

## RESEARCH ARTICLE (ORIGINAL) 8

## Becoming a mother for the second time: The moment of birth

*Tornar-se mãe de um segundo filho: O momento do nascimento*

*Convertirse en madre de un segundo hijo: El momento del nacimiento*

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### Abstract

**Background:** Becoming the mother of a second child, as a phenomenon of transition in parenting, requires a transition to new roles and responsibilities for the woman, translating into a period of vulnerability.

**Objective:** To understand the meaning of the woman's experience of becoming a mother of a second child.

**Methodology:** Qualitative study, with a hermeneutic phenomenological design. Activities developed in the data analysis process took van Manen's guidelines. Ethical assumptions were fulfilled.

**Results:** The theme, the moment of birth, is manifested in the encounter between the woman and the second child, being a moment presented as "just me and him". From this moment, an encounter(s) and/or an (dis)encounter(s) with the other, who is the second child, begins and the (new) family identity is born. Affection and emotions, but also ambivalences and (dis)encounters are intertwined in this experience.

**Conclusion:** Confronting these findings and their meaning for nurses will open the horizon of their understanding of the lived experience of these women and will certainly have an impact on their way of being present in care.

**Keywords:** mothers; siblings; parenting; parturition; family; nursing

### Resumo

**Enquadramento:** Tornar-se mãe de um segundo filho, enquanto fenómeno de transição na parentalidade, exige da mulher uma transição para novos papéis e responsabilidades, traduzindo-se num período de maior vulnerabilidade.

**Objetivo:** Compreender o sentido da experiência vivida da mulher ao tornar-se mãe de um segundo filho.

**Metodologia:** Estudo qualitativo, de desenho fenomenológico hermenêutico. Atividades desenvolvidas no processo de análise de dados tiveram em consideração as orientações de van Manen. Cumpriram-se pressupostos éticos.

**Resultados:** O tema, o momento do nascimento, manifesta-se no encontro entre a mulher e o segundo filho, sendo um momento apresentado como "só eu e ele". A partir deste momento, iniciam-se, encontro(s) e/ou o (des)encontro(s) com o outro, que é o segundo filho, e nasce a (nova) identidade familiar. O afeto e as emoções, mas também as ambivalências e (des)encontros entrelaçam-se nesta experiência.

**Conclusão:** O encontro com os achados e o seu sentido para os enfermeiros permitirá abrir o horizonte da sua compreensão da experiência vivida destas mulheres e seguramente terá impacto no seu modo de ser-presente no quotidiano de cuidados.

**Palavras-chave:** mães; irmãos; parentalidade; nascimento; família; enfermagem

### Resumen

**Marco contextual:** Convertirse en madre de un segundo hijo, como fenómeno de transición en la paternidad, requiere que las mujeres hagan una transición hacia nuevos roles y responsabilidades, lo que se traduce en un período de mayor vulnerabilidad.

**Objetivo:** Comprender el significado de la experiencia vivida por una mujer al convertirse en madre de un segundo hijo.

**Metodología:** Estudio cualitativo, de diseño fenomenológico hermenéutico. Las actividades desarrolladas en el proceso de análisis de datos tuvieron en cuenta las directrices de van Manen. Se cumplieron los supuestos éticos.

**Resultados:** El tema, el momento del nacimiento, se manifiesta en el encuentro entre la mujer y el segundo hijo, y se presenta como un momento de "solo yo y él". A partir de este momento, comienzan encuentro(s) y/o (des)encuentro(s) con el otro, que es el segundo hijo, y nace la (nueva) identidad familiar. Afectos y emociones, pero también ambivalencias y (des)encuentros se entrelazan en esta experiencia.

**Conclusión:** El encuentro con los hallazgos y su significado para los enfermeros permitirá abrir el horizonte de comprensión de la experiencia vivida por estas mujeres y seguramente tendrá un impacto en su forma de estar presente en su cuidado diario.

**Palabras clave:** madres; hermanos; parto; responsabilidad parental; familia enfermería

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## Introduction

As a transition in parenthood, becoming the mother of a second child represents a period of greater vulnerability and (trans)formation of the woman as a *being-in-the-world* (Heidegger, 2005; Watson, 2012), in the search for her new identity and (re)balance (O'Reilly, 2004; Guarda-Rodrigues & Rebelo-Botelho, 2021).

In Portugal, although the desired fertility is, on average, 2.3 children, the intended fertility is 1.8 children (Instituto Nacional de Estatística & Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos, 2014), and the actual fertility is only one child (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2020). This reality in Portugal suggests that the desired parental transition of having a second child seems to be increasingly difficult to achieve and may even put the population renewal process at risk, which is currently of 2.1 (Instituto Nacional de Estatística & Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos, 2014).

Although the transition in parenthood related to the birth of a second child is a complex process, potentially changing previously established interaction patterns that bring about challenges to all subsystems and parties involved, it seems to be felt with strong intensity in the relationship with the mother (Brazelton & Sparrow 2006; Piccinini et al., 2007).

When becoming a mother for the second time, the woman not only experiences the issues affecting first-time mothers, such as the redefinition of roles, routines, and relationships but she is also faced with problems specific to this period of the life cycle, in so far as the uniqueness of each baby is linked to a particular moment in the life of the woman who needs to become the mother of a new being and welcome each child into her own life and the family's life (Krieg, 2007; Mercer, 2004). Women's adjustment to growth and transformation (Mercer, 2004) while experiencing this transition in parenthood of becoming mothers for the second time can be very demanding, stressful, chaotic, and lead them to exhaustion as they need to (re)born and (re)start anew. It can also affect women's health and well-being (Krieg, 2007; Vivian, 2010), given the need to adapt to their new role and identity (O'Reilly, 2004), and cause new tensions in the marital and/or family relationship (Vivian, 2010) and children's healthy physical and emotional development (Krieg, 2007). In addition, the birth of a second child gives rise to the phratry and can also trigger role and intragenerational conflicts as it makes relationships more complex (Krieg, 2007; Vivian, 2010).

Given that this transition is currently under-researched (Krieg, 2007; O'Reilly, 2004), particularly in Portugal (Rodrigues & Velez, 2018), it is important to access the meaning of women's unique experience of becoming mothers for the second time.

In view of the above, this study aimed to understand women's lived experience of becoming mothers of a second child from their perspective.

## Background

The woman is an individual, a "being-in-the-world" (Heidegger, 2005; Watson, 2012), a human being of temporal horizons who, being-in-the-world-and-being-with-others, more specifically with the other - with her special entity, her second child -, experiences a transitive, complex, lived journey of transformation to become a mother (Mercer, 2004; Vivian, 2010).

Although it may be a predictable life event, becoming a mother implies reorganization and adaptation due to the associated changes (Mercer, 2004), and it is a phenomenon that goes far beyond motherhood as an act of being a parent.

In this context, a transition is a passage from one life phase, condition, or status to another, which may lead to changes in health status, role relations, expectations, or abilities and imply changes in needs of all human systems (Chick & Meleis, 1986).

Given that parenthood is a transition, the presence of a second child emerges as a transition in parenthood (Guarda-Rodrigues & Rebelo-Botelho, 2021) that involves knowledge and skill acquisition (O'Reilly, 2004). Although the transition to first-time parenthood has been investigated, namely by nurses in Portugal and abroad, the research on the transition to parenthood and the exercise of the maternal/paternal role has not focused on the transition experienced with the birth of the second child (Rodrigues & Velez, 2018; Rodrigues & Rebelo-Botelho, 2020).

In 2018, Rodrigues and Velez published a scoping review aimed to identify and map the available scientific evidence on women's transition when becoming mothers for the second time. This review found nine studies published between 1997 and 2013, none of which were conducted in Portugal. In one of these studies, the female participants described this transition as the search for a new balance, and seven themes emerged that were common in their lives: "1) balancing the positive and negative elements of the first few weeks, 2) knowing what to expect, 3) establishing a new routine, 4) maintaining the marital relationship, 5) taking a break, 6) seeking out support, and 7) nurturing relationships among family members" (O'Reilly, 2004, p.455). Issues of gender and conjugality emerged in the remaining studies, and only one focused on parental leave.

These studies reinforce the need for an in-depth understanding of women's perspective of the phenomenon of becoming mothers for the second time, so that person-centered care interventions can be designed to address each individual's complexity and uniqueness.

## Research question

What is the meaning of women's lived experience of becoming mothers of a second child?



## Methodology

This study used a qualitative methodology with a hermeneutic phenomenological design. Data were collected in two private day-care centers in Leiria, Portugal.

The experiential material was collected from phenomenological interviews, lasting approximately 60 minutes, with 11 women with a second child aged 18 to 24 months. Participants who met these eligibility criteria and were interested in participating in the study were identified by the day-care center management and the educators. The participants were aged 26 to 43 years and lived with a male partner who was the father of their two children. Only the partner of one of the participants had two children from previous relationships who did not live with the couple on a daily basis. The participants were full-time workers, except for one of the women who was a student. The birth interval between the first and the second children ranged from 21 months to five years.

A written invitation was sent, and a mutually agreed-upon time and place were scheduled for the interview. The researcher received training prior to the interviews. Keeping in mind the phenomenological intention of this moment and the main research question, the participants were asked to describe a meaningful experience - situation, episode, event, or moment - in the process of becoming mothers of a second child. In addition, they were asked to describe what they did, said, and felt in that situation, namely concerning the body, space, time, things, and others (van Manen 1997, 2014). The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for a detailed analysis. Field notes were also collected using a notebook and added to the respective interviews.

The activities in the data analysis process were developed based on van Manen's (1997, 2014) guidelines. Thus, after gathering the experiential material, a moment of familiarization followed, with immersion in the phenomenon under analysis (van Manen 1997, 2014). Subsequently, the material was edited, and the narrative text was created to make understandable something that could go unnoticed. After reading and rereading the material, the themes - or experiential structures - inherent to the phenomenon under study were isolated.

Collaborative analysis (van Manen, 1997) was also used to build the themes, with the participation of supervisors, faculty, and nurse researchers specializing in the research area of Lived Experience and Epistemology.

After immersion in the essential themes, the phenomenon was described through the art of writing and rewriting, being sensitive to the subtle undertones of language (van Manen, 1997).

The research protocol was reviewed and authorized by the Ethics Committee of the Lisbon Nursing School (no. 817/2016) and the National Data Protection Committee (no. 4156/2016). Informed consents were also obtained from the directors of the day-care centers and the study participants. Pseudonyms were used for all names mentioned in the study to ensure data anonymity and confidentiality.

## Results

The meaning attributed to a woman's lived experience of becoming a mother for the second time is marked by a set of essential themes: 1) *The moment of decision*; 2) *The moment of birth*: from the encounter and the (dis) encounter with the other to the (re)birth of the family identity; and 3) *The moment of returning home and to daily life: it's all very . . . I need more . . .* Moments that reveal a journey that occurs over time and portray the diversity of human experience.

This article presents the theme *The moment of birth* and its thematic variations: *It was just me and him/her*; *Encounter(s) and disencounter(s) between siblings*; and *We are four: the family as one*.

"It was just me and him/her" - The participants describe the encounter between them and the second child at the moment of birth as an intimate and emotionally intense moment of enchantment and complicity, presented as "just me and him/her", a singular moment that differs from other moments experienced with the first child, as narrated by Rosa (I3) and Carolina (I4), respectively.

I was very happy, I cried. . . . it was wonderful . . . With the second child, the whole journey was important, but the birth was indeed a different experience. Completely different. Much more serene, much more peaceful, much more. . . emotional. Rosa (I3)

Carolina (I4), referring to the moment immediately after the birth, mentions how she saw her second child as beautiful and perfect and felt fulfilled and in love. For that participants, that moment was only theirs, of those two beings.

The most important thing was really his birth . . . the fact . . . that I was able to get him out, the first child I couldn't, he wouldn't get out . . . I felt very emotional, I cried tears of joy (. . .). I couldn't take my eyes off him . . . It was just me and him . . . It felt good to be just us. Really, if there were someone else, it would probably ruin something. It was perfect. Carolina (I4)

Although the participants describe the experience of the encounter as an intensely deep, emotional phenomenon full of love, Carolina (I4) tells us how, before the birth, she questioned herself and worried about her ability to love her second child just as she loved her first child, with whom she already had a meaningful experience. However, Carolina (I4), Alice (I7), and other participants mentioned that they loved them both but in a different way.

The first child . . . is everything to us. And I didn't know if I would love the second one the same way as I love the first one. When Frederico [second son] was born . . . the first son, there's already a whole experience . . . And yet, when he [the second son] was born . . . everything was so different, and everything was also so good and . . . really the love . . . was the same, it completely blew me away when I laid my eyes on him. Carolina (I4)

"You can like them differently, because they are different but... that emotion that you feel with the first child, it's

the same emotion you feel with the second child, in a different way.” Alice (I7)

These women highlight a love that reveals itself in a different way but with the same meaning.

“Encounter(s) and disencounter(s) between siblings” - The first encounter between the two children is largely a moment of tenderness and love. It is also an expected and planned encounter, but above all it is a daily encounter in which affection and love grow and (trans)form the other. Sofia (I6) describes a moment of true happiness, one of “the happiest moments of her life”, when she observed the first encounter between her children, still in the hospital, shortly after the birth of her youngest child. The moment when her first child welcomes her brother, when she “wanted everything” with her brother.

Seeing my daughter arrive at the hospital . . . looking at that little thing . . . She sat down . . . I put Lourenço on the baby bed, and she stayed next to him. She touched him a lot, first, she was afraid to touch him, then she wanted to hold him. . . She held him, and then she wanted to hug him, then she wanted everything. . . . We saw that she liked her brother . . . She was saying, “hey brother, then you can go home” . . . It was such an emotional experience, and I tried not to cry . . . . I was so happy . . . . For me, that moment . . . was one of the most beautiful moments of my life . . . It was seeing them both. I felt it was worth it ((laughs)), all that sacrifice again. [I feel] Happy. Sofia (I6)

The participants describe the affection between siblings even during pregnancy. Leonor (I2) recalls how her oldest son talked about his sister even before she was born, with a feeling of both possession and affection, and referred to the sister as his sister, more precisely as his “sis”.

“And from very early on, José would say “this is my sis” . . . but full of pride . . . and affection for her” Leonor (I2). But this encounter of love and tenderness between siblings also occurs on a daily basis. The natural acceptance and one child’s protection of the other child promotes a feeling of mission accomplished, so deep and emotionally intense that it cannot be explained.

The important thing for me is to see that Francisco has accepted his brother very well, that he loves his brother, that he protects him and always wants to kiss him . . . . In the morning he has to kiss his brother . . . . Seeing this brotherly love . . . Carolina (I4)

“Frederico already likes to open and close doors and . . . and his brother goes and . . . grabs him and says ‘no, you might get stuck.’ And it’s already . . . it’s cute to watch. He’s protective . . .” Carolina (I4).

In turn, Sofia (I6), having said that “I never wanted to be a mother” and that she only became a mother for the first and second times because of her partner’s desire and vocation, reported how she admires and feels happy to watch the complicity between her children, which is shown, for example, in the way they communicate and play together.

This week I thought it was beautiful. Lara, who is in that phase of wanting to play mommy and

daddy, . . . he’s the baby and she’s the mother and says to him “eat it all or I’ll be angry at you”. . . . She then sits him in the stroller, which happens to be the doll’s stroller, and walks him around . . . I think it’s very beautiful . . . their complicity . . . . I feel happy. I think that . . . it was the best thing I’ve done. Sofia (I6)

Although the encounter between the first and the second child is one of tenderness and love, the occupation of the space by another person, that is, the younger sibling, was also experienced. Ana (I9) narrates how she felt sad, or even desperate, when she realized the suffering felt and demonstrated by her first child. Upon returning home after giving birth, he verbalized his suffering, in a mixture of astonishment and sadness, when he noticed that his mother didn’t come alone, but was carrying a baby, another human being, his brother.

As soon as he saw me, he was all happy, ran towards me, and hugged me . . . “Mommy’s home.” But . . . when he saw his brother Tiago, he became very quiet . . . “Uh, he came too, he’s also here ((he said it in a low voice))”. . . . He didn’t like it, he was very upset, it was like an invasion of his space. It affected him a lot. . . . It’s that despair of loving one so much and loving the other so much too, but knowing that it was really causing suffering . . . Ana (I9)

In turn, Ana (E9) describes the tantrums, the wars, the fights, the teasing, and the simultaneous gestures of love that she observes in her children’s interactions.

If you have all the toys here, they will be interested in the same thing. At the same time, they will want the same thing. But after a while, if one is not there, they ask, “Mom, where’s Tiago? Mom, Tiago must be doing something wrong. Mom, where is he? Despite . . . this whole thing of . . . wars between them, but . . . I don’t think they can be without each other anymore. Ana (I9)

For the female participants in this study, the lived experience of becoming mothers for the second time is reflected in loving and tender encounters. However, it is also manifested in moments of disencounter between siblings, or rather, of manifestation of the presence of a self faced with the occupation of space by the other.

“We are four: the family as one” - The encounter and the (re)birth of the family as a whole, as one, is a concern for these women, namely the first child’s and the partner’s acceptance and integration of the second child.

Ana (I9) and Maria (I5), moved by emotion, recall when the older son, not seeing his younger brother in the car and feeling his absence, asks his parents for him. Pedro said, “Mom, there are only three of us. . . Where is the fourth member . . . Joana, in turn, said “So, Dad, aren’t we going to pick up Joaquim today? Both participants feel that this behavior reveals that the older son has accepted his brother as a family member.

In addition to the first child’s acceptance of the second child as a family member, the participants also reported how important it was for them to see that their partner showed the same love and acceptance when he met their

youngest child for the first time. His affection and attention toward her as a woman and mother of his children were also important. When recalling the moment of the first encounter with their partners after the birth, Rosa (I3) and Carolina (I4) reported the importance of their husband's affection for them and their newborn second child. That moment is felt as something basic, structuring, deeply peaceful, and appeasing, like a dream come true, to the extent that they have what they wanted, they are not alone, they have support, and their family is reunited.

My husband . . . He picked up the little girl and . . . actions speak for themselves. I was happy . . . that he was also there . . . he was supportive, which is what we need. We need a lot of support . . . to feel we're not alone. I was happy, joyful . . . the family is together. That's what we all want.  
Rosa (I3)

I remember my husband's visit. First . . . he hugged me and kissed his son . . . and held him in his arms . . . and he couldn't take his eyes off him either. I was quite emotional, to see him . . . Of the second son . . . the same tenderness.  
Carolina (I4)

In this moment of the (re)encounter and (re)birth of family identity, the older children's acceptance of these new members and the partners' love towards the younger children and the women is valued and emotionally significant for them.

## Discussion

The time of birth is unveiled as the experience of the encounter and (re)encounter between the woman and the second child, an intimate moment of two being(s)-in-the-world, of enchantment, perfect, presented as "just me and him/her" but where the temporal dimensions of past, present, and future are (re)experienced and addressed.

This intimate and enchanted encounter that occurs at the moment of birth seems to give existential meaning to the female participants, beings who become mothers of a second child, endowed with language, capable of opening up to the world, more specifically to the other, their special entity, who is their second child and also a being. Therefore, and paraphrasing Heidegger (2005, p.35), the entity is a way to access the being because the being is only revealed from the entity, insofar as "the being is always the being of an entity", but that needs to be in a relation with its entities and its being to exist. Thus, there is a recognition of the identity, the being, of this entity that is the second child as a unique child, on equal terms with all others, who receives the love that is due to him/her, because each child is unique and each mother is unique with each child. For this reason, this transition in parenthood is a qualitatively different, specific, and singular experience (Kojima et al., 2005). The female participants' narratives reveal love, affection, and a gift-love that impels women to give something of themselves, to protect their child in the face of a need-love of the child who seeks the mother's encounter and

protection, but also the love between siblings. For Lewis (2017), the mother's love for her child, revealed in the participants' narratives, refers to affection, the humblest of loves, because it does not seek to impress, it's universal, and is the most delicate of all natural loves.

The older sibling's acceptance of the second child was very important for the female participants, which can also be found in the literature studied. Walz and Rich (1983) found that a major maternal concern was the firstborn child's acceptance of the younger sibling, which can be seen in the energy and time spent by the women in preparing their first child and including them in the events related to their sibling's birth.

In this study, women's lived experience of becoming mothers for the second time manifests itself in moments of encounter in love and tenderness and moments of (dis) encounter between siblings due to the occupation of the space by another individual.

Some studies have focused on or made contributions to understanding the impact of second child's birth on the firstborn child (Kojima et al., 2005; Pereira, 2011; Piccinini et al., 2007; Walz & Rich, 1983).

Piccinini et al. (2007) investigated the impact of the second child's birth on family relations, namely concerning the changes in the firstborn child's behaviors, the marital relationship, the firstborn child-parent relationship, and the support network. The researchers report that the mothers who participated in the study empathetically showed their suffering when realizing the firstborn child's difficulties in coping with the newborn's arrival, for example, through small signs of discontent, such as the child's facial expression when the mother came home. Walz and Rich (1983) also found that, as firstborn children occupy an important place in the mother's life, the arrival of a second child changes the already established relationship, generating feelings of dissatisfaction and suffering.

In turn, Pereira (2011) analyzed the parents' perspective of sibling rivalry from pregnancy to the second child's 24 months of life in families with a preschool firstborn child and found that, in the early period, that is, after the sibling's birth, sibling rivalry was primarily revealed through the firstborn child's jealousy towards the parents. However, according to this author, as the second child develops greater motor and communication skills, the rivalry is also manifested through competition and direct disputes between siblings.

In this study, the participants also described the experience of becoming mothers of a second child as the encounter and the (re)birth of the family, now "we are four", as a whole, as one. However, at this same time, the women were also concerned about the acceptance of each of the family members, their beings, in a unique and proper place.

The love shown by the partner, both towards the newborn child and the participants, is valued and emotionally significant. O'Reilly (2004) also found that the female participants were not only concerned about their relationship with each child and the children's relationship with each other, they were also concerned about the

father's relationship with the children. In turn, Kojima et al. (2005) found growing evidence that the father's involvement with the family contributes significantly to the family's adjustment to the birth of a second child. In turn, Piccinini et al. (2007) added that the birth of the second child impacts the current dynamics of the family relationships, stressing that the family as a whole experiences changes during this period. However, the following question emerges in this context: What is the role of the man, the father, the partner in this transition? In view of the above, this study reveals how the human phenomenon - becoming the mother of a second child - as a transition in parenthood that represents a particular period of (trans)formation and greater vulnerability presents itself, at the moment of birth, as a journey marked by a (new) beginning and the (re)encounter of a being-in-the-world who is adapting to a new role and identity. A moment where affection and love are intertwined with (dis)encounter and ambivalence.

A limitation of this study and its design is that they do not seek representativeness or extrapolation. Instead, they intend to contribute to unveiling the phenomenon without focusing on the number of participants but rather on clarifying the meaning and individual meanings of the phenomenon under study (van Manen, 2014).

## Conclusion

The meaning attributed to women's lived experience of becoming mothers for the second time is marked, among others, by the *moment of birth*: a time of encounter and (dis)encounter with the other and (re)birth of the family identity.

This intimate moment is one of enchantment, presenting itself as "just me and him/her". It is, thus, a singular and distinct moment from that experienced with the first child. Although some of the participants had experienced the fear about the love they would feel for their second child, now they speak of a love that is different but just as good. A love that grows and becomes stronger over time through daily interaction and presence. The first encounter between both children is also presented as a moment of tenderness and love. It is an expected and planned encounter, but above all it is an encounter, a crossroads where affection and love seem to grow and (trans)form the other. Nevertheless, in the relationship of the being with other beings, there are also moments of (dis)encounter, of sibling rivalry, or rather of the manifestation of the presence of a self faced with the occupation of space by the other, a protagonist of restlessness from the mothers' perspective.

In the experience(s) revealed, the encounter and the (re)birth of the family as a whole, as one, is also marked by the firstborn child's acceptance of the second child and the partner's love towards the youngest child and the woman. Through the dissemination of the findings of this study, nurses have the opportunity to become (even more) aware and reflect upon the moment of birth experienced by the woman who becomes a mother for the second time. They

can facilitate the woman's (re)balance and adjustment to this transition by implementing interventions aimed at the expression of feelings and emotional regulation, for example, regarding their initial fear about the love and the position occupied by the second child in their lives and the lives of each family member and their anguish towards the firstborn child's behaviors and sibling rivalry. Nurses should explain that affection and love can grow with everyday life and that children will benefit from a sibling relationship. They should also demystify the cultural ideals about what it means to be a "good" mother, giving voice to women's inner life, reducing the pressure, and allowing them to free themselves from the weight of their own impossible and punishing ideals. In this way, they will be able to find and look for the essential, that is, the other in their presence. Nurses should also make them aware of the importance of the presence of their partner in this transition.

Nurses should find the time and space to discuss, among other aspects, the transmission of anticipatory guidelines about the expected changes in the behavior and structure of family relationships and dynamics.

However, this topic should be further explored in terms of conceptual clarification and its application with a view to improving nursing care delivery. It would be relevant to further explore the experiences of both the man who becomes a father for the second time and the firstborn child, so as to achieve a deeper understanding of this phenomenon and identify specific nursing interventions to facilitate this transition in parenthood for the several participants. Further studies should investigate this transition but include different types of families and/or families belonging to groups with increased vulnerability. Concerning nursing education, it would be relevant to focus on women's transition to parenthood when becoming mothers for the second time.

## Author contributions

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