

Abstract

First-time childbearing families sometimes change roles and relationships because the fathers and mothers have not previously experienced and practiced child rearing. It is especially important for first-time fathers to participate the child rearing process in order to strengthen the parent-child relationship. This quasi experimental research aimed to study the effects of promoting a first-time father's child rearing involvement program on child rearing behaviors and parent-child relationships. The sample group consisted of first-time fathers and mothers that were registered for birth delivery at the postpartum department at Maesod Hospital, Tak province, for a total of 54 couples. The sample groups were selected through inclusion criteria and were divided equally into two groups: a control group and experimental group. The samples in the control group received only routine nursing care, whereas those in the experimental group participated in the promotion of first time father child rearing involvement program together with routine nursing care. Data collection was carried out through a personal data questionnaire, a father's and mother's relationship questionnaire, a father's and child's relationship questionnaire, and a father's child-rearing behavior questionnaire. The statistical research used a data analysis consisting of descriptive statistics, a Chi-square test, an Independent t-test, and ANCOVA.

The study revealed that the mean scores of father's child rearing behaviors in the experimental group were statistical higher than the control group at the 1 week and 6 weeks postpartum ($t = -3.210$, $p < .01$ and $t = -2.735$, and $p < .01$, respectively). Specifically, the scores of parent-child relationships among the experimental group were statistical higher than the control group at 6 weeks postpartum ($F_{1,51} = 4.67$, $p > .05$).

The researcher suggests that nurses should promote first-time father's child rearing involvement programs with routine nursing care extending from the beginning of pregnancy. Longitudinal study should be further conducted in order to follow and assist first-time father for continuing in child rearing involvement process.