

Midwives' experiences of witnessing traumatic hospital birth events: A qualitative study

Seyhan Çankaya¹, Yasemin Erkal Aksoy¹, and Sema Dereli Yılmaz¹

¹Selçuk University

May 3, 2021

Abstract

Aims: The aim of this study was to investigate in detail the traumatic birth experiences of midwives in the delivery rooms, and their attitudes, reactions, and coping strategies. **Methods:** The design of the study is descriptive and the purposive sampling method was used. This approach is ideal for a preliminary exploration of the nature of a phenomenon. Between October 2018 and January 2019, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of midwives. The research was carried out with the participation of 29 midwives, who work in labour and birth room. They were asked to describe a particular stressful situation they had experienced during the birth process, their emotions about the event, and their coping strategies and support systems. All interviews were digitally recorded, stored in a database, and transferred to MAX Qualitative Data Analysis 18.1.0 for analysis. **Results:** As a result of the content analysis, three main themes emerged: Psychological impact, defensive practice, and expectations from the hospital. It was revealed that, after the traumatic birth, midwives experienced highly emotional exhaustion in the form of sadness, flashbacks, guilt, fear, and empathy, and that they performed an increasingly defensive practice. Besides, midwives explicitly stated that they were not prepared enough for traumatic events and that most traumatic births were simply ignored in their workplace. Eventually, it was determined that midwives received support mostly from their colleagues in case of a traumatic birth. **Conclusion(s):** Midwives need to feel valued and be supported by their institutions in coping with emotional stress. Therefore, performing clinical inspections by experienced or specialist midwives may serve as a supporting framework for reducing defensive interventions.

Hosted file

Manuscript.doc available at <https://authorea.com/users/325322/articles/453287-midwives-experiences-of-witnessing-traumatic-hospital-birth-events-a-qualitative-study>

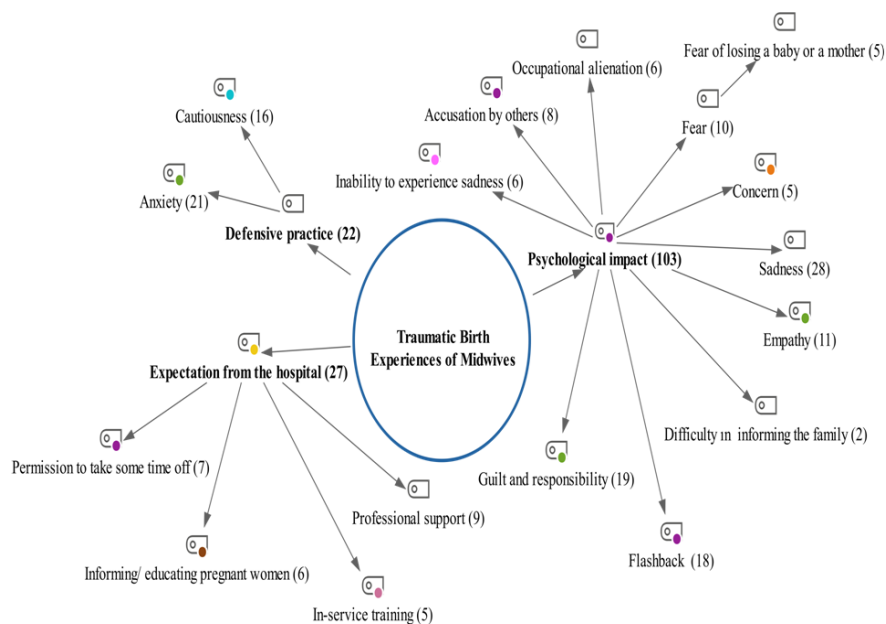


Fig. 1. Theme tree about the traumatic birth experiences of midwives

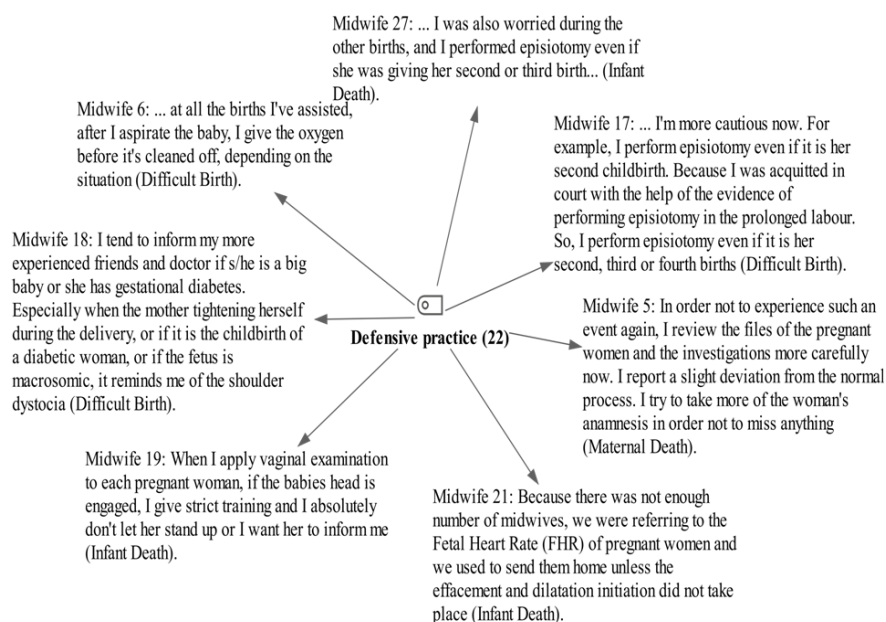


Fig. 2. The views on the main theme of defensive practice

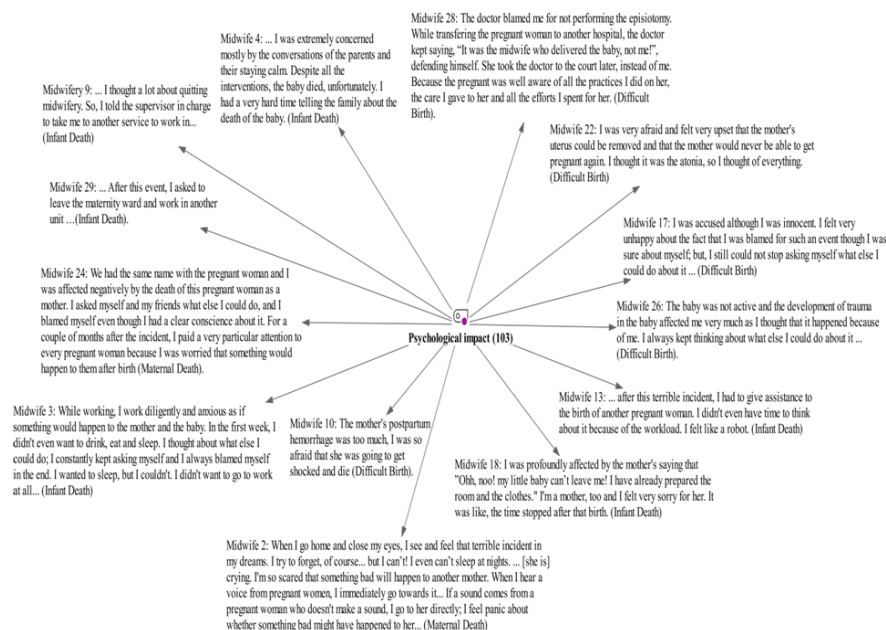


Fig. 3. The views on the main theme of psychological impact

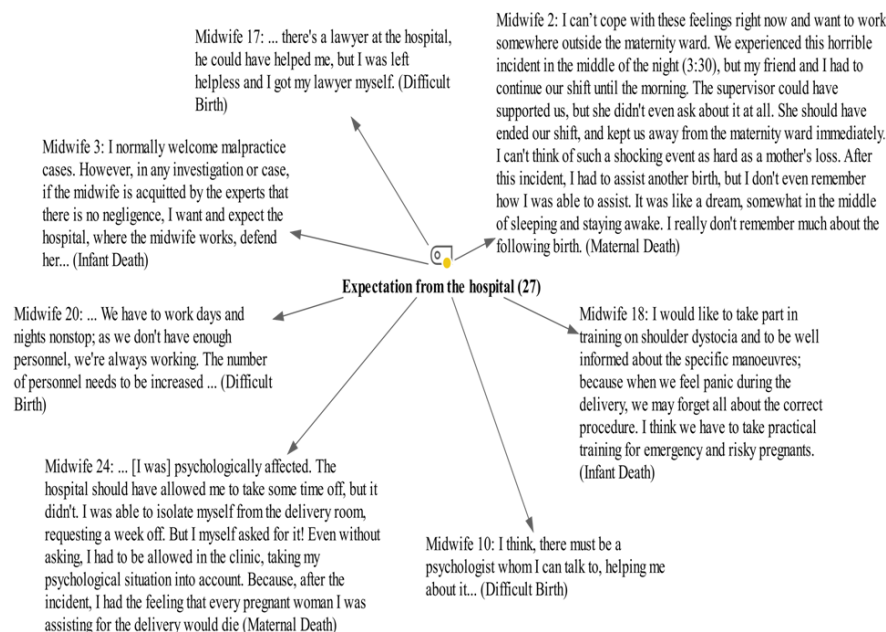


Fig. 4. The views on the main theme of expectations from the hospital