

Real Talk: Midwifery Mentoring & Belonging

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Becoming a Midwife Researcher

(Short answer: You already are one!)

Melanie Phipps, PhD, CNM, FNP-C

What is the point of doing research?

And what are the benefits to you?



- Why you are *already* a midwife researcher
- The essential point: To understand. To simplify. To add clarity to what you see, what you are experiencing, what you are hearing and observing around you in everything you do
- It's fun
- You want to make a difference
- You want to be able to communicate more easily with others

Of COURSE there are benefits to others, too!

VALUE of becoming a midwife researcher

- Leverage policy initiatives
- Improve care
- Improve systems
- Improve collaboration and communications with communities and others with whom you may not have otherwise known
- Long-term benefits to everyone involved from increased communication to community building
- And, don't forget, it's fun!



Creation of Community

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Approaching Research as a Career Trajectory

Start NOW!

- Keep a journal or notebook
- Go to conferences and talk with others who are doing research
- DNP vs PhD— what's the difference?
- Do you need to be in a university to do research?



The importance of a good research program

Don't settle!

- It's *not* just the research. It's an overall endeavor that includes courses, people, networking, AND doing a lot of reading and writing papers (like contractions, just one at a time... well, maybe a couple at a time)
- Look at programs and talk with people. Pay attention to students, faculty, courses, and the overall university environment. Look for a good track record. Look at what types of research are already being done. Is it boring or is it interesting?
- Funding
- Line up your emotional support FIRST: This includes midwifery colleagues, mentors, family (+ and - :)

What kind of research?

What makes *you* happy?

Quantitative vs Qualitative Research

- Do you like to talk with people?
- Do you like to crunch data?
- Do you like to do both?
- Keep it simple and start small!
- Most important thing: It needs to be interesting to YOU
- Case studies are research, too



Research is not dry and it is not clean!

Know your biases

- Be sure to acknowledge your biases: It is ok to have bias as long as you know how it might affect your interpretation of your results and how others might perceive your work.
- Knowing your biases will help you strengthen your research to minimize bias as much as possible.
- Be clear about where and how you are getting your data
- Get help. There are a LOT of people that know way more than any of us do. That's good AND very reassuring!
- DO NOT GIVE UP

The importance of doing research that matters

So What?

- It's *not* just the matter of getting the degree
- Research should be beneficial to the participants and communities involved
- Be very clear about potential risks and benefits. Don't minimize either.
- What is "the IRB"? They care about the ethics of your research, they are on your side

Partnering

Who do you want to work with?

- Resources
- People
- Libraries
- Informal partnerships
- Importance of background research
- Do you need to publish?
- It's all about building community.

Thank you! Questions?



Melanie Phipps, PhD, CNM, FNP-C

Email: mphippsm@gmail.com

(858) 525-5733