

CARROT

Fertility at work

A **global report** from Carrot Fertility

Fertility and family-forming journeys can be physically, emotionally, and financially challenging for many people worldwide. Infertility has become more common, with new data from the World Health Organization suggesting it impacts 1 in 6 people worldwide. On top of that, globally, there are laws and regulations that can make it significantly more difficult for people to access care.

Fertility is not only a global healthcare concern – it's an important workplace issue. To better understand how fertility impacts the workplace, we surveyed 5,000 people across the U.S., UK, Canada, India, and Mexico. We asked questions to get a sense of how people around the world feel about fertility topics at work and how they want to be supported in their fertility and family-forming journeys. Our results show that no matter where people live, many are facing fertility challenges, seeking support, and turning to their employers for help.



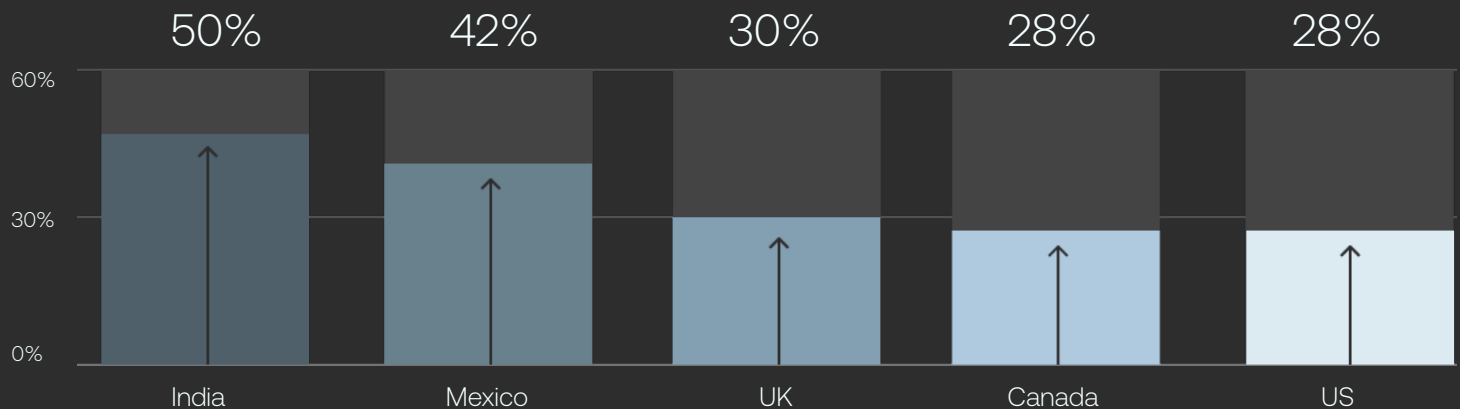
Pressure to build a family is universal

In addition to the personal desire to start or grow a family, the vast majority of people overall (91%) indicate they also feel societal pressure from at least one major source – most commonly a parent wanting to have grandchildren (49%). Spouses and religion are the second and third most common sources of pressure, respectively.

There was also a gender divide among respondents. Thirty-seven percent of women rate their age or the timing of building a family as their second most common source of pressure.

Additionally, 36% say their country’s culture places a stigma on people experiencing infertility or fertility challenges, which can make it difficult to have open, honest conversations and find much-needed support. For respondents in India and Mexico, this is even more prominent, with 50% of respondents from India and 42% of respondents from Mexico believing their culture places a stigma on people experiencing infertility or fertility challenges.

Our culture places a stigma on people experiencing fertility challenges.



Financial challenges are the biggest roadblock to starting a family

Respondents rank financial challenges as the most common roadblock to starting a family, reported by a majority in each country and 63% overall. Workplace challenges (55%), such as career growth considerations, are the second most common roadblock and are also experienced by a majority in each country.

For employees looking to start or grow their families, just 32% say they can afford fertility treatments if needed. Twenty-nine percent say they may incur debt to pay for fertility treatment, and 39% would have to dip into savings to afford it. Mexicans are most likely to have to incur debt or dip into savings, with 31% saying they're actively saving. Alongside Mexican respondents, Indians are the most likely to currently be setting aside funds for potential future interventions such as in vitro fertilization.

Among respondents who may incur debt to pay or have to dip into savings to afford fertility treatment, bank loans are the top financing option, as reported by 47%.

Americans and Canadians would be more likely to take on a second job to help finance their fertility treatments.

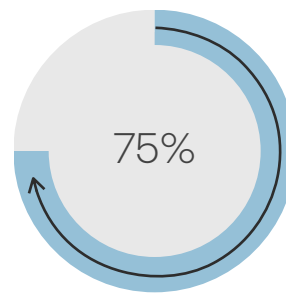
Top 3 financing options for respondents who may go into debt or dip into savings to finance fertility treatment

	1	2	3
Global	47% A bank loan	45% Credit card debt	44% Taking on a second job
U.S.	48% Taking on a second job	41% A bank loan	41% Selling minor possessions
Canada	50% Taking on a second job	37% Selling minor possessions	36% Credit card debt
Mexico	60% A bank loan	54% Credit card debt	44% Taking on a second job
UK	46% A bank loan	43% Loans from family	40% Taking on a second job
India	55% A bank loan	54% Credit card debt	45% Loans from family

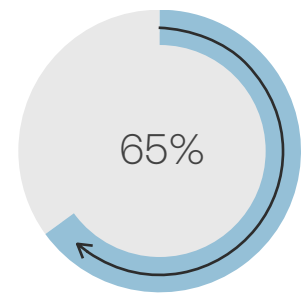
Fertility benefits are a crucial part of employee recruitment and retention

Fertility not only impacts people in their personal lives – it can also impact their work productivity and performance. Sixty-five percent of respondents say that they spent time at work researching fertility treatments, benefits, and family forming, and 55% share that fertility challenges have detrimentally impacted their work performance.

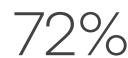
Fertility benefits are also an influential factor for people seeking new jobs. Sixty-five percent of respondents say they would ask about fertility benefits before accepting a new job offer and 42% even consider it to be a “deal breaker,” if not offered for a new job.



75% consider fertility benefits at work to be an important part of an inclusive company culture



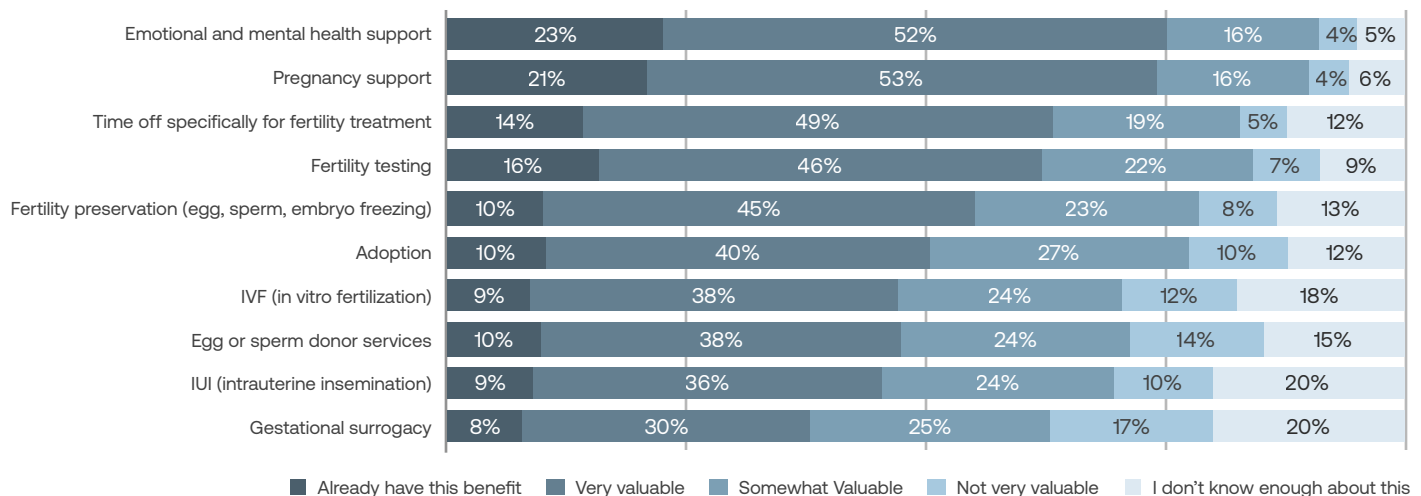
65% would change jobs to work for a company that offers fertility benefits



72% would stay at their company longer if they had access to fertility benefits



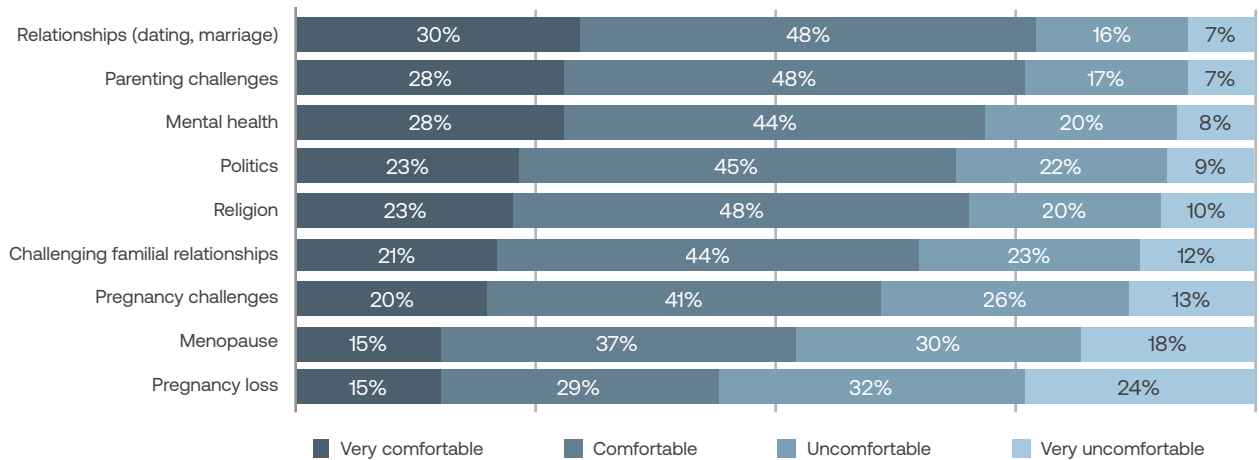
62% would even consider a part-time job with fertility benefits in addition to their full-time career



Fertility stigma remains, despite more support in recent years

Seventy-nine percent of people say they feel uncomfortable (or might) discussing fertility openly at work. Even topics like politics and religion are all considered more comfortable to discuss with work colleagues than pregnancy challenges, menopause, or pregnancy loss.

Even in private conversations, work is the least comfortable place to discuss fertility. Thirty-three percent are uncomfortable having these discussions with a supervisor or manager, and 28% are uncomfortable discussing with colleagues. By comparison, just 15% are uncomfortable sharing fertility issues with friends.



Creating a supportive workplace culture

There is substantial employee demand for fertility benefits in the workplace, presenting an opportunity for employers to enhance their benefits offerings to attract and retain talent. More than 60% believe that employees in their country should have better access to fertility benefits in the workplace. Nearly all respondents (97%) expressed a desire for better workplace culture for those trying to build a family or experiencing fertility challenges, with “better emotional or mental health resources” (63%) being the most popular solution. When employers do offer fertility benefits, specialized emotional and mental health tailored for fertility care experiences support are the most common such benefits and considered most valuable (53%).

Similarly, 97% expressed a desire for more employer-led support in addressing fertility care needs in the workplace, with fertility benefits being the top global solution (59%).



Way employers can make employees feel more supported addressing infertility or fertility care in the workplace

	1	2	3
Global	59% Receiving fertility benefits	56% Ability to work remotely	56% Flexible time off
U.S.	66% Receiving fertility benefits	61% Flexible time off	60% Ability to work remotely
Canada	60% Receiving fertility benefits	50% Flexible time off	49% Ability to work remotely
Mexico	58% Support / affinity / employee / resource group	57% Ability to work remotely	51% Receiving fertility benefits
UK	61% Flexible time off	54% Receiving fertility benefits	54% Ability to work remotely
India	63% Receiving fertility benefits	62% Ability to work remotely	60% Flexible time off

Conclusion

Despite cultural differences, employees globally are spending time — both at home and in the workplace — thinking about fertility and family formation. While these issues are on their minds and influencing where they want to work, there are still challenges with openly discussing all facets of fertility with supervisors and colleagues. Employers can help ease the financial burden, stress, and stigma by starting a conversation about these topics and providing inclusive fertility benefits to their team members worldwide.

Demographics and methodology

Carrot commissioned this scientific random sample of 5,000 respondents between the ages of 25 and 40, equally representing five countries (Canada, India, Mexico, UK, and U.S.), currently employed for wages, and are either in the planning stages or actively building a family.

- 54% of respondents identified as women and
- 46% as men
- 61% are married and 12% are living with a partner
- 74% have at least some college education

The survey was fielded in March 2023 and has a margin of error of 1.4% with 95% confidence.