
ABSTRACT

A qualitative analysis of a female therapist's subjectivity changing due to motherhood

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This study investigated a therapist's own narrative and investigated how female therapists experience motherhood and how it changes them as a therapist. In Study I, eight therapists who were either pregnant or had already given birth were interviewed longitudinally from the viewpoint of their perceived changes as a therapist. In Study II, seven therapists who had resumed working were interviewed from the viewpoint of their changes in their actual therapeutic settings. The interviews were qualitatively analyzed using the modified grounded theory approach (Kinoshita, 2007). Of note, in Study II, the analysis focusing on the category "subjectivity as a therapist" found in Study I, showed that therapists, who actively decided to resume work through the process of "adjusting the therapist's wavering subjectivity," self-regulated how they interacted with their clients, making sure of their clients' needs and effective timing of intervention. They related these changes to the therapist's experience of pregnancy and childbirth. These results suggest that changes in a female therapist may be associated with the emergence of maternal subjectivity (Baraitser, 2008).

Key Words: female psychotherapist, pregnancy, childbirth, qualitative study, maternal subjectivity
