|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 2: Table of findings for fathers’ involvement during labour and birth** | | | | |
| **Author, date and country, title** | **Aims of study** | **Methodology /sample** | **Main findings** | **Strengths and Weaknesses** |
| 1. Bonda Bondas-Salonen, T.   1998  Finland  How women experience the presence of their partners at the births of their babies | To examine women’s experiences of their partners presence during labour | Qualitative: Observations of lived events and 80 dialogic interviews before, during and after delivery and then followed up 2 years later  Sample: 80 women selected by public health nurse or midwife | The partners' presence could alleviate the suffering of loneliness, pain, and uncertainty during delivery and give the women strength to endure the suffering as well as share their joy. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher not considered. Credibility of the findings was not discussed and it appears that only one researcher analysed the findings |
| 1. Chandler, S., & Field, P. A   1997  USA  Becoming a father. First-time fathers' experience of labour and delivery. | To identify first-time fathers’ experiences of the birth of their first child. Examined fathers’ expectations and experiences during labour and birth and | Qualitative: In-depth interviews  Sample: 14 fathers were interviewed | Although the fathers expected to be treated as part of a labouring couple, they found that they were relegated to a supporting role. Initially the fathers were confident of their ability to support their wives, but they found that labour was more work than they had anticipated. They became fearful of the outcome, but hid these fears from their partners. Later, they found that their focus moved from their wives to their babies at the time of birth. The men all completed the experience with an enhanced respect for their wives. fathers assume one of three roles during labour: coach, teammate, or witness | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher were considered.  To ensure trustworthiness, 6 secondary informants who contacted the researcher after the birth of their children, were used to validate the researcher’s interpretation of the data obtained from the primary informants Credibility of the findings was ensured as an expert judge independently coded data in the transcripts and primary and secondary informants verified the emerging categories and the major findings. Clear statement of findings. |
| 1. Chapman L.   1992  USA  Expectant fathers' roles during labor and birth | To describe and explain the  expectant father’s experience during labour and delivery | Qualitative: Grounded theory  Semi structured interviews 4 weeks after birth and observation in labour  Sample: 20 couples recruited from 5 hospitals in San Francisco Bay area | Roles adopted by men were either coach (actively assisting partner with breathing etc) teammate (responded to requests for physical & emotional support) or witness – largest group | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment was explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims but couples were interviewed together which may have affected accuracy of views. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher not considered. There was one interviewer but to ensure accuracy of responses couple were interviewed again after 4 weeks. Reflective commentary was included. Clear statement of findings. |
| 1. DeJoy S.B.   2011  USA  The Role of Male Partners in Childbirth Decision Making:  A Qualitative Exploration with First-Time Parenting Couples | Thesis  To explore the decision making processes, context and outcomes for first-time parents related to childbirth. | Qualitative: Interviews  The primary researcher interviewed couples twice: once prenatally to identify their plans for their birth, and again after the birth to identify the decisions they actually made, the circumstances surrounding each decision, and the process by which couples arrived at decisions. | Findings identified values and beliefs held by men that influenced their input into decisions, as well as the roles they fulfilled in decision making. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims but interviewed couples together which may have affected accuracy of views  Reflective commentary was included. was To ensure credibility of the finding the author and a second coder analysed the narratives using an inductive process to identify major themes and concepts. Clear statement of the findings. |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Dellmann T.   2004  "The best moment of my life": a literature review of fathers' experience of childbirth | A review of the literature examining father’s experiences of childbirth | Literature review that examined studies published from 1980–2002.  52 papers were selected for the review from peer review journals | | The findings revealed that fathers think childbirth is both distressing and wonderful. Fathers feel they are not living up to their role and, yet, they are confused about what their role is. They simply do not feel like they know what to do. | The review addressed a clearly focussed issue. Papers were selected from peer review journals Papers addressed the review questions and had varying research designs. Quality appraisal of the studies was not included  Study participants were limited mostly to white, first-time fathers. Teenaged fathers, poor fathers, wealthy fathers, and fathers from a variety of ethnicities and cultural backgrounds or who do not speak English have rarely been included in research that examines men’s experiences |
| 1. Gungor I. and Beji N.K.   2007  Turkey  Effects of fathers' attendance to labor and delivery on the experience of childbirth in Turkey | To determine the effects of fathers' attendance to labour and delivery on the experience of childbirth. | Quantitative: Questionnaire  Sample: 50 primigravidae low-risk women and their partners were recruited to the study. The first 25 women were included in the experimental group, and their partners were allowed to participate in birth. The remaining 25 women were included in the control group, and their partners were not allowed to participate in birth.  Perception of Birth Scale and Father Interview Form were used to. | | The study found that fathers' support in birth helped mothers to have more positive experiences in all aspects of childbirth. There was no relationship between fathers' support and length of labour, use of pain-relieving drugs, or obstetric interventions in birth. When mother and father were supported during labour and delivery, the rate of the fathers who adopted an active role was high. | Clearly focused hypothesis. Methodology and design were clearly described and appropriate. Sample selected in a way that would not introduce bias. The sufficiency of the sample size was evaluated by the power analysis. Good response rate. Questionnaire was reliable and valid as the Perception of Birth Scale is an instrument for measuring maternal perceptions of the labour and delivery experience for women having vaginal or unplanned caesarean deliveries. Statistical significance was assessed and the CI presented for main results. |
| 1. Hallgren A., Kihlgren M. Forslin L. and Norberg A.   1999  Sweden  Swedish fathers' involvement in and experiences of childbirth preparation and childbirth | Swedish fathers' involvement in and experiences of childbirth preparation and childbirth | Qualitative: Interviews  Sample: 11 men who participated with their partners in antenatal classes. Three tape-recorded interviews were performed: before and after childbirth preparation, and between one and three weeks after the baby was born. | | Indications of vital involvement as well as various levels of involvement or distance were found. The participation in childbirth was more demanding than expected for the eleven men. They felt unprepared for an unpredictable process, the experience of time and pain, the woman's action, and their own reactions. The men who were regarded by the authors as vitally involved seemed to manage overwhelming feelings of helplessness during childbirth, to support the women, and experience the meeting with the baby positively. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher was not considered.  Triangulation through co-assessment during the first analysis was performed by the second authors through reading randomly-selected interviews and consensus was reached. |
| 1. Hallgren, A., Kihlgren, M., & Olsson, P   2005  Sweden  Ways of relating during childbirth: an ethical responsibility and challenge for midwives | The first aim of the present study was to describe, prospective mothers’ and fathers’ and their midwives’ ways of relating during childbirth in a Swedish setting. A second aim was to reflect on these descriptions in relation to parents’ experiences | Qualitative: Interviews  Sample: Women and men before and after childbirth. Four couples’ and nine midwives ‘ways of relating’ were documented by 27 hours of observation, including 14.5 hours of video-recorded sessions. | | The midwives strongly influenced the different ways of relating and three aspects of professional competence were disclosed. The midwives seemed to influence the different ways of relating to a large extent. They differed in how they carried out their caring activities, their ways of relating with the couples and the physical birth process, and also in the way they expressed the importance of childbirth. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher was not considered. To ensure trustworthiness of the results triangulation through co-assessment during the first analysis was performed by the .second authors |
| 1. Hendrix, M. Pavlova, M. Nieuwenhuijze, M.J. Severens, J.L. Nijhuis, J.G   2012  Netherlands  Differences in preferences for obstetric care between nulliparae and their partners in the Netherlands: a discrete-choice experiment. | The aim of this study was to investigate whether there are differences between the decision-making process of pregnant women and their partners with regard to these attributes of obstetric care. | Quantitative: A prospective cohort study using a questionnaire, based on the method of discrete-choice experiment  Sample:  Low-risk nulliparae and their partners. n total, 449 women received the questionnaire. From those 321 women (71.5%) returned the questionnaire In total ,290 partners received the questionnaire. From those 212 partners (73.1%) | | Possibility of influencing decision-making was the most important characteristic of obstetric care for both pregnant women and their partner. For women, a home-like birth setting was important while the partners found the possibility on pain-relief treatment during birth important. | Clear research aim presentenced Methodology and design were clearly described and appropriate. Sample selected in a way that would not introduce bias as sample was randomly selected. Sample based on consideration of statistical power. Good response rate. Questionnaire not piloted and reliability and validity not discussed. Statistical significance was assessed but the CI was not presented for the main results. |
| 1. Hildingsson I. and Haggstrom T.   1999  Sweden  Midwives' lived experiences of being supportive to prospective mothers/parents during pregnancy | To elucidate midwives' narrated experiences of being supportive to prospective mothers or parents during pregnancy and rights to receive proper care. | Qualitative: A phenomenological hermeneutic analysis of transcribed text from seven tape-recorded interviews.  Sample: 7 midwives working in midwifery clinics in five health centres in the context of Swedish primary health care, | | The interpretation of the text showed that through perception and intuition the midwives seemed to become aware that some women needed increased support. The situations of these prospective mothers were often characterised by difficult social problems or fears. The midwives acted on both a personal and a professional level with ethical perspectives in mind, when they were advocating their clients' | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. The interviews and the transcription of the text were carried out by the first author however credibility was ensured when the themes and subthemes were discussed until consensus was reached by two the authors. The results were also discussed in workshops together with nurses, nursing teachers, midwives and researchers in nursing science and the midwives seemed to agree with the presented findings |
| 1. Johnson, M.P.   2002  UK  An Exploration of Men's Experience and Role at Childbirth | Examined men’s experiences and roles during childbirth | Mixed methods study: Questionnaire survey and interviews  Sample: Survey administered to 53 men were after birth and a further of a sub-sample of 20 of these men were interviewed. | | Overall, the majority of men reported a positive and emotionally uplifting experience, but a number of negative aspects were also identified. Several men were unable to clearly identify a defined role or functional purpose in their attendance. The study highlights there are some negative aspects to men attending their child's birth, but these are related to under-preparedness and obligatory role adoption that possibility may conflict with men's own reasons for attending the birth | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Small convenience sample. Sample selected in a way that could introduce bias. Sample was not based on consideration of statistical power. Questionnaire not piloted. Reliability of questionnaire not discussed. Statistical significance was not assessed and CI not presented for main results.The interviews were approached as a way to contextualize the men’s responses to the questions raised in the survey. Credibility if the findings were not discussed. . |
| 1. Kainz,G.; Eliasson,M.;von Post, I.   2010  Sweden  The child's father, an important person for the mother's well-being during the childbirth: a hermeneutic study | The aim of this study was t to describe the mother’s experience of the child’s father’s presence during the childbirth. What does the child’s father’s presence mean to the mother’s well-being? | Qualitative: Interviews  A hermeneutic approach was used to collect data in various districts in south western Sweden.  Sample: 67 first time mothers who had a normal delivery, vacuum or C/S I month prior to interview, aged 18–41 years participated in the study. | | The main finding was the father was an important person for the mother’s well-being during the childbirth. Five subcategories were also identified. the child’s father was present, he did not abandon the mother; the child’s father pleaded the mother’s cause; the child’s father inspired the mother to have strength and courage; the child’s father and mother—a team; and the child’s father and mother become parents. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher was not considered.  Clear statement of findings. Credibility if the findings were ensured as two researchers read scripts. Reflexivity evident. |
| 1. Kao BC, Gau ML, Wu SF, Kuo BJ, Lee TY   2004  Taiwan  A comparative study of expectant parents ' childbirth expectations | Aim to examine parents expectations | Quantitative: Instruments used to collect data included basic demographic data and the Childbirth Expectations Questionnaire.  Sample: 200 couples willing to participate in this study Inclusion criteria were at least 36 weeks of gestation, aged 18 and above and no prenatal complications | | The findings revealed that the factors from childbirth expectations included the caregiving environment, expectation of labour pain, spousal support, control and participation, and medical and nursing support. There was no general differences identified in the childbirth expectations between expectant fathers and expectant mothers; and expectant fathers with a higher socioeconomic status and who had received childbirth education had higher childbirth expectations, whereas mothers displayed no differences in demographic characteristics. | Clearly focused research question. Methodology and design were clearly described and appropriate. Sample selected in a way that would not introduce bias. Sample not representative as were selected by convenience sampling and were restricted to a medical centre and a regional hospital in one area therefore possible bias. Sample not based on consideration of statistical power. Good response rate. Questionnaire was reliable and valid. Statistical significance was assessed and the CI presented for main results. |
| 1. Kululanga L.I., Chirwa E., Sundby J.   2012  Malawi  Malawian fathers’ views and experiences of attending the birth of their children: a qualitative study | Aims to examinethe views and experiences of men who attended the birth of their children | Qualitative: Semi-structured Interviews within two years after the birth.  Sample: 20 fathers(nine ﬁrst-time and 11 repeat fathers) | | Four themes were identified: otivation; positive experiences; negative experiences; reflection and resolutions. The negative experiences had four sub-themes namely shame and embarrassment, helplessness and unprepared, health care provider – male partner tension, and exclusion from decision-making process. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. To ensure credibility the participants’ actual words were in the report. In addition, the researcher had frequent discussion sessions with co-authors and impartial colleagues experienced in qualitative method |
| 1. Kunjappy-Clifton A.   2008  UK  And father came too… a study exploring the role of first time fathers during the birth process and to explore the meaning of the experience for these men. Part two | To explore the role of first time fathers during the birth process and the meaning of the experience | Qualitative: Unstructured Interviews  Sample: Convenience sample of 6 first time fathers whose partners had given birth at a nearby birth centre over 1 month within 2-6 weeks of the birth of the baby | | Childbirth can be a traumatic time for expectant fathers, during which they feel vulnerable, fearful for their partner and infant, and are in a transitional period that leaves them powerless, conflicted, and in limbo as a spectator without a traditional male role. Fathers assume one of three roles during labour: coach, teammate, or witness. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Relationship between participants and researcher was considered as researcher ensured that the participants were not her client group to ensure there was no bias. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed.  The authenticity of the data was enhanced by returning the transcripts to the participants for verification.  Reflective commentary was obvious as it was recognized by interviewer that the findings were enhanced by the fact the interviewer was a qualified midwife and aware of the subtleties of the experience of the birthing process however it results may also have been limited by the potential for researcher bias |
| 1. Lindgren,H.; Erlandsson,K.   2011  Sweden  She leads, he follows - fathers' experiences of a planned home birth. A Swedish interview study | Aim of the study was to gain an understanding of fathers’ experiences of a planned home birth | Qualitative: In-depth interviews  Sample: 8 Swedish fathers who had the experience of a total of 23 births, of which 17 were planned home births. The fathers were recruited by the midwives who had assisted with the planned home births. | | Analysis revealed the main theme ‘‘she leads – he follows’’. The fathers were compliant to the woman’s decision; they also described it as a deliberate choice and struggled with feelings of being different in comparison with the established way of becoming a father. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher was considered. To ensure accuracy of responses and credibility, both authors took part in the process of analysis.  During the analysis notes that had been taken during the interviews were checked for complementary information regarding the participants´ birth stories. |
| 1. Longworth HL. Kingdon,C.K..   2011  UK  Fathers in the birth room: what are they expecting and experiencing? A phenomenological study | To explore the role, expectations and meanings that individual fathers ascribe to their presence at birth. | Qualitative: A Heideggerian phenomenological approach utilising in-depth interviews at two different time points.  Sample: 11 first-time fathers accessed through hospital-based parentcraft sessions from a large tertiary maternity unit in the North West of England. | | Four main themes were evident: fathers’ disconnection with pregnancy and labour; fathers on the periphery of events during labour; control; and fatherhood beginning at birth and reconnection. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Reflexivity from author was included. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher not considered and there was no detail about the topic guide  To ensure accuracy of results independent interpretive summaries were written by 2 researchers for each interview |
| 1. Martin K.A.   2003  USA  Giving Birth Like A Girl | Explore women’s experiences about their labour and births | Qualitative: In-depth interviews  Sample: 26 women were interviewed about their labours and births within 3 month of having their first baby | | The findings suggest that white, middle-class, heterosexual women often worry about being nice, polite, kind, and selfless in their interactions during labour and childbirth. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that was addressed research aims. Reflexivity from author who included. Trustworthiness not ensured in that only one researcher analysed the transcripts. |
| 1. Martin C.J.H.   2008  UK  A tool to measure fathers' attitudes and needs in relation to birth | The aim was to develop a scale—the Birth Participation Scale (BPS)—which midwives can use to measure fathers’ attitudes and needs in relation birth participation. | Quantitative: Questionnaire survey  A convenience sample of first (n= 42) and second-time fathers (n= 36) were randomly invited to participate in the Questionnaire survey at 2 points -prior to and post birth. Difference between scores in a positive or negative direction | | Results have shown that the majority of fathers aspire to provide successful support during childbirth, with only a minority relinquishing the role. Most fathers perceive their birth experience favourably with midwives undoubtedly facilitating such an evaluation. | Clearly focused research question. Methodology and design were clearly described and appropriate. Sample selected in a way that may have introduced bias as it was a convenience sample and was not necessarily representative . Sample not based on consideration of statistical power. Satisfactory response rate. No pilot discussed so uncertain whether scale for questionnaire was reliable and valid. Statistical significance was assessed but the CI was not presented for main results |
| 1. Messner E.R.   2010  USA  Transition to fatherhood in the context of cesarean birth | This study examined the experiences of first time fathers and their transition to fatherhood in the perinatal and postpartum period after a c-section delivery. | Qualitative: Data were collected by audio-taped non-structured interviews  Sample: First time fathers recruited from a major university hospital. Interviewed approximately one month after delivery. | | Findings included the following over-arching themes that dominated most of the fathers‘ experiences as they transitioned from stage to stage of the process: Expecting a Natural Childbirth; Ongoing Communication Breakdowns; Riding an Emotional Roller Coaster; Moving to a Sense of Relief and Peace; Awakening to the Challenges of Being a Father; and Resolving the Memory and Moving On. Overall, the positive or negative communication skills of the staff had a similarly polarizing effect on all the fathers‘ positive or negative perception of the birthing experience. | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher not considered..  Transcripts were not verified by the participants but to ensure credibility of the findings interpretation of the data was discussed in length with an expert in phenomenological research. |
| 1. Nichols M.   1993  USA  Paternal perspectives of the childbirth experience. | Father’s childbirth experiences | Qualitative: Semi-structured interviews.  Sample: 44 first-time fathers who were asked to describe their childbirth experience. | Data from fathers who attended prenatal childbirth education classes were examined separately from fathers who did not attend. For all fathers, regardless of prenatal preparation, the labour experience evoked generally positive responses in addition to a significant number of negative responses. 61% of negative feelings about labour were listed by prepared fathers, while 39% were listed by unprepared fathers. Perceptions of the birth experience were generally characterized by positive or very positive feelings. Results also indicated that fathers perceived that they were most helpful to their partners during labour | | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Details about the interviews explained and a topic guide was used and its development and pilot discussed.  Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher not considered.  To ensure trustworthiness transcriptions were overseen by the researchers supervisor to ensure consistency and trustworthiness |
| 1. Nolan M.   2011  UK  At home in early labour: what fathers do and how they feel—Part 1 and part 2 | These articles present data from a 2010 survey completed by 263 fathers on their experience of being at home with their partner in early labour. Fathers' state of mind during early labour is explored. | Quantitative: Questionnaire survey using the web based, Monkey Survey. Link made available on the Fatherhood Institute website. Survey also distributed to Children centres across UK  Sample: fathers who had recently attended the birth of their child | Anxiety levels are found to be high, particularly in regard to the wellbeing of their partners and babies. Attending antenatal classes does not appear to diminish anxiety and nor does speaking to a midwife in early labour. Men thought that the most helpful measures for their partners during labour was to physical/comfort measures beyond just psychological support and physical presence. | | Clearly focused research question. Methodology and design were clearly described and appropriate. Sample selected in a way that would not introduce bias. Sample representative. Sample not based on consideration of statistical power. Good response rate. Questionnaire detail given but no pilot performed  Reliability and validity of questionnaire not discussed although it was stated that for one of the forced choice questions categories were drawn from previous studies of father’s accounts of labour. Statistical significance was not assessed nor CI |
| 1. Sengane, M.L.M. and Nolte, A.G.W.   2012  South Africa The expectations of fathers concerning care provided by midwives to the mothers during labour | This study focused on  fathers’ expectations of the care provided to mothers by the midwives during labour. | In-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with fathers about the care provided to their partners or wives by midwives.  Sample: | The results revealed that fathers saw the provision of comfort and support as the two main aspects for mothers in labour that they expected from midwives. The findings were that midwives should improve their communication skills with the mothers, as well as with the fathers if they are available. Fathers expected midwives to encourage them to accompany the mother during labour and to facilitate bonding between father, mother and baby. | | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and researcher not considered..Credibility was enhanced by implementation of the following strategies:  •member checking, whereby follow-up interviews were conducted with two of the participants for validation of data that had already been gathered  •peer examination, whereby the study was supervised by an expert in research and midwifery. Data were also analysed by an independent coder experienced in qualitative research methods and midwifery. |
| 1. Steen M. Downe S. Bamford,N.   2012  Not-patient and not-visitor: A metasynthesis fathers' encounters with pregnancy, birth and maternity care | Aim: to identify and synthesise good quality qualitative research that explores the views and experiences of fathers who have encountered maternity care in high resource settings. | Using a pre-determined search strategy, relevant databases were searched for papers  published between January 1999 and January 2010. Backchaining of the reference lists in included papers was undertaken. | Findings: from 856 hits 23 papers were included. The emerging themes were as follows: risk and uncertainty, exclusion, fear and frustration, the ideal and the reality, issues of support and experiencing transition.  Synthesis: fathers feel themselves to be ‘partner and parent’ but their experience of maternity care services is as ‘not-patient and not-visitor’. This situates them in an interstitial and undefined space with the consequence that many feel excluded and fearful. | | The review addressed a clearly focused aim and set out clear inclusion/exclusion criteria. 23 papers were selected for the review from peer reviewed journals. Papers addressed the review questions and had varying research designs. The analysis was based on metaethnographic techniques of Nobit and Hare (1988) and the quality of the included papers was critiques using a stage process. |
| 1. Waldenstrom U.   1999  Sweden  Effects of birth centre care on fathers' satisfaction with care, experience of the birth and adaptation to fatherhood | Effects of birth centre care on fathers' satisfaction with care, experience of the birth and adaptation to fatherhood | Quantitative: Questionnaire survey mailed 2 months after the birth to fathers in a birth centre group and a standard care group.  This study was part of a randomized controlled trial., in which the outcomes of a birthcentre were compared with standard care in the Stockholm area.  Sample: 576 expectant fathers | | Birth centre group had more positive experiences of intrapartum and postpartum care than a standard care group. Attitudes by staff were assessed as more positive, fathers felt they were treated with greater respect and during labour the midwife was more supportive of their needs as partners. Birth centre care did not seem to have any major effect on fathers' experience of labour and birth, or any long-term effect on adaptation during the first 2 months.  No difference in women’s satisfaction as a result of partners’ support, although women appreciated the support provided by their partners. | Clearly focused hypothesis. Methodology and design were clearly described and appropriate. Sample was randomised and was based on consideration of statistical power. In order not to jeopardize the benefit of randomization which aims at minimizing selection bias, all comparisons were by ‘intention-to-treat’. Good response rate.  Reliability and validity of questionnaire was not discussed and questionnaire was not piloted. Statistical significance was assessed but the CI was not presented for main results. |
| 1. William K., Umberson D.   1999  USA  Medical Technology and Childbirth:Experiences of Expectant Mothers and Fathers | Examined the influence of medical intervention on the expectant father's experience of childbirth. | Qualitative: In depth interviews compared expectant fathers' and mothers' experiences with medical technology during pregnancy and childbirth.  Sample: 15 primarily White, middle-class, married couples prior to and after the birth of their first child | | Our findings reveal differences in the impact of medical technology on expectant mothers' and fathers' perceptions of involvement and control over pregnancy and childbirth | Aims clear. Methodology and design were appropriate. Recruitment explained and was appropriate. Data collected in a way that addressed the research aims. Ethics discussed. Relationship between participants and the interviewer was considered. Credibility of the results were not ensured as only the researchers listened to the interview tapes and did not state there was verification of the findings. |
| 1. Wockel A.   Schafer E., Beggel A. and l Abou-Dakn M.  2007  Germany  Getting Ready for birth; Impending fatherhood | Examining the preparation of antenatal classes | Quantitative: A randomized prospective trial.  Sample: Men who took part in preparation classes together with their partner  Men were separated into two groups. The men in the intervention group were given additional training without their partners to prepare them for the delivery room. The men in the group were not given extra training and only attended the preparation course with their partners. | | Data were collected at the end of the course and three months after birth by questionnaire. In the intervention group the participants felt better prepared and judged the experience of birth more positively. The training lead to an intensified feeling of having helped their partner adequately during birth. The women whose partners had attended the training felt that the support of their partners was much better, compared with the control group. Special classes for men enhanced the contentment of both partners at birth. | No clear aims or research question.  Methodology and design were clearly described and appropriate. States there was randomization of sample to minimize selection bias, however all participants of the intervention and the control group were preselected. At the midwifery practice they showed a particular interest in the preparation for birth and therefore bias of the results cannot be eliminated . The sample was not based on consideration of statistical power. The structure of the questionnaire was designed according to the standardized questionnaire of Lukesch (1983) to collect data concerning birth fears and therefore reliability and validity of the instrument had been considered.  Statistical significance was assessed but the CI was not presented for main results. |