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# Attitudes towards embryo donation to infertile couples of fertility patients, specialists in the field and community

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ATTITUDES TOWARDS EMBRYO DONATION TO INFERTILE COUPLES OF FERTILITY PATIENTS, SPECIALISTS IN THE FIELD AND COMMUNITY.

L. Urdapilleta.

CEGyR (Center of Studies in Gynaecology and Reproduction), Buenos Aires, Argentina.

**OBJECTIVE:** As a part of a larger study, the attitudes of three groups of subjects – fertility patients, professionals working in the field and general population - towards embryo donation to infertile couples, concerning destiny of their spare embryos, personal redefinitions of “embryo,” “parents,” and “child,” known vs. anonymous donation, identificatory information, disclosure and contact, will be described.

**DESIGN:** Exploratory (ad hoc attitude scale), descriptive.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:** Four hundred and seven men and women (160 fertility patients recruited from three reproductive clinics, 97 experts in the area and 150 individuals of general population) were administered a protocol with an attitudinal scale. Each of them had to hypothetically situate themselves in three different scenarios: being an embryo donor, being an embryo recipient and being a person born through donated embryos, assessing the same topics from these alternative perspectives (frequencies and percentages).

**RESULTS:** More than half of the subjects in the three groups chose to donate their embryos to infertile couples. Correspondingly, they also believe an embryo is not a child but a group of cells with the potential of becoming a person. Over 90% of them considered “parents” to those who rear a child and with similar percentages, that the individual born through embryo donation would consider his parents those who gestated and brought him up despite those who donated the embryo. Although most of the theoretical donors and recipients preferred anonymous donation over known one, positive attitudes towards the rights to reveal the origins to the child were shown in 70.3% of the recipients and 71.5% of the ones born through embryo donation. Likewise, 43.5% of the donors would leave identificatory information for the offspring and 45.9% would accept contacting him in the future. Fifty nine percent of the recipients agreed that the child has the right to access to identificatory registries. The offspring (68.8%) would like to know that he was born through embryo donation.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Even though the positive attitudes showed towards different topics surrounding embryo donation of the subjects of this study could differ from those of real or prospective donors/recipients since they were in a hypothetical situation, these findings can also be suggesting a new trend towards supporting families built up in a non traditional way.