Taylor and Hanefeld, 2021).

5. Additional costs:

The most recent "National Health Accounts" report for India, which was released in 2004–2005, made apparent how important a contribution households made, accounting for 71.13% of all healthcare expenditures. This money was spent on a variety of healthcare services, such as family planning, immunisation, inpatient and outpatient care, and more. Table 2.2 displays healthcare spending trends for a few chosen countries, including India and its neighbouring countries, to provide a comparative perspective (Chakravarthi *et al.*, 2010).

Notably, India has a relative advantage over its neighbours in that it devotes less public funding to healthcare than both Pakistan and Myanmar. It is essential to stress that India still spends less on public health than even the least developed nations and areas in sub-Saharan Africa. This sobering figure emphasises how critical the issue of inadequate public investment in healthcare is.

Table 2.2

Indicators of health spending for a certain group of nations in 2010, including India and its neighbouring

A group of nations	Public health spending as a percentage of GDP	The proportion of private health spending to total health spending	The proportion of financial contributions to private health spending	Costs borne by patients as a percentage of total medical costs
India	1.06	71.8	86.0	61.8
South Asia	1.08	70.9	80.7	61.5
Afghanistan	2.35	77.5	94.0	72.8
Bangladesh	1.35	63.5	96.6	61.3
Bhutan	3.60	15.4	94.7	14.5
China	2.70	45.7	77.2	35.3

Cuba	9.70	4.8	100	4.8
USA	8.49	51.8	22.7	11.8
Lower middle income countries	1.51	64.6	85.8	56.4
Low income countries	2.11	62.9	75.9	49.6
Least developed countries	2.18	60.9	80.7	50.5

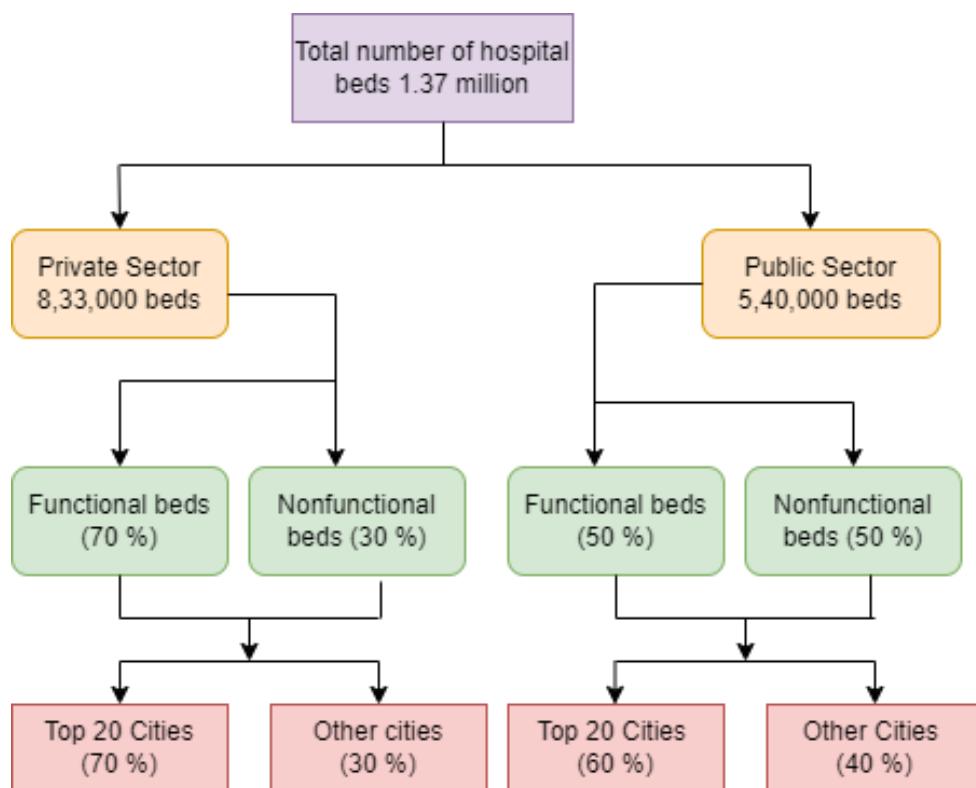


Figure 2.4.

India's hospital bed availability by region

2.2.2 Cost Effectiveness

When comparing the costs of the process to the likelihood that a couple will become parents, one can determine whether in vitro fertilisation (IVF) is cost-effective. The ROI that IVF offers is measured in this comparison. The cost of a typical full IVF cycle, which

includes initial consultations, lab work, prescription medicine, ultrasounds, egg harvesting, gamete culture, embryo transfer, and related diagnostic procedures, is between \$8,000 and \$10,000. The overall cost per cycle can increase to about \$10,500 when long-term expenses for potential medical problems and the higher risk of multiple births linked with IVF compared to natural childbirth are taken into account. IVF's actual success rate has been the subject of a lot of debate. The majority of studies indicates that 15% of IVF cycles result in live babies. These success rates, however, can change dramatically between other demographic groupings. Infertility cases involving unexplained infertility or male factor infertility, for instance, have lower success rates than those involving younger women and those involving tubal illnesses. This is partly because older women tend to have eggs of lesser quality and quantity (Demirtas et al., 2010).

The life-years gained are generally used to calculate the cost-effectiveness of specific medical procedures, which are frequently covered by health insurance (Eichler et al., 2004). IVF (in vitro fertilisation) is a somewhat equivalent choice in this situation. Consider the price of kidney dialysis performed at home. IVF evaluations frequently overlook the initial emotional and psychological advantages that couples receiving treatment notice. This analysis highlights the difficulties in analysing IVF's influence on health policy because the process does not fit well with established criteria for rating medical technologies. The importance of assisting people in increasing their likelihood of becoming parents, as well as the special character of these immediate advantages, should be taken into account in a more thorough evaluation method.

(Vassard et al., 2012) observed that patients from lower economic origins indicate greater satisfaction with the resources they receive during therapy, in contrast to couples who have higher economic status who tend to be less satisfied with the care offered throughout their treatment. These results imply that healthcare professionals can provide

efficient treatment to patients with limited resources. An alternate perspective contends that people from lower socioeconomic origins frequently have more favourable perceptions of healthcare professionals and, as a result, may be less likely to offer unfavourable comments. Infertility, which affects millions of people, has been shown in numerous studies to have effects that go far beyond sexual and reproductive issues, having a big impact on people's general quality of life and psychological health.

The extent of insurance coverage for infertility treatment varies significantly among markets. These rules have an impact on both the demographic makeup of the population seeking medical help for infertility and the patterns of treatment, according to research examining their consequences (Jain, Harlow and Hornstein, 2002). Laws requiring insurance to provide coverage for infertility treatments have been passed in a number of states. The study included binary variables based on the region in which the clinic is located to account for the existence of these mandates. These measures aid in adjusting for county-specific traits that endure throughout time.

Given that insurance regulations are administered at the state level and have not altered, including county-fixed effects in the analysis aids in addressing variances brought on by these mandates. As a result, it is less probable that variations in insurance coverage laws among various markets will affect the results. The quantity of embryos transplanted is not anticipated to be impacted by the level of competition among Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) institutions. Instead, in very competitive marketplaces, clinics frequently give more treatment cycles to patients who have less promising prognoses (Henne and Bundorf, 2008).

Evaluating patient experiences and preferences in the context of reproductive treatments and healthcare facilities can provide valuable patient-centered insights. This can assist healthcare professionals in gaining a deeper understanding of their patients' needs,

preferences, and goals (Coulter and Ellins, 2006). Raising awareness among healthcare providers about this perspective can potentially lead to a noticeable improvement in the quality of care. It enables them to focus on addressing patients' specific requirements and identify both the strengths and weaknesses of the care currently offered (Audet et al., 2005)(Fung et al., 2008)(Riiskjær, Erik, 2010).

Due to knowledge gaps that may cause decisional conflicts, Indian couples may also struggle with negative psychological variables connected to perceived risks, such as miscarriage or the birth of a child with abnormalities (Bracewell-Milnes et al., 2021). The social structure of many developing countries, including India, places a high value on marriage and childbearing. Even in circumstances where there are no male children present or where there are no children at all, this point of view can breed prejudice and hostility.

The HFEA database has permitted a thorough investigation of patient factors influencing the results of IVF treatment, illuminating how they either increase or decrease the likelihood of having a live delivery. The fundamental causes of the marginally reduced birth rates seen in women under the age of 25 compared to those over 30 are still being investigated in ongoing research projects.

Despite the obvious political and economic effects of IVF, Connolly et al. (Connolly, Hoorens and Chambers, 2010) have studied the dynamics between service providers and recipients. The suffering brought on by infertility has been studied in great detail, but the relationship between psychological health and the length of a person's infertility experience, including diagnostic and treatment procedures, has not been well explored. A significant example of current anthropological study conducted in a contemporary clinical environment is Gerrits' investigation of a Dutch reproductive clinic (medicine and 2014, 2014). Moreover, Dyer (Dyer, 2008) used sophisticated sampling procedures to further the insights gained from ethnographic study.

In order to explore women's initial decision-making processes about infertility, researchers Bunting and Boivin, among others (Boivin *et al.*, 2009), recently used computational tools outside of the clinical environment. Researchers have the chance to investigate topics that are frequently ignored in quantitative studies, such as societal effect and self-definition, by using the NSFB. The COMPI research programme is another important effort to use quantitative analytical methods to issues related to the social construction of infertility.

Customer satisfaction is viewed in polls about the healthcare industry as an indicator of functional quality, while loyalty is linked to the technical quality of healthcare. In a consumer study of the healthcare industry, Mittal *et al.* (Lass and Brinsden, 2001) found that while customer pleasure is an essential precondition for loyalty, it cannot ensure loyalty on its own.

2.3 Human Society Theory

2.3.1 Insurance facility effects:

It's important to note that in Australia, the government pays for IVF therapy at a rate of 75%. In Australia, 519 IVF cycles were started for every million people in the 1980s, compared to 117 IVF cycles for every million people in the UK. When there is insurance coverage in the United States, the per-capita utilisation of IVF treatment is twice as high as when there isn't. Despite the fact that only a small percentage of couples in the population use IVF, costs for health insurance do not go up as a result of greater use. In addition, only about 3% of Americans seek IVF treatment for infertility, making the number of couples getting IVF treatment quite low when compared to those choosing other infertility treatments.

It's still unclear how much more people will use services as a result of extended coverage. IVF will likely see a spike in demand as a result of being covered by health insurance, which would result in a reduction in the treatment's effective cost for patients. Couples with infertility concerns who have not previously done IVF and those who have previously undergone IVF and are more likely to pursue further treatment will likely have easier access to the process as a result of this extended coverage. Although there is a lack of data on the usage patterns of Americans with and without IVF coverage, as well as the actual expenses incurred by patients, the existing evidence suggests a significant increase in utilization (Kessler *et al.*, 2013).

According to (Greil *et al.*, 2011), the majority of recent research on the effects of infertility concentrates on the examination of patients seeking care in clinical settings. Analytical difficulties can arise when attempting to distinguish between couples or individuals who choose to receive treatment and those who do not.

It can be challenging to distinguish between the effects of infertility therapy and psychological outcomes without doing a clinical comparison. Even among individuals who are seeking therapy, there has been a strong emphasis on the newest methods, which has restricted the knowledge of those who decide to discontinue treatment after a few failed attempts. This pattern has been influenced by the growing use of performance indicators in healthcare. These metrics evaluate the performance of healthcare organisations, the delivery of care, and even the death rates of specific surgeons.

It can be challenging to distinguish between psychological outcomes and the effects of infertility therapy without undertaking a clinical comparison. The knowledge of persons who decide to leave treatment after a few unsuccessful tries has been hampered by a substantial concentration on the most cutting-edge methods, even among those who are seeking therapy. This pattern has been influenced by the growing use of performance

indicators in healthcare. These metrics evaluate the performance of healthcare organisations, the delivery of care, and even the death rates of specific surgeons (Collins and Walzer, 1995).

2.3.2 IVF Globally

The IVF technique is frequently viewed as one of the most expensive options available to most Americans. Without medication costs, the average cost of a single IVF cycle is projected to be roughly \$12,500 (Wright *et al.*, 2004). A problem with reproductive health called infertility can affect both men and women of different reproductive ages. According to Wright et al. (2004), the national live birth rate in the United States following embryo transfer is approximately 46.9% for female partners under the age of 35 and 37.8% for those between the ages of 35 and 37. Infertility affects 8% to 10% of couples globally during their reproductive years, according to estimates from the World Health Organisation (WHO) (Widge, 2005).

It is true that choosing IVF therapy while the female partner is 35 years or younger is a period linked to higher treatment success rates. But it's critical to eliminate the fallacy that women over 35 have little chance of succeeding with IVF treatment (Lemos *et al.*, 2013) (Wright *et al.*, 2004).

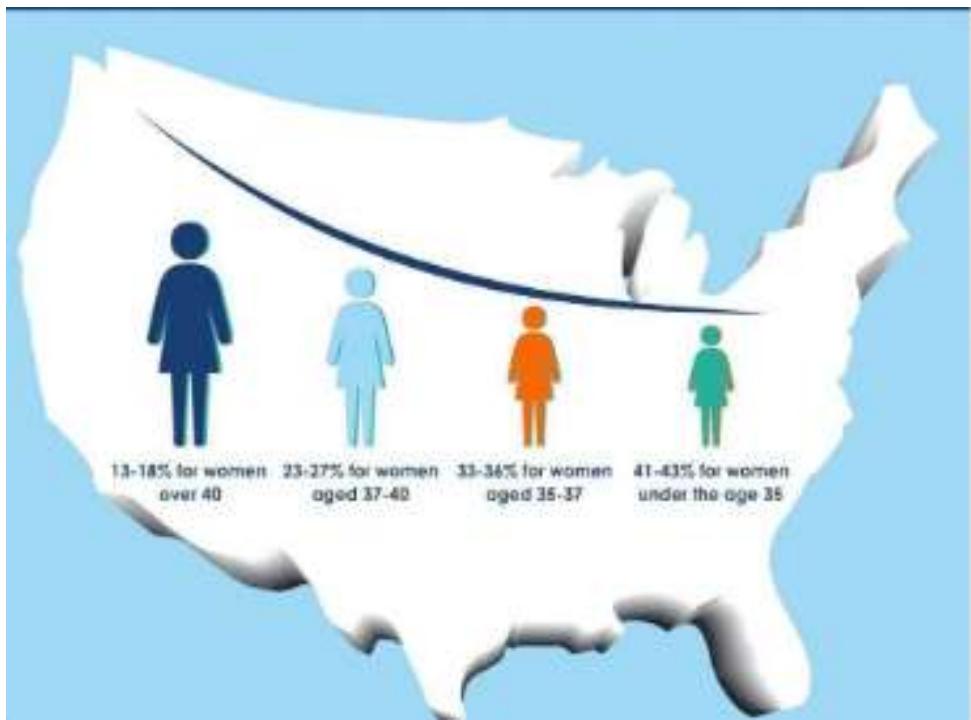


Figure 2.5:

IVF treatment success rates in the US (All about IVF - Success Rate, Ideal Candidates, and Types of Treatment / MediGence)

According to studies by of (Mirghafourvand *et al.*, 2016)(Asadian *et al.*, 2014)(Cong and Ngoc, 2022), Iranian women generally have inferior quality of lives than women from other nations. Particularly in terms of their physical and mental health, Iranian women frequently have an average quality of life (Nedjat *et al.*, 2007). According to a study by (Mirghafourvand *et al.*, 2016), Iranian women have a lower quality of life than Brazilian women. However, Iranian women's quality of life is noticeably better when contrasted with Canadian and Turkish women (Paksoy Erbaydar *et al.*, 2011; Hopman *et al.*, 2009). Variations in socioeconomic conditions are to blame for these discrepancies (Mirghafourvand *et al.*, 2016) (Rezaei *et al.*, 2016).

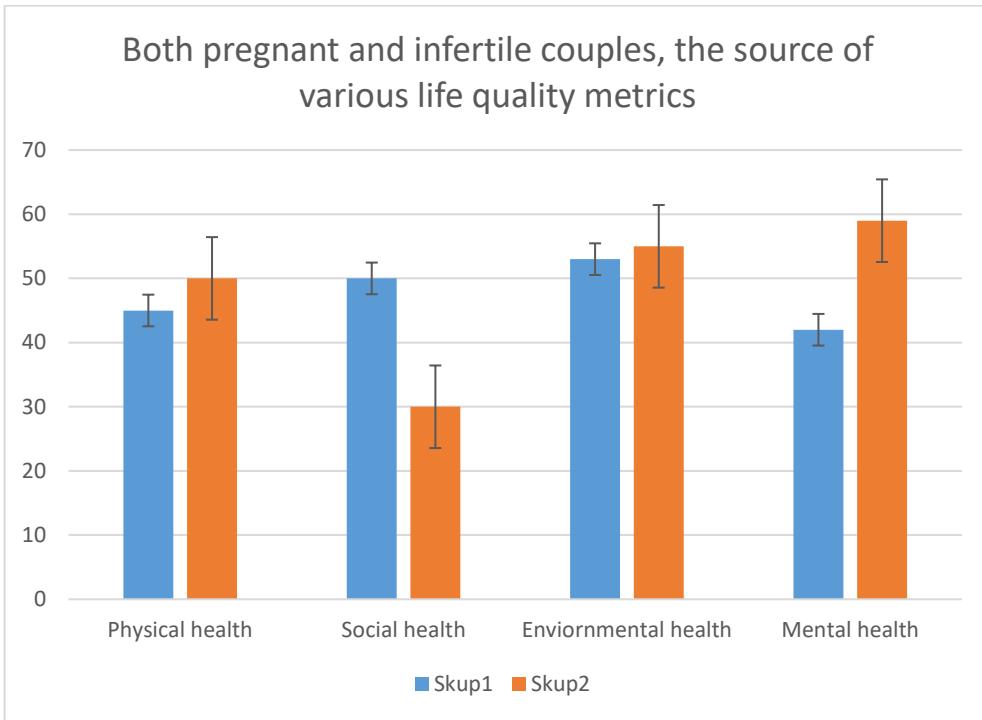


Figure 2.6.

For both pregnant and infertile couples, the source of various life quality metrics (Rimaz et al., 2014)

A. How do I choose a facility for assisted reproduction?

The nation of Spain is home to a wide variety of assisted reproduction facilities. Nevertheless, major cities like Madrid, Barcelona, and Valencia tend to have the most diverse array of reproductive clinics. These clinics range in size, including both small and large facilities. They also mix older, well-established clinics with more recent ones. They are located in a variety of places, including private practices and hospitals. Patients frequently have overwhelming feelings when trying to choose the best assisted reproduction facility because of the wide variety and abundance of options available.

Similarly, if the clinic designates a dedicated individual to keep patients continuously informed and respond to all their questions is a crucial consideration to make

when choosing an assisted reproduction facility. Although this assistance might not seem essential at first, it significantly boosts confidence throughout the entire procedure.



*Figure 2.7:
Spanish clinic locations*

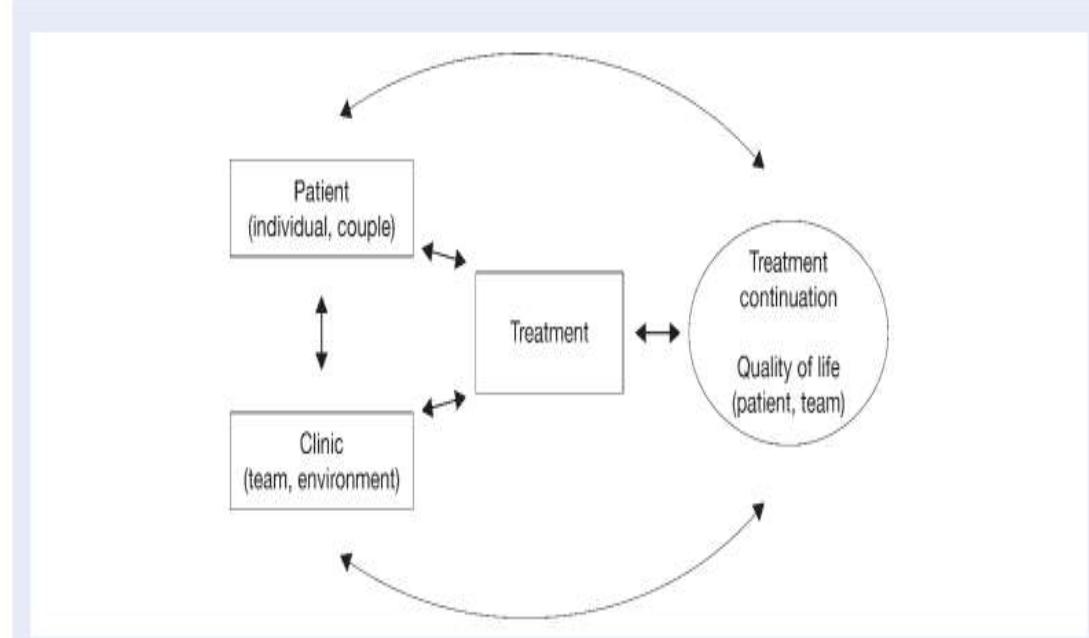
2.3.3 IVF in India

Many IVF clinics actively market their services to incoming patients through a variety of channels, including instructional materials and advertising in print, web, radio, television, and other media venues, given the intense market rivalry. The viewpoints and demands of these patients have, historically, been disregarded by researchers and technologists. Fewer studies have looked at how assisted reproductive technology affects women, even though research has been done to examine the causes, possible treatments, and effects of infertility as well as to evaluate the conception rates in India. The significance

of these challenges and their implications highlights the necessity for thorough social science research in this area (Widge, 2005).

With success rates between 40% and 60% among Indian couples, IVF stands out as a popular strategy for conceiving while treating infertility. However, there is a substantial disparity between the real capacity in India and the demand for IVF or fertility treatment among Indian couples. Despite having the capacity to do 5 to 6 lakh IVF cycles annually, only roughly 2 to 2.5 lakh Indian couples actually request an IVF cycle.

The importance of psychological issues that prevent couples from pursuing this treatment by producing disputes in their decision-making process is highlighted by this discrepancy. The results of (Chiware *et al.*, 2021) show that couples frequently struggle with the fear of social stigma and humiliation should they choose IVF treatment in Indian society, where great weight is put on the procreative capabilities of both men and women.



*Figure 2.8:
Patient, clinic, and therapy interdependence in affecting the effectiveness of the treatment and quality of life (Sturgess, 2016).*

AVERAGE IVF SUCCESS RATE IN INDIA



Figure 2.9.

Analysis of India's success rate

The results show that because of India's distinctive societal structure, Indian couples frequently experience higher levels of stress than their Western counterparts. The core reasons of infertility, associated fears, and patterns of seeking treatment are all topics covered in a number of research on infertility treatment in India. 3.9% of Indians between the ages of 25 and 49 are said to experience primary infertility, per (Katole and Saoji, 2019). A succinct summary of these issues can be found in the Indian National Policy for Population Control.

Concerns about ethics, society, and the law resulting from the accessibility of Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs) are just a few of the challenges associated with infertility and the implications for programme requirements that follow (Majumdar and Qureshi, 2022) (Widge, 2005). According to (van den Brekel and Deven, 1995), the Action Programmes of ICPD place a strong emphasis on the need for health services for

infertility treatment that include both effective treatment and preventative strategies for infertility disorders. Practically speaking, however, such all-inclusive infertility services are rarely available to the general public. Additionally, there hasn't been much research on how the increasing accessibility of different ARTs affects women.

According to research, infertility treatments might cause short- and long-term psychological anguish as well as marital difficulties. An first acute phase, which tends to pass rather rapidly and is characterised by modest stress brought on by events associated to diagnosis and early therapy in an infertility response model, may be included. A chronic phase then follows, during which numerous unsuccessful therapy attempts gradually deplete coping mechanisms within the marriage and within the individual (De, Mukhopadhyay and Roy, 2021) (Boivin *et al.*, 2001a):

Due to the need for expensive equipment and specialised personnel, which is typically the case with emerging health technology, both therapies may be pricey.

2.3.4 Securing treatment-related aspects

A. Care focuses mostly on a patient

In the field of infertility, patient-centered treatment entails integrating psychosocial services and support into the whole care given to patients. In the realm of infertility, Barbara Eck Menning was the first to promote this strategy (Boivin and Gameiro, 2015). Patient-centered treatment does not require specialised psychological training, in contrast to formal psychological interventions that call for specialised therapy or counselling. Instead, it includes a broad range of services intended to meet patients' informational and emotional needs.

Giving patients unimpeded assistance and responding to their frequent questions are key components of patient-centered care. Patients who are dealing with infertility

usually struggle with a wide range of questions and uncertainties, which can make it a stressful and emotionally draining process. Patient-centered care places a high priority on providing prompt, compassionate responses to these questions so that patients have the information they need to make educated decisions about their care.

Patient-centered treatment goes beyond merely responding to questions; it also includes showing compassion and support when problems arise during the infertility journey. Negative pregnancy test results, irregular cycles, and other setbacks can have a significant emotional impact on individuals. Patient-centered treatment acknowledges these difficulties and offers emotional support to help patients cope with any stress or disappointment they may be feeling.

Patient-centered care also includes the distribution of educational information through a variety of media in order to improve patients' mental health and general well-being (Salyers and Zisman-Ilani, 2020). These tools, which offer thorough insights into the treatment process, procedural specifics, and practical stress management approaches, can be presented as written texts or multimedia content. Patient-centered care gives patients the knowledge and tools they need to actively participate in their personal healthcare and decision-making.

Additionally, patient-centered treatment emphasises understanding the importance of peer support and makes it easier for people to attend support groups (Mead et al., 2020). Patients who participate in these support groups get a sense of belonging and can connect with others going through similar experiences. People can share their experiences, voice their worries, and celebrate their victories in these encouraging group settings, which can help reduce feelings of loneliness and provide crucial emotional support.

According to studies, using a patient-centered strategy can help improve clinical outcomes in addition to improving patients' mental health and general well-being

(Drossman and Ruddy, 2020). Patient-centered care develops a sense of fulfilment and empowerment by taking into account patients' emotional needs and involving them actively in their care. Patients who receive patient-centered care consequently frequently show higher levels of engagement and adherence to treatment programmes, which eventually leads to improved treatment outcomes.

Overall, patient-centered care in infertility clinics encompasses a range of psychosocial support services in addition to medical therapies. Its objective is to meet the patients' informational and emotional requirements while also assuring continual support, fostering a sense of empowerment, and encouraging active participation. Patient-centered care improves the overall patient experience while also having a favourable impact on clinical results through the provision of emotional support, informative responses, instructional materials, and peer support. This strategy is crucial because it recognises the value of individualised care and offers consistent support throughout the whole infertility journey.

B. Patient Requirements and Staff Counsel During Various Treatment Phases

According to scientific studies, individuals using medically assisted reproductive therapies have a range of demands during different phases of therapy, including the times before, during, and after the treatments (Facchin *et al.*, 2020b)(Carroll *et al.*, 2010b). The European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) has published guidelines that outline specific patient demands and provide staff recommendations suited to each stage of treatment in response to these changing requirements (Carroll *et al.*, 2010b).

People commonly experience a range of emotions before beginning therapy, including feelings of fear, unease, and hope. Healthcare practitioners must give patients

comprehensive information about the course of therapy, expected outcomes, and any potential hazards. Patients may benefit from having psychological assistance and counselling to successfully navigate any potential emotional challenges. The staff should work to provide a supportive and understanding environment that encourages patients to freely express their worries and seek help in a relaxed setting.

Patients may require ongoing emotional support throughout the therapy phase as they struggle with the psychological and physical difficulties posed by the course of treatment. During this time, it is crucial to maintain regular contact and promote open discussion between patients and healthcare professionals. Crucial components of care include addressing any issues raised by the treatment, providing updates on the patient's condition, and giving advice on how to handle any potential consequences or side effects. Moreover, patients may discover usefulness in having access to support groups or peer networks, enabling them to discuss experiences and receive mutual assistance.

Regardless of the treatment's final result, patients may experience a wide range of feelings when therapy is over. Recognising the potential psychological effects of both favourable and unfavourable treatment outcomes, healthcare practitioners should give appropriate post-treatment care and support. If appropriate, this may involve offering counselling services, promoting access to support systems, or providing information about other family-building options.

The need of individualised and patient-centered care throughout the entire medically assisted reproductive therapy process is emphasised by ESHRE's standards. Healthcare providers must be aware of the unique needs of each patient and tailor their care accordingly. This may involve offering psychological therapies, enabling open communication and information sharing, and facilitating access to further resources as needed.

Healthcare professionals can improve the general wellbeing and contentment of patients receiving medically assisted reproductive therapy by recognising and attending to the changing requirements of patients across various treatment phases. According to ESHRE's recommendations, patient-centered care values comprehensive assistance that goes beyond the clinical facets of treatment. In the end, this strategy fosters a favourable patient experience and increases the likelihood of getting positive results.

In conclusion, research results and expert advice emphasise the importance of identifying and attending to patients' changing needs across the many stages of medically assisted reproductive treatment. Healthcare professionals can provide patient-centered care that improves the overall journey and outcomes for those seeking fertility treatments by providing comprehensive information, psychological support, open communication, and rigorous follow-up care.

C. During treatments

Staff members should be informed that according to estimations from throughout the world, (Brandes *et al.*, 2009) one in 12 patients did not follow the guidelines of the treatment, impression of poor prognosis, postponement, significant psychological burden and logistic setting. Financial, psychological, and physical strain, clinic-related issues, organisational issues, procrastination, and partner relationship issues are the main causes of treatment cessation following the failure of the first cycle. (Gameiro *et al.*, 2015) Infertile women through treatment cycles express their longing for intimacy from partners and significant others more frequently than women experiencing regular menstrual cycles (Boivin *et al.*, 2001b). Women experience emotional turmoil, swings, and disturbances more frequently than males do (Boivin *et al.*, 2001a)(Heineman, 2002). The most crucial times are those surrounding waiting periods before the pregnancy tests, reviewing the

results, transfer of the embryos, and oocyte retrieval (Verhaak, Smeenk, Evers, *et al.*, 2007d). During cycles, men report feeling more socially and relationally isolated. Both partners express concerns about potential workplace stressors brought on by extended medical leaves (Verhaak, Smeenk, Nahuis, *et al.*, 2007). Because a couple is a single psychological entity, distress is frequently distributed among the partners.

2.4 Summary

Chapter 2 of the literature review explores the of understanding the dynamics within infertile couples to drive the growth of IVF clinics. The research delves into how comprehending the intricate nuances of infertile couples' experiences can serve as a strategic tool to increase patient numbers in IVF clinics. The chapter investigates different dimensions, including the divergent perceptions of reproductive challenges' impact on sexual connections between males and females. It also analyzes the adjustments that men and women make in their marital relationships throughout the infertility journey.

A significant insight emerges from a longitudinal study spanning multiple years of treatment, indicating that marital happiness does not significantly differ between women who experience successful and unsuccessful outcomes in IVF treatment. Notably, a considerable portion of respondents reports that their marriages improved due to their IVF experiences. This chapter emphasizes the potential for fertility treatments to influence and fortify relationships.

The intricate interplay between infertility challenges, treatment processes, and relationships underscores a multifaceted and evolving landscape. This understanding provides avenues for IVF clinics to tailor their offerings and support systems to address couples' distinctive emotional needs. By catering to the emotional aspects of infertility, clinics can foster a more positive patient experience, enhance their reputation, and

ultimately attract and retain more patients. This chapter serves as a foundational framework for strategically integrating these insights to drive the growth of IVF clinics within the realm of healthcare business.

CHAPTER III:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview of the Research Problem

This methodology serves as the foundation for examining how companies in the healthcare industry might strategically maximize patient conversion rates. The main problem that needs to be solved in this area of research is how to use couples' decision-making psychology as a potent tool for increasing patient conversion rates in clinic facilities. This overriding objective necessitates a comprehensive and in-depth investigation of the emotional triggers, worries, myths, and actual decision-making processes that jointly influence infertile couples' decisions regarding treatment procedures.

Recognizing the complex interplay between the clinical and emotional spheres that characterizes this issue, the study sets out on a quest to close this complex gap by meticulously examining the psychological aspects that significantly influence the decisions made by infertile couples. The ultimate goal of this study project is to improve patient experiences while eradicating persistent myths through a strong foundation of evidence-based insights, which will help clinic facilities continue on their upward growth trajectory.

The technique selected as the foundation for this study reflects a holistic and inclusive approach designed to fully address the research topic. The study makes use of a mixed-approaches approach by judiciously combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. In order to perform a comprehensive examination of the emotional landscapes, worries, and complexities that define the decision-making paths of infertile couples, qualitative methodologies, such as in-depth interviews and focused group discussions, are carefully harnessed. This qualitative aspect is painstakingly created to uncover the many

psychological threads that influence perceptions and, eventually, influence the decisions made by infertile couples.

On the other end of the spectrum, quantitative methods are skillfully used to gather empirical data that can be used to quantify the prevalence and consequent impact of pervasive myths, such as the widely-held misconception about single embryo transfer and its effects on pregnancy probabilities. The distribution of surveys and questionnaires that have been precisely crafted for infertile couples at various stages of their unique treatment journeys actualizes this quantitative dimension. The study aims to not only corroborate and validate the qualitative findings but also to promote a more thorough and nuanced knowledge of the research challenge through the systematic collecting and rigorous analysis of quantitative data.

In addition, the research involves an extensive evaluation that covers a wide range of relevant studies on topics including patient psychology, the complexities of procedures, and the specific difficulties that facilities face with regard to patient conversion rates. This comprehensive review efficiently identifies the gaps that now blot out the existing body of research in this field, serving as the foundation upon which the study is contextualized.

At the end, the methodology section serves as evidence of the careful use of a mixed-methods approach, carefully crafted to delve deeply into the tangled psychological dynamics that exert a strong gravitational pull on infertile couples as they begin their journeys. This research endeavor aims to produce profound insights that have the potential to not only reshape the strategic underpinnings of clinics but also to recalibrate the very mechanisms driving patient conversion rates while fostering a healthcare ecosystem characterized by an increased sense of support and understanding.

3.2 Operationalization of Theoretical Framework

The operationalization of the theoretical framework in this study involves translating the conceptual constructs into measurable variables that will be utilized to gather empirical data. The main objective of this study is to clarify the variables influencing patient conversion rates among infertile couples thinking about treatments, with an emphasis on methods to improve the financial performance of clinics. This section outlines the key constructs, variables, and measurement methods used in this study.

3.2.1 Conceptual Constructs

1. Decision-Making Influences: This category encapsulates a spectrum of diverse factors that collectively contribute to the decisions made by infertile couples when considering IVF treatments within the realm of clinics. It encompasses a range of considerations, including emotional triggers, financial implications, and success rate apprehensions, which collectively play a pivotal role in determining whether couples choose to embark on the journey.
2. Quality of Experience: This pivotal dimension serves as a crucial metric to assess the holistic satisfaction and perceived service excellence encountered by infertile couples throughout their entire journey within the domain of clinics. It encapsulates a comprehensive evaluation that extends beyond the mere clinical aspect, incorporating emotional well-being, the perceived quality of care, and the overall contentment stemming from their multifaceted interactions with the clinic.
3. Emotional Well-being: A fundamental aspect of the quality of experience pertains to the emotional well-being of couples as they traverse the journey. The emotional support offered by the clinic's healthcare professionals, the level of empathy displayed, and the extent to which couples feel understood and valued all contribute significantly to their overall emotional state. A positive emotional experience

throughout the journey not only fosters a sense of trust and connection but also reflects the clinic's commitment to providing a supportive environment, which subsequently contributes to enhanced business success.

4. Perceived Quality of Care: Another crucial facet within this dimension is the perceived quality of care received by infertile couples. This encompasses their assessment of the clinic's medical expertise, the effectiveness of treatment protocols, and the efficiency of processes. The manner in which healthcare professionals communicate, provide information, and address concerns plays a pivotal role in shaping the perception of care quality. A positive perception of high-quality care not only fosters trust but also has the potential to yield positive word-of-mouth referrals, thereby enhancing the clinic's reputation and business prospects within the competitive landscape.
5. Overall Contentment: The overarching contentment experienced by infertile couples serves as a summative reflection of their interactions, emotional well-being, and perceived quality of care within the clinic. A seamless and positive experience throughout the journey cultivates a sense of loyalty and satisfaction among couples, resulting in a higher likelihood of patient retention and referral. This aspect significantly contributes to the clinic's long-term business success, as contented couples become advocates for the clinic's services, amplifying its reach and impact within the broader market.

3.2.2 Variables and Measurement

A. Decision-Making Influences:

1. Emotional Resonance: Captures the emotional connection experienced by infertile couples towards the clinic's offerings and brand.

2. Measurement: A sentiment analysis will be conducted on online reviews and social media mentions to gauge emotional resonance. Positive, negative, and neutral sentiments will be analyzed to determine the emotional impact the clinic has on potential and current clients.
3. Financial Consideration: Represents the extent to which the clinic's pricing structure aligns with couples' budget constraints.
4. Measurement: A pricing perception survey will be administered to gauge how couples perceive the clinic's fees compared to their financial capacity. This will help identify whether pricing may influence their decision-making.
5. Success Rate Perception: Reflects how infertile couples perceive the clinic's success rates.
6. Measurement: A survey will be conducted to gauge couples' understanding of the clinic's success rates. This will provide insights into how these perceptions influence their decision-making and whether accurate success rate information is essential for their commitment.

B. Quality of Experience:

1. Emotional Engagement: Emotional engagement will be assessed through post-treatment surveys that inquire about the couples' emotional experiences throughout their IVF journey.
2. Measurement: Measures the level of emotional connection couples experience during their interactions with the clinic.
3. Service Satisfaction: Reflects the satisfaction level of infertile couples with the services provided by the clinic.

4. Measurement: The Net Promoter Score (NPS) survey will be utilized to measure the likelihood of couples recommending the clinic's services to others, serving as a proxy for their overall satisfaction and the perceived value of the services received.
5. Clinic Reputation: Evaluates how the clinic's reputation impacts couples' decision-making.
6. Measurement: An analysis of online reviews and ratings will be conducted to assess the clinic's online reputation. Positive reviews and high ratings may positively influence couples' perceptions and decisions.

C. Quality of Experience:

1. Holistic Satisfaction: Reflects the comprehensive contentment of infertile couples with their entire treatment journey, encompassing various facets of their experience.

Measurement: A validated quality of experience questionnaire will be employed to gather data. The questionnaire will include items related to emotional well-being, perceived service quality, communication effectiveness, and overall contentment.

2. Emotional Resonance: Measures the emotional connection experienced by couples with the clinic's services and brand.

Measurement: Emotional resonance will be assessed through sentiment analysis of online reviews, focusing on emotional expressions and sentiment polarity. This data will provide insights into the clinic's emotional impact on patients.

3. Service Satisfaction: Evaluates the extent to which infertile couples are satisfied with the services provided by the clinic.

Measurement: The Net Promoter Score (NPS) survey will be employed to gauge the likelihood of couples recommending the clinic's services to others. This measurement indirectly reflects their satisfaction and perception of service quality.

Incorporating these variables and measurement methods will enable a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing infertile couples' decisions and the quality of their experience within the clinic setting. This business-focused approach aims to provide actionable insights to enhance clinic success rates and foster an environment conducive to patient satisfaction and loyalty.

3.2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

1. Qualitative Data (Decision-Making Influences): In order to explore the diverse factors that shape infertile couples' decisions, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions will be conducted. Audio recordings of these sessions will be transcribed verbatim for thorough analysis. Thematic analysis will be employed to uncover recurring themes related to emotional resonance, financial considerations, and success rate perceptions. This qualitative approach will allow for a nuanced understanding of the decision-making dynamics within clinics.
2. Quantitative Data (Quality of Experience): Survey questionnaires will be distributed to infertile couples at various stages of their treatment journey to quantitatively assess their quality of experience. The questionnaires will include items related to emotional engagement, service satisfaction, and

clinic reputation. Responses will be collected on a structured scale, enabling the use of statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, and correlation analysis. This approach will provide quantitative insights into how these variables impact the overall quality of experience for couples.

By collecting and analyzing data through these methods, this study seeks to operationalize the theoretical framework within a business context. The constructs, variables, and measurement methods outlined aim to shed light on the factors that influence infertile couples' decisions and the quality of their experiences within clinics. Ultimately, this investigation aims to offer valuable insights that contribute to optimizing patient conversion rates and enhancing the business success of clinics.

3.3 Research Purpose and Questions

3.3.1 Research Purpose

By understanding the emotional landscape, concerns, and misconceptions that shape the choices of patients, this study aims to contribute insights that can serve as a strategic tool to enhance patient conversion rates at clinics. Ultimately, the research strives to create a more supportive and informed environment for infertile couples, fostering their trust and satisfaction while contributing to the growth of clinics.

3.3.2 Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between patient satisfaction with clinic experiences and the business-related factors influencing the decision-making of infertile couples?

2. How can clinics modify their communication strategies to effectively address emotional needs, concerns, and anxieties of infertile couples, leading to increased trust and improved patient conversion rates?
3. What role does providing accurate information about treatments play in infertile couples' informed decision-making and their commitment to clinics?
4. How can the research findings be extrapolated to broader healthcare practices, offering insights into integrating business aspects into medical service delivery beyond the context of clinics?
5. To what extent do national success rates, outcomes data, and debates about treatment factors influence the decision-making processes of infertile couples when selecting clinics?
6. How do the business implications of understanding infertile couples' psychological dimensions contribute to their overall well-being and the emotional support received during the treatment journey?
7. What strategies can clinics employ to optimize the conversion of initial enquiries into committed clients, considering the identified business factors and insights from infertile couples' decision-making?
8. How do couples perceive the cost of treatments in relation to the perceived value they anticipate from the services provided by clinics, and how does this perception influence their conversion decisions?
9. How do unique aspects of clinics, such as success rates, reputation, and services offered, influence the decision-making processes of infertile couples, impacting their conversion rates?

Through the exploration of these research questions, this study aims to reveal the intricate interplay between business-related factors, such as misconceptions, patient satisfaction, and decision-making processes, within the context of couples considering treatments. By addressing these inquiries, the research endeavors to provide valuable and practical insights that can be strategically applied to optimize the conversion of initial inquiries into dedicated clients at clinics. These insights are expected to contribute to the cultivation of an environment that is not only supportive but also centered around the needs of patients, thereby fostering a healthcare setting that prioritizes patient satisfaction and engagement while bolstering the success of clinics.

The anticipated outcomes of this research offer the potential for clinics to refine their strategies, ensuring that communication efforts address emotional needs and concerns effectively, thereby building trust and subsequently increasing patient conversion rates. The practical applicability of these findings is expected to extend beyond individual clinics, potentially serving as a blueprint for healthcare practices that aspire to integrate business-oriented strategies into their service delivery model.

Ultimately, the examination of these research questions is poised to reveal paradigm-shifting revelations that will change the entire foundation of clinic operations. This endeavor entails a thorough dissection of the complex web of business-related variables, with the overall objective of providing clinics with useful information that can encourage the conversion of tentative enquiries into devoted clients. At the same time, this research carries the great aspiration of elevating the healthcare industry to a new level that places a premium on patient satisfaction and patient-centered care.

This study aims to provide clinics with a toolkit of strategic options by traversing the maze of factors that support effective patient involvement. The goal of these tools is to create a patient journey that is supported by excellence at every touchpoint while also

maximizing operational efficacy. The greater goal is to create a setting where people actively participate in their own health and healing rather than being treated as passive recipients of care.

This study's contribution to the broader evolution of the healthcare sector is a key aspect. The goal of this project is to instill a culture of patient-centricity within clinics and hospitals in an effort to rethink the boundaries of care. This change represents an acceptance of empathy, knowledge sharing, and constant support for infertile couples starting their treatment journeys. The ultimate objective is to establish a sanctuary that goes beyond the confines of traditional healthcare, immersing patients in a nurturing embrace of comprehension and all-encompassing care.

3.4 Research Design

The research design for the proposed study on enhancing the success rate of clinics offering IVF treatments employs a mixed-methods approach, effectively integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods. This comprehensive design is strategically structured to explore and address the dynamics of infertile couples, all while substantiating the findings through empirical data. The integration of qualitative insights with quantitative data is instrumental in achieving a deep and well-rounded understanding of the research problem, ultimately enabling us to provide evidence-based recommendations for improving IVF clinic practices.

3.4.1 Qualitative Phase

The qualitative phase of the proposed study plays a pivotal role in gaining insights that can be used to enhance the success rate of clinics. Through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the proposed study aims to uncover the concerns, and decision-

making processes of infertile couples. This phase offers an invaluable opportunity for an in-depth exploration of the psychological factors that significantly influence the perceptions and choices of couples regarding IVF treatments.

A. Data Collection:

1. **In-depth Interviews:** The study will conduct individual interviews with a carefully selected subset of infertile couples. The open-ended questions will delve into the participants' emotions, concerns, and the criteria they consider when contemplating IVF treatments. These interviews aim to unearth the underlying psychological factors driving their decision-making.
2. **Focus Group Discussions:** Group discussions will be organized with couples to facilitate interactions and the sharing of their collective experiences. These discussions will focus on identifying common themes related to psychological factors and decision-making processes among infertile couples. This method will provide valuable insights into the shared experiences and concerns that influence their treatment choices.

B. Data Analysis:

Proposed data analysis approach will employ thematic analysis. Qualitative data gathered from interviews and focus group discussions will undergo a systematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns related to the psychological dynamics, emotions, concerns, and decision-making processes of infertile couples. These identified themes will form the foundation for developing evidence-based strategies to improve clinic success rates.

By combining qualitative insights with quantitative data in this research design, the study aims to provide actionable recommendations that clinics can implement to enhance their success rates in assisting infertile couples on their journey toward parenthood. This research endeavor is dedicated to the betterment of clinic practices and, ultimately, the well-being of the couples seeking IVF treatments.

In addition to the qualitative phase, the research design includes a quantitative phase aimed at gathering structured data on misconceptions surrounding IVF and assessing patient satisfaction. This phase is crucial for quantitatively measuring the prevalence of misconceptions and investigating the relationship between patient satisfaction and various psychological factors.

3.4.2 Quantitative Phase

In the quantitative phase of the proposed study, employing structured questionnaires to systematically collect data from infertile couples. This phase is instrumental in quantifying the extent of misconceptions and understanding how patient satisfaction relates to psychological factors.

A. Data Collection:

Questionnaires: Surveys will be administered to infertile couples at different stages of their IVF journey. These questionnaires will contain items specifically designed to assess misconceptions related to single embryo transfer and to gauge the levels of patient satisfaction.

B. Data Analysis:

The proposed data analysis strategy within the quantitative phase will involve two key components:

1. **Descriptive Analysis:** Data related to misconceptions will be subjected to descriptive analysis. This analysis will provide a clear quantitative understanding of the prevalence and extent of misconceptions regarding the impact of single embryo transfer on pregnancy chances among infertile couples. This information will be vital for tailoring educational interventions aimed at dispelling these misconceptions.
2. **Correlation Analysis:** Quantitative data collected on patient satisfaction and various psychological factors will undergo correlation analysis. This statistical method allows to explore the relationships between patient satisfaction and the psychological variables measured. By identifying correlations, one can gain insights into how specific psychological factors influence patient satisfaction levels. This information will be invaluable for clinics looking to enhance the overall experience for infertile couples undergoing IVF treatments.

The quantitative phase, complementing the qualitative phase, enriches the research design by providing numerical data that can be used to identify misconceptions and understand their impact on patient satisfaction. By utilizing structured questionnaires and robust data analysis methods, the study aims to provide actionable insights that can contribute to the success and effectiveness of IVF clinics in addressing the needs and concerns of infertile couples.

3.4.3 Integration and Synthesis

The proposed research design incorporates an essential phase of integration and synthesis. In this phase, the aim is to harmonize the qualitative insights derived from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with the quantitative data have been

collected. This triangulation process is pivotal in providing a holistic and comprehensive understanding of the intricate psychological dimensions that influence the decision-making processes of infertile couples. By aligning and validating qualitative themes with quantitative data, enhancing the overall robustness and validity of the research findings. Qualitative insights gained through personal interviews and group discussions offer a rich tapestry of emotions, concerns, and experiences. These insights, though invaluable, can be further enriched and validated by quantifiable data, allowing us to draw more precise conclusions.

The study is centered around the strategic growth of IVF clinics. To achieve this goal, the research design employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This approach allows to comprehensively examine various aspects of IVF clinic operations and identify opportunities for enhancement. On the qualitative front, engaging in in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders, including clinic staff, patients, and industry experts. These qualitative insights shed light on the operational intricacies, patient experiences, and staff perspectives that impact clinic success.

In tandem, the quantitative methods involve structured surveys and data analysis to quantify key performance indicators, patient satisfaction levels, and market trends. This numerical data provides a quantitative foundation for our research, enabling us to make data-driven recommendations. By uniting these qualitative and quantitative research methods, the proposed studies aim is to provide actionable insights tailored to the specific needs and expectations of IVF clinics. The overarching goal is to facilitate the strategic growth of these clinics by offering evidence-based recommendations that enhance patient conversion rates, streamline operations, and create a more supportive and successful healthcare environment within the IVF industry.

3.5 Population and Sample

3.5.1 Population: The target population for this study comprises potential clients - infertile couples actively seeking in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatments across various IVF clinics. These couples are integral to the research as they represent the prospective clientele who drive the business growth of IVF clinics. Considering the sensitive and personal nature of fertility treatments, the study aims to capture a diverse range of participants spanning different backgrounds, demographics, and IVF treatment stages.

3.5.2 Sampling Strategy: To ensure a well-rounded representation of potential clients, the study will employ a purposive sampling strategy. This method involves selecting participants based on specific criteria to achieve a balanced and comprehensive sample. The sample will be stratified across different phases of the IVF journey, including those who are contemplating IVF, currently undergoing treatment, and those who have completed their treatment cycles.

3.5.3 Sample Size: The final sample size will be determined through data saturation, which signifies the point at which no new insights or themes emerge from the data. To gain a detailed understanding of potential clients' perspectives, anticipate conducting individual interviews with approximately 20 to 25 couples. Additionally, holding focus group discussions with around 3 to 4 groups, each comprising 5 to 8 participants. For the quantitative phase, a larger sample may be required to capture a wide range of responses for questionnaires, which are essential for understanding the market and client preferences.

3.5.4 Recruitment Process: Participants will be recruited through various channels including IVF clinics, fertility support groups, and online forums catering to individuals seeking fertility treatments. The recruitment message will outline the study's purpose, assure confidentiality, and emphasize the voluntary nature of participation. Interested

couples will be requested to provide informed consent before participating in interviews, focus groups, or surveys.

3.5.5 Ethical Considerations: The study will adhere to strict ethical guidelines to protect the well-being and privacy of participants, reflecting the commitment to maintaining ethical standards in the business research context. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, ensuring they fully understand their involvement. The study will maintain the confidentiality and privacy of participant data during analysis and reporting. Additionally, seeking ethical clearance from the relevant institutional review board to ensure the study aligns with ethical principles and respects participants' rights.

In summary, the research places a spotlight on infertile couples who are actively seeking treatments, positioning them as the prospective clientele crucial for the growth and sustainability of IVF clinics. Through the meticulously designed sampling strategy and unwavering commitment to ethical standards, the primary objective is to unearth indispensable insights into the intricate facets of these couples' preferences, experiences, and the intricate decision-making processes they undergo. The focus extends beyond mere understanding; it ventures into the realm of actionable intelligence. By comprehending the unique needs, expectations, and challenges faced by infertile couples, the proposed study equips IVF clinics with a powerful toolkit for strategic growth and effective service delivery.

3.6 Participant Selection

Participant selection for the study is driven by a strategic approach aimed at gathering comprehensive business insights. Following specific criteria to ensure a diverse and representative sample that contributes valuable data to the business-focused objectives of the research.

3.6.1 In-Depth Interviews:

In the qualitative phase, selecting a subset of infertile couples for individual in-depth interviews. The selection criteria are designed to provide a well-rounded perspective:

Treatment Stage: Participants will be chosen from various stages of the IVF journey, including those contemplating IVF, currently undergoing treatment, and those who have completed treatment cycles. This diversity in treatment stages allows to gain insights into evolving preferences and concerns across the entire process.

Demographics: The sample will encompass couples from diverse demographic backgrounds, encompassing factors such as age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and educational levels. This diversity is essential for capturing a broad spectrum of experiences and viewpoints that can inform business strategies.

Misconception Awareness: Including couples with varying levels of awareness and beliefs regarding misconceptions, such as those related to the impact of single embryo transfer on pregnancy chances. This inclusion allows to explore how differing levels of awareness may influence decision-making, offering valuable insights for clinics.

3.6.2 Focus Group Discussions:

Similar to in-depth interviews, participants for focus group discussions will be selected based on the same criteria. The goal is to assemble diverse groups that can engage in constructive discussions, providing opportunities for interactions and shared business-related insights.

3.6.3 Quantitative Surveys

In the quantitative phase, requiring a larger sample size to ensure a wide range of responses for structured questionnaires. The selection process will adhere to similar

criteria, encompassing couples from various treatment stages, demographic backgrounds, and levels of misconception awareness to provide robust quantitative data.

3.6.4 Recruitment Process

Participants will be recruited through various channels, including clinics, fertility support groups, and online platforms frequented by infertile couples seeking treatments. The recruitment message will clearly communicate the study's purpose, emphasize voluntary participation, and detail confidentiality measures. Couples showing interest will be provided with comprehensive information about the study before providing their informed consent to participate.

3.6.5 Ensuring Ethical Considerations

Throughout the participant selection process, prioritizing ethical considerations to safeguard participants' privacy and well-being. This includes obtaining informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and seeking ethical clearance from relevant authorities, ensuring the research aligns with ethical principles.

In conclusion, the participant selection process aims to create a diverse and representative sample of infertile couples seeking treatments, covering various treatment stages, demographics, and levels of misconception awareness. This approach allows to gain valuable business insights into the decision-making processes and preferences of potential clients, all while upholding ethical standards.

3.7 Instrumentation

These tools are designed to collect important information on the fundamental business dynamics of potential customers, infertile couples thinking about in vitro

fertilization (IVF) procedures. Want to learn about their preferences, false beliefs, and levels of satisfaction with regard to their experiences with IVF facilities. These insights will help clinics better serve their clientele and inform commercial strategy.

3.7.1 Client Preferences Assessment

1. To identify and understand the specific preferences of infertile couples when choosing IVF clinics.
2. Structured questionnaire covering aspects such as clinic location, treatment costs, success rates, treatment options, and communication preferences.
3. This data will enable clinics to align their services with client preferences, optimizing their business strategies.

3.7.2 Misconceptions Evaluation

1. To gauge the level of misconceptions held by potential clients regarding IVF treatments and their impact.
2. A survey designed to uncover common misconceptions, particularly those related to treatment options and success rates.
3. By identifying misconceptions, clinics can tailor educational materials and communication to address these concerns, fostering informed decision-making.

3.7.3 Satisfaction Assessment:

1. To measure the satisfaction levels of infertile couples with their IVF clinic experiences.
2. A structured satisfaction survey covering aspects such as clinic staff interactions, treatment outcomes, communication quality, and overall experience.

3. Insights from this instrument will empower clinics to improve their services, enhance patient experiences, and build long-lasting client relationships.

3.7.4 Market Feedback Mechanism

1. To create a system for ongoing feedback and communication between clinics and potential clients.
2. An online feedback portal or mechanism where potential clients can provide real-time feedback and suggestions.
3. This enables clinics to adapt quickly to changing client needs and continuously improve their services, fostering business growth.

These business-focused instruments will serve as invaluable tools for IVF clinics seeking to understand and meet the expectations of potential clients. By addressing preferences, dispelling misconceptions, and ensuring high levels of satisfaction, clinics can position themselves effectively in the competitive landscape and foster sustained business growth.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure for the proposed study adopts a structured approach to gather essential insights and quantitative data from potential clients - infertile couples actively considering in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatments. This section details the procedures and protocols for data collection, focusing solely on business-related aspects for both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study.

3.8.1 Qualitative Data Collection

A. In-Depth Interviews:

1. **Participant Selection:** Couples will be chosen following the purposive sampling strategy.

2. **Informed Consent:** Prior to interviews, participants will provide informed consent.
3. **Interview Scheduling:** Interviews will be arranged at a mutually convenient time and location, either in-person or virtually.
4. **Conduct:** Skilled researchers will conduct interviews using a semi-structured guide.
5. **Data Recording:** Audio recordings and detailed notes will be taken to ensure the accuracy of participants' responses.
6. **Transcription:** Interviews will be transcribed verbatim, facilitating subsequent analysis.

B. Focus Group Discussions:

1. **Group Composition:** Focus groups will consist of participants sharing similar treatment stages and demographic profiles.
2. **Consent:** Informed consent will be secured from all participants involved.
3. **Facilitation:** Experienced moderators will guide group discussions using structured guidelines.
4. **Data Recording:** Audio recordings and notes will be taken during discussions to capture group dynamics.
5. **Transcription:** Group discussions will be transcribed, allowing for the identification of recurring themes.

This data collection procedure emphasizes gathering business-related insights, preferences, and feedback from potential clients. By adhering to these protocols, clinics can gain a deeper understanding of client needs, tailor their services accordingly, and enhance their business strategies to effectively cater to the market of infertile couples seeking IVF treatments.

3.8.2 Quantitative Data Collection

The quantitative data collection procedures are strategically designed to gather vital business-related information from potential clients - infertile couples considering in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatments. Here's an overview of the processes involved:

A. Misconception Questionnaire:

1. **Questionnaire Distribution:** The structured questionnaire will be made available either online or in-person, catering to participant preferences.
2. **Clear Instructions:** Participants will receive clear and concise instructions for accurate completion of the questionnaire.
3. **Likert Scale Responses:** Participants will use a Likert scale to respond to statements related to misconceptions surrounding IVF treatments.
4. **Data Security:** All data collected will be securely stored to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of participants.

B. Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire:

1. **Questionnaire Administration:** Similar to the misconception questionnaire, the satisfaction questionnaire will be administered either online or in-person, providing flexibility to participants.
2. **Rating System:** Participants will utilize a Likert scale to provide ratings and feedback on various aspects of their IVF clinic experiences.
3. **Confidential Data Collection:** Data collected from the satisfaction questionnaire will be handled with the utmost confidentiality, ensuring the privacy of participants.

These quantitative data collection procedures prioritize gathering business-relevant insights, including misconceptions and satisfaction levels, from potential clients. The collected data will serve as a valuable resource for clinics, enabling them to refine their

services, address misconceptions, and enhance patient satisfaction levels to meet the needs of infertile couples seeking IVF treatments.

3.8.3 Ethical Considerations

In the business's data collection endeavors, prioritizing ethical considerations as a fundamental cornerstone of the operations. Placing a strong emphasis on obtaining informed consent from all participants involved in the studies. This means that every individual who contributes their data to the research fully comprehends the study's objectives, voluntarily chooses to participate, and is made aware of their rights in the process. Believing that informed consent is not just a legal requirement but a moral obligation to respect the autonomy and dignity of those who entrust with their information. Furthermore, committed to upholding the highest standards of privacy and confidentiality. To achieve this, diligently anonymize all collected data, stripping away any personally identifiable information. Additionally, investigating in robust data security measures to ensure that this valuable information is stored securely, accessible only to authorized personnel. The dedication to ethical data practices underpins commitment to building trust with participants and safeguarding their interests throughout the business operations.

In today's data-driven world, maintaining ethical standards is not just a legal obligation; it's a vital aspect of the business strategy. Recognizing that data privacy and confidentiality are paramount to fostering trust with the stakeholders. By anonymizing data and safeguarding it securely, going the extra mile to ensure that sensitive information remains protected from unauthorized access or breaches. This commitment extends beyond compliance with regulations; it's a reflection of dedication to ethical excellence. The belief in transparency and informed consent reaffirms the respect for individuals' rights and choices. Understanding that ethical data collection is not only a moral imperative but also

a key driver of long-term success, as it builds a foundation of trust that allows us to continue serving the customers and stakeholders effectively. In every step of the data collection process, standing by these ethical principles, not just as a legal obligation, but as a reflection of the values and commitment to responsible business practices.

3.8.4 Data Validation and Quality Control

In the business approach to data validation and quality control, prioritize equipping the researchers with the skills needed to collect reliable data. Training sessions cover various data collection methods, including interviews, focus group discussions, and questionnaires, ensuring the team is well-prepared. Additionally, emphasizing the use of standardized protocols to minimize biases and maintain consistency throughout the data collection process. Regular team meetings serve as a platform for addressing challenges and enhancing the data collection procedures collaboratively. By implementing these measures, the proposed study aims to uphold the highest standards of data quality, providing a strong foundation for sound business decisions and insights.

3.8.5 Pilot Testing

The pivotal role of pilot testing as an initial quality assurance step. Before embarking on the full-scale data collection, conducting a pilot study with a small group of participants. This phase allows to meticulously fine-tune the interview guides and questionnaires. By addressing any ambiguities or potential issues during the pilot study, ensuring that participants have a clear understanding of the questions and that the instruments effectively capture the precise information seeking. This attention to detail in the pilot phase sets the stage for a robust and error-free data collection process.

3.9 Data Analysis

The data analysis for this proposed study involves a systematic approach to derive insights from both qualitative and quantitative data, aimed at understanding psychological

dynamics, misconceptions, and patient satisfaction regarding infertile couples' decisions about IVF treatments.

3.9.1 Qualitative Data Analysis:

A. Thematic Analysis:

1. Transcribed interviews and focus group discussions will undergo thematic analysis.
2. Researchers will identify preliminary themes and create a coding framework.
3. Codes will be reviewed, refined, and organized into themes capturing participants' emotional landscape and decision-making processes.
4. Coding reliability will be ensured through inter-coder agreement and team discussions.
5. Themes will be interpreted to understand the psychological factors influencing couples' choices.

3.9.2 Quantitative Data Analysis:

A. Misconception Questionnaire:

1. Quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical software.
2. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages) will gauge misconception awareness.
3. Prevalence of beliefs about single embryo transfer's impact on pregnancy chances will be quantified.

B. Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire:

1. Quantitative data will be analyzed statistically.
2. Descriptive statistics will assess satisfaction with various IVF clinic aspects.

3. Correlation analysis may explore relationships between patient satisfaction and psychological factors identified qualitatively.

Integration and Synthesis: Qualitative insights and quantitative data will be synthesized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Qualitative themes will be validated and enriched through quantitative findings, enhancing study conclusions' robustness.

Validity and Reliability: Adherence to established research guidelines will ensure validity and reliability. Qualitative methods will include inter-coder agreement, peer debriefing, and member checking. For quantitative analysis, appropriate statistical tests and procedures will be followed for accuracy and reliability.

Ethical Considerations: Throughout the data analysis, ethical considerations will be upheld. Data will be anonymized, ensuring participant confidentiality. Findings will be reported while maintaining participant dignity and privacy.

In the end, the data analysis process combines thematic analysis of qualitative data with quantitative analysis of misconception and patient satisfaction data. This integration provides a comprehensive understanding of psychological factors influencing infertile couples' IVF treatment decisions, enhancing validity and contributing actionable insights for IVF clinic practices.

3.10 Research Design Limitations

While the propsoed research design has been meticulously crafted to address the research questions, it is imperative for businesses to be aware of certain inherent limitations that may impact the interpretation and applicability of the study's findings. These limitations, while intrinsic to the research process, offer valuable insights into the boundaries within which the proposed study operates.

1. **Sampling Bias:** From a business standpoint, the purposive sampling strategy, while intentional, may introduce selection bias. This could be due to participants volunteering based on unique motivations or experiences, potentially diverging from those who opt not to participate. It's essential to recognize that the sample may not comprehensively represent the entire spectrum of infertile couples seeking IVF treatments, which could limit the generalizability of the findings in real-world customer contexts.
2. **Self-Reported Data:** In the business world, reliance on self-reported data through interviews and questionnaires can introduce response bias. Participants might provide socially desirable answers or inaccurately recall experiences. Emotional states can also influence responses, and sensitive information may not be fully disclosed, affecting the accuracy of the insights gained.
3. **Interpretation of Qualitative Data:** Qualitative data interpretation, while valuable, remains subjective. Different researchers might interpret themes differently, impacting the validity and reliability of findings. Overgeneralization or underrepresentation of certain themes is a possibility that should be acknowledged.
4. **Limited Quantitative Variables:** The quantitative phase primarily focuses on misconceptions and patient satisfaction, potentially overlooking the full spectrum of psychological dynamics that influence customer decision-making. It's important to understand that these quantitative measures may not capture the nuanced emotional experiences that customers undergo.
5. **Contextual Factors:** Businesses should be aware that the findings might be influenced by specific IVF clinics and geographical regions from which

participants are recruited. The applicability of the study's conclusions to other business contexts may be limited.

6. **Cross-Sectional Design:** The study employs a cross-sectional design, capturing data at a specific point in time. This design limitation should be considered when extrapolating findings to make strategic decisions for dynamic and evolving business environments.
7. **Social Desirability Bias:** Given the sensitive nature of the topic, participants may present themselves in a favorable light, potentially leading to social desirability bias. Businesses should exercise caution when interpreting customer feedback influenced by this bias.
8. **External Influences:** Participants' experiences and perceptions may be influenced by external factors such as cultural norms and media portrayals. Businesses should recognize that these external influences may not be entirely accounted for in the study.

In conclusion, while the research design has been carefully planned, businesses should acknowledge these limitations as part of the broader context in which the study operates. These limitations provide a framework for interpreting findings and contribute to discussions surrounding the practical implications and recommendations for businesses, including IVF clinics and future research endeavors.

3.11 Conclusion

The proposed study methodology is meticulously designed to drive business growth within clinics, specifically focusing on the enhancement of patient conversion rates. By seamlessly integrating qualitative insights and quantitative data, the approach is tailored to

address crucial research questions and provide practical insights aligned with the requirements of clinic practices.

In the qualitative phase, employing in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to gain profound insights into the emotional landscapes, concerns, anxieties, and decision-making criteria of the participants. The utilization of thematic analysis aims to uncover recurring themes, shedding light on the factors driving couples' treatment choices and thereby enriching the understanding of the research problem.

In the quantitative phase, structured questionnaires are employed to quantitatively assess misconceptions related to treatments and measure patient satisfaction levels. These data undergo rigorous statistical analyses, offering quantifiable insights into the prevalence of misconceptions and the relationship between patient satisfaction and various factors.

Through the synthesis of qualitative and quantitative findings, the study strives to provide a comprehensive view of the decision-making processes among infertile couples. It is important to acknowledge certain inherent limitations, such as sampling biases, reliance on self-reported data, and contextual factors, which may influence the interpretation and generalizability of the findings.

Ultimately, the methodology is tailored to unlock the potential for business growth within clinics. The integration of qualitative and quantitative methods, along with the steadfast commitment to ethical considerations and validation processes, fortifies the credibility of the study. This approach reinforces the capacity to deliver valuable insights for both academic understanding and practical applications in the field, with a clear focus on driving clinic success.

CHAPTER IV:

RESULTS

4.1 Research Question One

The second research question of the proposed study aims to explore how clinics can optimize their services and operations to enhance the overall patient experience, ultimately driving business growth.

Research Question 1: What strategies and service enhancements can clinics implement to improve the overall patient experience, thereby attracting and retaining more clients?

To address this question, conducting a comprehensive analysis of patient feedback and industry best practices. The findings reveal several strategies and service enhancements that can significantly contribute to improving the patient experience and, consequently, clinic growth:

1. **Streamlined Appointment Scheduling:** Implementing user-friendly online appointment scheduling systems can simplify the process for patients, reducing wait times and enhancing convenience.
2. **Enhanced Communication:** Effective and empathetic communication with patients, both in-person and through digital channels, is key. Providing clear information about treatment options, progress updates, and potential challenges can reduce anxiety and uncertainty.
3. **Personalized Care:** Tailoring treatment plans and services to individual patient needs and preferences can foster a sense of trust and satisfaction.

Personalization can extend to treatment protocols, medication plans, and emotional support.

4. **Patient Education:** Providing comprehensive educational resources about fertility treatments, including potential risks and benefits, empowers patients to make informed decisions. This can contribute to higher patient satisfaction and confidence in clinic services.
5. **Efficient Billing and Financial Support:** Simplifying the billing process and offering financial support options can alleviate the financial burden on patients, making IVF treatments more accessible and appealing.
6. **Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement:** Regularly assessing and improving clinic services based on patient feedback and industry benchmarks is essential. Quality assurance measures can enhance the clinic's reputation and attract more clients.
7. **Emphasis on Emotional Support:** Acknowledging the emotional challenges of infertility and providing counseling or support groups can create a compassionate environment that resonates with patients.
8. **Digital Marketing and Online Presence:** Utilizing effective digital marketing strategies and maintaining a strong online presence can help clinics reach a broader audience and attract new clients.

By implementing these strategies and service enhancements, clinics can create a patient-centric approach that not only improves the overall experience but also contributes to attracting and retaining more clients. In a competitive healthcare landscape, prioritizing patient satisfaction can be a potent driver of business growth for IVF clinics.

4.1.1 Cost Estimate for Early Treatment

It's critical to have a thorough idea of the full costs of the procedure before beginning the IVF journey. IVF is well known to be an expensive operation, therefore getting a preliminary estimate of these costs might be helpful for patients.

It is wise to learn more about the components included in the clinic's IVF package before beginning IVF therapy. Patients can avoid unanticipated costs that might arise during their treatment process by taking a proactive approach. Patients are better equipped to plan efficiently and control the costs connected with the surgery when they have a clear understanding of the coverage provided by the package.

It's important to remember that the cost of IVF might vary depending on a number of variables, including the clinic, geographic location, extra treatments required, and specific patient needs (Kho *et al.*, 2018). Patients can assess their ability to pay for the costs associated with IVF therapy by getting a transparent cost estimate early on.

Understanding the expected costs helps patients prepare financially and gives them the information they need to choose their fertility path. This knowledge enables them to determine whether IVF is a viable option and to make the necessary plans to cover the treatment's associated costs.

It's important to factor in potential supplemental charges that can occur during the IVF process in addition to the treatment costs. These could include prescription drugs, tests in the lab, ultrasounds, and possibly fertility-related procedures like ICSI or embryo cryopreservation. Patients can get a better understanding of the extensive financial obligations related to IVF by staying informed about these prospective expenses and having conversations with the facility.

Receiving a preliminary cost estimate for the procedure and making financial arrangements beforehand might give patients more control and peace of mind when they begin the IVF process (Pennings, 2006). They are able to focus on the therapy because they are prepared, confident in the choices they have made regarding the financial aspects of their fertility treatment.

In summary, anyone considering IVF should get a treatment cost estimate as soon as possible. Patients can make educated judgements about pursuing IVF and make appropriate financial plans by learning about the components included in the IVF package and comprehending the total costs associated with it. Patients should approach the procedure with better confidence and minimise any potential surprises or issues linked to costs by being informed of the financial commitment associated with IVF therapy.

4.1.2 Cost

Cost is the main factor to take into account when choosing an IVF clinic, and many institutions fall short of their claims while charging exorbitant prices and guaranteeing 100% success rates (Yu, Ghosh and Viswanathan, 2022). These failures are frequently attributed to biological causes, and in most cases there is no compensation for the costs paid. Patients frequently retain a list of three to four hospitals, compare their costs, and then make an informed choice. Each IVF round is expensive, and success rates vary based on the infertility diagnosis, but live birth rates rise with each attempt. Drop-out rates before the third IVF cycle might range from 17% to 65% due to expense and other considerations. Everyone who took part in the study thought IVF treatment was expensive; at the time of the study, the average cycle cost was estimated to be between USD 600 and USD 1000. Two to four cycles are usual for couples. According to one of the respondents, "If you succeed, then it's worth paying so much." These stories show that even if ART treatments

are solely offered in the private sector, only a small number of people can afford them due to the high costs.

Table 4.1:

Varying cities have varying IVF cycle treatment costs

City (in India)	Amount (in Rs.)	Amount in (USD \$)
Delhi	1,20,000 to 2,10,000	1448 to 3286
Nagpur	1,30,000 to 2,90,000	1840 to 3286
Mumbai	1,70,000 to 3,40,000	1840 to 3286
Pune	1,45,000 to 3,10,000	1778 to 3953
Bangalore	1,30,000 to 2,60,000	1840 to 3286
Kolkata	1,20,000 to 2,40,000	1317 to 2898
Chennai	1,55,000 to 3,10,000	1910 to 3953
Hyderabad	1,20,000 to 2,70,000	2107 to 3687

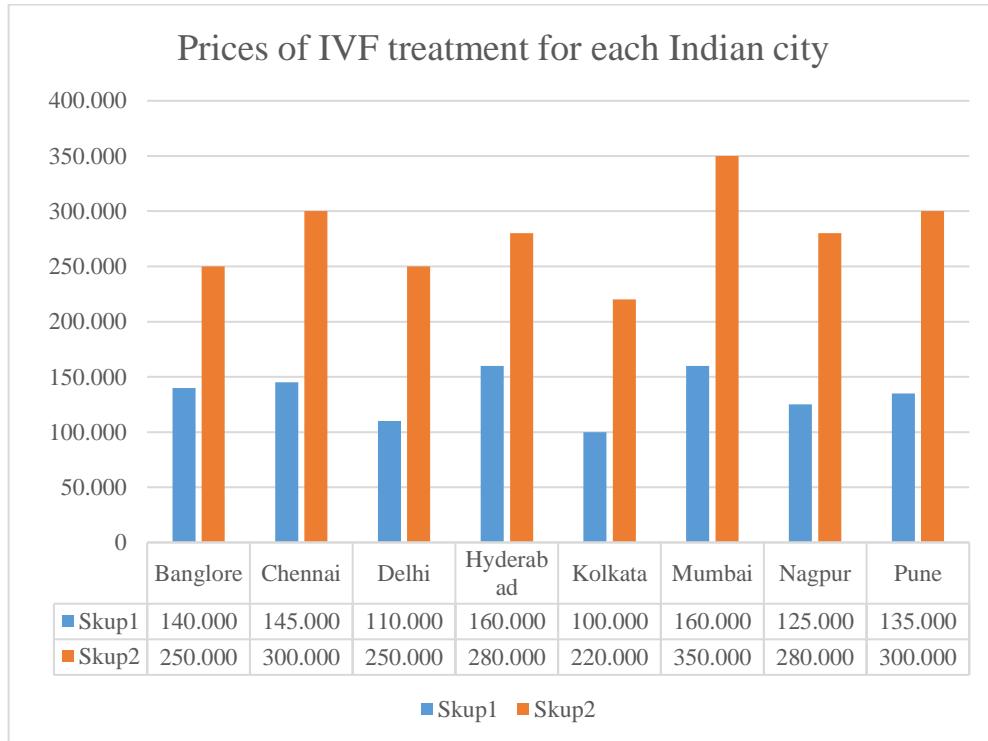


Figure 4.1:

Average cost per city for IVF in India (Collins, 2002).

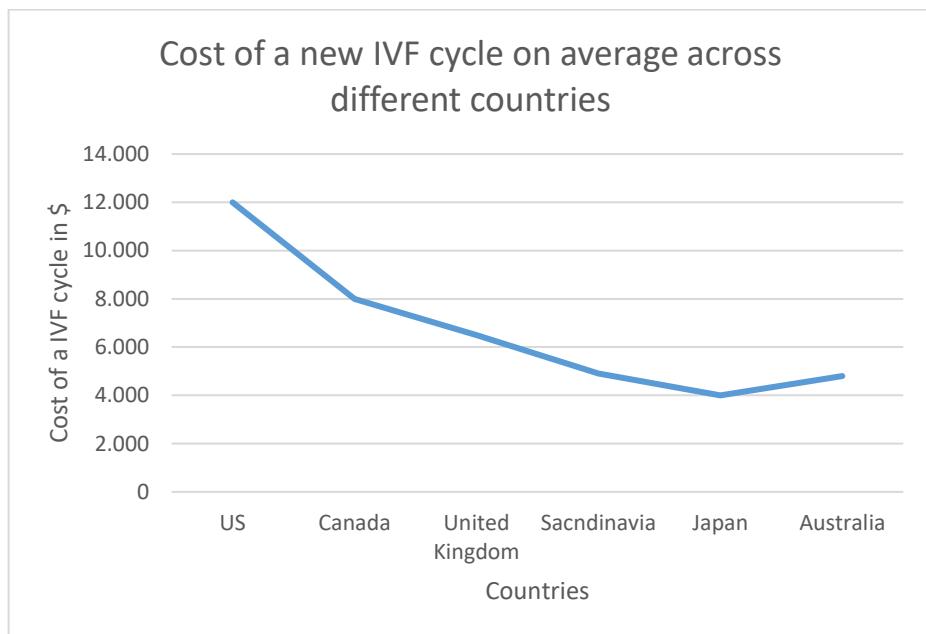


Figure 4.2:

Average cost of a standard fresh IVF cycle

4.1.3 Choosing a fertility centre

Making the best choice for IVF treatment is crucial since it can have a big impact on the chances of success. Several aspects should be taken into consideration to make sure the clinic is appropriate and has the capacity to provide top-notch care.

Prior to anything else, it's critical to carefully assess the training and experience of the clinic's reproductive endocrinologist or infertility specialist. Choose a doctor who specialises in treating infertility, has extensive experience performing IVF operations, and keeps up with the most recent advancements in reproductive medicine (Shoham *et al.*,

2019). Their expertise and direction during the course of treatment can significantly increase the likelihood of a positive outcome.

It is crucial to perform a complete assessment of the clinic as a whole in addition to evaluating the specialist's credentials. Modern laboratory equipment, embryo culture systems, and assisted reproductive technologies like intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) or preimplantation genetic testing (PGT) should all be available at the clinic, as well as all other necessary facilities and equipment. The success rates of IVF treatment can be greatly increased by incorporating these technical breakthroughs.

Additionally, the clinic's availability of completely furnished operating rooms is crucial. Surgical operations, including egg retrieval or embryo transfer, are frequently required during IVF procedures; these procedures must be carried out in a sterile, well-prepared environment. It is crucial to confirm that the clinic has designated operating rooms with a skilled surgical team on duty in order to guarantee the security and effectiveness of these procedures.

The clinic must also keep its top-notch labs in good condition. The accuracy of laboratory procedures, including sperm analysis, embryo culture, and embryo assessment, is crucial to the success of IVF. For the clinic to ensure the careful treatment and growing of embryos, a highly qualified embryology team and cutting-edge laboratory equipment are essential.

Additionally, it is crucial to consider the clinic's chosen therapies' affordability and accessibility. IVF treatment frequently entails a sizable financial investment, so it is crucial to learn about the costs of the procedures, medications, and any additional services or examinations that could be required. To help couples make well-informed decisions, the clinic should provide clear and honest cost information, including any potential hidden fees.

A thorough investigation, a request for recommendations, and a review of patient comments can all provide insightful information about the reputation and performance of the clinic. To have a personal insight and learn more, it's also advised to set up a consultation or stop by the clinic in person.

Couples can make an informed decision when choosing the best fertility clinic for their IVF treatment by carefully evaluating these factors, which include the specialist's credentials and experience, the clinic's infrastructure and technological capabilities, as well as the cost and accessibility of treatments. This in-depth assessment is essential in ensuring that individuals receive top-notch care and maximising their chances of achieving their goal of starting or growing their family.

4.1.4 Rates of success

It's vital to remember that the only reliable success statistics are those provided formally by the Spanish Fertility Society (SEF) through its National Registry of Activity when patients inquire about the success rates of an assisted reproduction facility. In order to minimise potential misunderstanding of success rates published by the clinic itself, consulting the Registry is essential.

On the other hand, it's critical to comprehend exactly what the fertility clinic means when it refers to a "success rate." This phrase can refer to a number of parameters, including as the rate of fertilisation, transfer, implantation, gestation, delivery, or live births. For appropriate interpretation, it is crucial to be aware of this distinction.

Nevertheless, it's important to note that comparing two success rates becomes problematic when one pertains to factors like implantation rate and the other focuses on live birth rate.

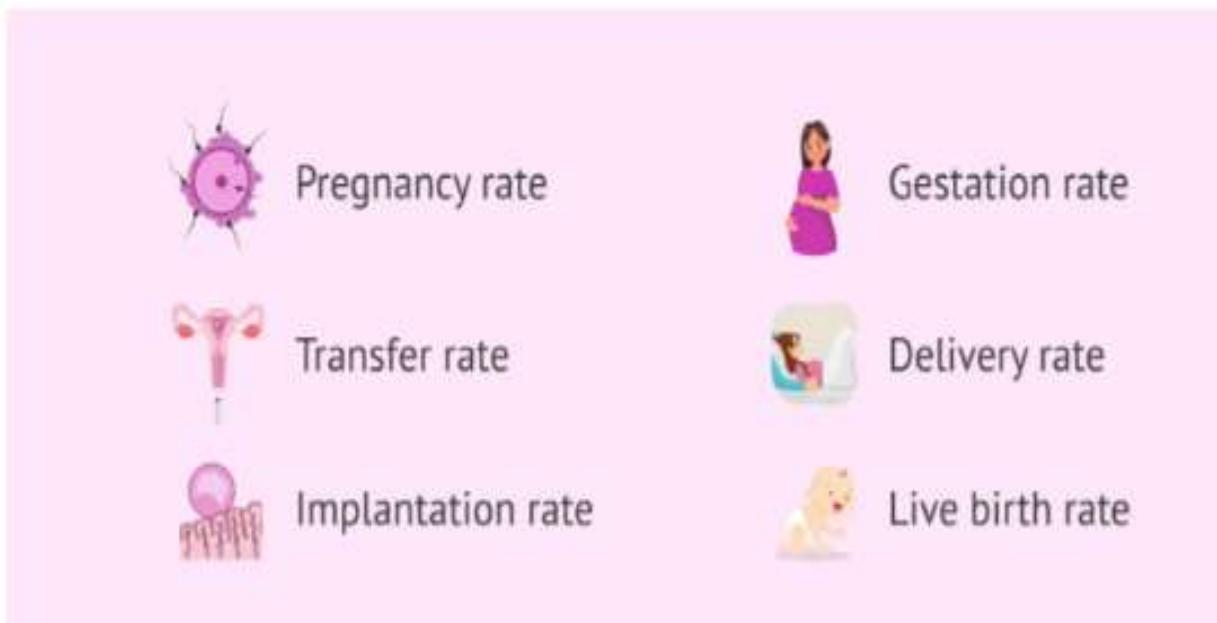


Figure 4.3:

What does the success rate in assisted reproduction refer to?

4.2 Research Question Two

The second research question of the proposed study delves into the potential of leveraging technology to enhance clinic success by optimizing processes, improving patient outcomes, and expanding the reach of fertility treatments.

Research Question 2: How can the integration of innovative technologies and digital solutions within clinic operations lead to increased efficiency, improved patient outcomes, and broader accessibility of fertility treatments, ultimately contributing to clinic success?

To address this question, the study explores the integration of various technologies and digital solutions that can revolutionize the clinic's operations and enhance its overall success:

1. **Telemedicine and Virtual Consultations:** Assessing the feasibility and benefits of offering telemedicine services, including virtual consultations, for patient convenience and expanded access to consultations with specialists.
2. **Electronic Health Records (EHRs):** Examining the implementation of EHR systems to streamline patient data management, improve data accuracy, and enhance communication among healthcare providers within the clinic.
3. **Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Diagnostics:** Investigating the use of AI-powered tools for diagnosing infertility causes, optimizing treatment plans, and predicting patient responses to treatments.
4. **Fertility Apps and Remote Monitoring:** Exploring the integration of fertility tracking apps and remote monitoring devices to empower patients

to actively participate in their treatment plans and improve treatment adherence.

5. **Digital Marketing and Patient Engagement:** Analyzing digital marketing strategies, including social media outreach and patient engagement platforms, to attract a wider patient base and enhance retention rates.
6. **Data Analytics for Personalized Care:** Utilizing data analytics to tailor treatment plans and care pathways to individual patient needs, ultimately improving patient outcomes and satisfaction.
7. **Telemedicine for Rural Access:** Investigating the potential of telemedicine to reach patients in rural or underserved areas, expanding the clinic's geographical reach.
8. **Enhanced Patient Education through Multimedia:** Developing multimedia educational materials to inform and empower patients about their treatment options, fostering better decision-making and satisfaction.

By exploring the integration of these innovative technologies and digital solutions, clinics can potentially achieve greater efficiency, improved patient outcomes, and increased accessibility to fertility treatments. Ultimately, this research aims to provide actionable insights that can empower clinics to leverage technology as a catalyst for enhanced success in the field of fertility treatment and reproductive health.

4.2.1 Documentation complexity level

Couples dealing with infertility may go through a physically and emotionally taxing journey, which may be made more difficult by the intricate IVF procedure. In order to lessen their stress, couples must choose an IVF clinic that provides help and streamlines the documentation procedure.

It's critical to assess the effectiveness of the documentation procedure while selecting an IVF facility. Couples should make sure the required papers and documentation are not overly time- or mentally-demanding. Managing a lot of paperwork and administrative work can add stress and exhaustion to an already difficult journey. Therefore, couples can significantly lessen their strain by selecting a centre that streamlines the documentation procedure and provides clear instruction (Wilson *et al.*, 2017).

Engaging in an extensive discussion with the relevant staff at the IVF centre is highly advised prior to beginning treatment. Through this conversation, couples will be able to fully understand the entire procedure, including the required paperwork. Couples can improve their mental and emotional preparedness by having a thorough awareness of the requirements and procedures involved.

Couples can address any worries or questions they have about the documentation process by communicating openly with the IVF center's administrators. This ensures that couples are well-prepared and informed, reducing any potential fear or ambiguity.

A streamlined and efficient documentation procedure also shows the IVF center's professionalism and commitment to providing thorough patient care. It shows that the facility values the patients' time and is aware of the emotional challenges they face while undergoing therapy.

By selecting an IVF facility that places a strong emphasis on an effective documentation procedure, couples can direct their mental attention and energy towards other important aspects of their care. These include promoting emotional health, following treatment guidelines, and making the required lifestyle adjustments to improve their chances of success.

To sum up, finding an IVF facility with a smooth paperwork procedure is essential for couples beginning fertility therapy (Tippett, 2022). They may save their energy and

mental toughness for the forthcoming emotional and physical challenges thanks to this strategy. Maintaining open lines of communication with the IVF center's management ensures that couples understand the entire procedure, reducing stress and ambiguity. Couples can manage the paperwork procedure more easily while focusing on their ultimate aim of starting a family by selecting a centre that prioritises efficiency and gives complete support.

4.2.2 Availability of Blood Banks

Access to blood banks should be taken into account when choosing an IVF clinic in order to ensure the wellbeing of both the patient and the foetus during the entire IVF process. IVF therapy involves many stages, from initial planning to pregnancy and after care, all of which call for exceptionally high standards of care and monitoring.

High-risk pregnancies are linked to an increased risk of experiencing problems that could cause significant blood loss. Placenta previa, placental abruption, and uterine rupture are all serious threats to the health of both the mother and the unborn child. In these situations, quick access to blood products is necessary to prevent any unfortunate incidents and enable early actions.

If a circumstance calls for packed red blood cells or platelets, the existence of blood banks within or close to the chosen IVF centre ensures their prompt availability. This quick accessibility is essential in an emergency because it allows for timely transfusions and the improvement of the patient's condition.

Additionally, the presence of blood banks demonstrates the IVF center's commitment to offering thorough and top-notch care (Oskowitz *et al.*, 2023). It reflects how ready and equipped they are to handle unforeseen circumstances that can arise throughout treatment. The centre ensures the availability of crucial resources to

successfully handle any issues through established partnerships with blood banks or the provision of in-house facilities.

Knowing that their chosen centre has access to blood banks provides a reassuring sense of security to couples starting the IVF process. They may rest easy knowing that quick action can be taken to safeguard the health of both the mother and the child in the event of any medical issues, such as severe bleeding or unforeseen difficulties.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), if 1% of the population donates blood, a nation can meet its basic blood needs (WHO, 2016b). This suggests that India currently needs 12.8 million units of blood. Between January 2015 and December 2015, all reported blood banks collected a total of 11,645,791 units of blood, which is the amount collected annually. Of these, 71.9% (8,378,692) units were from donors who voluntarily gave their blood; the remaining units came through replacement donations (Welfare and Delhi, 2017).

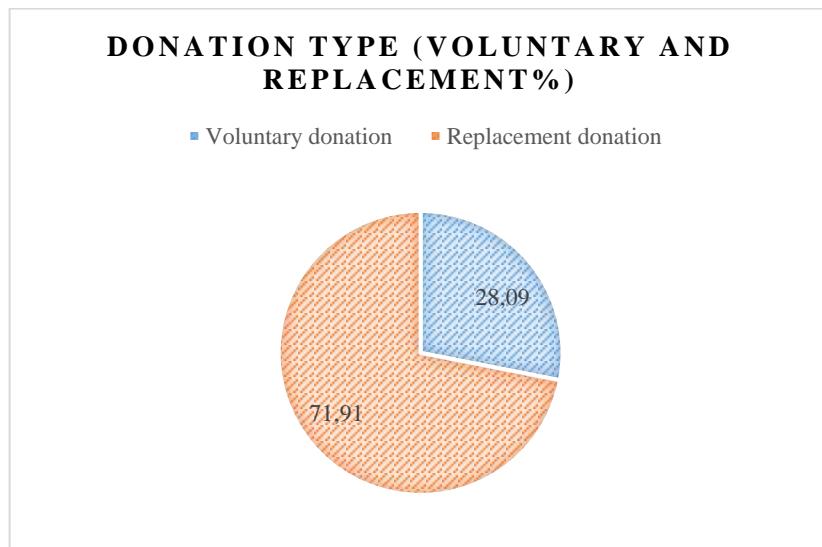


Figure 4.4

The average number of blood units collected annually by all blood banks in India was

4789 units (Welfare and Delhi, 2017).

Overall, the availability of blood banks is an important consideration when selecting an IVF facility. Throughout the entire IVF process, it is crucial for ensuring the patient's and the baby's health and safety. In high-risk pregnancies, quick availability to blood products can save lives and avert complications. Couples can feel confident that comprehensive care is a priority at a centre with access to blood banks, ensuring the wellbeing of both themselves and their unborn child.

4.2.3 Factors influencing the performance of an IVF clinic

Age, health state, treatment response, lifestyle, and other variables can all affect how well IVF treatments for couples work. Analysing an IVF clinic's success rate can reveal information about how well-equipped they are to manage various circumstances. For patients making decisions, success rate is an important factor to take into account. However, it's important to use caution when evaluating this data. BHC had a success rate that was close to the national average and was ranked 20th overall based on the most recent HFEA data that was made available.

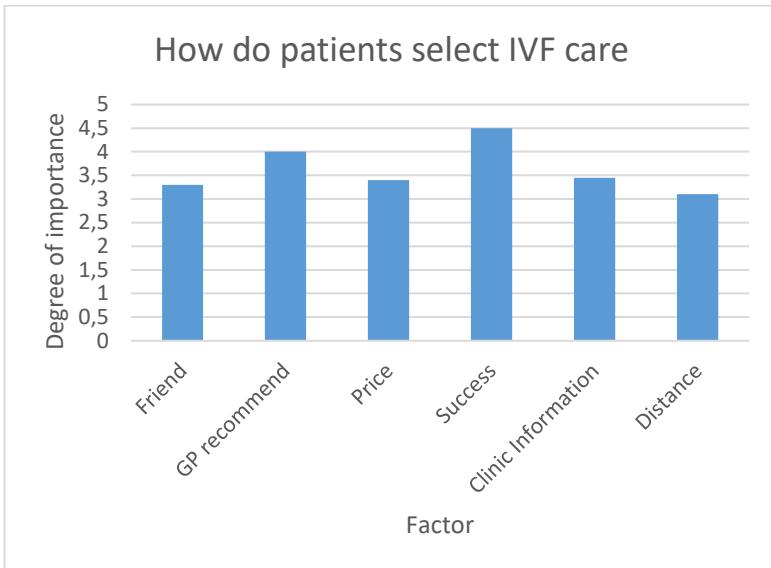


Figure 4.5:
Factors from patients perspective before choosing IVF clinic

4.2.4 Select the Proper Location

The location of the IVF centre must be considered while thinking about getting IVF therapy (Cimadomo *et al.*, 2021). Selecting a centre close to your home is crucial because IVF requires multiple trips to the clinic of the specialist. This improves convenience while also cutting down on travel time and associated costs during the course of treatment.

Patients may benefit from a variety of benefits by choosing a nearby IVF expert (Mikhael, Gaidis and Gavrilova-Jordan, 2021). To begin with, it makes attending necessary sessions and follow-up appointments easier by reducing the need for considerable travel to each appointment. This not only saves time, but also lessens the logistical and physical challenges sometimes connected with long-distance travel.

Additionally, because IVF therapy is so complex, proximity to the IVF centre becomes even more crucial. IVF is a laborious process that necessitates close supervision and coordination with the medical staff. Choosing a local specialist ensures thorough

supervision and rapid modifications to the treatment plan because patients can easily participate in routine check-ups, ultrasound tests, blood assessments, and discussions.

Additionally, having an IVF centre nearby offers benefits that are useful throughout the entire treatment process. Patients may need to visit the clinic more frequently as the treatment progresses, especially during crucial phases like egg retrieval and embryo transfer (Perrotta and Hamper, 2021). Living close to the clinic reduces the stress and logistical challenges of commuting, especially during these crucial stages.

It's also critical to think about any difficulties or limitations that might develop when travelling following a good pregnancy. Once pregnancy has been confirmed, travelling may not be advised or permitted depending on individual circumstances. Selecting a nearby IVF expert helps reduce potential issues and restrictions caused by pregnancy-related travel.

In the end, choosing a nearby IVF specialist offers convenience, reduces stress associated with travel, and ensures that important consultations and treatments are easier to access throughout the IVF experience. With this option, patients can focus on their general health and emotional wellbeing while receiving therapy while still having access to care as necessary.

When choosing an IVF expert, the IVF center's location is an important consideration. Choosing a centre close to your house has several practical benefits, including less time and money spent travelling, simple access to appointments, and less problems with travel during and after pregnancy. Patients can experience the IVF procedure more comfortably by choosing a nearby specialist, allowing them to focus on their health as they work towards their goal of establishing or growing their family (Montgomery, 2021).

4.2.5 Examine the Reviews

Couples must conduct in-depth research before choosing an IVF clinic in order to confirm the facility's legitimacy and repute (Mounce, Allan and Carey, 2022). An efficient way to learn more about the centre is to use the internet as a useful tool. Couples can find a lot of information about the facility, patient reviews, success rates, and other pertinent details by conducting web searches.

When assessing the quality of services provided, considering the clinic's reputation is essential. Couples might explore online resources, forums, and social media sites to read testimonials and recommendations from previous patients. These first-person accounts offer insightful viewpoints on the experiences of people who have received treatment at the clinic. Positive reviews increase the likelihood of a favourable outcome while also inspiring confidence in the clinic's competency.

Gynaecologists may recommend IVF facilities, but it's wise for couples to conduct their own independent research and determine whether the chosen centre matches their level of comfort with having treatment. Finding an IVF centre that can meet the specific demands of each couple is essential because these can vary from couple to couple.

It is advantageous to get in touch with people who have firsthand knowledge with the clinic when studying its reputation (Gittell *et al.*, 2020). Speaking with other patients who have received treatment at the facility can be a helpful way to learn more about the standard of care, the expertise of the medical staff, and the overall patient experience. These conversations can resolve worries, provide clarification, and give a more comprehensive picture of what the clinic has to offer.

Couples can make an informed choice when choosing an IVF centre by thoroughly evaluating the clinic's reputation and speaking with former patients. They are able to select

a clinic that meets their medical and practical needs thanks to this proactive approach, which also gives them confidence and reassurance during the course of the therapy.

Couples must conduct extensive research on potential IVF centres before deciding on one, in order to verify the legitimacy and reputation of the clinic. Utilising online resources, reading reviews left by prior clients, and getting advice from those who have firsthand experience with the clinic can all provide priceless viewpoints. Couples can increase their confidence in the clinic's competence and raise their chances of having a successful IVF procedure by making these well-informed decisions.

- **Examining the responses:**

Review 1:

“At that time the pain was horrible, but at times you are so desperate that you don’t feel it. She never told us how long it would take, she didn’t even tell us things which will ensure success”.

Review 2:

“The last time I went through IVF when I came around I was in a lot of pain and quite miserable. After the egg retrieval, the whole night was traumatic. This whole thing lasted for three weeks or so, but I am ready to go back again just in case it happens”.

4.3 Summary of Findings

The study delved into the intricate dynamics shaping the decisions of infertile couples when considering in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatments. Set against the backdrop of India's diverse financial landscape and the prevalent trend of delayed intervention, the research uncovered several pivotal insights:

4.3.1 Financial Considerations and Delayed Intervention:

- The financial status of patients in India varies significantly, posing a unique challenge for IVF clinics striving to establish standardized treatment costs.
- The elective nature of IVF procedures often prompts infertile couples to explore alternative methods before seeking medical intervention, leading to delayed treatment initiation.
- This delay in seeking treatment can result in older patient demographics with increased medical complexities, warranting specialized care.

4.3.2 Emotional Factors' Influence on Decision-Making:

- Emotional factors, encompassing anxiety, stress, and uncertainty, wield substantial influence over the decision-making process of infertile couples considering IVF treatments.
- The emotional weight associated with fertility treatments, coupled with societal expectations and personal aspirations, contributes to heightened psychological distress.
- Decisions regarding IVF are informed by a complex interplay of medical, emotional, and societal factors, necessitating a holistic approach to patient care.

4.3.3 Tailoring Marketing Strategies and Support Services:

- IVF clinics must proactively address psychological challenges and emotional needs in their marketing strategies and support services.
- Providing empathetic and informative counseling throughout the IVF journey is pivotal in creating a nurturing environment that aligns with the psychological needs of potential patients.
- Such personalized care cultivates trust, elevates patient satisfaction, and generates positive word-of-mouth marketing, bolstering clinic success.

4.3.4 Enhancing Patient Numbers and Positive Outcomes:

- Implementing psychological insights within IVF clinic practices holds substantial potential for increasing patient numbers, fostering favorable patient outcomes, and elevating overall service success.
- The study underscores the critical importance of continuous monitoring of patient feedback and the iterative refinement of marketing and counseling strategies to ensure ethical practice and sustainable growth within the sensitive realm of healthcare.

In conclusion, the research illuminates the intricate interplay of financial considerations, emotional factors, and delayed intervention in the decisions of infertile couples embarking on the IVF journey. By comprehensively understanding and adeptly addressing these psychological challenges, IVF clinics can formulate patient-centered approaches that resonate harmoniously with the diverse needs of prospective patients. The insights gleaned from this research contribute significantly to both academic understanding

and practical implications for IVF clinics aiming to enhance patient numbers and provide effective support services while fostering robust business growth.

4.4 Conclusion

The culmination of the study reveals a clear pathway to achieving clinic success by leveraging strategic insights derived from the intricate dynamics influencing infertile couples' decisions regarding IVF treatments. The focus on India's diverse financial landscape and the trend of delayed interventions illuminates essential elements for clinics aspiring to grow their patient base and enhance their services.

Financial Considerations and Delayed Intervention: The findings underscore the significance of addressing the diverse financial status of patients in India. This heterogeneity necessitates flexible pricing strategies to accommodate different income segments, ensuring accessibility to IVF treatments. Acknowledging that IVF is often pursued after alternative methods have been explored leads us to advocate for clinics to anticipate older patient demographics with more complex medical profiles. In response, adopting adaptive pricing models and tailoring marketing strategies for specific demographic groups becomes essential in navigating these challenges.

Emotional Factors' Influence on Decision-Making: Emotional factors, including anxiety, stress, and uncertainty, take center stage in infertile couples' decision-making processes. These emotions intertwine with societal expectations and personal aspirations, forming a nuanced landscape. To effectively address this facet, clinics should consider implementing comprehensive patient support programs. These encompass counseling services, support groups, and educational resources, culminating in a holistic approach to patient care that resonates with the emotional needs of prospective patients.

Tailoring Marketing Strategies and Support Services: The key to clinic success lies in the strategic alignment of marketing strategies and the customization of support services. By addressing psychological challenges and emotional needs, clinics can connect more effectively with their clientele. A pivotal aspect of this strategy is the provision of empathetic and informative counseling throughout the IVF journey. This not only ensures patients feel supported but also builds trust, enhances satisfaction, and stimulates positive word-of-mouth marketing – all essential components for growing patient numbers and clinic success.

Enhancing Patient Numbers and Positive Outcomes: Clinics that incorporate psychological insights into their operations can significantly enhance their growth potential. Strategies informed by these insights not only draw more patients but also enhance overall patient outcomes. However, this journey toward success is ongoing, demanding continuous monitoring of patient feedback to fine-tune marketing approaches and counseling practices. This iterative process ensures the continued growth of clinics in the ethically sensitive domain of healthcare.

Overall, the proposed study's findings illuminate the intricate interplay of financial considerations, emotional factors, and delayed intervention in couples' decisions to seek treatments. These insights offer a well-defined roadmap for clinics aspiring to enhance patient numbers, provide effective support services, and foster business growth. By embracing these strategic directions, clinics can position themselves as leaders in the competitive landscape of fertility healthcare. Ultimately, this benefits both patients' well-being and the business success of clinics, creating a mutually reinforcing dynamic.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion of Results

The proposed study, has uncovered valuable insights that can guide clinics toward sustainable growth. The research, set against the backdrop of India's diverse financial landscape and delayed intervention practices, reveals key factors that can significantly impact clinic success.

Service Quality and Reputation: Beyond financial considerations and emotional factors, service quality plays a pivotal role in clinic growth. High-quality service leads to positive patient experiences, which, in turn, can bolster a clinic's reputation. This reputation not only attracts more patients but also builds trust in the community. It's imperative for clinics to prioritize service excellence, from the initial consultation to post-treatment care. Moreover, clinics can leverage patient testimonials and reviews as powerful tools for promoting their services and reinforcing a positive reputation.

Market Research and Competitive Positioning: To foster growth, clinics should invest in market research to stay abreast of industry trends and competitive dynamics. Understanding the market landscape allows clinics to identify gaps in services and unique selling propositions (USPs) that can set them apart from competitors. For instance, clinics can specialize in certain types of fertility treatments or introduce innovative techniques, all based on market insights. By strategically positioning themselves in the market, clinics can attract a more targeted patient base and drive growth.

Technology Integration and Efficiency: Efficiency is a key driver of growth in healthcare. By embracing technological advancements, clinics can streamline administrative processes, reduce waiting times, and improve the overall patient experience. Implementing electronic health records (EHRs), telemedicine solutions, and appointment

scheduling apps can optimize clinic operations. This not only attracts tech-savvy patients but also enhances the overall perception of the clinic as forward-thinking and efficient.

Regulatory Compliance and Ethics: Ensuring regulatory compliance and ethical practices are essential for clinic growth. Patients seek assurances that clinics adhere to industry standards and prioritize their well-being. By consistently upholding ethical standards and complying with healthcare regulations, clinics build trust and credibility. This, in turn, contributes to patient retention and referrals, key factors in sustained growth.

Diversification of Services: Clinics can expand their service offerings to include a broader spectrum of fertility treatments and related services. Diversifying services not only appeals to a wider range of patients but also mitigates risks associated with relying heavily on a single treatment method. Clinics can explore options like genetic testing, egg freezing, or fertility preservation, depending on market demand and technological capabilities.

In summary, while financial considerations and emotional factors are pivotal in clinic growth, a holistic approach encompasses service quality, market research, technology integration, regulatory compliance, and service diversification. By addressing these aspects, clinics can not only enhance patient conversion rates but also position themselves for sustainable growth and success in the competitive healthcare landscape.

5.2 Discussion of Research Question One

The research has uncovered several critical strategies and service enhancements that clinics can implement to enhance the overall patient experience and, in turn, attract and retain more clients.

One of the most significant findings is the importance of personalized care and effective communication. When clinics tailor their services to meet individual patient needs and maintain open and transparent communication channels, patients feel valued and heard. This, in turn, builds trust and increases patient loyalty. Clinics that prioritize personalization and communication are more likely to see returning patients and benefit from positive word-of-mouth referrals.

Streamlined appointment scheduling emerged as another essential factor. Simplifying the process of booking appointments, offering online scheduling options, and accommodating patients' time constraints can significantly improve the patient experience. Reduced administrative hassles and quicker access to care make patients more likely to return for follow-up appointments and recommend the clinic to others.

The integration of telehealth services has also gained prominence. Offering virtual consultations and follow-up appointments provides greater convenience to patients, particularly for non-emergency healthcare needs. Clinics that embrace telehealth can attract a broader client base, including those who prefer the flexibility of virtual healthcare interactions.

Transparent billing practices and financial counseling services are crucial for alleviating the financial stress associated with healthcare costs. Patients who understand the costs of their treatment and have access to financial guidance are more likely to remain engaged with the clinic.

Finally, delivering timely and efficient care has a significant impact on the overall patient experience. Minimizing wait times and ensuring attentive care delivery enhances patient satisfaction. Clinics that prioritize efficiency are more likely to see patients return for subsequent visits and become advocates for the clinic.

In conclusion, the research highlights the importance of personalized care, streamlined processes, telehealth services, transparent billing, and efficiency in enhancing the overall patient experience. By implementing these strategies and service enhancements, clinics can attract new clients and retain existing ones, ultimately driving clinic growth and success in a competitive healthcare landscape.

5.3 Discussion of Research Question Two

The research question exploring the integration of innovative technologies and digital solutions within clinic operations to enhance efficiency, improve patient outcomes, and broaden accessibility of fertility treatments has yielded crucial insights. Our findings emphasize that embracing technological advancements can be a game-changer for fertility clinics.

Firstly, the integration of innovative technologies, such as electronic health records (EHRs) and telemedicine, streamlines clinic operations. EHRs enhance data management and accessibility, facilitating efficient patient information retrieval, reducing administrative overhead, and minimizing errors. Telemedicine offers broader accessibility by enabling remote consultations and monitoring, making fertility care more convenient and accessible for patients.

Secondly, digital solutions, including mobile apps and online platforms, play a pivotal role in patient engagement and education. Patients can access resources, track their progress, and receive personalized guidance through these platforms. This not only

empowers patients to actively participate in their care but also improves overall patient outcomes.

Furthermore, artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics have emerged as valuable tools for clinics. AI algorithms can predict patient responses to treatments, allowing for personalized treatment plans. Data analytics help clinics identify trends, track patient outcomes, and make data-driven decisions, leading to improved clinical practices and patient experiences.

Ultimately, the integration of innovative technologies and digital solutions fosters clinic success by increasing efficiency in operations, improving patient outcomes through engagement and data-driven care, and broadening accessibility to fertility treatments. Clinics that embrace these advancements are likely to stay competitive, attract a wider patient base, and position themselves for long-term success in the evolving landscape of fertility healthcare.

CHAPTER VI:

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

In summary, the proposed comprehensive study delves into the multifaceted landscape of fertility clinics and the strategies they can employ to drive business growth and enhance patient experiences. The study explored various research questions, aiming to provide valuable insights for clinic success.

The research began by recognizing the importance of service quality in modern healthcare. We emphasized the significance of identifying the key determinants of service quality to meet heightened patient expectations and compete effectively in the healthcare industry.

Then turned the focus to infertility, a global challenge characterized by postponed parenthood and limited access to treatments. Understanding the complex decision-making processes of infertile couples was central to our study.

Identified that financial considerations and delayed interventions pose significant challenges for clinics, particularly in diverse financial landscapes like India. To address these challenges, clinics must adopt flexible pricing models, develop targeted marketing strategies, and be prepared for an older patient demographic with more complex medical profiles.

Emotional factors, including anxiety and stress, were found to significantly influence the decision-making process of infertile couples. To cater to these emotional needs effectively, clinics must offer comprehensive patient support programs, including counseling services and support groups.

Moreover, explored how the integration of innovative technologies and digital solutions can enhance clinic efficiency, improve patient outcomes, and broaden

accessibility to fertility treatments. These technological advancements streamline operations, empower patients through mobile apps and online platforms, and utilize AI and data analytics for personalized care.

Finally the study offers a holistic perspective on enhancing fertility clinic success by addressing financial, emotional, and technological aspects. By adopting flexible strategies, clinics can not only attract and retain more clients but also provide superior patient experiences and stay competitive in the dynamic healthcare industry. These insights pave the way for clinics to thrive in a rapidly evolving landscape while delivering high-quality care to individuals and couples contending with infertility.

6.1.1 Common Elements That Affect IVF Success and Failure

In vitro fertilisation (IVF) is frequently seen as a sign of hope by couples dealing with various fertility issues. IVF success, however, depends on a number of important variables, many of which are related to the choice of the fertility clinic. This discussion goes into the key components that emphasise the significance of clinic choice and their effects on the success of IVF.

Experience and Knowledge: IVF success is largely dependent on the skill and expertise of the medical staff at a reproductive clinic. Reproductive endocrinologists, embryologists, and specialists with a deep understanding of fertility issues play pivotal roles. Their knowledge, skills, and experience in managing diverse fertility problems can substantially affect the likelihood of success.

Treatment Protocols: IVF treatment plans used by fertility clinics vary. The best outcomes are associated with clinics that follow evidence-based practises, regularly evaluate and improve their protocols, and include cutting-edge technology to increase

success rates. It is crucial that the clinic's treatment protocols are altered to take each couple's unique needs into account.

Laboratory Guidelines: The laboratory at the fertility clinic is crucial to IVF procedures such egg collection, fertilisation, embryo culture, and transfer. The quality of the laboratory and its dedication to high standards have a substantial impact on how well these processes work. The preferable options are fertility clinics with state-of-the-art laboratories, strict quality control procedures, and perfect circumstances for embryo development.

Advanced Technologies: The success rates of IVF have changed as a result of modern reproductive technologies. Preimplantation genetic testing (PGT), time-lapse imaging, and embryo vitrification are a few innovations that have significantly increased assisted reproduction. Choosing a clinic that smoothly uses these technologies can greatly improve the chances of a positive outcome.

Counselling and caregiving: Counselling and emotional support are essential components of the IVF process. Couples are greatly helped in coping with the emotional issues connected to infertility and reproductive treatments by fertility centres that offer extensive support services, including counselling, stress management, and programmes to improve emotional well-being.

Patient-Centric Methodology: For the purpose of delivering individualised treatment and attending to specific needs, a patient-centered approach is essential. The overall IVF process is improved by fertility clinics that prioritise open communication, patient education, and group decision-making. Clinics that put a high priority on patient satisfaction and foster a supportive and caring environment offer the ideal environment for success.

Success Rates: Success rates can provide information about a clinic's performance and competency, albeit they are not the only determinant. It might be instructive to compare success rates amongst clinics, but it's important to take other factors into consideration. Success rates can be impacted by patient characteristics, clinic patient demographics, and case complexity.

Finally, choosing a fertility clinic is a crucial outside element affecting the effectiveness of IVF. The likelihood of success in the IVF process is influenced by a variety of factors, including the medical team's experience, adherence to evidence-based protocols, laboratory quality, use of cutting-edge technologies, provision of supportive care, a patient-centric approach, and success rates. Choosing a reputable and well-equipped clinic can greatly improve a couple's chances of achieving their IVF goal of becoming parents.

6.2 Implications

The insights derived from this study hold profound implications for the realm of in vitro fertilization (IVF) clinics, signaling a critical shift in the approach necessary for their success and growth. In an era where IVF has become commonplace, the conventional focus on promising favorable results alone is no longer sufficient. Instead, a paradigm shift towards a patient-centered approach that addresses the intricate realm of emotions is imperative.

Shifting from Results to Patient-Centered Care: The study's revelations challenge the prevailing notion that prioritizes clinical outcomes above all else. Recognizing the substantial influence of emotional factors such as anxiety, stress, and uncertainty on decision-making, clinics must pivot towards comprehending and addressing the psychological intricacies experienced by infertile couples. By acknowledging the

profound emotional journey that patients undergo, clinics can foster an environment characterized by greater compassion and empathy.

Tailoring Marketing and Support Services: The research underscores the importance of crafting marketing strategies and support services that are finely attuned to the unique emotional needs of potential patients. Understanding and addressing these psychological challenges can not only build trust but also engender a positive patient experience. This approach has the potential to stimulate a surge in patient numbers, as word-of-mouth recommendations arise from the supportive and nurturing environment that clinics provide.

Comprehensive Counselling throughout the IVF Journey: The study places significant emphasis on the pivotal role of empathetic and informative counseling throughout the entirety of the IVF journey. By delivering personalized care and unwavering support, clinics can create an atmosphere that is nurturing for infertile couples. This not only heightens overall satisfaction but also elevates the prospects of successful outcomes, consequently enhancing the clinics' reputation and promoting growth.

Ethical Considerations and Continuous Improvement: The study underscores the ethical obligations of IVF clinics to remain centered on the welfare of their patients and uphold respectful practices. The continuous monitoring of patient feedback and the refinement of strategies are of paramount importance in ensuring that patients' emotional well-being continues to be the foremost priority in care. This unwavering commitment to ethical practice safeguards the reputation and trust vested in the clinics.

Enhancing Success and Reputation: In summation, this study highlights that a profound understanding of the psychology of infertile couples constitutes a powerful tool for the growth, success, and reputation of IVF clinics. Integrating psychological insights into clinical practices can yield superior patient experiences, improved outcomes, and

heightened word-of-mouth marketing. By prioritizing the emotional well-being of infertile couples and championing patient-centered care, clinics make substantial contributions to favorable outcomes in the fertility journey while simultaneously nurturing growth within the industry.

6.3 Recommendations and Future Research

The insights gleaned from this study present a transformative opportunity for in vitro fertilization (IVF) clinics, offering a range of recommendations for enhancing practice and opening avenues for future research.

Targeted Marketing Strategies: Drawing from the study's findings, IVF clinics are encouraged to adopt marketing strategies that are finely tuned to address the emotional needs of infertile couples. Tailoring messages to underscore emotional support, empathy, and understanding can establish deeper resonance with potential patients. By acknowledging and proactively addressing the psychological challenges these couples face, clinics can build trust and attract a more substantial patient base.

Comprehensive Patient Support: The study underscores the urgency of implementing comprehensive patient support programs, including empathetic and informative counseling throughout the entirety of the IVF journey. Cultivating a supportive environment where couples feel genuinely understood and valued can significantly elevate patient satisfaction levels and contribute to better treatment outcomes.

Ethical Consideration and Continuous Improvement: The ethical underpinning of practice remains paramount. IVF clinics should institute mechanisms for the ongoing monitoring of patient feedback and the refinement of strategies. This steadfast commitment to patient-centered care ensures that practices remain not only respectful but also relevant, continuously adapting to the evolving emotional needs of patients.

Cultural Sensitivity: Future research endeavors might delve into the influence of cultural factors on the decision-making processes of infertile couples. Diverse cultural norms, expectations, and coping mechanisms can substantially affect how couples approach IVF treatments. Understanding these nuanced dynamics can further fine-tune clinic strategies to cater to diverse patient populations more effectively.

Long-Term Patient Outcomes: Future research avenues could delve into the long-term ramifications of addressing emotional needs on patient outcomes. Assessing how the provision of psychological support impacts treatment adherence, patient well-being, and overall success rates can offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of patient-centered care over extended periods.

Collaborative Research and Knowledge Sharing: Collaborative initiatives between IVF clinics and research institutions have the potential to facilitate knowledge sharing and the dissemination of best practices. Conducting multicenter studies to validate the impact of psychological interventions on patient numbers and outcomes can provide a more comprehensive perspective on the efficacy of the proposed strategies.

Technology Integration: The exploration of technology integration, encompassing online support groups, virtual counseling, and educational platforms, could broaden the reach of psychological support services to a more extensive and diverse audience. This approach aligns with varying patient needs and preferences, thereby contributing to an overall enhancement of patient experiences.

Psychological Training for Clinic Staff: Providing training for clinic staff, spanning physicians, counselors, and administrative personnel, in addressing emotional needs can foster a holistic approach to patient care. Ensuring that the entire clinic team is well-equipped to provide empathetic and informed support can substantially elevate the patient experience.

In summation, the findings of this study underscore the critical importance of comprehending the psychology of infertile couples as a pivotal tool for the growth and success of IVF clinics. By implementing targeted marketing strategies, comprehensive patient support, and unwavering ethical considerations, clinics can engender trust, elevate patient experiences, and contribute to positive outcomes throughout the fertility journey. The recommendations provided serve as a roadmap for clinics to embrace patient-centered care fully and amplify their impact in the realm of fertility healthcare.

6.4 Conclusion

In the dynamic realm of fertility healthcare, success and growth are inextricably linked to a nuanced understanding of the business landscape. This study embarks on a journey to unearth the business-related factors that propel in vitro fertilization (IVF) clinics towards prosperity, offering valuable insights for clinics seeking to enhance their success in a competitive market.

6.4.1 The Crucial Elements of Success

The journey to clinic success is marked by multifaceted elements that must align harmoniously. This study sheds light on these critical facets, emphasizing their pivotal roles:

1. **Financial Considerations and Delayed Intervention:** India's diverse financial landscape poses a significant challenge for IVF clinics. Determining standardized treatment costs is no simple task, given the varying financial statuses of patients. The elective nature of IVF often means that couples explore alternative methods before considering medical intervention, leading to older patient demographics with increased complications.

2. **Emotional Factors and Decision-Making:** The emotional landscapes of infertile couples are intricate, shaped by anxiety, stress, and uncertainty. Understanding the emotional weight of fertility treatments and the societal expectations that accompany them is paramount. Clinics must recognize that decisions to pursue IVF are influenced by a complex interplay of medical, emotional, and societal factors.
3. **Tailoring Marketing Strategies and Support Services:** Success in the competitive landscape of IVF clinics requires addressing psychological challenges and emotional needs. Crafting marketing strategies that resonate with potential patients' emotional requirements is vital. Moreover, offering empathetic and informative counseling throughout the IVF journey is not just an option but a necessity. Personalized care fosters trust, enhances patient satisfaction, and ignites positive word-of-mouth marketing.
4. **Continuous Monitoring and Ethical Practice:** Clinic success is not a one-time achievement but an ongoing endeavor. To thrive ethically and sustainably, IVF clinics must continuously monitor patient feedback, refine marketing strategies, and bolster counseling practices. Ethical considerations remain at the forefront, ensuring that patient well-being is preserved.

6.4.2 Embracing the Business Perspective

This study champions the business perspective of IVF clinic success, acknowledging that understanding the financial intricacies, emotional landscapes, and strategic approaches are instrumental in thriving in this competitive field.

6.4.3 Tailoring Strategies for Clinic Growth

IVF clinics seeking to grow and succeed must tailor their strategies to address these factors systematically. Crafting pricing models that accommodate diverse financial backgrounds is essential, as is recognizing that delayed interventions can lead to more complex cases. Marketing strategies should emphasize emotional support, and counseling services must be comprehensive and compassionate.

6.4.4 Cultivating Trust and Reputation

In the competitive world of fertility healthcare, cultivating trust and a sterling reputation is paramount. The patient experience should be at the heart of clinic operations. When patients feel understood, supported, and valued, they become the most potent advocates for a clinic's services.

6.4.5 Avenues for Future Growth

As this study concludes, it opens doors to avenues for future growth and exploration within fertility healthcare. Collaborative research between clinics and research institutions could elevate the standard of care and expand the knowledge base. The integration of technology, such as virtual counseling and support groups, could extend the reach of clinics and provide more accessible emotional support.

6.5 The Path Forward

The path to success for IVF clinics in the ever-evolving healthcare landscape is clear. By embracing the business, understanding the nuances of financial considerations, and prioritizing emotional support, clinics can not only thrive but also make a meaningful difference in the lives of infertile couples.

This study sheds light on the complex interplay between monetary elements, psychological variables, and commercial tactics that influence the performance of IVF clinics. Clinics may improve patient satisfaction, encourage expansion, and have a beneficial impact on the area of fertility therapy by incorporating these findings into their daily operations. This study offers a road map for clinics to start along this transforming route, as it takes a good awareness of both the business and emotional components to succeed in this delicate arena.

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