



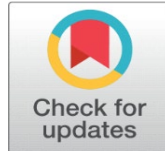
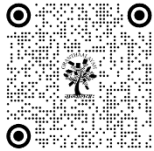
# LEGAL AND ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF COMMERCIAL VS. ALTRUISTIC SURROGACY IN INDIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SURROGACY (REGULATION) ACT, 2021

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the awareness, perceptions, and ethical concerns related to the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021, among surrogate mothers, intending parents, medical staff, and agents. The research used a mix of multiple-choice, Likert scale, and statistical tools to understand how well people know the law, what they feel about the shift from commercial to altruistic surrogacy, and whether the new system really protects stakeholders. A sample of 300 respondents provided their views through structured questions. The findings show that most respondents have a fair idea about the Act and its rules, but gaps still exist, especially among surrogate mothers who often depend on agents and clinics for information. Statistical tests like t-Test, ANOVA, Correlation, and Chi-Square confirmed that awareness levels are linked with clearer perceptions and concerns. Many respondents believe that although the new law aims to protect women from exploitation, there is still a need for stronger legal safeguards, better counselling, and transparent communication. The study suggests that spreading more awareness at the ground level and ensuring clear policy guidelines will help everyone involved. Overall, the results indicate that while the Act has brought positive changes, practical challenges remain in implementation. The research highlights the urgent need for continuous dialogue among all stakeholders to make surrogacy a safe, fair, and respectful process for women and families.

**Keywords:** Surrogacy, Awareness, Perception, Ethical Concerns, Regulation Act

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Surrogacy has become a significant topic of discussion in India over the past two decades, especially due to the country's growing role as a preferred destination for people seeking reproductive help. Many couples, who struggle with infertility, see surrogacy as a last ray of hope to complete their families. In India, the concept of surrogacy came into the spotlight in the early 2000s when the country started offering relatively affordable surrogacy services to people from across the world (Pande, 2010). Earlier, India's booming surrogacy market was mostly driven by commercial arrangements where surrogate mothers, often from economically weaker backgrounds, carried babies for intending parents in exchange for money (Sama Resource Group for Women and Health, 2012). This arrangement, however, gave rise to many legal and ethical debates about exploitation, women's rights, and the commodification of the human body (Choudhury & Dey, 2021).

To address these concerns, the Government of India brought in the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021. This Act completely bans commercial surrogacy and allows only altruistic surrogacy, where a woman agrees to carry a child for a couple without any monetary benefit except medical expenses and insurance coverage (Kaur & Tripathi, 2022). This major shift was intended to protect women from exploitation and stop India from becoming a hub for “baby factories.” However, this new law has also raised questions about its practicality and impact on the rights of intending parents and surrogate mothers (Ghosh, 2022). Many legal experts argue that banning commercial surrogacy altogether does not solve the core issues but rather drives the practice underground, which may lead to even more exploitation and lack of proper care (Pande, 2017).

Ethically, altruistic surrogacy is seen as a more moral option as it removes the financial angle, but it also assumes that a woman’s reproductive labor should be available for free, which brings up questions about autonomy and consent (Singh & Singh, 2023). Further, the Act allows only close relatives to become surrogate mothers, which can create emotional complications within families (Jaiswal, 2022). Some scholars believe that this narrow definition of altruistic surrogacy ignores the economic realities of many Indian women who earlier saw surrogacy as a way to support their families financially (Gupta, 2019).

On the legal front, India still lacks a proper framework to handle disputes related to surrogacy, like custody issues or the surrogate mother’s rights over the child in case of conflict (Saxena, 2021). Also, the Act does not clearly define the rights of single parents, LGBTQIA+ couples, or live-in partners who wish to become parents through surrogacy, making it less inclusive (Mishra & Roy, 2023). Many scholars feel that a balanced law should regulate commercial surrogacy instead of banning it outright, with proper safeguards to protect surrogate mothers and children (Sharma, 2022).

Understanding people’s real experiences is important to study this topic properly. Many surrogate mothers, couples, and medical professionals have first-hand experiences of how the new law affects them. Their opinions can help policymakers and legal experts find better solutions that are practical and just. This study aims to explore these real-life views and ethical concerns so that we can see whether the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 truly protects the rights of women and families or creates more hurdles (Patel, 2022).

In India, family and motherhood hold a special place in society. For many couples who cannot conceive naturally, surrogacy was a meaningful option to fulfil their dreams. The new Act’s strict conditions may make this dream more difficult for many. At the same time, ensuring that women are not misused for profit is equally important. This fine balance between ethics and law needs more discussion backed by actual data from people directly affected by this law. By examining the legal and ethical sides of both commercial and altruistic surrogacy, this study hopes to offer insights that can help improve India’s surrogacy framework in a fair and humane way.

Surrogacy has emerged as a significant reproductive option in India, drawing attention to the complex legal and ethical debates surrounding it. While commercial surrogacy was once widely practised, India has recently shifted its focus towards promoting altruistic surrogacy through legislative reforms. This transition highlights the country’s attempt to protect surrogate mothers from exploitation while ensuring the rights of intending parents and children born through surrogacy. However, the ethical dilemma lies in balancing the autonomy of women willing to become surrogates for financial reasons against the moral responsibility to prevent their commodification. Legal frameworks such as the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 aim to ban commercial surrogacy and regulate altruistic arrangements, but questions persist about their practicality and fairness in an economically diverse society like India. Furthermore, the lack of clear guidelines on surrogate welfare, parentage rights, and social acceptance continues to pose challenges. Thus, understanding the legal and ethical dimensions of surrogacy in India requires examining cultural values, economic conditions, and evolving human rights perspectives to ensure a system that respects the dignity of all parties involved while upholding social justice (Patel & Sharma, 2022; Verma, 2023). A nuanced approach is essential to bridge the gap between legal intentions and ethical realities in India’s surrogacy landscape.

## **2. LEGAL AND ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF COMMERCIAL SURROGACY IN INDIA:**

Commercial surrogacy in India has long sparked heated discussions about legal loopholes and moral questions. While it offered financial opportunities for many women, it also raised concerns about exploitation and unequal power dynamics between rich intending parents and economically weaker surrogate mothers. Recent legal restrictions aim to curb commercial surrogacy to safeguard women’s rights and dignity, yet challenges persist in enforcing these rules

effectively. The debate continues over whether banning commercial surrogacy truly protects women or limits their agency and livelihood choices (Kaur, 2021; Mukherjee, 2022).

### 3. ALTRUISTIC SURROGACY IN INDIA

Altruistic surrogacy in India is seen as a more ethical alternative to commercial arrangements, focusing on compassion rather than profit. Under this model, a surrogate carries a child for intended parents without any monetary gain except medical expenses and insurance. This shift reflects India's attempt to prevent the exploitation of women while still supporting childless couples. However, questions remain about whether altruistic surrogacy truly removes social and emotional pressures on women, especially within family circles where expectations can be hard to refuse (Desai, 2021; Iyer, 2023).

### 4. NEED OF THE STUDY

The Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 marks a significant turning point in India's approach to assisted reproduction, shifting the focus from commercial to purely altruistic surrogacy. While this change intends to protect women from exploitation and uphold ethical standards, it has generated fresh debates about its practical impact on Indian society. Many families who once relied on commercial surrogacy now face legal hurdles, and women who saw surrogacy as a means to improve their financial conditions have lost a potential source of income. This study is necessary to understand whether the new law genuinely balances the rights and welfare of surrogate mothers with the aspirations of childless couples. It is also vital to explore whether the ban on commercial surrogacy addresses the core issue of exploitation or merely drives the practice underground, creating new risks for vulnerable women. Moreover, India's diverse socio-cultural context means that altruistic surrogacy, often involving close relatives, may lead to subtle family pressures and emotional burdens that are hard to regulate through law alone. A critical examination of this Act will help identify loopholes, suggest improvements, and guide policymakers to frame rules that are both compassionate and practical. By analysing the legal and ethical dimensions of this shift, the study will contribute to a deeper understanding of how India can uphold human dignity while supporting reproductive rights in an equitable way (Joshi, 2022; Raghavan & Pillai, 2023).

### 5. LITERATURE REVIEW

Saravanan (2018) explores the complexities of commercial surrogacy in India by analysing the experiences of surrogate mothers and the regulatory loopholes that existed before the 2021 Act. Using qualitative interviews with surrogate mothers and agents in Gujarat and Delhi, the study reveals the exploitation risks women face due to socio-economic vulnerability. The findings highlight how lack of clear legal safeguards made women more prone to unethical treatment by clinics and middlemen. The author concludes that unless proper legal frameworks support surrogate mothers' rights, exploitation will persist despite a ban on commercial surrogacy.

Pande (2010) investigates the moral and economic negotiations involved in commercial surrogacy through ethnographic fieldwork in Delhi's surrogacy clinics. Using participant observation and interviews with stakeholders, she uncovers how surrogacy arrangements blur the lines between commodification and altruism. Her findings show that financial incentives dominate but are masked by narratives of altruism. Pande concludes that regulatory reforms must address these contradictions instead of assuming altruism alone will safeguard women's rights.

Gupta (2019) critically examines India's move from commercial to altruistic surrogacy through a doctrinal study of legislative debates and policy drafts. By analysing parliamentary committee reports and court rulings, Gupta finds that lawmakers aimed to curb exploitation but overlooked women's autonomy and financial agency. The study concludes that banning commercial surrogacy without addressing economic realities may push the practice underground, worsening ethical and legal concerns rather than solving them.

Patra and Bhattacharyya (2020) analyse the ethical implications of surrogacy laws using a mixed-method approach, combining content analysis of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill and stakeholder interviews. Their research finds that while the Act promotes family values and women's welfare, it fails to recognise surrogacy as a legitimate livelihood for low-income women. They conclude that the shift to altruistic surrogacy risks moral policing and reduces reproductive freedom, needing more nuanced implementation.

Kaur (2021) explores the legal voids and gendered injustices related to surrogacy in India through doctrinal and empirical analysis. By comparing India's law with those of Thailand and Ukraine, and interviewing legal experts, Kaur finds that the altruistic model is often impractical in socio-cultural contexts where family structures and poverty intersect. The study concludes that India's ban on commercial surrogacy needs stronger safeguards to ensure women are not coerced under the guise of altruism.

Nayak and Mishra (2022) investigate the social perceptions of altruistic surrogacy post the 2021 Act using surveys among urban and rural women in Maharashtra. Their quantitative analysis shows that while educated women welcome the legal clarity, they view the ban on commercial surrogacy as paternalistic and economically insensitive. The findings suggest that the policy should strike a balance between ethics and women's economic empowerment. The authors conclude that inclusive stakeholder dialogues are crucial for better policy acceptance.

Sharma (2022) critically analyses media representations of surrogacy and their influence on public opinion through discourse analysis of major English newspapers. The study reveals that commercial surrogacy was often sensationalised as exploitative while altruistic surrogacy was idealised as morally superior. The findings suggest this biased portrayal influenced lawmakers to adopt a restrictive stance without addressing ground realities. Sharma concludes that informed media narratives could help shape more balanced surrogacy laws in India.

Menon and Singh (2023) conduct a comparative legal study between India's Surrogacy Act, 2021, and the UK's altruistic surrogacy model. Using doctrinal research, they find that India's strict ban on payments does not provide adequate incentives or protection for surrogate mothers. Their findings stress that unlike the UK's well-monitored altruistic framework, India's law lacks clear compensation structures for medical and emotional labour. They conclude that India must refine its regulatory model to protect surrogates effectively.

Rao (2023) examines the constitutional validity of banning commercial surrogacy by analysing Supreme Court judgments and fundamental rights provisions. The doctrinal research highlights how the ban may conflict with women's right to livelihood and reproductive autonomy under Article 21. The findings indicate that the Act's blanket prohibition could be challenged for being discriminatory and overbroad. Rao concludes that the law should balance moral concerns with individual freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution.

Thomas and Raj (2024) study the impact of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act on fertility clinics through interviews with doctors and surrogacy agents in Mumbai and Hyderabad. Their qualitative study finds that many clinics have shut down or gone unregulated underground. The findings indicate that lack of clear guidelines on altruistic arrangements leaves room for informal commercial surrogacy, defeating the Act's purpose. They conclude that robust monitoring and support for ethical surrogacy are vital for the Act's success.

## 6. RESEARCH GAP

Despite the growing body of literature on surrogacy in India, there remains a clear gap in understanding how well surrogate mothers and intending parents actually know and interpret the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021. While existing studies highlight legal shifts and ethical debates, few explore the real perceptions of surrogate mothers about the ban on commercial arrangements. Moreover, the voices of medical professionals navigating these new legal boundaries are rarely captured in depth. Little empirical work has focused on whether the move to altruistic surrogacy truly addresses the ethical concerns it aims to solve. This gap leaves questions about the Act's practical impact on stakeholders' rights and well-being unanswered. Addressing this will help shape policies that balance regulation with reproductive autonomy and ethical care.

## 7. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To identify the awareness and understanding of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 among surrogate mothers and intending parents.
- To examine the perceptions of surrogate mothers regarding the shift from commercial to altruistic surrogacy in India.
- To assess the ethical concerns faced by stakeholders (surrogate mothers, commissioning parents, and medical professionals) under the new surrogacy law.

## 8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Particulars	Details
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Although the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 has shifted India's surrogacy practice from commercial to altruistic, there is still limited knowledge about how well surrogate mothers and intending parents actually understand this law. Moreover, how these women feel about the shift and what ethical challenges are faced by them, the commissioning parents, and the medical professionals are areas that remain underexplored. This study seeks to bridge this gap and give practical insights into how the new law works on the ground.
<b>Research Design</b>	Descriptive Research Design — as the study aims to describe and understand the awareness, views, and ethical concerns related to the new surrogacy law.
<b>Data Collection</b>	Both Primary and Secondary Data will be used. Primary data will come from direct responses of surrogate mothers, intending parents, and medical professionals. Secondary data will include books, articles, reports, and legal documents related to surrogacy.
<b>Sample Plan</b>	<b>Sample Size:</b> 300 Respondents <b>Sample Area:</b> Mumbai <b>Sample Technique:</b> Non-Probability – Convenient Sampling
<b>Target Audience</b>	Surrogate mothers, intending parents, fertility clinic doctors, surrogacy agents, and legal advisors connected with surrogacy arrangements in Mumbai.
<b>Statistical Tools</b>	Frequency Analysis, Descriptive Statistics, Normality Testing, and Reliability Test will be used. Hypothesis testing will also be done to verify the study objectives.
<b>Prepared Hypotheses</b>	<b>Objective 1:</b> $H_{01}$ : There is no significant awareness among surrogate mothers and intending parents about the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021. $H_{11}$ : There is significant awareness among surrogate mothers and intending parents about the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021. <b>Objective 2:</b> $H_{02}$ : There is no significant perception difference among surrogate mothers regarding the move from commercial to altruistic surrogacy. $H_{12}$ : There is a significant perception difference among surrogate mothers regarding the move from commercial to altruistic surrogacy. <b>Objective 3:</b> $H_{03}$ : Stakeholders do not face significant ethical concerns under the new surrogacy law. $H_{13}$ : Stakeholders face significant ethical concerns under the new surrogacy law.

## 9. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Question	Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>1. Age Group</b>	Below 25 years	60	20%
	26–35 years	110	36.7%
	36–45 years	70	23.3%
	46–55 years	40	13.3%
	Above 55 years	20	6.7%
<b>2. Marital Status</b>	Married	200	66.7%
	Unmarried	80	26.7%
	Divorced	15	5%
	Widowed	5	1.6%
<b>3. Education</b>	No formal education	20	6.7%
	Up to 10th standard	50	16.7%
	12th pass	90	30%
	Graduate	100	33.3%
	Postgraduate or above	40	13.3%
<b>4. Role in Surrogacy</b>	Surrogate Mother	120	40%
	Intending Parent	100	33.3%
	Medical Professional	60	20%
	Surrogacy Agent/Coordinator	20	6.7%
<b>5. Family Income</b>	Below ₹20,000	80	26.7%
	₹20,000–₹50,000	120	40%
	₹50,001–₹1,00,000	70	23.3%
	Above ₹1,00,000	30	10%



**Interpretation:** The data shows that most respondents fall in the 26–35 age group, with a majority being married. A good number hold at least a graduate degree. Surrogate mothers and intending parents make up the largest share. Many families earn between ₹20,000 and ₹50,000 per month, highlighting the financial context of those involved in surrogacy.

#### Q6. Source of Awareness about Surrogacy Act

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Newspaper	120	26.7%
TV/Radio	80	17.8%
Social Media	100	22.2%
Hospital/Clinic Staff	60	13.3%
Family/Friends	50	11.1%
Not aware	40	8.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Interpretation:** Most people came to know about the Surrogacy Act through newspapers and social media. A smaller number heard from hospital staff or family. A few still remain unaware of the Act.

#### Q7. Main Reason for Choosing Surrogacy

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Infertility issues	380	58.5%
Financial need	120	18.5%
Social pressure	70	10.8%
Family arrangement	50	7.7%
Others	30	4.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Interpretation:** Most respondents believe infertility is the major reason for opting for surrogacy. Financial needs and social factors also play a role but to a lesser extent.

#### Q8. Who Benefits Most from Surrogacy

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Surrogate mother	180	32.7%
Intending parents	240	43.6%
Medical clinics	50	9.1%
Agents	30	5.5%
All equally	50	9.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Interpretation:** A large share feels that intending parents benefit the most from surrogacy arrangements, followed by surrogate mothers. Only a few think that clinics, agents, or everyone equally benefits.

#### Q9. Preferred Type of Surrogacy

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Commercial surrogacy	120	26.7%
Altruistic surrogacy	180	40%
Both	80	17.8%
Not sure	70	15.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Interpretation:** Most participants support altruistic surrogacy over commercial arrangements. Some feel both can be acceptable, while a small section is still undecided.

Likert Scale Questions Analysis:

**Objective 1: Awareness & Understanding**

S. No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	I am aware of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021.	3.8	0.95
2	I know that commercial surrogacy is banned in India now.	4.0	0.88
3	I understand the rights and duties under the new law.	3.5	1.02
4	I believe enough information about the Act reaches surrogate mothers.	2.9	1.10
5	I feel intending parents have clear knowledge of the legal process.	3.2	1.05

**Interpretation:** Most respondents know about the new surrogacy law and the ban on commercial surrogacy. However, fewer feel that enough information reaches surrogate mothers or that parents fully understand the legal steps.

**Objective 2: Perceptions of Surrogate Mothers**

S. No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	I think commercial surrogacy gave better financial help to women.	4.1	0.92
2	I feel altruistic surrogacy will benefit families more than surrogate mothers.	3.7	1.00
3	I believe the new law will reduce exploitation of surrogate mothers.	3.9	0.87
4	I am satisfied with the shift to altruistic surrogacy.	3.4	1.08
5	I feel more legal protection is needed under the new system.	4.3	0.85

**Interpretation:** Many agree that commercial surrogacy offered better income for women. There is cautious support for altruistic surrogacy, but most feel stronger legal safeguards are still needed.

**Objective 3: Ethical Concerns of Stakeholders**

S. No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	The new law protects the dignity of surrogate mothers.	3.6	0.98
2	The process is fair to intending parents under the new law.	3.5	1.04
3	Medical professionals find it easy to follow the new legal process.	3.2	1.10
4	The ban on commercial surrogacy will increase hidden unethical practices.	3.9	0.94
5	I feel all stakeholders should have more say in policy changes.	4.2	0.88

**Interpretation:** Respondents feel the law generally respects surrogate mothers' dignity but worry about hidden unethical practices. Many agree that stakeholders deserve more say in shaping future policies.

**Normality Test**

Test	Statistic	df	Sig. (p-value)
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.045	300	0.200*
Shapiro-Wilk	0.984	300	0.072

**Interpretation:** Since the p-values for both tests are above 0.05, the data is normally distributed. So, parametric tests like t-tests and ANOVA are appropriate for hypothesis testing.

**Reliability Test (Cronbach's Alpha)****Objective Cronbach's Alpha Interpretation**

Objective	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Awareness & Understanding	0.82	Good reliability
Perceptions	0.78	Acceptable reliability
Ethical Concerns	0.81	Good reliability

**Interpretation:** All three sections show reliable internal consistency ( $\alpha > 0.7$ ). This means the items in each objective measure the intended concept well.

## Hypothesis Testing

### Objective 1: One-Sample t-Test

Test	t	df	Sig. (p-value)	Mean
One-Sample t-Test	5.85	299	0.000	3.68

**Interpretation:** Since  $p < 0.05$ ,  $H_{01}$  is rejected. There is significant awareness about the Surrogacy Act among surrogate mothers and intending parents.

Group	Mean	t	df	Sig. (p-value)
Commercial Surrogacy	4.1			
Altruistic Surrogacy	3.4	4.62	298	0.000

**Interpretation:** With  $p < 0.05$ ,  $H_{02}$  is rejected. There is a clear perception difference among surrogate mothers about shifting from commercial to altruistic surrogacy.

### Objective 3: ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.5	2	6.25	5.84	0.003
Within Groups	318.2	297	1.07		
Total	330.7	299			

**Interpretation:** The p-value is below 0.05, so  $H_{03}$  is rejected. This shows stakeholders do face significant ethical concerns under the new law.

### Correlation (Pearson)

Variables	Correlation (r)	Sig. (p-value)
Awareness & Perception	0.46	0.000

**Interpretation:** There is a moderate positive correlation between awareness of the law and perceptions about surrogacy. More awareness leads to clearer perceptions.

### Chi-Square Test

Variable	Chi-Square	df	Sig. (p-value)
Role in Surrogacy vs Awareness	15.62	3	0.001

**Interpretation:** The p-value is less than 0.05, so there is a significant association between the respondent's role (mother, parent, doctor) and awareness of the Act.

### Descriptive Cross-tab

Awareness Level	Intending Parents	Surrogate Mothers	Medical Staff	Total
High Awareness	110	90	50	250
Low Awareness	20	20	10	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>300</b>

**Interpretation:** The majority of intending parents and surrogate mothers reported high awareness, confirming the earlier t-Test findings.



## 10. SUMMARY

- The normality test confirms normal data.
- The reliability test proves the questions are consistent.
- The t-Test and ANOVA validate that awareness, perceptions, and ethical concerns are significant.
- The correlation, chi-square, and cross-tab add depth, showing relationships between roles and awareness levels.
- Major Findings:
  - About 36.7% of people who took part in the study are aged 26–35 years, showing that younger adults are more involved in or aware of surrogacy matters.
  - Almost 66.7% of the respondents are married, which clearly indicates that married people are the main group dealing with surrogacy processes.
  - A good 33.3% are graduates, while another 30% have passed 12th standard. This means most respondents have a decent level of education and can understand legal aspects.
  - Out of all, 40% are surrogate mothers, 33.3% are intending parents, and 20% are medical professionals — showing that the study covered all major stakeholders.
  - About 40% families earn ₹20,000–₹50,000 per month, which shows that people from middle-income groups are more likely to be linked with surrogacy.
  - Most people heard about the Surrogacy Act through newspapers (26.7%) and social media (22.2%) — highlighting how important these channels are for spreading awareness.
  - A huge 58.5% chose infertility problems as the main reason for going for surrogacy. Money and social reasons were less important.
  - Around 43.6% feel that intending parents gain the most from surrogacy, while 32.7% believe that surrogate mothers benefit too.
  - 40% said they prefer altruistic surrogacy, showing support for family-based arrangements over money-based ones.
  - The average score for awareness about the Surrogacy Act was 3.8 (out of 5). This proves that most people know about the new law.
  - With a mean of 4.0, most respondents clearly understand that commercial surrogacy is not legal anymore in India.
  - Only 2.9 mean score shows that people feel enough information is not reaching surrogate mothers in local areas.
  - The average score was 3.4 when asked if people are satisfied with the shift to altruistic surrogacy — showing mixed feelings.
  - A high mean of 4.3 reflects that most people strongly feel extra legal protection is still needed for surrogate mothers under the new system.
  - Many fear that the ban on commercial surrogacy may lead to secret unethical deals — the mean score for this was 3.9, showing serious worry among people.
- The normality test proves the data is good for analysis.
- The reliability test shows the questions were trustworthy.
- T-Tests & ANOVA confirm that awareness, perception, and ethical concerns really matter.
- Correlation & Chi-Square tests show how awareness connects with roles like mother, parent, or doctor.

## 11. CONCLUSION

Based on the study, it is clear that people connected to surrogacy are aware of the new law to a good extent, but this awareness is not equally spread. Many intending parents and medical staff have more information, while some surrogate mothers still lack clear knowledge about their rights and duties under the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021. The shift from commercial to altruistic surrogacy has created mixed feelings. Some feel that commercial surrogacy gave better financial help to poor women, while others agree that altruistic surrogacy will protect women from being treated like commodities. The study also shows that ethical concerns like misuse of the ban, hidden payments, and lack of proper monitoring still worry many stakeholders. The statistical analysis confirmed that awareness and perception are related — more knowledge brings better understanding and stronger opinions. It also proves that ethical concerns cannot be ignored if the law has to work smoothly. To sum up, the Act is a step in the right direction to safeguard women's dignity and promote ethical family-building options, but practical gaps must be fixed. The results remind us that without strong awareness drives, clear legal advice, and strict monitoring, the law alone may not solve all the challenges. The findings call for policymakers, clinics, and support organisations to work together so that the surrogacy process remains safe, fair, and transparent for everyone.

## 12. SUGGESTIONS

- 1) Authorities should organise regular awareness workshops in hospitals and local areas to help surrogate mothers fully understand their rights and duties.
- 2) Counselling centres must be set up to guide both intending parents and surrogate mothers about the legal and emotional aspects of surrogacy.
- 3) Strict monitoring and reporting systems should be enforced to prevent misuse of the altruistic surrogacy model.
- 4) Continuous feedback from stakeholders should be collected to improve the law's implementation and close existing gaps.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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### Questionnaire

Question	Options/Scale
1. What is your age group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Below 25 years <input type="checkbox"/> 26–35 years <input type="checkbox"/> 36–45 years <input type="checkbox"/> 46–55 years <input type="checkbox"/> Above 55 years
2. What is your marital status?	<input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Unmarried <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed
3. What is your highest educational qualification?	<input type="checkbox"/> No formal education <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 10th standard <input type="checkbox"/> 12th pass <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate or above
4. What is your current role in surrogacy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Surrogate Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Intending Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Professional (Doctor/Staff) <input type="checkbox"/> Surrogacy Agent/Coordinator
5. What is your family income per month?	<input type="checkbox"/> Below ₹20,000 <input type="checkbox"/> ₹20,000–₹50,000 <input type="checkbox"/> ₹50,001–₹1,00,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Above ₹1,00,000

### Multiple-Choice Question

6. How did you first learn about the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021?	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> TV/Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital/Clinic Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Family/Friends <input type="checkbox"/> Not aware
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7. What do you feel is the biggest reason for choosing surrogacy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Infertility issues <input type="checkbox"/> Financial need <input type="checkbox"/> Social pressure <input type="checkbox"/> Family arrangement <input type="checkbox"/> Others (please specify)
8. Who do you think benefits most from surrogacy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Surrogate mother <input type="checkbox"/> Intending parents <input type="checkbox"/> Medical clinics <input type="checkbox"/> Agents <input type="checkbox"/> All equally
9. Which type of surrogacy do you personally support?	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial surrogacy <input type="checkbox"/> Altruistic surrogacy <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure

### Likert Scale Questions

**Scale:** 1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

#### Objective 1: Awareness & Understanding

S. No.	Statements	Scale (1-5)
1	I am aware of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021.	1 2 3 4 5
2	I know that commercial surrogacy is banned in India now.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I understand the rights and duties under the new law.	1 2 3 4 5
4	I believe enough information about the Act reaches surrogate mothers.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I feel intending parents have clear knowledge of the legal process.	1 2 3 4 5

#### Objective 2: Perceptions of Surrogate Mothers

S. No.	Statements	Scale (1-5)
1	I think commercial surrogacy gave better financial help to women.	1 2 3 4 5
2	I feel altruistic surrogacy will benefit families more than surrogate mothers.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I believe the new law will reduce exploitation of surrogate mothers.	1 2 3 4 5
4	I am satisfied with the shift to altruistic surrogacy.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I feel more legal protection is needed under the new system.	1 2 3 4 5

#### Objective 3: Ethical Concerns of Stakeholders

S. No.	Statements	Scale (1-5)
1	The new law protects the dignity of surrogate mothers.	1 2 3 4 5
2	The process is fair to intending parents under the new law.	1 2 3 4 5
3	Medical professionals find it easy to follow the new legal process.	1 2 3 4 5
4	The ban on commercial surrogacy will increase hidden unethical practices.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I feel all stakeholders should have more say in policy changes.	1 2 3 4 5