Exploring the Impact of Sister to Sister Surrogacy

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Purpose/Aim

The purpose of this research study is to understand the impact of sister to sister surrogacy:

- Unsettling family equilibrium may arise due to close relationships
- Explore the surrogate experiences, motivations, psychological effects, and attitudes
- Illuminate patterns of reactions, interactions, and relationships between the surrogate and her partner, child, own children, intended parents, extended family, friends, and her community relationships

Background

A detailed literature review revealed:

- Very little research exists on sister to sister surrogacy, as most surrogacy studies are between an unrelated surrogate and intended mother
- Surrogates feel pressured to carry the baby for the intended mother and feel family resentment if they refuse
- Motivations for most unrelated surrogates is financial in nature
  - Social controversy arises when monetary compensation is involved
  - Most socially accepted form of surrogacy is when a close friend or relative carries the baby for no monetary compensation
- Maintaining a good relationship with the intended family is key in helping the surrogate recover from her sense of loss after giving birth and relinquishing the newborn
- Unrelated surrogates are far less likely to report sadness or dissatisfaction with the overall experience of surrogacy
- Related surrogates are more likely to need counseling to effectively cope with the loss of relinquishing the newborn

Methods

- Setting
  - Sister surrogates living in California
- Sample
  - 10 participants
  - Inclusion
    - Female sister surrogates ages 24-34
    - In a monogamous relationship for at least 2 years
    - Lives within 100 miles of the intended family
    - Willing to share experience
  - Exclusion
    - Any characteristic that does not align with inclusion criteria
- Measurement
  - Grounded theory, a qualitative method to systematically collect data to discover a pattern of reactions, interactions, and relationships among people
  - Enables the exploration of human actions and interactions where very little information is available
- Procedure
  - IRB approval through CSU Chico
  - Informed consent
  - Creation of open-ended interview questions with research team
  - Personal interviews at 6-9 weeks following delivery
  - Audio recorded and transcribed
- Analysis
  - Constant comparative analysis to identify themes between the interviews

Conclusion

- This study will define the experiences of sister to sister surrogates where very little information now exists
- Themes will be identified to illuminate the unique impact of sister to sister surrogacy on the woman, her relationships, and her community
- This research has yet to be conducted

References


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