

## **Sailing against the tide:**

The Journey to motherhood following previous pregnancy loss

### **Abstract**

**Background:** The experience of pregnancy following a previous pregnancy loss can be difficult and psychologically challenging. There are over 34,000 women who experience pregnancy losses every year in Taiwan. **Methods:** This project aims to understand this experience more fully, through an exploration of women's concerns, perspectives and experiences of maternal adjustment to motherhood following previous pregnancy loss using a qualitative approach with a purposive sample of Asian women living in Taiwan. In order to protect participants and researchers, particular ethical sensitivity is required in data collection and analysis, using interpretative phenomenological analysis. **Results:** The data from six participants (23-38 years) was analysed. A metaphor of "sailing against the tide" emerged from the data to depict three stages of the journey: remembering the journey of "loss"; the rising sun brings new life within; changing tide brings new birth. The essence of their journey through the pregnancy and birth is a permutation of fear, uncertainty and a deep desire for reassurance of fetal wellbeing. **Conclusions:** The preliminary findings have been used to draft a theoretical cameo of the journey and provide challenging insight into specific needs of mothers who have had a pregnancy loss and their heightened need for support at a professional, familial and agency level to enable them to adapt to this new motherhood. Further research is required to provide a framework for practical development and specialist care of these women.

Key words: pregnancy loss, experiences, subsequent pregnancy, motherhood