Importance of genetic links in determining public attitudes towards surrogacy

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Objective

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

Design

This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among men and women aged 20 - 40 years, in Colombo District, Sri Lanka.

Methods

The study instrument was an online questionnaire with close ended questions. A sample of 431 was obtained via a snowball sampling method. Inferential statistics were performed using Pearson's Chi-Square Test, Fisher's Exact Test and Mann-Whitney U Test and the significance level was set at 95%.

Results

Acceptance of traditional surrogacy was lower among participants with positive attitudes towards the presence of a genetic link between the parents and offspring (n = 168, 54.02%). In comparison, those who claimed that a genetic link was not of notable importance showed a significantly higher acceptance of the traditional form (n = 80, 66.67%, p = 0.017). A similar pattern in attitudes was observed in the acceptance of gestational surrogacy among the participants.

However, the proportion of respondents who claimed that a genetic link was important and who also accepted the gestational form, was higher (n = 245, 78.78%) than the proportion who accepted traditional surrogacy (p = 0.012). Disapproval rates of gestational surrogacy among those who did not find a genetic link between parents and offspring dropped to a mere 10.83% (n = 13) when compared to the traditional form.

Conclusion

The need for genetic ties that links a parent to their children played a significant role in the formation of attitudes for and against surrogacy in general as well as between the two formats of the ART.

