

Jul 05, 2009

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

Dear Dr. Schachman,

Recently you sent your manuscript for consideration by Nursing Research. Your manuscript received positive and useful reviews. One sentence in review #2 calls for comment, "It would enhance the reader's understanding of the full context of the study's origin, if the researcher can speak of personal experience in this phenomenon." I interpret this sentence to ask for the author's personal experience. As the Editor, I recommend that you ignore this statement. The context of the study's origin is important, but personal experiences are not needed here. The comments of the reviewers are listed below along with a checklist for style. You may revise your manuscript based on the reviews and resubmit the manuscript to Nursing Research for further consideration.

Please include with your revised submission an itemized, point-by-point response to the comments of the reviewers. The revisions should be completed by August 6, 2009 (if possible) to be considered with the N/D issue that mails with the upcoming military supplement to Nursing Research.

With Kind Regards,

Molly C. Dougherty, PhD, RN, FAAN
Editor
Nursing Research

Reviewer Comments:

Reviewer #1: Well written, interesting and timely paper. This paper is almost ready for publication; however, two glaring issues need to be addressed first.

First, the design is descriptive phenomenology using the methods of Colaizzi (1978), a commonly used methodology in nursing research. The author(s) use rigor in their process and write well about it. However, the references to Husserl without any primary source referencing are inappropriate. Mentioning the philosopher is a token effort, which is superficial at best. I suggest that the author(s) delete all references to Husserl. They used Colaizzi's interpretation of Husserl and descriptive phenomenology. They have not provided any depth of understanding of how Husserl's work frames this study; they do however provide a good understanding of Colaizzi's methods and an adequate framework for this study. The author(s) need to identify this study appropriately.

Secondly, the author(s) provide an ethnocentric view of fatherhood, common in Western countries. There are a number of comments about the universality of the expectations of fathers during birthing. These comments need qualification grounding them in the context in which they reside, without the assumption that all fathers (even in North America) hold the same expectations of their role(s).

Otherwise, this is a fine study.

Reviewer #2:

Abstract: The abstract clearly identifies the phenomenon to be studied and the rationale for a qualitative approach. A concise overview is given of the phenomenological method selected and its application in this study. A synopsis of the major findings is presented, as well as, reflections on the meanings, understandings, and implications of these findings.

Problem Statement: The researcher states that "although existing research provides important insight into the fathers' perspectives of childbirth, there are no studies that explore the perspective of [combat-deployed] men who are absent during this important event" (p. 2, lines 22-23 and p. 3, lines 1-5). Therefore, the researcher sought "to explore the lived experience of first-time fatherhood from the unique perspective of military men who are deployed to combat regions during birth" (p.3, 8-10). The author argues that "better understanding of new fatherhood in this population may inform more helpful and supportive approaches to facilitating fathers' participation in the new role..." (p.3, lines 5-8).

Attention to Relevant Literature: The author presents a brief review of the literature and documents the relevance and significance of the study. Studies on fathers' birth attendance have primarily "focused on effects of their participation on the labor process and on maternal well-being" (p. 2, lines 8-10), and few have explored the father's perspective. It would enhance the reader's understanding of the full context of the study's origin, if the researcher can speak of personal experience in this phenomenon.

Theoretical Framework: Not applicable

Style of Presentation: This is a well organized, clearly written, grammatical, and concise report that contributes to knowledge of first-time combat-deployed fathers' lived experiences. It also adds understanding of this qualitative research method for those readers who may not be familiar with it.

Study Design: The philosophical and theoretical premises of the phenomenological method are briefly described in a separate paragraph (p.

3). The author reiterates the rationale for selecting this qualitative method, explaining how it appropriately serves to answer the research question. Both the setting and sample are appropriate for this qualitative study. Protection of human subjects was appropriately addressed.

Data Analysis and Discussion: The steps in the phenomenological process of analysis described by Colaizzi are clearly described in the report and in Table 1. In reporting the selected data, the author illustrates the analytic steps of identifying significant statements in the transcribed interview data and articulating formulated meanings. Table 2 presents an example that illustrates this process. These meanings are grouped into five theme clusters, which are then subsumed under two main themes; 1) "Disruption of protector/provider role"; and 2) "Restoration of the protector/provider role." The two main themes capture the essence of first-time fatherhood for men who are combat-deployed. The description of the theme clusters and the two main themes demonstrate an effective communication of insights into this human lived experience. The strategies that the researcher used to ensure reliability and validity of the findings are clearly explained (p. 4, lines, 19-23; p. 5, lines 1-7), and the limitations are addressed.

In the discussion, the author presents a review of what is known or believed in the literature on this phenomenon. It is not clear why the author included findings from the two studies by Palkovitz (p. 14, lines 16-20). They do not seem relevant, or contribute, to the present research.

The author clearly states the implications for nursing and appropriately concludes that findings from this study are important in assisting nurses "in identifying better ways to prepare and support men in an involved fatherhood role" (p. 17, lines 12-13). The relevance of this new knowledge is both immediate and direct.

CHECKLIST FOR STYLE ----

TITLE PAGE --

Provide complete address

Supply running head of less than 50 characters (no abbreviations).