

OP 03: Public perspective on the uses and indications of surrogacy within the Sri Lankan context.

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Introduction: Although surrogacy is a controversial Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) in Sri Lanka, there are various platforms that advertise surrogate mothers anonymously.

Objectives: To describe attitude and factors associated with surrogacy among 20-40-year old adults in Sri Lanka.

Methods: This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among men and women aged 20-40 years, currently residing in the Colombo District. Study instrument was an online questionnaire with close ended questions. Data collection was conducted among a sample recruited by the snowball sampling method.

Results: Participants in general preferred the usage of surrogacy in women unable to have children due to medical conditions over the other instances provided (83.30%). However, in the instance of same-sex couples opting for surrogacy, non-heterosexuals (n=22, 88.00%), Buddhists (n=202, 58.21%), respondents with more liberal religious beliefs (n=78, 63.93%) and those without children (n=233, 58.54%) showed significantly higher levels of acceptance of surrogacy.

Heterosexuals (n=165, 40.64%), non-Buddhists (n=40, 57.14%) and respondents with firm religious beliefs had significantly higher rejection rates for the use of surrogacy to circumvent the effects of pregnancy.

Participants who had positive attitudes towards having children also depicted higher acceptance rates for both these scenarios (p=0.001 each).

Conclusions: Non-heterosexuals, Buddhists and respondents with more liberal religious beliefs were deemed more open minded as to the usage of surrogacy in various instances as opposed to their counterparts. This may have a significant socio-cultural impact on the acceptance and normalization of a third-party reproduction methods like surrogacy, even if properly regulated.

Keywords: Surrogacy, Assisted Reproductive Technology, adults, attitudes