Experiences of Online Sperm Donation

Information for Participants: Person who has conceived with donor

Principal investigator: Rhys Turner-Moore, Department of Psychology at Leeds Beckett University

Lead researcher: David Carless, School of Health and Life Sciences at University of West Scotland

Research staff: Lauren Smith, Francesca Taylor, Georgie Forshall, Department of Psychology at Leeds Beckett University

About the Project

This project seeks to understand more about online sperm donation, including the experiences of people who have recently conceived with a sperm donor they found online. The research has two broad aims:

1. First, we want to explore the relationships in online sperm donation, what influences people's experiences and what the impacts are
2. Based on these findings, we would then like to explore the imagined ideal futures of those involved in online sperm donation and work with them to create the changes that are important to them

The research is led by Dr Rhys Turner-Moore at Leeds Beckett University and is a collaboration with researchers at Universities of Manchester, Sheffield, Sussex and West of Scotland, and Pillowfort Productions. The project has been funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. This research builds upon our previous work on people's experiences of online sperm donation.

Please read the information on this sheet carefully before agreeing to take part. A brief, audio-visual, version of this information sheet can be found on our website https://www.aiconfidential.co.uk/donor-recruitment

Why am I being invited to take part?

As a part of this research, we would like to hear about the experiences and perspectives of people who have recently conceived with the donors who are taking part in our research.

What will it involve?

We would like to interview you twice: once as soon as is mutually convenient (i.e., now that you have conceived with a donor taking part in our research) and again at a later date (most likely in about a year's time or 1.5 year's time, and no later than two year's time).

We will travel to you to conduct the first interview. This will be at a mutually convenient location (e.g., at your home, somewhere local to you). The second interview will be online.

The interview will take up to 1.5 hours and comprise two parts. First you will be invited to share your life story, talking the researcher through your life up to the point of the first interview (or since the previous interview). The researcher will then ask you follow-up questions about topics covered in your life story. Whilst these follow-up questions will be led by your story, we may cover topics such as families, parenthood, how/when online sperm

Economic and Social Research Council

This work is supported by the Economic and Social Research Council
ES/W001381/1

donation became important in your life, the ups and downs of online sperm donation for you so far, and the impacts of these.

Second, we will explore who or what has influenced your online sperm donation journey so far. To help with this, we will ask you to write these onto a visual image which covers individual, relationship, community, and social influences, and then talk through this with you. We do not expect you to share personal information about other people in your interviews. Rather, we are interested in the types of people/relationships in general that have influenced your journey.

Will I be reimbursed for my time?

You will receive £20 per interview as a thank you for your contribution. We will also reimburse any childcare costs up to £30 per interview (with receipts).

Will I remain anonymous and will my data be treated confidentially?

At the first interview, you will be asked to choose a fake name which will be used in any write-up of the interviews so that you cannot be identified.

Each interview will be audio-recorded and a typewritten account of what was said will be made: you will only ever be referred to by the fake name you have chosen, and any identifiers (location etc.) will also be changed so that nothing you say can be traced back to you. The recordings you have produced will be stored electronically in a password protected folder and deleted at the end of the project. The visual image/drawing you have produced and your consent form will be stored in a locked cabinet at Leeds Beckett University and scanned and uploaded as a PDF to a password-protected folder on our OneDrive.

All the information that you provide to us will be kept strictly confidential. The only time that we would reveal anything to an appropriate authority would be if you divulged information that we feel could potentially put you or another person at risk of serious harm, or if you divulged information about previously having seriously harmed someone and you provided identifying information about that person. We would decide as a research team if this needed to be done or not, and we would let you know first if we needed to speak to someone else about what you have said and why.

How will my data be used?

Summaries of the overall findings are likely to be shared in a variety of ways, such as our project and institutional websites, newsletters and blog; media articles and podcasts; and short reports for key stakeholders. Many of these will be available via our project website, so that you can read them if you would like.

The findings from the research may also be presented at seminars and conferences and published in academic journals and books. At no point will participants be referred to by their real name and where direct quotations or the visual image from the interviews are used, any identifying information will be changed so that these also remain anonymous.

The anonymised findings overall (not for you specifically) may also be shared with members of our consultation group, made up of people who have been through the same process of

Economic and Social Research Council

This work is supported by the Economic and Social Research Council
ES/W001381/1

online sperm donation. We might ask them for their feedback and interpretation on our findings before they are written up for journal articles.

Your interview recording, anonymised typewritten account of what you said, and visual image that you produce may also be shared with our graphic artist who will produce visual representations of our research findings. The graphic artist will be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement, meaning that they will be prohibited from sharing your data with anyone outside of the research team.

Finally, it is a requirement of our funder (the Economic and Social Research Council; ESRC) that we archive your anonymous research data with the UK Data Service. You will not be identifiable when we archive this data and researchers outside of the research team will have to ask the permission of our Principal Investigator, Dr Rhys Turner-Moore, before accessing it. No personal information (e.g., names or contact details) will be archived with the UK Data Service. It is possible to opt out of data archiving for your individual data, if you want to.

Is taking part voluntary and can I change my mind?

Yes - taking part is completely voluntary and you can choose to stop taking part at any time. You can also choose to not answer any question without providing a reason. You will be reminded at every interview that you can choose to stop taking part in the study at any time, and that you have the right to withdraw your data for up to 3 months after each interview.

If you wish to stop taking part at any time, then you should email Lauren Smith (l.m.smith@leedsbeckett.ac.uk) to let them know.

Prior to each interview, you will be asked to read and sign a consent form which states that by signing the form and taking part in the interviews, you are agreeing to your data being used in the project.

If you wish to withdraw your data from the project, then you should email Lauren Smith with the fake name you chose and let them know which parts of your data you wish to withdraw – the typewritten accounts of the interviews, or your visual image of who or what has influenced your online sperm donation journey, or both of these. Lauren will then delete the data that they have pertaining to that fake name.

Will there be any other opportunities to get involved in your research in the future?

Yes! If you would like to be contacted about future research opportunities, you can tell us on the consent form.

I would like to take part in this research, what should I do?

If you would like to take part in the research, please email us at spermdonationproject@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Economic and Social Research Council

This work is supported by the Economic and Social Research Council
ES/W001381/1