**Exploring the experiences of English-speaking women who have moved to Israel and subsequently used Israeli fertility treatment services: a qualitative study**

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**Biography**

Lucy Davies is a 4th year medical student at the University of Birmingham. She received a 1st class Intercalated BMedSc Global Health with Honours from the University of Birmingham.

**Abstract**

Background

Israel’s pronatalist culture results in a social expectation to have children, driving Israel’s high fertility rate of 2.9. Israel’s health policy reflects this expectation through funding unlimited fertility treatment for up to two children. Societal pressure to have children exacerbates challenges of fertility treatment. Furthermore, the lack of financial burden creates a culture of perseverance following treatment failures. The experiences of Israeli women using fertility treatment have been studied. This study aimed to understand the experiences of English-speaking women who migrated to Israel.

Methods

This was a qualitative study using interviews to investigate the experiences of 13 English-speaking women who migrated to Israel and utilised Israeli state funded fertility treatment. Data were analysed thematically using Framework analysis.

Results

Three themes were identified: 1. Systemic factors: The lack of financial burden was positive, however, participants struggled to navigate the bureaucratic healthcare system, especially when experiencing a language barrier. 2. Influence of others: Encountering a cold bedside manner coupled with pronatalist cultural expectations was challenging. Participants utilised support from other migrants who appreciated the culture shock. Understanding of healthcare professionals regarding shared religious values improved treatment experiences. 3. Impact: Participants often withdrew socially and described implications upon their lives.

Conclusion

Navigating a bureaucratic system and pronatalist culture are difficulties experienced by English speaking migrants receiving fertility treatment in Israel, however, lack of financial burden and understanding of religious and cultural beliefs improved treatment experience. Better provision of English resources and further research into supporting women navigating Israel’s pronatalist culture is needed.