THE FATHER'S PERCEPTION ON HIS PRESENCE DURING THE PARTURITIVE PROCESS

PERCEPÇÃO DO PAI SOBRE A SUA PRESENÇA DURANTE O PROCESSO PARTURITIVO PERCEPCIÓN DEL PADRE SOBRE SU PRESENCIA DURANTE EL PROCEDIMIENTO PARTURITIVO

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to describe the father's perception of his presence during the parturition process. **Method:** a qualitative, descriptive study, consisting of nine accompanying fathers, in a Normal Birth Center institutionalized in a reference maternity hospital. Data collection took place through direct and individualized interviews, with a semi-structured script, recorded and transcribed in its entirety. The Content Analysis technique was used in the category analysis mode. **Results:** analysis of the data allowed for the emergence of the categories << Parent / companion conception about their presence during the childbirth process, << Feelings expressed by the father / companion during the expulsive period >> and << Involvement of the father / companion in the parturitive process >>. **Conclusion:** the fathers acknowledged the accompanying of their female partners in labor as positive, since they were able to contribute by providing support, safety, confidence, comfort and physical and emotional well-being. **Descriptors:** Obstetric Nursing; Humanizing Delivery; Labor, Obstetric; Paternity; Humanization of assistance; Father-Child Relations.

RESUMO

Objetivo: descrever a percepção do pai sobre sua presença durante o processo parturitivo. **Método:** estudo qualitativo, descritivo, constituído de nove pais acompanhantes, em um Centro de Parto Normal institucionalizado em uma maternidade pública de referência. A coleta de dados ocorreu por meio da entrevista direta e individualizada, com roteiro semiestruturado, gravada e transcrita na íntegra. Utilizou-se a técnica de Análise de Conteúdo na modalidade Análise de Categorias. **Resultados:** a análise dos dados possibilitou emergir as categorias << Concepção do pai/acompanhante sobre sua presença durante o processo de parto >>, << Sentimentos expressos pelo pai/acompanhante durante o período expulsivo >> e << Envolvimento do pai/acompanhante no processo parturitivo >>. **Conclusão:** os pais reconheceram o acompanhamento às companheiras em trabalho de parto como positivo, pois puderam contribuir proporcionando-lhes apoio, segurança, confiança, conforto e bem-estar físico e emocional. **Descritores:** Enfermagem Obstétrica; Parto Humanizado; Trabalho de Parto; Paternidade; Humanização da Assistência; Relações Pai-Filho.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: describir la percepción del padre sobre su presencia durante el proceso parturitivo. **Método:** estudio cualitativo, descriptivo, constituido por nueve padres acompañantes, en un Centro de Parto Normal institucionalizado en una maternidad pública de referencia. La recolección de los datos ocurrió por medio de la entrevista directa e individualizada, con guión semiestructurado, grabado y transcrito en su totalidad. Se utilizó la técnica de Análisis de Contenido en la modalidad Análisis de Categorías. **Resultados:** el análisis de los datos posibilitó emerger las categorías << Concepción del padre / acompañante sobre su presencia durante el proceso de parto >>, << Sentimientos expresados por el padre / acompañante durante el período expulsivo >> y << Involucramiento del padre / acompañante en el proceso parturitivo >>. **Conclusión:** los padres reconocieron el acompañamiento a las compañeras en trabajo de parto como positivo, pues pudieron contribuir proporcionándoles apoyo, seguridad, confianza, confort y bienestar físico y emocional. **Descriptores:** Enfermería Obstétrica; Parto Humanizado; Trabajo de Parto; Paternidad. Humanización de la Atención; Relaciones Padre-Hijo.

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INTRODUCTION

The Public Health Policies, which report on Maternal and Child Health, underline the relevance of the humanization of health care through the reception of practices based on scientific evidence and that, in particular, appreciate the rights, individuality, completeness and autonomy in the various care segments. This manifestation became indispensable in the face of the officialization of childbirth in health institutions, which distanced the women from the home, in their particular context and family protection, overlapping a biomedical model of care focused on the medical professional and the hospital institution. In Brazil, hospital care, attributed to childbirth, has increased to 95% since 1994, reaching 97.9% in 2006. Currently, parturients are assisted by trained professionals in 95.9% of the cases so distributed: 88% by doctors and 7.9% by nurses.¹

It was observed that, as of 2005, parturients have reserved the right to accompany their free choice throughout the parturitive process, which must necessarily be protected by the Unified Health System (UHS). However, almost 13 years after the enactment of Law No. 11,108, of April 7, 2005, delinquency of the legal text is easily witnessed in health institutions. In the Brazilian states where the Stork Network Program is being implemented, it is estimated that 62.4% of the women were not guaranteed the right to accompanying during the parturition process, according to what was foreseen in the legislation.²

Studies have been carried out in Brazil showing that the presence of the man at the birth scene was neglected for several decades, although the presence of the male during the parturition process is a new event and requires more adherence and reflection on the part of the latter. The companion demonstrates support and security to the woman in the parturient, although in some occasions she exhibits surprises and expectations.³

It has been shown that the paternal coexistence within the modern family has expressive changes announced, in particular, by the appearance of a new embodiment of masculine obligations in society. This is essentially in response to the current achievements of women and to the new responsibilities assigned to them in public life, and in the professional environment.

According to this proposition, there is tacit convenience to review the incumbency of the former head of the household in the domestic arena, in the sense of sharing duties and services, with evidence in the raising of the child. Although this change of judgment is slow, today's society calls for the most productive involvement of man as husband and father. This includes the experience of the parturitive process with the wife or companion.⁴

Essential contributions to the ordination of the timely bond between father and newborn are provided for the follow-up of the father in the process of his child's birth collaborating in the preparation and legitimation of paternity. In addition, the father can be a familiar reference, emotional support, support in the care attributed to the woman, providing the progress of labor, giving her more security, tranquility and comfort, which may reflect in strengthening the relationship. This also contributes to the greater involvement of fathers in the family's health and quality of life.⁵

In this sense, it is emphasized that the quality assistance to the woman in labor is a fundamental right and represents an indispensable step to ensure that she can exercise motherhood with safety and well-being. The health team should be prepared to welcome the parturient, her partner and other family members, respecting all the meanings of that moment, with the duty to facilitate the creation of bonds, transmitting confidence, tranquility and guaranteed the rights of women in the health actions.⁶

From this context, the following guiding question was elaborated: What is the perception of the father about his presence during the parturition process?

OBJECTIVE

- To describe the father's perception of his presence during the parturition process.

METHOD

Qualitative, descriptive study, in the period of December 2017, in a Normal Birth Center (NBC) institutionalized in a reference maternity hospital in Teresina (PI), Brazil. The NBC has five beds assigned to the parturition process, attending the attention to childbirth and humanized birth, recommended by the Stork Network, and the prepartum, childbirth and postpartum work assisted by obstetrician nurses.

It is the research of nine accompanying fathers, limited by data repletion, which is adequate to the cessation of the inclusion of new participants when the narrations are prolix. Fathers or partners who were 18 years of age or older and who agreed to participate in the study after reading and signing the Free and Informed Consent Term (FICT), as recommended in Resolution 466 of the National Health Council were included.

For the acquisition of the data, a semi-structured interview was conducted, composed of open and closed questions, previously formulated, that addressed issues related to the objectives of this study that were recorded by portable MP3 players and transcribed in full in the next. The interviews were individually directed to the accompanying parents, in a reserved space, in order to provide comfort and privacy.

The information was analyzed through the Content Analysis Technique, in the Categorical Analysis modality, determined as a set of information analysis techniques that allows to compile the raw material and to gather elements that have similarity to each other. Among the Content Analysis procedures, the Thematic Analysis was chosen, which consists of elucidating the meanings that conclude a communication, and the presence and frequency of these mean something to the studied object.⁷

For the elaboration of the categories, the speeches were transcribed, continuing with the re-reading for the speculation of the content and significance of the achieved results. Consequently, the words and expressions with the same sense nucleus were chosen by the classification of the lines, which were underlined in the same color. Subsequently, the speeches by color were grouped when three thematic units emerged: conception of the father / companion about their presence during the birthing process, feelings expressed by the father / companion during the expulsion period and involvement of the father / companion in the parturitive process.

Descriptive results were presented and the anonymity of accompanying fathers was protected by pseudonyms composed of the letter "D" followed by numbers (D1, D2 ... D9). Regarding the ethical aspects, the research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the State University of Piauí with the opinion no. 1,458,910 and CAAE: 52605215.1.0000.5602. The Free and Informed Consent Term was provided to accompanying fathers in order to clarify them about the

study, as well as to request authorization for participation in this study.⁸

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

♦ Conceptions of the father about his presence during the parturition process

This category reveals how the accompanying parents present their experiences in the face of the events that occur with their partners, from admission to NBC until discharge, and it is possible to verify, through the analysis of their statements, the commitment with the assistance methodology applied at the Normal Birth Center.

It was found that the warmth and interaction between the couples proved to be important elements for the rise of humanization, given that it is based on ethical and human principles, based on esteem and emotional support to their companions. This demonstration of spontaneous and natural affection offered by them, favors satisfaction, because the parturients felt welcomed and supported, provoking superiority in confidence and security in the prepartum, childbirth and postpartum work, resulting in comfort, besides providing the role of the woman in the process of parturition, as revealed in the statements.

It is important the presence of the father, both physical and moral, because it gives more confidence to the mother, she feels more comfortable, more confident [...] is good to comfort her, so that she feels safer with everything this and have more strength so that it comes to have the baby and has a normal birth. (D1)

It was the first time I was accompanying her all the time until the delivery ended ... my presence was very necessary because I gave her more strength and confidence because everything is not easy for the woman ... I see the accompaniment in a positive way because it is the responsibility of both and not to play the responsibility only on the mother's back. (D2)

It's ... It had a moral and physical support, so I did my part because the nurses did their part ... I did everything I could do, until the nurses praised it, they told my mother-in-law when she came in, who: "This, yes, is the husband who helped even giving a psychological, mental, moral and physical support." (D3)

The help I gave was more strength, encouraging every moment, saying that she was capable, that she could. There came a certain moment when she said that she could not do it, she said that it was not right, but I told her that she was capable,

that every woman is capable, that God gave this gift to the woman [...] (D9)

It was identified through the analysis of the mentioned speeches, that fathers perceive that their presence in their wives' or companion's prepartum and childbirth allows the transmission of affective gestures, providing comfort, confidence and security, as well as encouragement during this special and delicate moment. It was observed that the parents had an important role supporting in several aspects that correspond with the needs of women in the physical, moral, mental and psychological scopes.

The presence of the companion, along with his wife or partner during the pre-delivery and childbirth works, helps to make the moment more pleasant and healthy for the woman, providing the emotional support she really needs, stimulating her to produce strength so that the delivery takes place in a more calm and peaceful manner, returning to the most natural possible and providing security and comfort.⁹

It has been shown that research conducted in Brazil, depending on the conceptions, some fathers are anxious and excited and have an anticipatory behavior, while others let express a certain uneasiness and fear about the birth of their child, stagnating in front of the new event. Consequently, being aware of the different perceptions of accompanying fathers about the parturition process is essential to assist in the preparation of plans and the delivery of assistance, validating a model of care that verifies and incorporates the man as an important actor in the birth scenario and as a support network for the woman.¹⁰

The companion's support, in the parturition process, can provide the woman with positive feelings such as the feeling of shelter, courage, tranquility and comfort, with the consequent reduction of fear and anxiety. The ongoing companionship of a person alongside during the parturition process is a form of emotional support that reduces loneliness and fear in an unfamiliar environment.^{11, 9}

In a study conducted at the Obstetric Center (OC) of the Clinical Hospital in Porto Alegre, the authors argue that the father's accompaniment during the parturition process allows words to be verbalized through conversations, allowing the woman to feel cherished, supported and reassured. The existence of this interaction may alleviate pain that the woman may present due to contractions.¹²

According to these premises, it is imperative that the Nursing Body of NBCs, which assists women in this exceptional

period, are able to lead the diverse feelings experienced by the parturient and the perception of the spouse that contribute to the rescue of natural childbirth and inclusion of the partner at birth scene.

Feelings expressed by the father / companion during the expulsion period

The second category arose from the reports of the companions as to the way in which they express their feelings, fears and expectations regarding the changes that occur throughout the periods of prepartum, childbirth, and in the immediate puerperium, according to the narratives of the deponents.

At the time of childbirth, I held her hand helping her all the time ... I saw the child inside her still and it was a very good experience, I never had it in my life [...] if any parent is nervous, try not to be , because the presence of the father in these hours for the woman is very good. (D3)

To tell you the truth, I did not help much because I was very nervous, I cried too and I was very scared to see why she was like, so, crying for the pain I was feeling, I was very nervous and afraid, but I think I helped. (D6).

It is a very good experience, I was very moved because I had never seen it. I saw these things only through the videos on YouTube and on TV, but I had never seen them live. Boy, I felt a lot of emotion at the time and I cried, excited. (D7)

It is because of the fact that I never participated in a delivery, I was very emotional and nervous at times, but it was great to be there to help my wife. The help I think I gave was when I saw that she was very nervous and in pain, that's when I grabbed her hand to make her feel safer. (D8)

Boy, the experience, so I think it is unique, different experience that had never happened, I went through many situations, but last night was very different, something I had never seen, had never accompanied, did not know how it worked, as far as it would go [...] today, I can consider it perfect; Yesterday, it was overdue at that time, but today I consider it a perfect accomplishment. (D9)

Emotions result from the mental interactions of individuals caused by a moment or something abrupt, occasioned by other individuals or events, changing the affective state of the person. They can be pleasant or unpleasant, according to how they were stimulated. Despite the apprehension generated before the moment of delivery itself, the anxiety and concern evidenced by the father, not knowing what will happen, he is very excited after the birth of the child, manifesting an explosion of feelings in which

the emotion is highlighted over the other feelings that were kept.¹³

Feelings, emotion, nervousness, anxiety, anguish and fears are present and expressed by the companions. All these manifestations were exhibited by the fact that it was the first experience as companion, associated with the lack of knowledge of the whole clinical process of the prepartum and childbirth work, the stages that follow them and how to provide the appropriate assistance, according to the moment of pain presented by the companion, in addition to generating some apprehension about the outcome of the birth. Given this context, the companions are shown as real supporters.¹³

The man, father, in the companion mode included in the setting of the childbirth, can experience the birth of his son and each father will perceive their participation in different way. The way in which each father / companion perceives the parturitive process stands out as unique and particular to each one, since, in particular, the experiences they related, describe various meanings of experiences lived at each moment approaching birth, and these events mark their lives, involving feelings that will be recorded in their memories.⁵

The birth of a child with the presence of the father, at that moment, gives him a diversity of feelings that are interspersed at all times, such as suppression, fear, excitement, love and emotion, showing a transformation in the life of the couple. On the other hand, this companion experience may lead to a traumatic experience, but it can also generate affection, respect and sharing among those involved.¹²

Involvement of the father / companion in the parturitive process

This category shows how the companions interacted with the methodology applied in NBCs: Swiss ball activities, horse riding, music, walking, warm bath, comfortable position for childbirth, food without residues and other related activities such as orientations in relation to the childbirth mechanism, follow-up of the partogram and words of comfort. The orientations provided to the couple had the purpose of facilitating the participation of the fathers in the aid to their companions during the assistance to the parturitive process, according to the statements.

[...] I helped her all the time, from the beginning, in the pre and postpartum years, I helped her exercise when she was three to four centimeters [...] I exercised with her, she has several forms of exercise, made her

ride with her, made her sit on the ball and squatting [...] I stayed on her side all the time stroking her to calm her down. (D3)

[...] I had many exercises and massages that I did ... the part I think I helped the most was when I was doing the massage on her back for the baby to be born, talking to her and explaining. (D4)

Well, I believe that I was essential because, first of all, it has the issue of dilation, because it is a period that the woman suffers, so, in part, it is a physiological situation, but it needs support, right, I do not I am a doulo, but practically I was one, at work, in the exercises and in the bath. I spent hours and hours walking with her, so wherever she went, I was on her side [...]. (D5)

I gave her a lot of strength, always encouraging her to push harder and do the exercises, I helped her with a massage, she understood, I think, yes, that my participation was very ideal. (D7).

[...] I helped when it was time for her to bathe and walk, I helped when it was to do those ... exercise with the ball and walk. (D8)

It was observed by the researchers of this theme that the most expressive activity of the companion, present at the time of labor, is bound by actions that promote physical comfort, which positively favors the progress of cervical dilatation of the parturients. The actions of the companion are more directed to the aid in ambulation, in the warm bath, in the exercises using the Swiss ball, horse and, also, in the execution of massages with mineral oil. These methods help reduce pain, reduce anxiety, and reduce the stress of the labor process.¹³

The practice of manual massages by the companion is a simple, non-pharmacological and inexpensive therapeutic measure that, if performed together with the breathing techniques and with ambulation, promotes the comfort and tranquility of the parturient. The use of the horse and the Swiss ball, which are mobility techniques, are aimed at relieving pain during the active phase of labor, generating greater relaxation for the woman and reducing the use of analgesics and anesthetics, as well as a better development of labor.¹⁴

An integrative review, composed of 26 articles in Brazilian and international languages, whose theme was "The partner as a companion in the parturition process", corroborates this study when the authors found that physical comfort comprised 23.1% of the studies expressing activities performed by fathers such as hugs, provision of hydration, help in breathing exercises,

ambulation, changes of position, drying the forehead, taking the woman's hand during labor, or keep it warm, and the implementation of some massage techniques.¹⁵

These statements show a behavior resulting from a process of interaction of the accompanying father with the Nursing team and his partner that becomes the search for assistance and resolution of the pregnant state, because, when interacting with themselves and with the birth space, with their components, elaborate answers geared towards the needs of the outreach, which are reproduced in the form of involvement with the assistance, previously so unknown by the companions.

CONCLUSION

The narrative description of the accompanying fathers showed functions related to their social, historical, religious and cultural experiences for the negative or positive outcome in the parturitive process. Although the ideological existence associated with their participation is often delimited by social prohibitions, with institutional or individual representations, the relevant progress of the purpose of sharing the child's own birth was witnessed, since at times the father showed timid knowledge to provide support as he would appreciate. However, emotional support and reinforcement of their obligations as an unfamiliar father and partner in NBCs and, even less, in scientific research.

In this study, the fathers' efforts to recognize the follow-up of their partners in labor as positive were considered, since they were able to accompany them providing support, safety, confidence, comfort and physical well-being. However, it is noteworthy that the experience of the father in being present in this unique moment, that is the birth, generates to them several sensations that are expressed through feelings transpired by emotions, as well as the elucidation of a good experience.

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