



## FEELINGS EXPERIENCED BY PARTURIENTS IN REASON THE INCLUSION OF THE PARTNER IN THE PARTURITION PROCESS

### SENTIMENTOS VIVENCIADOS POR PARTURIENTES EM RAZÃO DA INSERÇÃO DO ACOMPANHANTE NO PROCESSO PARTURITIVO

### SENTIMIENTOS EXPERIMENTADOS POR LAS MUJERES DEBIDO A LA INSERCIÓN DEL ACOMPAÑADOR EN EL PROCESO DE PARTO

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#### RESUMO

**Objetivo:** compreender a representação da figura do acompanhante para a mulher durante o trabalho de parto e parto. **Método:** estudo exploratório, com abordagem qualitativa, desenvolvido com puérperas em uma maternidade pública em Goiânia/GO, Brasil. A amostra constituiu-se de 13 participantes que tiveram parto normal na unidade. A produção de dados foi realizada por meio de entrevista semiestruturada, utilizando gravador de voz e, após a transcrição na íntegra, os discursos foram separados por semelhança e estruturados em categorias. **Resultados:** na análise sobre o que representou a figura do acompanhante para a mulher durante o trabalho e parto e parto emergiram duas categorias: Segurança e Fortalecimento. **Conclusão:** a presença do acompanhante cooperou de forma positiva durante o trabalho de parto, contribuindo para a superação e fortalecimento da mulher. **Descritores:** Parto Humanizado; Parto Normal; Direitos do Paciente; Enfermagem Obstétrica.

#### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** to understand the representation of the companion figure for women during labor and delivery. **Method:** an exploratory study, with a qualitative approach, developed with mothers in a public hospital in Goiânia/GO, Brazil. The sample consisted of 13 participants who had normal delivery in the unit. The production data was conducted through semi-structured interviews using a voice recorder and, after the full transcript, the speeches were separated by similarity and structured categories. **Results:** the analysis of which represented the accompanying figure for women during labor and delivery, two categories emerged: Safety and Strengthening. **Conclusion:** The presence of the companion cooperated positively during labor, contributing to the resilience and empowerment of women. **Descriptors:** Humanized Birth; Birth Normal; Patient Rights; Nursing Obstetric.

#### RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** entender la representación de la figura del acompañador de las mujeres durante el trabajo de parto. **Método:** estudio exploratorio, con un enfoque cualitativo, desarrollado con las madres recientes en una sala de maternidad en Goiânia, Goiás, Brasil. La muestra consistió de 13 participantes que tuvieron parto natural en la unidad. Los datos de producción fueron recogidos a través de la entrevista semiestructurada, utilizando la grabadora de voz y, después de la transcripción en su totalidad, los discursos fueron separados por similitud y estructurados en categorías. **Resultados:** durante el análisis acerca de lo que representó la figura del acompañador para la mujer a lo largo del trabajo del parto han surgido dos categorías: seguridad y fortalecimiento. **Conclusión:** la presencia del acompañador cooperó positivamente durante el trabajo, contribuyendo a la resiliencia y empoderamiento de las mujeres. **Descriptores:** Humanización del Parto; Parto Normal; Los Derechos del Paciente; Enfermería Obstétrica.

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## INTRODUCTION

Childbirth is more than a physiological event, it is a memorable and structured social and cultural event, in particular family, taking into account the social stratification, race/ethnicity, marital status, health status of pregnant women. In this context, assistance to the mother during the whole birth process must meet the actions of humanization of childbirth involving the experiences lived by the mother and whereas the procedures in care at delivery are also future milestones - positive or negative - in life of all involved in the context.<sup>1</sup>

The conquest by the companion right in the birth scene was forced by various social movements and especially the campaign organized by the Humanization of Childbirth Network (HCN) in favor of the right to the presence of a companion as free choice of the woman.<sup>4</sup>

The Ministry of Health (MOH) provides good practice in the delivery assistance, among them the obligation to allow the presence of a companion, free choice of women during the labor period, childbirth and postpartum in Brazilian health institutions. This right is supported by the Federal Law 11,108 of April 07, 2005.<sup>2</sup>

Women who receive continuous support during labor, compared with those without a support provider, have less chance of being subjected to caesarean section and increases the possibility of having a normal delivery without the use of analgesia; reduced labor time; less dissatisfaction with the experience of the process of labor and birth and a newborn with better Apgar scores in the first five minutes of life.<sup>3</sup>

Although the presence of a companion in childbirth is a constitutional right included in the health policy of Stork Network strategy for obstetric and neonatal care, the pace and the implementation context are little known, since, until recently, there was no national data on the presence of available companions.<sup>5</sup>

The fact that a companion in the birth period contributed positively to the movement towards humanization of the birth process, providing positive insights to health professionals as well as for newborns and parents.<sup>6</sup>

The humanized attention to the laboring woman understands adoption of knowledge, attitudes and practices that aims to promote a healthy labor and birth, in which develop actions and procedures based on scientific

evidence avoiding inopportune interference not to generate damage to the mother and newborn, respect autonomy, privacy and rights of mothers.<sup>6</sup>

Encouraging the involvement of the companion it was given from the fact that this practice came to contribute to the humanization of labor and birth. Numerous studies corroborate the idea that mothers need support throughout labor.

Scientific evidence reinforces the idea that the presence of a family in the delivery period is beneficial for both the mother and the child, as they raise self-esteem and the woman's well-being, relieving thus pain and tension, reducing the period of labor, decreases complications, the number of caesarean sections, among others benefits.<sup>7</sup>

This study aims to understand the representation of the companion figure for women during labor and delivery.

## METHOD

An exploratory qualitative study, developed with mothers in a public hospital in Goiânia, Goiás. Sample consisted of 13 participants who had normal delivery in the unit. The sample of participants was determined by data saturation.

Inclusion criteria: postpartum women over the age of 18, that have had vaginal delivery. Were excluded from the study: mothers with mental disorders; postpartum women whose deliveries evolved with neonatal death and postpartum women who had their child transferred to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, from November 2015 to February 2016.

The interviews were conducted by the researchers, using a voice recorder, and after the full transcript, the speeches were separated by similarity, structured into categories, and then analyzed and discussed in light of the literature. In order to maintain the integrity, all respondents were given pseudonyms.

This study is part of the project entitled "Health Practices in the Stork Network: Strategies, contributions and challenges to promote the health care of women." It was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Clinical Hospital of the Federal University of Goiás, CAAE 35107814.4.0000.5078, and serves 466/128 Resolution of the National Health Council.

RESULTS

Among the 13 respondents, only one woman had no companion during labor and birth, for lack of someone to accompany her.

Nine women (69%) were married or had stable union and four (31%) were single. According to parity, four (31%) were primary; four (31%) secundiparous; three (23%) terciiparous; and two (15%) quadriparous; Twelve (92.3%) had more than six prenatal consultations. It is noteworthy that all respondents received prenatal care and none during consultations received information about the escort right in the birth process.

Of the interviewees when asked about the law which guarantees their right to a companion, only nine (69%) reported being aware of this right.

For each interviewed person, seven (53%) had a partner and companion. With respect to the satisfaction of women with respect to the person who was accompanying them during the delivery, nine (69%) said the companion was who she wanted.

In analyzing the chart represents the figure of a companion to the woman during labor and delivery. Two categories emerged: Security and Strengthening.

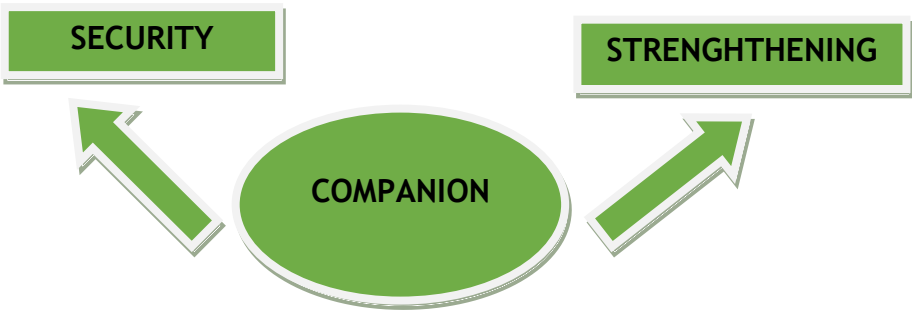


Figure 1. Graphical representation of categories that emerged.

◆ Safety

For the interviewees, companion presence sends a sphere of safety during labor. The reports reveal that the companion figure produced confidence and minimized fear during childbirth:

*He gives me security [...] he took the fear away and gave me security (P 03).*

*He helped me in everything [...] Security and trust at the time of pain (P 04).*

*I could have my husband and especially at the time of birth he gave me a lot of security [...] giving birth here was an achievement (P 09).*

It was identified that the partner's presence during childbirth opportunity was considered significant. One interviewee reported that the preference for the partner was linked to the fact they feel more confident with it:

*I preferred him even because I feel more confidence in him (P 01).*

Even women who have had other deliveries, also describe the presence of the companion as a factor that provided them greater security during the birth process:

*I represented for me, I think it was safer because as we are prepared or already gone through the situation, each situation is different from one another and so on (P 01).*

According to a postpartum woman, the presence of someone who may welcome them,

soothing and offering emotional support and encouragement, was perceived positively:

*I liked it because it is a time that you feel so alone that is a moment of our own [...] is a time that only you feel pain [...] so when you feel pain you get like this, it seems that no one is understanding what you are going through and when you have someone with you to see the person's concern calming you and talking to you, this was very good, it was perfect (P 01).*

Security is considered by WHO as a major factor during labor and delivery. It is worth noting that the figure of the companion must be the woman's choice, which should contribute in a positive way in the birth process.

◆Strengthening

The labor and delivery is permeated by a range of feelings, conflicts and distress, fear, insecurity and a sense of disability, even the fact that the parturients experience something new, which often are centered in primary situations of pregnancy and gain larger dimensions during pregnancy. Many women reported that their partner's presence gave them a kind of strengthening, which brokered the passage during labor pain:

*She was there beside me asking me to have strength and help the child that needed a lot of me [...] (P 02).*

*He gave me all the strength so I can have it [...] He removed the fear (P 03).*

*Then my godmother gave me strength, said I'd done it and stayed by my side the whole time (P 06).*

*You share this moment with your husband giving you strength is priceless. I would go through it all again (P 07).*

*It seemed that we had a link ... I squeezes his hand so much I felt even stronger [...] (P 10).*

*My mother accompanied me throughout pregnancy, so she taught me to be strong in difficult times and when the time came to come here I was ready, you know, safe (P 12).*

Feeling empowered, women can produce in an atmosphere of resilience and perseverance to the final outcome of delivery. For one interviewee, the presence of her mother was essential for her to not give up the normal delivery.

*Means a lot to me [...] I think that if she was not here I would have given up the normal delivery and made a cesarean section (P 13).*

It was found that the presence of a companion during the birth process is able to make the time of delivery less stressful. It is an opportunity to be with the woman, favors the empowerment providing you security, peace and quiet, since strengthening and security are associated with the need to share fears and anxieties with someone's continued presence during the parturition process.

## DISCUSSION

Prenatal care aims to prepare women for childbirth, providing information that may be important for success of the parturition process. Among the women interviewed, it was found that all prenatal care over six consultations reaching the recommendation of MOH, however, no pregnant women received guidance about the right to free choice of companion during labor, delivery and postpartum.

The educational actions must be developed from the beginning of prenatal care. It is known that prenatal care is an important means to provide educational interventions for care that health professionals, especially nurses who perform the first prenatal consultation, can offer women and their families of knowledge and guidance, as well to clarify the doubts.<sup>11</sup>

Emotional support promoted by the partner's presence during pregnancy and postpartum period is one of the World Health Organization recommendations (WHO) and MOH, and classified this practice as beneficial for women. This conduct constitutes a reference to the institutionalization of

humanized care in health care, and allows women to experience the birth in a more secure and respectful way.<sup>9</sup>

Knowing the opinion of mothers about their experiences, care and comfort received during their labors and delivery may point to new ways to care during this time in their lives.<sup>10</sup>

The presence of a companion next to the woman in the birth process is related to the wishes, desires and fears at birth. Actions taken by companions are as important as the obstetricians care provided by health professionals.<sup>9</sup>

The participation of a companion for women giving birth provides feelings related to strengthening security, protection, resilience and comfort. Childbirth is considered a stressful event, can be softened by the presence of the companion or family reference. In this sense, partner participation, can also be linked to emotional support, which is not always provided by the health team. So sharing this moment with their partner, with their partnership, it helps to facilitate good outcomes during labour.<sup>12-13</sup>

In the assessment of the presence of a companion for mothers showed satisfactory results. Recalling that women's preferences should be respected. In assisting the passenger presence generated welfare feelings for most pregnant women. The presence of the companion is recommended by the WHO and the right secured by law throughout the country. Subsistence and fulfillment of this right shall be disseminated among pregnant women during prenatal care in health facilities. Compliance is a significant indicator of quality of care, and contributes for the safety of the mother and promotes the physiological course of childbirth.<sup>14</sup>

## CONCLUSION

All women had prenatal coverage, however, showed an incipient regarding educational activities and information about the companion of choice. The majority of respondents were unaware that both a male or female companion could stay with them.

Described a difference when accompanied by a partner. They said they feel more secure and confident, the partner was preferred during delivery. While others accompanying them reported that they felt more empowered.

The figure of the companion in the birth scene promoted to the women the feeling of overprotection, disassociated from other actors. For some symbolized a distant person

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in this process, that this was not the companion she would like.

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