‘It should be the most natural thing in the world’: Exploring first-time mothers’ breastfeeding difficulties in the UK using audio-diaries and interviews; A critical Analysis

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In this journal, the authors sought to find out the challenges faced by first time mothers’ in breastfeeding. In the abstract of the journal they recognize breastfeeding as a global practice that is promoted with high levels of scrutiny at international levels as such UK is not an exemption. (Gorud, 2014)To ensure that the study was objective enough and a true reflection of the reality on the ground the research focused on the first mothers as the only respondents. This was the foundation of their interpretative phenomenological analysis. Moreover, the researchers relied on the unedited audio diary accounts that were kept by the participants that recorded their infant feeding experience for the first one week after birth. To this end the journal is convincingly presents a high level of validity. (Homewood, Tweed, Cree, & Crossley, 2009)

The abstract provides an objective summary of the whole study while highlighting the various aspects of the research including the findings that are discussed in the subsequent sections. In summary a look at the abstract gives the user the general overview of the journal thus making it possible to draw some conclusion before reading the whole journal. In other words it provides it provides almost enough information on the key areas of research explored within the whole journal. (Kumar & Kalke, 2012) At the conclusion of the abstract the authors give a preview of their recommendations on the way forward given their research findings. This presents the journal in the light of the best research journals that can be found in the world’s best libraries.

In its introduction the journal sets out the objectives of the study that is what the authors set out to research. As stated in the title the journal sought to explore the challenges faced by first time mothers’ in breastfeeding given that breastfeeding is the most natural thing in the world. To answer this question a lot of objectives had to be consequently developed thus further expounding the research. This has been achieved concisely by the authors. Some of the objectives to this study were; to find out the challenges facing first time lactating mothers. Another objective was to explore ways of promoting breastfeeding among mothers in UK, to establish the impact of breastfeeding monitoring programs in UK among many others that are revealed in the study. The objectives that the study set to cover are relevant and contribute immensely in achieving the general objective of the research in answering the questions on the difficulty experienced by breastfeeding mothers and offering solutions thereafter.

In any well researched paper the type of this journal, a theoretical framework serves a key role as it demonstrates that relationships proposed in the paper are not based on mere personal perceptions, instincts and guesses of the authors, but rather emanating from facts researched and obtained from other authors. In the same way the journal presents a number of theories documented by the previous researchers on the same area of study or related topics. The journal is rich of citations from other sources that support their objectives alongside their findings. These diverse theoretical aspects covered in the journal succeed in helping the authors in clarifying their implicit theories in a manner that is clear in definition. (Tsai, Huang, & Lee, 2015)

Research conclusions or hypothesis supported by credible citations from previously researched papers attaches a high degree of validity in the arguments within the paper from a critical point of view. These theoretical aspects are important in developing the theories that are critical to predicting the relationships between two or more variables. In which case, the hypothesis are often more specific than the theories. For instance in the introductory part the authors have provided good evidence on their presumption that that breast milk yields considerable immunological, nutritional and developmental advantages to babies. This assertion has been supported by various theoretical and empirical evidences from the previous research done by other authors.

There is central concept running across the whole paper that is the concept of breastfeeding its advantages challenges and everything about it. Ideally breastfeeding forms the whole scope of the research. The concept extrapolated in this paper was an investigation into the everyday life information in regards to the behaviors of first time mothers , as they come face to face with new, significant and pressing information needs which comes along with their new responsibilities as first time mothers. In going about this, the research covered several topics that were significant inn explaining the underlying areas therein. These and other studies contributed immaculately to a better understanding of the science and art of breastfeeding breaking down and highlighting the kind of support that might be useful to breastfeeding women.

The research recognizes that there is a limited understanding of the impact of breastfeeding difficulties on mothers and on their developing relationship with their children remains limited and therefore this is what informed the choice of respondents to be the directly affected parties in order to help the rest. In the same sense the methods employed in the research adequately provides an objective analysis and the scope of the research. There is also coherency in the way in which the points and the methods are presented. (Alimoradi, Javadi, Barikani, Kalantari, & Ahmadi, 2014)

For instance in data collection audio-diary recorded for a whole week were used for a seven day period. The training was first conducted to the participants and the prompts provided. This shows the commitment expressed in getting first hand information. Additionally, different questions that were necessary in getting all conclusive response were also inculcated in the interview. The research assistants visited the participants as soon as they delivered. (Hausman, 2007) This was critical in covering the scope of the events and just ensuring the key aspects that were relevant to the study were rightly covered. Consequently, an appropriate analysis was adopted from the preceding findings this led to correct interpretation of the results that has been attached to the journal. (Johnston, 2006)

From my own evaluation, the value positions underlying the research has been coherently, clearly and implicitly presented. In the process of presenting such an analysis several themes arose however, not the original themes expected in the study but they were central in understanding the whole scope as was the case. The theme of tension and prior expectation is adequately covered. (Berridge, McFadden, Abayomi, & Topping, 2005) This is important in understanding the other aspects of the research in relation to the central theme of the study. There is enough evidence provided to discuss every aspect of the study. There is a wide scope of literature that provides various citations in regards to the findings of the research. In essence the findings of this research are a fair reflection of the already presented literature done on the same or related areas that tends to answer the same question.

The research as it is has got several observable features that make it credible and valid before the users. Among the strengths of this research given its objective is the choice of the participants. The research was designed to explore first time mothers’ breastfeeding difficulties in the UK, therefore the researchers only chose the first time mothers as their correspondents. Strength here is the timing of the interviews. This is also among the strengths of the research given the response was instantaneous with regards to the difficulties, the audio diary were provided during the first week after delivery. (Dykes, 2006) This facilitated a true reflection of the feelings and experience that were key to the hypothesis here. The analytical methods used here are also good for the research. (Hardy, 2014)

However, there are a few flaws that can be noted from the research. Some of these weaknesses include there was no comparative analysis between the first week after delivery and the subsequent weeks moreover the research did not consider getting the views of other mothers on the experience during their times as first mothers thus creating various loopholes within the research itself.

The literature review worked splendid for the research however, it was not exhaustive. It is true that the literature provided ample evidence in the hypothesis created and this makes the people have the flow needed of a research paper. The contribution of the authors also matched almost perfectly with the available literature as such there were no serious deviations between the findings as expressed in this research and other papers. This was done in a research language, clear, precise and understandable to the interested users.

In summary, my overall assessment of this research details a proper conducted research and a well communicated paper. From the abstract to the conclusion there is a complete flow of facts and figures as were covered in the research. Consequently the methodology used in the study further provides a lot of reasons as to why this research is reliable. The methods and the subsequent analysis is a reflection of the great effort put in the work. However, there were a few flaws like the limited comparative analysis exemplified in the research that would have produced a great piece in the event that they would have been fully covered. From the above critical analysis, it is therefore safe to classify this research as good reliable and credible.

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