Exploring the Occupations of Mothering from Diverse Angles

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Definitions and Descriptions of Mothering

“...socially constructed set of activities and relationships involved in the nurturing and caring of people.” Glenn (1994)

Ruddick
Chodorow
Patricia Hill Collins
Occupational Therapy
Francis-Connolly
Esdaile & Olson
Wegner et al
Explore mothers’ experiences (with and without children with developmental differences), with a particular interest in perceptions related to mothering and how these perceptions impact participation in mothering occupations and co-occupations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6 &amp; 10 y</td>
<td>Germ/Ita/Ir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paula</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jewish/W.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Val</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18 &amp; 10</td>
<td>Jewish/His</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6,4 &amp; 3</td>
<td>W. Amer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nichole</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4 &amp; 3 yr</td>
<td>African A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natalie</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18 mo</td>
<td>P.R./Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natalia</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13 mo</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rae</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12 &amp; 3yr</td>
<td>African A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherrol</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>23m 4yr</td>
<td>Jamaican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikiesha</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4 &amp; 2 yr</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brittney</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1 yr</td>
<td>African A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5 months</td>
<td>African A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonesha</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>African A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonica</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29 mo &amp; 2 yrs</td>
<td>Haitian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dionne</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6 mo Adj Age</td>
<td>African A.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Themes - Boyatzis ‘98 data reduction methods

- Occupations and Activities
  - Occupational Consumption
  - (Multiple Role Hardship)
  - Emotional Engagement
  - (Emotional Hardship)

- Socio-cultural Influence
  - Familial Expectations
  - Country of Origin
    - (Shifting Support)
    - Information overload

- Duality of Feeling
- Signs of Success
- (Self-determination)
Sub-theme – Occupational Consumption

Nichole –

“So immediately I come in, I have to give the kids a bath, get them ready for bed, he has nothing prepared for me to eat so I just jumped in to giving them a bath, getting them ready for bed, bedtime stories, tuck you in, then finally 8:00...Well, I’m tired.”
Duality of Feeling

Sherrol

“..it’s a challenging experience but yet a rewarding one. There are definitely the highs and the lows to mothering. It’s a blessing to be a mother. However, there (are) times that you wish you weren’t a mother. So I think my best description for mothering is that it’s a gift from God, that it does come with some rewards and it does come with some challenges.”
Brittney

“When I first got pregnant, I was mad. I cried and cried and cried some more, but what hurt me (was) my father. He told me you gotta give the baby up for adoption.”
“It’s terrifying”
“So afraid”
“Petrified...I cried a lot”
“Narratives... are the window to viewing the internal meaning systems individuals use to construct their identity and sense of their experience.”
Swanson & Johnston
From simple interview to narrative excavation

**Elements leading to change in methods**

- Interaction with Yolanda
- Second generation of qualitative researchers article—Frank and Polkinghorne (2010)
- Reflexivity literature and processing
- Critical Antenarratology – Boje (2007)
Power of reflexivity -

Women of Color have unique mothering experiences, due to unique history of inequities, and a drive to protect and nurture within the context of these inequitable opportunities.
Content Analysis of Narrative

Boje (2007)

Critical Antenarratology Method

Methodological approach that suspends the notion of the beginning, middle and end of a narrative and seeks to understand the multiple angles of a person’s experience over time.

- Simultaneity, Fragmentation, Trajectory, Morphing
- Reflexivity
- Contextual analysis – historical literature, socio-cultural influences etc.
Second generation of qualitative research

Context of family culture, literature aspects of mothering, content analysis of a year long blog with anternarratological approach
Summary

- Narrative expression outlets provide a way for mothers to cope in challenging and everyday situations.
- Narrative is better understood when not reduced to linear analysis.
- Critical antenarratology presents an alternative for exploring mothering occupations.
- Family centered and occupation-centered care require new ways of perceiving and providing intervention, benefitting the whole family.
Selected References


Selected References


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