

## Abstract

Infertility is a growing problem in Africa and affects the lives of many couples. As a health problem, it is largely culturally and socially constructed in such a way that even though it affects a couple it is the woman who bears the burden. This perspective has major implications for women whose status hinges on fertility performance. This paper presents the cultural construction of infertility and how it impacts on the lives of infertile women in Kenya. The presentation is based on material collected through qualitative methodologies among infertile and fertile women as well as through key informant interviews. Overall, infertility not only erodes the status of infertile women but also threatens their source of livelihood as some of their verbatim comments vividly point out. The burden of infertility is compounded by the fact that at the national programme level it is underplayed as a problem, the main focus being on fertility control. This is a situation that needs to be redressed so that those who are infertile, regardless of their numbers, receive the attention they require to experience quality life.