



Social representations attributed by men to their partner's prenatal care: a descriptive study

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to analyze the Social Representations attributed by men to their partner's prenatal care. **Method:** descriptive study, with theoretical support in the Theory of Social Representations, in the structural perspective. Men who have experienced prenatal care and are present with their partner in the postpartum period will participate in the study. Data collection will be carried out in a teaching maternity hospital, located in Natal-RN, Brazil, through the use of a semi-directed interview. With regard to data analysis, the assumptions of the Theory of Social Representations will be adopted, as well as the findings of the literature which are relevant to the theme. **Expected Results:** it is hoped that the study will provide an awareness of how relevant the man's participation is, as a future father, in the context of the partner's prenatal consultations, in addition to helping nursing professionals plan actions for the inclusion of the man in prenatal consultations.

Descriptors: Father; Responsible parenting; National Men's Health Policy; Nursing; Social Psychology.

INTRODUCTION

In the gestational context, more specifically with regard to prenatal care, care should occur with an interpersonal and family approach. Care for the pregnant woman, the partner and the family must take place in full by health professionals, especially nurses, in order to promote a humanized and welcoming service. Based on this, from the perspective of humanizing assistance, it is up to the services and health professionals to welcome the woman and her family, especially the man, as a future father, leading them to participate actively in the care process⁽¹⁾.

Thus, scientific evidence reinforces that the effective involvement of men during the gestational period is important not only for the construction of the paternal identity, but also for the creation of bonds between the triad father, mother and baby, and the promotion of mental health and welfare. Also, it is a way to influence parents to rethink and discuss their social identity, aiming at a more active participation in the exercise of paternity⁽²⁾.

It is known that, despite all the benefits resulting from the insertion and participation of men in the pregnancy-puerperal context, their absence is evident during this time, with external factors being highlighted as the main causes, such as working hours, since there is no form of parental leave or flexible shifts to facilitate their participation in prenatal consultations⁽²⁾.

The approach to the aforementioned theme becomes relevant because the mother was, for a long time, at the center of the care relationship with her children. Therefore,

little is known about the subjective experience of men in fatherhood or the influential factors in this process⁽³⁾. Given this and in the contemporary contexts of fatherhood, it is necessary to focus more on the the father figure and his functions in family relationships.

GUIDING QUESTION

How was it for the man, as a father, to have accompanied his partner's prenatal care? It is assumed that the answer to that question may have relevant repercussions at the biopsychosocial level with regard to the health of men, as well as women and children. It should be added that the results of the present study will provide more scientific evidence related to the theme and, therefore, will guide the care strategies directed to men, emphasizing their participation in the same prenatal consultations.

OBJECTIVE

Analyze the Social Representations attributed by men to their partner's prenatal care.

METHOD

Descriptive exploratory study with a qualitative approach, which will be performed at the *Maternidade Escola Januário Cicco* (MEJC), part of the hospital complex of the *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte Federal* (UFRN), in partnership with the Brazilian Unified Health System (SUS) and managed by the Brazilian Hospital Services Company (EBSERH), located in the city of Natal/RN, Brazil.

The expected participation of the study will include 100 informants. The sample number mentioned is in accordance with representational studies, in the structural perspective, since the levels of divergences for the classification of the central nucleus and the peripheral elements when stating that in research samples with 100 and 200 participants there are no repetitions of same compositions in the first house of Central Core Theory (TNC). The enrollment of the participants will follow the following inclusion criteria: men aged 18 years or older, who have experienced and are present with their partner in the postpartum period in the maternity hospital, specifically in the puerperium, are present in the maternity hospital and who self-declare having experienced and attended at least three prenatal consultations, which present favorable conditions for participation in the research, such as interest and availability to respond to the interview.

The project under consideration was submitted to *Plataforma Brasil* and is awaiting an opinion from the Ethics and Research Committee (CEP) of the *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte*, in accordance with resolution 466/12.

Data collection will begin immediately after the CEP has released a positive opinion. Data analysis will be performed in accordance with the Theory of Social Representations, under the perspective of the structural aspect, proposed by Jean Claude Abric, and the discussion will be carried out based on the literature relevant to the theme.

EXPECTED RESULTS

It is hoped that this study will provide an awareness of how relevant the man's participation, as a future father, is in the context of the partner's prenatal consultations. In addition, it is expected that the results can help nursing professionals plan actions that contribute to the inclusion of men in prenatal consultations, as well as directing health care to this public.

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