Reviewer's report

Title: Mothers’ Experiences in the Nurse-Family Partnership Program: A Qualitative Case Study

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Reviewer: Virginia Schmied

Reviewer’s report:

This is a very well written and interesting paper that makes an important contribution to the literature on nurse home visiting.

The research aim is well defined and clearly addressed in the paper.

Major essential revisions

Methods

The authors have selected case study as the guiding framework for the research however very little information is provided about Case Study as understood by Yin and it is not clear what this study is a particular ‘case’ of in contrast to being a qualitative descriptive or interpretive study. Please provide a more thorough description of why case study and what this offers that other frameworks do not.

Minor essential revision

Methods

The authors indicate that they use conventional content analysis to analyse the data yet the description of data analysis that is provided more closely represents thematic analysis – please clarify.

In the abstract there is reference to audio tapes which should read audio taped – however in the analysis section it is apparent that digital recorders were used.

The conclusions are supported by the data. The authors do comment that there are limitations implying that the sample may be a somewhat ‘biased’ group of participants as they are mothers who stayed in the program and remained happy to be interviewed a second time. It is not known if the data presented comes from all of the 18 women who participated in the first interviews or whether most of it comes from the motivated 7 women who were interviewed twice. The authors may wish to clarify on this.

The key focus of the paper is on what it is that has led to such a positive response from the participating women in contrast to a number of other studies of health visitors, child health nurses and public health nurses where mothers who use the service feel under surveillance or judged. In trying to unpack this, the authors have identified the relationship, the building of trust etc as central to a therapeutic relationship. This has been reported in other studies for example Briggs 2007 on the role of child health nurses

One of the first themes suggests that it is the personality of the nurse, is
personality and attributes something inherent in the person and does this mean that non judgemental approach, being honest and reliable cannot be learnt skills. There is mention that the nurses in NFP are trained in strengths based approach – this seems to be core to what is making the difference and would be similar to what is described by Davis and Day in the partnership approach. More attention should be given in the discussion to the training needs of nurses if they are to do this successfully in a ‘roll out’ of what is currently a pilot and to be a RCT.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'