

How do midwives feel when women choose to freebirth?

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HOW DO MIDWIVES FEEL WHEN WOMEN CHOOSE TO FREEBIRTH?

WHAT IS FREEBIRTH

A birth that happens intentionally without the attendance of a qualified health care professional, even when free, universal access to midwifery care is provided by public health care services.

Anecdotal data seems to suggest freebirth is increasing in UK and other developed countries



RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the attitudes, opinions, and experiences on freebirth of UK registered midwives?

STUDY CONTRIBUTIONS AND IMPACT



Reframing the debate on freebirth under a reproductive justice lens



A new definition of freebirth as the choice to self-care during birth



Emoji as a novel tool for interview elicitation



Improved understanding of UK midwives' perspectives on freebirth and women's autonomy. Improved understanding of the relationship between midwives' and women's autonomy

WHY WOMEN FREEBIRTH? A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

A broken system creates reproductive injustice

Structural barriers

- No homebirth
- Restricted midwifery
- Biomedical hegemony

Relational barriers

- Shattered trust (prev. trauma)
- Lack of continuity
- Disrespect and abuse

Reproductive self-determination

protects

Freebirth as self-care

- Peer support
- Self-education
- Selfcare agency
- Life affirming care

threatens

There is a paucity of research exploring the views and experiences of midwives caring for women who freebirth

A SEQUENTIAL MIXED-METHODS STUDY

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

- 14 midwives across the UK
- Diverse seniority, roles and years of experience
- Direct and indirect experience of freebirth

Thematic analysis ongoing



Emoji frequency cloud of participants' views

QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

Work planned:

- PPI for survey development
- Pilot
- Online recruitment
- Descriptive statistics analysis

INTERPRETATION

Using a feminist lens to look at issues of autonomy, power and agency in midwives' experiences

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