Author’s response to reviews

Title: What bereaved parents want health care providers to know when their babies are stillborn: a community-based participatory study

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Dr. Horiuchi,

First, I want to thank you for the excellent feedback as an editor and to the reviewers for their careful read of the manuscript. We used to comments to significantly improve the manuscript and sincerely hope we have satisfied all the concerns.

To address concerns, the following changes have been made:

1. Stigma has been briefly defined in the introduction.
2. We have clarified the purpose of the study.
3. We have made more clear the problems: fathers are under studied, most research is a top-down (led by researchers) model and thus participatory is another means to more ethically study vulnerable groups. Citations added to buttress this point.
4. The originality of the methods is now emphasized and cited.
5. More justification for participatory research has been added.

6. We feel that the paper appropriately addresses the research purpose, now highlighted more specifically in the introduction.

7. We explained how the reflective journals helped buttress validity and provided research citations.

8. We specified the process of research validity and cited. Also added information on member checking and citation.

9. No gender differences were observed in data analyses.

10. Added clarification for focus group abbreviation “FG.”

11. We added information on how more bereaved fathers were recruited.

12. We changed pedagogy to curricula.

13. We made all other minor edits recommended by Reviewer 2.

14. We emphasized the need for better provided training.

15. We integrated the concept of stigma in the discussion.

With regards to the question about “has there been an impact” since the death of the baby, we believe we address this in the introduction noting the significant psychological, relational, and social distress for these grieving families. We do not understand the question of why the focus group has only men and women. If the reviewer is asking why we created groups that comprised only mothers, only fathers, and a mix, it was in order to allow natural themes to emerge that may have been specific only to mothers or fathers. However, this was not found in the data. To address the question about comparing this study to others, this comparison was drawn to illuminate the consistency in psychological findings; the uniqueness and strength of this study, as we now clearly emphasize in the introduction, is in the high male participation and the methodology we employed.

Please let us know if there are any further changes you would like to see. We are grateful for this opportunity to improve this manuscript.