

First-Time Fathers' Experiences during Childbirth in Taiwan

Author: Wan-Lin, Pan

RN, Doctoral student, Nursing Department, National Taipei University of Nursing and Health Sciences; Department of Nursing, Kang-Ning Junior College of Medical Care and Management, Taipei, Taiwan.

- **Purpose:** The purpose of this presentation is to explore first-time fathers' experiences during their wives' childbirth in Taiwan.
- **Methods:** This qualitative study was undertaken using a grounded theory approach. We developed a semi-structured questionnaire for in-depth interviews conducted with 6 participants from hospital. Constant comparison, theoretical sampling, literature review, member checking and an expert panel were used to ensure research trustworthiness. A purposive sample of the fathers aged above 21 years who accompanied their wives throughout childbirth were recruited from the postnatal wards between one to seven days after the birth of their children.
- **Results:** The theme "Willing to participate in the birth and support their partner" was the core category for describing and guiding the process of childbirth. During this process, "Mixed feelings", "healthcare professional needed", "want to guard and support the couple", "the decision to see epidural analgesia during labor or not" and "long wait times and feeling helpless." was found to affect the first-time fathers' significantly. This study discovered that a prevalent lack of a standardized protocol to prepare and support first-time fathers.
- **Conclusion:** Childbirth was experienced as a mutually shared process for the couple. Overall, the fathers were faced their weak but mixed feelings while striving to participate in the childbirth. Fathers also worry about the woman and the baby so they need explanations about normal changes as well as possible complications. It is important for fathers to be prepared and to feel needed, which relevance for professional support. Fathers need to be knowed, seen and encouraged by healthcare professionals, who have to acknowledge and support their significant position.

