

Transition to parenthood recognition and accepting the maternal role.

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Introduction:

Pregnant women experience, an ambivalence feelings and emotions during pregnancy, causing a significant impact on the transition to parenthood and adjustment process to the maternal role [1]. Our qualitative research will allow pregnant women to describe their experience and the main difficulties in this transition, allowing us to develop appropriate interventions facilitating the transition to parenthood. Our aim is describe the pregnancy experience, recognition and accepting the maternal role.

Methods:

The qualitative study with descriptive phenomenological approach it was performed at a purposive sample consisting of 35 women, in the third trimester of pregnancy. The interviews occur in two center hospitals from Portugal and were conducted by two experienced researchers in the field of expertise. The researcher's relation with the interviewees were strictly professional. The eligibility criteria that we use in this research was: inclusion criteria - maternal age $\geq 35A$; primiparity; pregnant/healthy fetus and exclusion criteria - multiple pregnancy; mental/psychiatric illness. Curiously no one refused to participate in this study. After informed consent, the interview was conducted by two questions: "What is your pregnancy experience?" and "what were the main feelings and emotions that you experienced in pregnancy?". Data were analyzed according to the descriptive phenomenological method of Amedeo Giorgi [2]. From data analysis of the qualitative study, we proceed to the transformation of the units of meaning, perceiving the meaning of the phenomenological reduction and the imaginative variation, being important in the identification of the essential structures of the phenomenon.

Results:

From the data, 35 women are more representative between 35 and 39 years old. We also show that there is less representation of the sample between 40 and 45 years, a fact that may be related to the decline in fertility after 35 years [3]. Our sample includes pregnant women with ≥ 35 years, and it's curious that the interviewees refer, that in this age they are more mature and prepare to be a mother, which reflects a better acceptance of the maternal role. In the analysis of the speech the maternal experiences of the transition to parenting during pregnancy emerged as an essential structure the context: Transition to parenthood and the awareness to the maternal role. In this context, emerge the following key constituents: (i) Pregnancy experience; (ii) Pregnancy feelings; (iii) Feel prepared to be a mother; (iiii) Changes and discomforts in pregnancy:

(i) Pregnancy experience

"It's a very positive experience and allows me to experience and discover new sensations and emotions (...) feel the baby's movements for the first time, see him on the ultrasound, hear his heart (...) feel that we have a baby growing inside us, it is wonderful..." G6

(ii) Pregnancy feelings

"I'm experiencing pregnancy with a great happiness, but at the same time, very calmly, to enjoy every moment, it is a unique experience!" G3

(iii) Feel prepared to be a mother

"we decided to wait until now because (...) we see the arrival of a baby, in a different way, with more responsibly and maturity." G15

Keywords:

Health Transition; Parenting; Pregnancy; Qualitative Research

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Conflict of interest:

The author declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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(iii) Changes and discomforts in pregnancy

“There are many changes, physical and psychological, everything happens at the same time (...) nausea, see our body change... it's not easy, we stay a little fragile with everything, sometimes when I realize I'm crying.” G7

Discussion:

After analysing the contexts in pregnancy, we found that the living and experience of motherhood are involved in a mix of emotions and sensations. Our interviewees referred to fetal movements and ultrasound visualization as a remarkable experience, considering motherhood a realization of a dream, allowing their personal fulfilment. Motherhood is seen as something unique and special in a woman's life, implying the combination of positive and negative aspects, reward and sacrifices. Woman cannot hide the desire to be a mother and even through some difficulties, she advances towards the realization of her dream [4].

Our participants mentioned that there are many changes and discomforts in pregnancy, which agrees with other authors who mention that pregnancy is a complex event, involving physical, physiological and emotional changes in a woman's life, interfering with her daily life and the entire family [5].

This research allows us to understand how motherhood is lived and experienced by these women, evidencing their concerns and feelings. The sample was carried out only in central region hospitals, but it could have been beneficial, if we apply this study to the north and south of Portugal.

Ethics committee and informed consent:

This research was submitted to the Ethics Council of the selected institutions. All the requirements inherent to the RGPD were met. Participants gave their informed consent to participate in the research.

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