

# Turkish men's views about male midwifery care: a cross-sectional study

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## ABSTRACT

**Aims:** To determine Turkish men's views about receiving male midwifery care for their wife, partner, or female relatives.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted in September 2022- April 2023 with 279 male volunteers, reached via a Google Form prepared in light of the literature by the researchers.

**Results:** Average age was  $31.5 \pm 11.0$  years, 47.7% fathers, 66.7% have university degrees and more, 74.2% are not employees in the medical sector, and 44.4% do not know the presence of male midwives in Türkiye, 69.2% agree men can do midwifery, 53% do not want a male relative to be a midwife, 55.9% see a difference between a male gynecologist and a male midwife, 60.6% do not want his partner/relative to receive care from male midwife. In the higher-educated group, men are supporting men to be midwives. They are also willing to receive care from male gynecologist for their spouse/ relative. Stating no male midwife in Türkiye, requesting spouse/relative to receive care from a male doctor was found to be significantly higher in the healthcare worker group. Not wanting men to be midwives and their spouse/partner/relative to receive care from a male midwife was found to be high ( $p < 0.05$ ). Positivity against male midwifery was higher at higher education level. With fatherhood, men prefer a gynecologist for their spouses/ partners; however, they do not prefer a male midwife.

**Conclusion:** With the increase of male midwives in our country, hesitations will become more prominent. However, in western countries with high number of Turkish immigrants where male midwives are common, cultural and social aspects are part of competent care. However no data on this are available. All data will contribute to both sides.

**Keywords:** Male, midwife, midwifery, culturally competent care

## INTRODUCTION

The midwifery profession has strong, long-standing roots and goes back to the existence of humanity.<sup>1</sup> Midwifery is a primarily women-chosen professional health discipline based on science, art, and ethical values.<sup>2-4</sup> From ancient times to the present, midwives have been known as "healers, caregivers, mind-givers, and potion experts. It was also referred to as "knowledgeable mothers," "aunts," "grandmothers," and "witches" among the wealthy and religious groups.<sup>1</sup> Today, male midwives are active health care professionals in countries like the United Kingdom, Austria, Germany, and France. Even in countries such as the United States and Australia, where gender is not required in the midwifery profession, the male midwife rate is between 2 and 3.3%.<sup>4</sup> In 2018, a total of 47 universities, including public and private universities in Türkiye, offer midwifery education. At only three universities precondition is to be "female" other universities welcome both genders.<sup>3,5</sup> To feel more comfortable, protect privacy, not be seen by "foreign men", and in labour pain are some of the reasons women prefer female midwives.

Socio-cultural values and religious beliefs may also play a role.<sup>3</sup> However, some studies on this issue show differences.<sup>2,3,5-7</sup> In Türkiye, where some parts of the country live a more patriarchal structure, men dominate decision-making processes.<sup>8</sup> This will also include the midwife's decision. Midwives are in a very special place, supporting in many periods in a woman's life. Studies focusing on men in midwifery are partly limited by views of women about receiving care from male midwives, which presents positivity in a study from Ghana<sup>9</sup> and also Türkiye.<sup>10</sup> In another earlier time, from Türkiye Bolsoy et al.<sup>11</sup> reported that nearly half of the women were open to male midwives, but in the case of choosing possibility, more than 75% prefer to receive care from a female midwife. However in a study from a rural area in Kenya emphasized the importance of increasing the number of female midwives and considered variations towards male midwives according to age, marital status, level of education and culture, and even the attitude of the male partner.<sup>12</sup> More studies are present about female midwives' views about male midwives from the United States

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of America (USA), which is positive,<sup>13</sup> and midwifery students' views about male midwives.<sup>14,15</sup> Studies involving female students in Türkiye have identified hesitations regarding male students. It has been concluded that students with negative gender perceptions also have negative views about males in the profession.<sup>14,15</sup> However, data on men's views about male midwifery are very limited. The purpose of this study is to determine Turkish men's views about male midwifery and care. These study results will guide additional studies in Türkiye and also may be a starting point for Europe-based studies, where male midwives are more common than in Türkiye and due to the high number of Turkish immigrants. Emphasizing the need for culturally competent care, especially in multicultural communities and immigrant-welcoming countries.

## METHODS

### Ethics

This study has been approved by the Haliç University Non-interventional Clinical Researches Ethics Committee (Date: 28.09.2022, Decision No: 198). All procedures were conducted by the ethical standards of the Helsinki Declaration guideline. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

### Study Design and Participants

A cross-sectional, descriptive study was conducted between September 2022- April 2023, to examine the views of Turkish men about male midwives. The researchers' registration, assignment, follow-up, and analysis steps were compliant with the Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (STROBE) statement guidelines about male midwives.<sup>16</sup>

### Data Collection

#### Sampling

We aim to reach a total of 377 men 18 and older, with a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 error margin as the smallest sample size for this.<sup>16</sup> However, during data collection, men showed low interest in sharing their thoughts about male midwifery. Some of the reasons were;

- The belief that becoming a male midwife is impossible in Türkiye
- The belief that no Turkish young man would be willing to become a male midwife
- Male midwifery care is not appropriate for the Turkish community

Our comments to motivate them to participate, like there is no difference between male doctors, obstetricians, were responded to as "that's different". This, however, shows the social tendency to put medical doctors in a different position than other health care professionals, which is another research topic area.

The sample size was found to be sufficient in the post hoc power analysis performed after the study. With a 90% confidence interval and a 0.05 error margin smallest sample size were calculated as 267.<sup>16</sup> Our study results include 279 men data in this study.

### Sampling inclusion criteria

- Access to the online form
- Male 18 years and older
- Volunteering to take part in the study.

### Data Collection Tools

The data collection form was developed by the researchers in light of the literature.<sup>3,6,7</sup> The data collection online questionnaire consists of a total of 16 questions, including 6 questions about the socio-demographic data (age, marital status, education level, occupation, number of children, number of alive children), and 10 questions about fatherhood experience, knowledge, and views about male midwifery.

### Data Collection Method

The online survey link was first tested with a smaller group (n=15) to determine the clarity of the questions before the main group, and necessary editing corrections were made. Men population 18 and older were reached with the snowball sampling method, who met the sampling selection criteria. The survey link remained active for 8 months. Filling out the online survey form took approximately 10 minutes.

### Statistical Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-24.0) program was used to analyze the study findings. Frequency, percentage, mean (X), standard deviation, and min-max values were obtained for descriptive statistical analyses. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was applied to determine whether the results were appropriate for normal distribution. To determine the relationship among categorical data, the Chi-square test was used. Multivariate binary logistic regression was used to measure the association between supporting men to be midwives according to selected sociodemographic variables like age, education, occupation group and experiencing fatherhood. The  $p < 0.05$  was considered to be significant.

## RESULTS

A total of 279 men were reached in this study, and the sociodemographic characteristics (**Table 1**) were as follows. The mean age  $31.5 \pm 11.0$  (18-70), more than half (50.5%) were married, with a baccalaureate (57.3%) degree, a university or higher education level (66.7%), are students (30.5%), non-health (74.2%) employees, and have  $0.86 \pm 1.08$  (0-5) children, among those with fathership experience, mean child number was determined as  $1.9 \pm 0.8$  (1-5). The distribution of opinions about male midwives is shown in **Table 2**. Accordingly, excluding 146 people who stated that they did not have children, 51.1% (n:68) of the spouses of men who experienced fatherhood experienced only cesarean sections, and 35.3% (n:47) only experienced vaginal delivery. For the total group, the distribution of knowledge and opinion about male midwives, 44.4% of men do not know whether male midwives are present in Türkiye, and 17.6% say No. A significant portion of men (69.2%) agree with the comment that men can do midwifery, however, don't want men (52.5%) to be midwives or a male relative to be a midwife (53.0%), see a difference between male obstetricians and male midwives (55.9%), stated

that they don't want a spouse/partner/relatives to receive care from a male midwife (60.6%), but they agree (55.6%) to receive care from a male obstetrician. In case of being able to choose, 53.0% would not focus on midwife/doctor gender. However, 21.9% preferred a male obstetrician, 24.4% want a female Professional, and only two men were open for a male midwifery care (**Table 2**).

| Variables                                  | n                     | %        |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Age (mean±SD min-max)                      | 31.50± 10.98 (18-70)  |          |
| Age group                                  | <40 years             | 200 71.7 |
|                                            | ≥40 years             | 79 28.3  |
| Marital status                             | Married               | 141 50.5 |
|                                            | Single                | 136 48.7 |
|                                            | Divorced              | 2 .7     |
| Education level                            | Primary school        | 8 2.9    |
|                                            | Middle school         | 16 5.7   |
|                                            | High school           | 69 24.7  |
|                                            | Baccalaureate degree  | 160 57.3 |
|                                            | Postgraduate          | 26 9.3   |
| Education group                            | Including high school | 93 33.3  |
|                                            | University and above  | 186 66.7 |
| Occupation                                 | Self-employed         | 50 17.9  |
|                                            | Civil servant         | 56 20.1  |
|                                            | Employee              | 79 28.3  |
|                                            | Unemployed            | 9 3.2    |
|                                            | Student               | 85 30.5  |
| Occupation group                           | Health employee       | 72 25.8  |
|                                            | Non-health employee   | 207 74.2 |
| Number of children (mean±SD min-max)       | 0.86± 1.08 (0-5)      |          |
| Number of alive children (mean±SD min-max) | 1.86±0.81 (1-5)       |          |

SD: Standard deviation, Min: Minimum, Max: Maximum

The distribution of answers from men (**Table 3**) regarding male midwifery shows similarity among age groups and education levels ( $p>0.05$ ). However, comparisons within education groups, where men did not want men to be midwives, nor a male relative to be a midwife, and a spouse/relative to receive care from a male midwife, were more common in the lower-educated group. Meanwhile, a preference for male obstetricians was significantly higher in the higher-educated group ( $p<0.05$ ). Another comparison in **Table 4** shows the distribution among the occupation groups (non-health employees and health employees) and fathership experience. Agreeing that there are no male midwives in Türkiye, wanting a spouse/relative to receive care from a male obstetrician was more common among the health employee group ( $p<0.05$ ). Other data showed a similar distribution. According to fathership experience, not wanting men to be midwives or any spouse/partner/relative to receive care from a male midwife was common among the fathers' group ( $p<0.05$ ). Not wanting a male relative to be a midwife was also borderline close to significance in the father's group ( $p=0.05$ ).

| Variables                                             | n                    | %        |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Fatherhood experience                                 | Yes                  | 133 47.7 |
|                                                       | None                 | 146 52.3 |
| Experienced birth patterns (n=133)                    | Only vaginal birth   | 47 35.3  |
|                                                       | Only C-section birth | 68 51.1  |
|                                                       | Vaginal & C-section  | 18 13.5  |
| Male midwives in Türkiye                              | Yes                  | 106 38.0 |
|                                                       | No                   | 49 17.6  |
|                                                       | Don't know           | 124 44.4 |
| Can men do midwifery                                  | Yes                  | 193 69.2 |
|                                                       | No                   | 86 30.8  |
| Wanting men to be midwives                            | Yes                  | 133 47.7 |
|                                                       | No                   | 146 52.3 |
| Wishing relative to be male midwife?                  | Yes                  | 131 47.0 |
|                                                       | No                   | 148 53.0 |
| Difference between a male obstetrician and a midwife? | Yes                  | 156 55.9 |
|                                                       | No                   | 123 44.1 |
| Supporting receiving care from male midwife           | Yes                  | 110 39.4 |
|                                                       | No                   | 169 60.6 |
| Supporting receiving care from male obstetrician      | Yes                  | 155 55.6 |
|                                                       | No                   | 124 44.4 |
| Prefered care by ...                                  | Male midwife         | 2 .7     |
|                                                       | Male obstetrician    | 61 21.9  |
|                                                       | No gender issue      | 148 53.0 |
|                                                       | Only female          | 68 24.4  |

Finally, a regression model (**Table 5**) analyzes the relationship between agreeing male midwifery in relation to some features like age, education, occupation, and fatherhood. None of the factors were determined as significant factor in this modeling ( $p>0.05$ ).

## DISCUSSION

This study defines Turkish men's opinions about male midwives. In the Turkish society and cultural environment, midwifery is commonly seen as a woman-specific profession and women's job.<sup>3,5</sup> Men are reluctant to enter professions with a female intensity. Reasons are the fear of losing masculine qualities, which are glorified, rewarded by society. They also prefer to be in male-dominated areas by avoiding feminine aspects.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, women caretakers/patients prefer female professions instead of male health professions.<sup>3</sup> About 44.4% of men in this study did not know about male midwives in Türkiye. 69.2% reported that men could do midwifery, but 53% did not want their male relative to be a midwife. In a study from Türkiye, the idea that if they choose they could do midwifery but the main issue was seen as they would not do it, not prefer it due to their gender roles. In a study conducted with male students, they stated that there are no male midwives, because "it is a woman's profession".<sup>6</sup>

Similarly in another study with midwifery students about their opinions about male midwives, 55.6% of students

**Table 3.** Distribution of views on male midwifery according to age and education level (n=279)

| Opinions on male midwife                              |                   | ≤39 years<br>(n:200) |      | ≥40 years<br>(n:79) |      | X <sup>2</sup> /p | Including<br>high school<br>(n:93) |      | University and<br>higher (n:186) |      | X <sup>2</sup> /p |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------|---------------------|------|-------------------|------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------|------|-------------------|
|                                                       |                   | n                    | %    | n                   | %    |                   | n                                  | %    | n                                | %    |                   |
| Male midwives in Turkiye                              | Yes               | 76                   | 38   | 30                  | 38   | .00<br>.999       | 34                                 | 36.6 | 72                               | 38.7 | 2.96<br>.227      |
|                                                       | No                | 35                   | 17.5 | 14                  | 17.7 |                   | 12                                 | 12.9 | 37                               | 19.9 |                   |
|                                                       | Don't know        | 89                   | 44.5 | 35                  | 44.3 |                   | 47                                 | 50.5 | 77                               | 41.4 |                   |
| Can men do midwifery                                  | Yes               | 141                  | 70.5 | 52                  | 65.8 | .58<br>.447       | 59                                 | 63.4 | 134                              | 72.0 | 2.15<br>.142      |
|                                                       | No                | 59                   | 29.5 | 27                  | 34.2 |                   | 34                                 | 36.6 | 52                               | 28.0 |                   |
| Wanting men to be midwives                            | Yes               | 97                   | 48.5 | 36                  | 45.6 | .19<br>.659       | 34                                 | 36.6 | 99                               | 53.2 | 6.90<br>.011      |
|                                                       | No                | 103                  | 51.5 | 43                  | 54.4 |                   | 59                                 | 63.4 | 87                               | 46.8 |                   |
| Wishing relative to be male midwife?                  | Yes               | 98                   | 49.0 | 33                  | 41.8 | 1.18<br>.290      | 35                                 | 37.6 | 96                               | 51.6 | 4.86<br>.027      |
|                                                       | No                | 102                  | 51.0 | 46                  | 58.2 |                   | 58                                 | 62.4 | 90                               | 48.4 |                   |
| Difference between a male obstetrician and a midwife? | Yes               | 109                  | 54.5 | 47                  | 59.5 | .57<br>.504       | 58                                 | 62.4 | 98                               | 52.7 | 2.36<br>0.125     |
|                                                       | No                | 91                   | 45.5 | 32                  | 40.5 |                   | 35                                 | 37.6 | 88                               | 47.3 |                   |
| Supporting receiving care from male midwife           | Yes               | 80                   | 40   | 30                  | 38   | .09<br>.756       | 26                                 | 28   | 84                               | 45.2 | 10.48<br>.001     |
|                                                       | No                | 120                  | 60   | 49                  | 62   |                   | 67                                 | 72   | 102                              | 54.8 |                   |
| Supporting receiving care from male obstetrician      | Yes               | 109                  | 54.5 | 46                  | 58.2 | .32<br>.573       | 39                                 | 41.9 | 116                              | 62.4 | 10.48<br>.001     |
|                                                       | No                | 91                   | 45.5 | 33                  | 41.8 |                   | 54                                 | 58.1 | 70                               | 37.6 |                   |
| Prefered care by ...                                  | Male midwife      | 1                    | 0.5  | 1                   | 1.3  | 2.37<br>.499      | 1                                  | 1.1  | 1                                | 0.5  | 3.90<br>.272      |
|                                                       | Male obstetrician | 47                   | 23.5 | 14                  | 17.7 |                   | 19                                 | 20.4 | 42                               | 22.6 |                   |
|                                                       | No gender issue   | 107                  | 53.5 | 41                  | 51.9 |                   | 44                                 | 47.3 | 104                              | 55.9 |                   |
|                                                       | Only female       | 45                   | 22.5 | 23                  | 29.1 |                   | 29                                 | 31.2 | 39                               | 21.0 |                   |

X<sup>2</sup>: Chi-square test. p<0.05**Table 4.** Distribution of views on male midwifery according to the occupational group and birth experience (n=279)

| Opinions on male midwife                              |                   | Health employee |      | Non-health employee |      | X <sup>2</sup> /p | No child |      | Have child |      | X <sup>2</sup> /p |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------|---------------------|------|-------------------|----------|------|------------|------|-------------------|
|                                                       |                   | n               | %    | n                   | %    |                   | n        | %    | n          | %    |                   |
| Male midwives in Turkey                               | Yes               | 22              | 30.6 | 84                  | 40.6 | 16.67<br>.000     | 62       | 41.1 | 44         | 34.4 | 1.48<br>.477      |
|                                                       | No                | 24              | 33.3 | 25                  | 12.1 |                   | 24       | 15.9 | 25         | 19.5 |                   |
|                                                       | Don't know        | 26              | 36.1 | 98                  | 47.3 |                   | 65       | 43.0 | 59         | 46.1 |                   |
| Can men do midwifery                                  | Yes               | 50              | 69.4 | 143                 | 69.1 | .003<br>.954      | 105      | 69.5 | 88         | 68.8 | .02<br>.887       |
|                                                       | No                | 22              | 30.6 | 64                  | 30.9 |                   | 46       | 30.5 | 40         | 31.2 |                   |
| Wanting men to be midwives                            | Yes               | 38              | 52.8 | 95                  | 45.9 | 1.02<br>.314      | 81       | 53.6 | 52         | 40.6 | 4.70<br>.030      |
|                                                       | No                | 34              | 47.2 | 112                 | 54.1 |                   | 70       | 46.4 | 76         | 59.4 |                   |
| Wishing relative to be male midwife?                  | Yes               | 37              | 51.4 | 94                  | 45.4 | .77<br>.381       | 79       | 52.3 | 52         | 40.6 | 3.80<br>.051      |
|                                                       | No                | 35              | 48.6 | 113                 | 54.6 |                   | 72       | 47.7 | 76         | 59.4 |                   |
| Difference between a male obstetrician and a midwife? | Yes               | 39              | 54.2 | 117                 | 56.5 | .12<br>.729       | 77       | 51.0 | 79         | 61.7 | 3.23<br>.072      |
|                                                       | No                | 33              | 45.8 | 90                  | 43.5 |                   | 74       | 49.0 | 49         | 38.3 |                   |
| Supporting receiving care from male midwife           | Yes               | 32              | 44.4 | 78                  | 37.7 | 1.02<br>.312      | 68       | 45.0 | 42         | 32.8 | 4.33<br>.037      |
|                                                       | No                | 40              | 55.6 | 129                 | 62.3 |                   | 83       | 55.0 | 86         | 67.2 |                   |
| Supporting receiving care from male obstetrician      | Yes               | 49              | 68.1 | 106                 | 51.2 | 6.14<br>.013      | 83       | 55.0 | 72         | 56.2 | .046<br>.830      |
|                                                       | No                | 23              | 31.9 | 101                 | 48.8 |                   | 68       | 45   | 56         | 43.8 |                   |
| Prefered care bye ...                                 | Male midwife      | 0               | 0    | 2                   | 1    | 3.11<br>0.376     | 1        | 0.7  | 1          | 0.8  | .88<br>.828       |
|                                                       | Male obstetrician | 16              | 22.2 | 45                  | 21.7 |                   | 31       | 20.5 | 30         | 23.4 |                   |
|                                                       | No gender issue   | 43              | 59.7 | 105                 | 50.7 |                   | 84       | 55.6 | 64         | 50.0 |                   |
|                                                       | Only female       | 13              | 18.1 | 55                  | 26.6 |                   | 35       | 23.2 | 33         | 25.8 |                   |

X<sup>2</sup>: Chi-square test. p<0.05

**Table 5.** Supporting male midwifery associated with occupation, fatherhood education and age groups (n=279)

|                     | B          | SE    | Wald | df    | Sig. | Exp (B) | 95% CI for EXP (B) |            |
|---------------------|------------|-------|------|-------|------|---------|--------------------|------------|
|                     |            |       |      |       |      |         | Lower              | Upper      |
| Step 1 <sup>a</sup> | Occupation | .148  | .287 | .266  | 1    | .606    | 1.159              | .661 2.035 |
|                     | Fatherhood | .599  | .330 | 3.299 | 1    | .069    | 1.821              | .954 3.478 |
|                     | Education  | -.537 | .289 | 3.463 | 1    | .063    | .584               | .332 1.029 |
|                     | Age        | -.458 | .354 | 1.676 | 1    | .195    | .633               | .316 1.266 |
|                     | Constant   | .204  | .388 | .275  | 1    | .600    | 1.226              |            |

SE: Standard Error, CI: Confidence interval

reported male midwives would not be accepted by society. A 55.2% of the students reported that they do not want a male family member (brother, older brother, cousin, etc.) to be a male midwife, and 56.5% did not want to receive care from a male midwife for their relative/partner.<sup>3</sup> Our research findings and present limited literature showed similarities. It is thought that due to social norms, Turkish men are reluctant to participate in professions where women have a majority.

From another perspective which asks female midwives and nurses with at least a bachelor's degree about the presence of male nurses in gynecology clinics, these female health professionals stated that nursing is not a female profession but more than half of the midwives and nurses participating in the study support the idea that male nurses should work at department which higher male patient proportion (like urology etc.) and not in obstetrics clinics, delivery rooms.<sup>18</sup> Our study showed that with increasing education levels, wishing to have a male midwife among their relatives and receiving care from a male midwife for the spouse/partner increased significantly. Higher education level was defined as a positive feature for a more positive approach to male midwifery, however, more details on the parameters are needed. Although many gynecology and obstetrics specialists in Türkiye are men, midwifery similarly to nursing is considered a female profession that men cannot do, and the first thing that comes to mind when a midwife is mentioned is a female figure. About half of the men participating in the study were fathers, and about 51% of their spouses had a vaginal delivery and received care from a midwife. They also stated that 60.6% of men do not want their spouses/partners/relatives to receive care from a male midwife, but 55.6% of them want a male doctor. A study from Türkiye states that delivery and care by male midwives would be reasons to confront some difficulties for the pregnant women and also her husband/partner.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, in another study by Gonenc et al.,<sup>5</sup> 71.3% of midwifery students stated that the public's reaction to male midwives would be negative and not be welcomed by the Turkish community. However, in a women-focused study, nearly half of the women stated that they might want to receive care from a male midwife but in women who did not want this main reason would be feeling embarrassed and uncomfortable with a male midwife. As mentioned in the study from Africa/Ethiopia, it's not culturally appropriate to expose their genitals to a male midwife.<sup>19</sup> In another study from Türkiye, Alan and Uğur<sup>20</sup> determined the opinions of patients and their relatives about male nurses. According to this data, 70.9% of the patients stated that the success of

nurses in practice was more important than the gender factor, 47.8% wanted to receive care from a female nurse, 55.2% were not bothered to receive care from a male nurse, and 72% stated that male nurses could care much better. The research findings and literature show some similarities. Although men do not prefer a male midwife, they are not against male doctors and note that they may prefer a male obstetrician. No comparable study results are men-focused; however, these study results showed similarities with women-focused studies.<sup>11,12</sup> Where women reported that they are not against male midwives, but to be more comfortable, they would prefer and choose to have a female midwife, and cultural factors also have to be considered. In general, to be "comfortable" seems to play a more leading factor; men who experience the special care needs after the delivery might also prefer female midwifery care. This perspective might be differentiated from being completely against male midwifery. However, more detailed data on this perspective are needed. In a systematic review study from Europe<sup>21</sup> migrant women need culturally-competent healthcare providers who provide equitable, high-quality, and trauma-informed maternity care, undergirded by interdisciplinary and cross-agency team-working and continuity of care. New models of maternity care are needed that go beyond clinical care and address migrant women's unique socioeconomic and psychosocial needs. However, no data are present about the Turkish population living in Europe.

### Limitations

Our study findings about men's views of male midwives in Türkiye are limited by the sample size and their answers to our online questionnaire. The online data collection method via Google Form and the snowball sampling method might also result in data collection from similar participant profiles, like similar economic, social, and cultural circles. Those with no internet access, low-educated, not literate, or who even live in rural areas might not be represented in this study. Therefore present data can not be generalized to the Turkish male population in Türkiye. For better understanding, additional studies are needed to analyse if male midwives are welcomed, if not, why., Especially, qualitative studies will give a deeper understanding of different communities.

### CONCLUSION

Study findings show that more than half of the men did not know the presence of male midwives in Türkiye. They also did not want a relative to be a male midwife. Willingness to

receive male midwifery care for their spouses/partners and also wanting a male relative to become midwife increased with higher education level. Nearly half of the participants experienced fatherhood. Their baby was born with vaginal birth and received midwifery care. It was observed that men with paternity experience did not want their spouses/partners to receive care from a male midwife; however, they stated that they could prefer a male obstetrician. In a global sense, gender neutrality comes to the core of midwifery, as in all professions. In patriarchal social structures, men's decisions are very effective, especially in health preferences that will affect women's lives. In general, these limited data points out the approach of men distinguishing between doctors and other healthcare professionals. The vision, gender roles, and positions also have some reflections on positioning doctors on a higher level. In Türkiye, especially at the community level and in most family structures, the “caregivers” are mainly female family members. Mostly, patients see and feel nurses/midwives much closer to them in comparison to doctors, who are also seen in a higher position. Not always easily reachable like caregivers. In this context, it is recommended that more men focus studies on male midwives, male midwifery care, and develop projects that will raise awareness of society's gender equality. This study was done in Türkiye; however, at least 3 million Turkish people are living in Western Europe, where male midwives are more common and more in clinical practice than in Türkiye. Only 2 million people with Turkish roots are living in Germany. To provide culturally sensitive and competent care, this topic should also be a research topic in Western European countries and in general, all countries welcoming immigrants from different countries.

## ETHICAL DECLARATIONS

### Ethics Committee Approval

This study has been approved by the Haliç University Non-interventional Clinical Researches Ethics Committee (Date: 28.09.2022, Decision No: 198).

### Informed Consent

All patients signed and free and informed consent form.

### Referee Evaluation Process

Externally peer-reviewed.

### Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

### Financial Disclosure

The authors declared that this study has received no financial support.

### Author Contributions

All of the authors declare that they have all participated in the design, execution, and analysis of the paper, and that they have approved the final version.

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