The Intersection Between Grief and Hope: *Linguistic Patterns of Women Trying to Conceive After Loss*

Rachel Thompson

Trying To Conceive & Infertility

For many women, experiencing challenges with infertility or losing a pregnancy can cause shame, self-blame, and feelings of inadequacy (Wenzel, 2020).

Methods

- Reddit
- *N* = 1,326,056 comments

Subreddit	Purpose	No. of Users
r/TTCafterloss est. 2014	For people trying to conceive, waiting to try, or dealing with life after pregnancy loss	9,250
r/TryingforaBaby est. 2011	For anyone trying for a baby	64,320

Research Question: How does experiencing a pregnancy loss affect how women discuss trying to conceive?

Pronouns	TTCafterloss (*N*= 283,892)	TryingforaBaby (*N*=1,042,164)	*t*	*df*	*Cohen's d*
I	7.16 (5.66)	6.96 (6.1)	-16.59***	478150	.03
We	.78 (2.04)	.73 (2.12)	-11.31***	464589	.02

Emotions	TTCafterloss (*N*= 283,892)	TryingforaBaby (*N*=1,042,164)	*t*	*df*	*Cohen's d*
Posemo	9.56 (14.93)	8.64 (14.69)	-29.12***	443946	.06
Negemo	3.27 (5.62)	2.43 (5.44)	-70.42***	438644	.15

Other	TTCafterloss (*N*= 283,892)	TryingforaBaby (*N*=1,042,164)	*t*	*df*	*Cohen's d*
Social	10.08 (9.16)	8.96 (9.46)	-57.77***	461186	.12
Cognitive Processing	12.46 (8.42)	12.89 (9.03)	23.47***	476377	.05

Note: * p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, *** p <0.01

To learn more about this work, please contact me at
Rachel.Thompson.23@utexas.edu

Analysis

- Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) (Pennebaker et al., 2015)
- Series of statistical analyses were performed, including Welch's T-Test

Results

- Women who experienced a pregnancy loss:
  - ↑ first-person pronouns
  - ↑ positive and negative emotion words
  - ↑ social words
  - ↓ cognitive processing words

Discussion

- Emotional upheaval
- Desire for social support
- Struggle to make sense of grief

Limitations

- Big data → significant results

Future Directions

- Pilot study
- Larger corpora- pregnancy experience
- Fertility/Reproductive health dictionary