

Thesis Title Cultural Changing : Beliefs and Health Behaviors
 of Postpartum Mothers
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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to study cultural changes in the traditional beliefs and health behaviors of postpartum mothers by using qualitative and survey research approaches. The sample group consisted of mothers who lived in Chombung district, Ratchaburi Province. The qualitative techniques used included focus group discussion, indepth interviews and observation. The sample groups for the indepth interviews were traditional midwives, mothers aged 20-39 years-old, 40-59 years-old and more than 60 years-old; there were 6 people in each group. The qualitative research data were analyzed to discover the beliefs and health behaviors associated with the postpartum period. The different groups of mothers had differing traditional beliefs and health behaviors over time, as seen in descriptive analysis.

The survey research assessed the 3 groups of mothers of differing ages with as of 244, 213 and 139, respectively. The data were analyzed by percentages, means, standard deviations, as well as performing analysis of variance and discriminant analysis.

The findings gained from the qualitative and survey research were as follows:

The traditional beliefs and health behaviors of postpartum mothers were studied in 3 categories: the beliefs and health behaviors associated with accepting food and medicine, in cleaning their bodies, and in keeping their bodies fit. The findings were that changes in beliefs and health behaviors were significant and that is the older mothers were, the more traditional were they beliefs and behaviors.

The most significant factor related to traditional beliefs and health behaviors of postpartum mothers was the different ages of mothers. The factor related to maintaining stability in community beliefs and health behaviors involved the midwives or elderly who had conservative views.

However, the nuclear family life style lessened the influence of traditional beliefs and health behaviors. Moreover the spread and acceptance modern medical information was largely responsible changes seen in the traditional beliefs and health behaviors of the younger mothers.

The strength of their beliefs concerning the postpartum period effected directly health behaviors performed.