

Re: NRES-D-09-00102, titled “Online fathering”: The experience of first-time fatherhood in combat-deployed troops

Point-by-point response to the reviewers

Reviewer #1

1. As noted by the reviewer, efforts to include the philosophical underpinnings of Husserl were superficial. As suggested, both references to Husserl were removed (previously located in “Study Design” p. 3, line 13-16, and “Trustworthiness” p. 5, lines 1-2). Colazzi’s methods were appropriately cited within the new text.

2. This researcher acknowledges an ethnocentric perspective of fatherhood, and as pointed out by the reviewer, this should be explicitly stated. The following statement was added to the section “Limitations”: *Additionally, the experiences of these new fathers are examined within an ethnocentric view of fatherhood common in Western countries; however, it is acknowledged that all new and expectant fathers may not hold the same expectations of their role.*

Reviewer #2

Attention to relevant literature: The reviewer suggested that the researcher speak of personal experience of the phenomenon. As guided by the editor, this statement was ignored.

Data Analysis and Discussion: In response to the reviewer’s statement, “It is not clear why the author included the two studies by Palkovitz (p. 14, lines 16-20. They do not seem relevant or contribute to the present research.” The study participants felt that being present at the birth event was critical to the bonding experience. This researcher was attempting to provide evidence that research exploring the effect of men’s birth attendance on father/infant bonding is dated, limited and contradictory. Some studies (eg. Bowen & Miller, 1980) do indeed support this premise. However, research such as the two Palkovitz studies contradict these findings. This researcher felt that it was important to include studies that examine both sides of the issue and not just the prevailing and accepted belief that father attendance at birth is paramount to father-infant bonding. Since the inclusion of the Palovitz studies seemed irrelevant to the reviewer, this researcher has included a sentence at the end of that paragraph to summarize the paradoxical findings and the need for continued research: *“These conflicting research findings about birth attendance and the paternal “bonding” experience may warrant further study, particularly as these new fathers felt that their absence was detrimental to establishing this critical attachment to their newborn.”*

Update unrelated to Reviewer comments:

In the “Implications” section, I have added the following statement: *“Although access to many of the social networking websites utilized by these participants has now been banned on Department of Defense (DoD) computers (Smith, 2008), a new social networking site (Troop Tube) has been introduced by the DoD, which may serve as an alternate, yet unfamiliar means of communication for deployed troops and their families.”*