Paternal depression during pregnancy and its effect on the relationships of couples and children’s health: a review study

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Abstract

Paternal depression during pregnancy causes increased incidence of psychiatric disorders, anxiety disorders, and impaired development of the child. Thus, considering the importance of psychological health of fathers in the psychological health of children, this study was conducted with the aim of examining the effect of paternal depression during pregnancy on the couple’s relationships and children’s health.

In this narrative review, firstly, the related keywords was identified with using mesh (medical subject headings) and then search was carried out in electronic databases including google scholar and the more specifically in Magiran, SID, Pubmed, Web of Science, Scopus, Ovid, Science Direct And ProQuest. The keywords: depression, depression in pregnancy, father, child, mental health. The published related articles were extracted from 1983 till 2018. Overall 95 articles have been searched. Researchers reviewed the title and abstracts of all articles searched, 25 articles are excluded due to non-relevance and ultimately they applied 70 studies to compile this review.

The results of our study culminated in organization of findings into two classes: class I: the effect of paternal depression on couple’s relationships including anger and interpersonal conflicts of couples, increased risk of maladaptation and negative feelings in marital relationships, the couple’s over-criticism of each other, emotional-psychological disorders of couples, and risk of infanticide; class II: the effect of paternal depression on children’s health including increased stress and anxiety in the child, mood problems in the child, behavioral problems especially in boys, antisocial behaviors of the child, restlessness and hyperactivity, and emotional-psychological disorders of the child.

Given the negative effects of paternal depression during pregnancy, necessary trainings should be presented to families about identification of depressed fathers during pregnancy by healthcare staff, so that with timely diagnosis and treatment, one can mitigate the consequences of this disorder on the family and child, thereby improving the couple’s relationships and quality of life.

Keywords: Depression, Depression in Pregnancy, Father, Child, Mental Health.

چکیده
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مطالعه موردنظر

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