Objective: It is well known that pregnancy termination is forbidden according to the laws of Islam, thus, the need for prenatal tests is inconclusive in Muslim society. In this research, we explored whether Jewish society norms influence Muslim women living in mixed cities to undergo prenatal testing and pregnancy terminations compared to Muslims women living in their own habitats.

Methods: The sample consisted of 1081 Israeli Muslim women between 18-49 years of age (M = 34.94, SD = 7.89); 564 (52%) living in a mixed city (i.e., Muslim and Jews living in the same city in coexistence) in the center of the country, and 517 (48%) Muslim responders living in their own habitats. SPSS software was used for statistical analysis.

Results: We found that participants living in the north and south of the country, either in mixed cities or their own habitats, underwent fewer invasive prenatal tests than Muslim women living in mixed cities and Muslim-only habitats in the center of the country. However, no statistical difference was observed between Muslim women living in mixed cities in the center as opposed to those living in Muslim-only habitats in the center. Muslim women living in mixed cities underwent more prenatal testing compared to the Muslim’s only habitats (FIG.1). Most pregnancy terminations, after receiving abnormal results, were performed in the center of the country both in the mixed cities and isolated habitats. Participants living in mixed-cities and Muslim-only habitats in the north and south did not undergo noninvasive prenatal testing (NIPT), whereas participants living in mixed-cities and Muslim-only habitats in the center did undergo these tests (FIG. 2). Moreover, participants living in mixed cities and Muslim-only habitats in the north and south did not receive genetic consultancy before a prenatal diagnosis, whereas participants living in mixed cities and Muslim-only habitats in the center of the country did receive genetic consultancy before undergoing the different prenatal tests.

Conclusions: Muslim women living in mixed cities performed more prenatal tests than in isolated Muslim-only habitats due to the influence of the Jewish society living in the same city. Muslim women living in the center of Israel, both in mixed cities and isolated habitats performed more prenatal testing and pregnancy terminations than in other parts of the country, attributable to more accessible medical services and consultancy in these areas. Additional medical health care and genetic counselling are needed in Muslim cities and only habitats in other parts of the country.