SELF-EFFICACY IN CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION CLASSES: A DELPHI STUDY

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AIMS
To validate the nursing interventions that are more appropriate to the promotion and teaching of self-efficacy in childbirth education classes.

METHODS
In order to develop a nursing intervention model that includes the teaching of self-efficacy in childbirth education classes, we conducted:

1st phase - an exploratory study by means of literature review and semi-structured interviews to twenty-five mothers in the day of the discharged from the hospital;
2nd phase - after the identification of the interventions for teaching and promotion of self-efficacy, we developed a qualitative study for validation of interventions, using a modified Delphi Technique.

The study was undertaken between June 2 and July 16, 2010, and involved a group of 72 experts from the Northern and Central areas of Portugal. The surveys were sent via e-mail.

We used a panel of experts in childbirth education and/or in self-efficacy, with at least two years of professional experience, who agreed to participate in all phases of this study.

Surveys that were incomplete or returned after deadline were excluded from this study.

Sample: the first round included 42 individuals [95.2% (n=40) nurses and 4.8% (n=2) psychologists; average age = 42.1 years, SD = 8.84]; the second round included 37 individuals [94.6% (n=35) nurses and 5.4% (n=2) psychologists; average age = 42.1 years, SD=8.85].

With regard to the level of consensus, we used 70% as the minimum level of agreement among the experts (Almeida et al., 2010). In the application of the Delphi technique were also taken into account its main features: participants’ anonymity, controlled feedback and statistical response of the group.

RESULTS
In the first round, of the 72 surveys sent, we obtained 42 (58.9%) responses that met the inclusion criteria.

During this round 16 (34%) of the 47 proposed nursing interventions reached the minimum level of agreement among the experts (set at 70%). The interventions that did not achieve consensus (31) were restructured, some of them rewritten, and three more were added, as per the participants’ suggestions.

During the second round, of the 42 surveys sent, we obtained 37 (88%) responses. The interventions that were proposed for validation reached a consensus of more than 70% and thus a new round did not take place. The level of agreement ranged between 70 and 100%, and only one intervention reached 100% of agreement.

Some of the interventions that reach high level of consensus were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To assess the level of self-efficacy</td>
<td>91.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>To inquire about prior experiences of pain</td>
<td>89.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>To teach about positive self-thinking</td>
<td>94.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To instruct on anxiety self-control techniques</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To positively reinforce the ability to be active in labor</td>
<td>90.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>To give qualitative feedback (to compliment, to reinforce one’s capability)</td>
<td>95.1</td>
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DISCUSSION
The teaching and development of strategies for the management and control of labor are objectives to be achieved in childbirth education classes, so as to contribute to a positive and satisfying experience of labor. Self-efficacy refers to the confidence and belief about one’s capability to cope with events that cause stress through the use of adaptive actions that allow the control of tasks considered challenging (Brites & Nunes, 2010). As argued by Manning and Wright (1983), the effectiveness of childbirth education classes can be increased if these include the teaching of self-efficacy.

This study allowed us to validate nursing interventions that will facilitate the teaching of self-efficacy in childbirth education classes. This step is extremely important as it provides the midwives with a much needed tool to make the childbirth education classes more effective, thus increasing a pregnant woman’s confidence and contributing to greater satisfaction with childbirth. This change in the preparation of the pregnant woman may also help in the bonding process with the baby and even contribute to an increase of the birth rate.

REFERENCES

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