

Thesis Title	Psychosocial Factors Affecting Mother's Illness Behaviour Related to Acute Diarrhoea in Children Below 5 years of age.
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#### A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this study was to determine factors influencing illness behaviour of mothers of children under five years of age who have been working in construction companies in Bangkok. Those mothers and children lived in hazardous environment susceptible to diarrhoea. The children were also left unattended during the mother's working hours.

The study design was cross sectional analytic approach with the study population of mothers working in construction

companies in and around Bangkok. Mothers who had children below 5 years of age and had contracted diarrhoea in their children. Due to limitation of time and funds, sampling method was purposive. Sample size was 116.

The results of the study revealed that 45.7% of interviewed mothers reported that their children often get diarrhoea and 59.5% of mothers said that their children had diarrhoea in the last month. More than three-fourths of the mothers perceived that a child passing loose watery stools 3 or more in one day was natural part of his/her growth. A similar proportion of mothers attributed diarrhoea in their child to the taboo food they ate. However 63.8% of them also considered diarrhea as a serious disease and less than half of them (44.8%) perceived the threat that of diarrhoeal diseases as one of the major causes of death in children. Mass media also contributed to the enhancement of their awareness on diarrhoea and in the use of ORS. About half of those mother had fairly good exposure to the radio or television in their residential quarters.

After the oral rehydration therapy was integrated into the primary health programme, more than three fourth of the mothers interviewed (81%) knew about the ORS and 80% said that they gained their knowledge from health workers. Mostly

those mothers obtained ORS from drugstores (42.2%) and only few from groceries (7.8%) and remainder went to clinics (12.9%) and government hospitals (13.8%). Majority had misconception in reconstituting oral fluid at home (62.1%) and using the solution even after, more than one day(68%). When asked about the benefits of treatment with ORS or barriers they found in getting and preparing ORS. More than half (53.4%) perceived low benefit as compare to mothers who foresee benefits in the treatment with ORS.

The study results also revealed that nearly half of the respondents would delay in an anticipation that diarrhoea would stop soon (57%) as compare to the other who prepared ORS or took their child to the nearest available health services. There was significant association found between those who perceived severity and also felt the need to give ORS/GO to health center. Similarly those who had understanding on ORS dosage and preparation would go for it in preference to traditional therapy.

In order to reduce infant and child mortality and morbidity due to diarrhoea, health education program should be aimed at creating higher health values, lifting food taboos and correcting of false beliefs by giving due attention to the local beliefs and terminology so that an easy

understandable methodology is adopted to communicate the accurate message to fight against the deadly diarrhoea.