Author's response to reviews

Title: Father for the first time - development and validation of a questionnaire to assess fathers' experiences of childbirth. (FTFQ)

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Gothenburg, February 2012

Subject: resubmission of manuscript -

Dear Chief-Editor,

Enclosed herewith is our revised manuscript No: 1866547592587241 Father for the first time - development and validation of a questionnaire to assess fathers' experiences of childbirth. (FTFQ)

We are grateful to the reviewers for their helpful comments and have carefully considered them in revising the manuscript. Our response to each comment is given below. We have also made some other changes which we also report below. All revisions are highlighted in yellow.

Yours Sincerely,

The corresponding author on behalf of the authors

Åsa Premberg
Reviewer 1

1. Were the experienced midwives who undertook the focus group to initially develop the questionnaire men (and/or fathers) or women? I presume they were women.

Comment: We have made a correction: Page 6, 2nd paragraph, line 5, commented page 14, 2nd paragraph, line 3.

2. I find it interesting that non-fathers were utilised to collect this initial data for the questionnaire as it would seem that this was then not from the perspective of fathers but from what a professional group believed. While the issues raised may well be the same, this needs some discussion and commentary in the paper.

Comment: Actually this must be a misunderstanding the initial data was collected only from first-time fathers, the focus group interview (with eight experienced female midwives) was used to confirm that no aspects of first time fathers during birth was uncovered.

3. I would prefer to see the phrase ‘to give birth’ used rather than ‘delivery’. Most contemporary writings now use the word birth.

Comment: Delivery has been replaced with birth in all places in the manuscript except for “delivery ward” as it’s a concept.

4. Some of the grammar and syntax needs attention. For example, ‘totally, should be replaced with ‘in total’.

Comment: Correction made Page 12, first line “totally” replaced with “In total”. The grammar and syntax has been reviewed and corrected.

Reviewer 2

5. Searches have been made in two medical databases – PubMed and Cinahl, and one more multidisciplinary database – Scopus. I strongly recommend that these weaknesses are discussed as limitation of the study.

Comment: Looking back, a broader literature review would naturally have strengthened the review. The main goal with the review was to confirm that no important dimension concerning fathers during birth was missing. And we have mentioned this as a limitation of the study and discussed its possible implications for our study (page 15, 2nd paragraph line 3).

6. What were the exclusion criteria?

Comment: We have clarified the inclusion and exclusion criteria on page 10 2nd paragraph, line 23

7. The final questionnaire includes questions on marital status. However, it is not explained why this variable is never used in the presentation of the instrument
validation or the discussion.

Comment: An explanation for the use of marital status as a background variable has been added on page 17, 3rd paragraph, line 6.

8. The questionnaire was sent, via the mothers, to 306 first time fathers and only fathers who were Swedish speaking were included. But how did the authors controlled this? How many fathers were excluded as they did not meet the inclusion criteria?

Comment: The second reminder was a phone call to the mothers, this gave some information about the reasons why some fathers had not answered the questionnaire and why others refused to participate. Numbers of fathers not meeting the inclusion criteria and reasons for exclusion are shown in figure1. There were 50 fathers, who did not meet the criteria, of whom 28 were fathers for the second (or more) time, 8 fathers had not participated during childbirth, 7 fathers did not speak Swedish, and 7 couples had separated.

Reviewer 3


Comment: The abbreviation is now explained in the text, page 5, 2nd paragraph. Line 7

10. Page 6 line 7, SSPS should be SPSS,

Comment: The abbreviation is now corrected in the manuscript. Page 10 line 1

11. Tables and figures can be improved. The manuscript is well written and organized. Table 1, please add number of missing. Table 3, please check Emotional support – Item discriminant validity 6/60

Comment: In table 1 numbers have been added to show how many fathers who had answered each question. In table 3 the numbers have been corrected in the manuscript