

Original Research Article

Assessment of Expressed Practices Adopted by the Mothers during Postnatal Period at Selected Hospitals of Ambala, Haryana

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ABSTRACT

Pregnancy and childbirth are major life events in a woman's life. They bring lots of joy in the family as well as many changes in the woman's physical, physiological and emotional status. The objective of study was to assess the expressed practices adopted by mothers during postnatal period. Also to assess the reasons for expressed practices adopted by mothers during postnatal period. The study adopted a non-experimental approach using exploratory survey design. The tool and techniques used for data collection was semi structured interview schedule and interviewing technique. The content validity of the tool was established by experts from the field of obstetrics and gynecological nursing or medical surgical nursing, mental health nursing and child health nursing. The study was conducted at MMIMS&R Hospital, Mullana, Ambala and General Hospital of Ambala city, India. Convenience sampling technique was used to collect data from 100 postnatal mothers. The data was collected during the month of April 2014. The data were analyzed by descriptive statistics. Demographic Variables revealed that (46%) were in the age group of 24-29 years, majority (78%) was Hindu and (47%) had completed their high school. Majority (98%) of mothers was homemaker and (44%) had monthly income 50001- 10000. Majority (80%) of mothers was from rural areas and most (60%) mothers had 1 child. Majority (93%) of mothers eat more green leafy vegetables for their better health. Majority (94%) of mothers change their undergarments daily to maintain personal hygiene. Majority (96%) of mothers avoid standing long periods of time to prevent pressure on the stitches or on the legs. All (100%) of mothers avoid sex for period of six weeks because they are advised by the health workers. Majority (95%) of the mothers will go for follow ups for their better future health in future. Majority of the postnatal mothers had healthy practices and their reasons behind them for adopting these practices were also good.

Key Words: Expressed practices, Mother, Postnatal Period.

INTRODUCTION

The post partum period or puerperium starts about an hour after the delivery of the placenta and includes the following six weeks. By six weeks after delivery, most of the changes of pregnancy, labor and delivery have resolved and the body has reverted to the non pregnant state. A good post partum

care and well balanced diet during puerperal can influence her health for rest of her life. Healthy food choices are encouraged with respect for ethnic and cultural preferences, while after caesarean birth, women usually receives clear liquid until bowel sounds are present and then advance to solid. ^[1]

The morbidity and mortality rate among women are high and some of the causes are avoidable. A number of serious complication and maternal death occur in postpartum period. According to WHO 2001 report, it is estimated that reproductive ill health account for 3rd of total disease burden of women, while postpartum hemorrhage, maternal morbidity and mortality are responsible for large portion of this figure. ^[2]

In general, western postpartum practices are based on the biomedical model, whereby the role of the woman is less important than that of the physician. In contrast, the traditional non-western perspective emphasizes that the birth is the part of holistic and personal system, involving moral value, physical aspect; social relation and relation to the environment. Postpartum health beliefs and practices among the non-western cultures are distinct but have much similarity. ^[3]

Improving maternal health is one of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the international community in 2000. Under MDG5, countries committed to reducing maternal mortality by three quarters between 1990 and 2015. Since 1990, maternal deaths worldwide have dropped by 47%. Between 1990 and 2010, the global maternal mortality ratio (i.e. the number of maternal deaths per 1, 00,000 live birth) declined by only 3.15 per year. This is far from the annual decline of 5.5% required to achieve MDG5. ^[4]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A quantitative research approach with the exploratory survey design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted at MMIMS & R Hospital, Mullana and Civil Hospital, Ambala City. Study comprised of 100 postnatal mothers. Inclusion criteria consisted of mothers who are able to understand and speak Hindi and within the 0-42 days of postnatal period

admitted in postnatal ward and feeding room whereas mothers with mental disorders were excluded from the study. Sample was selected by purposive sampling technique. Data obtained was analysed by using the descriptive statistics i.e. Frequency and percentage distribution.

Tools: The data was collected by using expressed practices checklist comprised of demographic variables and healthy (18) & traditional (29) expressed practice items in the area of diet, personal hygiene, self care, rest & exercise, sexual activities & contraception, spiritual activities, cultural activities, medication and follow up. Data was collected using interviewing technique. The content validity of the tools was established by nine experts including three nursing experts in the field of obstetrics and gynecology, three from medical-surgical nursing, two experts from community health nursing and one expert from child health nursing. Necessary suggestions were incorporated into tool. The tool translated in Hindi and verified by Hindi expert for appropriateness of language. Tryout was done on ten mothers at MMIMS & R Hospital, Mullana, Ambala. The reliability coefficient for the expressed practices was calculated by using test-retest method through Karl Pearson formula which was found to be 0.94.

Data collection: Formal administrative permission was obtained from the Medical Superintendent of MMIMS&R hospital and Principal Medical officer of Civil Hospital of Ambala City. Data was collected on April' 2015. Self-introduction & introduction to the nature of the study were given to the selected samples. To obtain free & frank response, the participants of the study were assured about the confidentiality of their response. Written consent was taken from each mother. It took 55-60 minutes to collect data. Thirty (30) samples were taken from postnatal ward, postnatal intensive unit and feeding rooms of MMIMS & R

Hospital, Mullana. Ambala and seventy (70) samples were taken from postnatal ward and feeding rooms of Civil Hospital, Ambala City. The data were analyzed and interpreted as per the objectives.

RESULTS

The obtained data were analyzed, tabulated and interpreted by employing descriptive statistics.

TABLE 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of mothers by demographic variables N=100

S. No.	Demographic Variables	f (%)
1.	Age (in years)	
	a) 18-23	43
	b) 24-29	46
2.	Religion	
	a) Hindu	78
	b) Muslim	11
3.	Educational status	
	a) Non-literate	8
	b) Primary	28
	c) High school	47
4.	Occupational status	
	a) Home maker	98
5.	Family income(per month)	
	a) ≤5000	42
	b) 5001-10,000	44
6.	Type of family	
	a) Nuclear	16
7.	Place of residence	
	a) Rural	80
8.	No. Of living children	
	a) 1	61
	b) 2	34
9.	Place of delivery	
	a) Home	1
	b) Govt. Hospital	70
10.	Type of delivery	
	a) NVD	28
	b) NVD with episiotomy	25
11.	Duration of postnatal period	
	a) 24hrs	17
	b) Up to 7days	78
	c) Up to 42 days	5

Demographic Variables: The data presented in table-1 depicts that forty six percent (46%) of mothers were in the age group of 24-29 years followed by (43%) of mothers were in the age group of 18 to 23 years, only (11%) of mothers were in the age group of 30-35years. Majority (78%) of the mothers were Hindu whereas only

(11%) were Muslim and (11%) were Sikh. Forty seven percentage (47%) of mothers were educated up to high school and majority of mothers (98%) were home maker and only (2%) of mothers were private employed. Forty four percent (44%) of mothers had monthly family income between Rs.5001 to10000 and majority (84%) of mothers belonged to joint family.

Majority (80%) of mothers were residing in rural area, (61%) of mothers had 1 living child followed by (34%) of mothers had 2 living child. Most (70%) of mothers had delivered in Government hospital and (47%) of mothers had undergone caesarean section followed by (28%) of mothers had undergone normal delivery. Majority (78%) of mothers were up to 7 days of their postnatal period followed by (17%) of mothers were within 24 hours of postnatal period, whereas (5%) of mothers were in up to 42 days of postnatal period.

Description of expressed practices adopted by mothers: The data presented in table- 2 depicts that out of 100 postnatal mothers: In the area of diet majority of mothers (93%) eat more green leafy vegetables followed by majority (91%) of mothers take protein rich diet(pulses, eggs) and only (18%) of mothers take more ghee, methi and garlic.

In the area of personal hygiene majority (94%) of mothers change their undergarments daily followed by majority (92%) of mothers change their clothes daily and only (30%) of mothers restrict to body massage with oil before hot water bath for few days after daily.

In the area of self care most of the mothers (64%) wash their personal clothes separately from men and family members and most (64%) of mothers avoid watching TV and only (28%) of mothers massage abdomen with oil and use cotton buds in ears.

In the area of rest and exercise majority (96%) of mothers avoid standing

long period of time followed by majority (92%) of mothers take 8-10 hours of rest and only (38%) of mothers do postnatal exercises.

In the area of sexual activities maximum (100%) of the mothers avoid sex for period of six weeks.

In spiritual activities majority (93%) of mothers do purification ceremony after delivery and majority (85%) of mothers restrict themselves to go to temple.

In cultural practices majority (79%) of mothers avoid entering to kitchen followed by most (69%) of mothers tie a thread around the wrist and only (38%) of mothers keep bowl of water under the bed.

In the area of medication and follow up majority (95%) of mothers agreed to go for follow up and followed by majority (94%) of mothers said that they will take prescribed medicines.

Description of healthy expressed practices adopted by mothers and reason for adopting:

The data presented in the table-3 depicts all the healthy practices adopted by the mothers during postnatal period where in the area of dietary practices during postnatal practices, majority (93%) of postnatal mothers consumed green leafy vegetable, where (43%) of mothers consumed it for her better health, (20%) of mothers consumed it to prevent cold to mother and the baby too and (23%) of mothers consumed green leafy vegetable to increase their blood Hb level. Majority (91%) of mothers consumed protein rich diet (pulses, eggs) where (41%) of mothers believed that it stimulates production of breast milk mothers believed that protein rich diet helps in strengthening of the body, (30%) of mothers believed that it will enrich the blood and help in recovery, (20%) of mothers believed that it helps in strengthening of body. Most (52%) of postnatal mothers agreed that they eat double quantity of food as compare to pre-pregnant diet where (32%) said they did

for good formation of milk and (20%) said that food will help rebuild her strength, promote recovery and improve breast feeding. Majority (80%) of mothers avoid spicy food where most (72%) avoid it prevent itching and burning sensation in sutures or in the anus. Only (8%) believed that milk is affected by the spicy food and baby will have mouth sores.

The area of personal hygiene further revealed that majority (92%) change their clothes daily to maintain hygiene. Majority (94%) of mothers change their undergarment to maintain their hygiene. Majority (80%) dry their undergarments under sun light in which (35%) believe that it prevents from infection and (45%) said that it dries off soon in sun. Most (50%) of the mothers agreed that they soak their under garment in any antiseptic solution to prevent from infection. Most (68%) of the mothers cleans perineal area with antiseptic solution to prevent from infection. Majority (88%) of mothers clean their breast before and after breast feeding to prevent from the infection to baby.

It was find out that in the area of self care most (54%) of mothers agreed that they limit the visitors to come to their room for few days. Thirty one percent said that they were advised for this by their elders where (23%) said that visitors may pass infection to mother and baby and may disturb milk production.

Findings further showed that in the area of rest and exercise, majority (92%) of mothers agreed to take 8-10 hours rest in which (41%) said that body is weak and rest is compulsory. Twenty eight percent of mothers said that heavy work leads to lower back pain and prolapsed uterus in future. Only (23%) said that rest will protect against postnatal depression. Majority (96%) of mothers avoid standing long period of time to prevent pressure on the stitches or on the legs. Majority (82%) of mothers avoid strenuous work because they believe that body is weak after

delivery. Thirty eight percent of mothers will do postnatal exercises in which (20%) of mothers will do because they were

advised by the health worker and majority (80%) of mothers will do it to maintain their physic and body.

TABLE 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of expressed practices adopted by mothers N=100

S.No.	EXPRESSED PRACTICES	YES (%)	NO (%)
1	DIET		
	During postnatal period:		
	i. Do you eat more green leafy vegetables?	93	7
	ii. Do you take more ghee, methi & garlic?	18	82
	iii. Do you take protein rich diet (pulses, eggs)?	91	9
	iv. Do you eat double quantity of food as compared to pre- pregnant diet?	52	48
	v. Do you avoid chewing the corn or hard foods?	64	36
	vi. Do you drink the milk mixed with turmeric to heal the wound?	29	71
	vii. Do you avoid spicy food?	80	20
	viii. Do you avoid eating lemon and water melon?	53	47
2	PERSONAL HYGIENE:		
	During postnatal period:		
	i. Do you avoid bathing for few days?	84	16
	ii. Do you avoid washing hair for few days?	70	30
	iii. Do you avoid combing hair for some days?	34	66
	iv. Do you restrict to body massage with oil before hot water bath for few days after delivery?	30	60
	v. Do you restrict from using cold water for washing hands, taking bath & toilet use?	42	48
	vi. Do you avoid brushing teeth for some days?	78	22
	vii. Do you change your clothes daily?	92	8
	viii. Do you use cotton cloth pad?	80	20
	ix. Do you change your undergarments daily?	94	6
	x. Do you dry your undergarments under direct sunlight?	80	20
	xi. Do you soak your undergarments in any antiseptic solutions?	50	50
	xii. Do you clean Perineal area with antiseptic solution after each micturation	68	32
	xiii. Do you clean your breast before and after every breast feeding?	88	12
3	SELF CARE		
	During postnatal period:		
	i. Do you tie warm cloth around the abdomen after delivery to support abdomen?	38	62
	ii. Do you massage abdomen with oil?	28	72
	iii. Do you limit the visitor to come your room for few days?	54	46
	iv. Do you wash personal cloth separately from men and family members?	64	36
	v. Do you use cotton buds in ear?	28	72
	vi. Do you avoid seeing in or using the mirror for few days?	44	56
	vii. Do you reside in your parent house for better care?	30	70
	viii. Do you avoid watching TV?	64	36
4	REST AND EXERCISE		
	During postnatal period:		
	i. Do you take 8-10 hrs rest?	92	8
	ii. Do you avoid standing long period of time?	96	4
	iii. Do you avoid strenuous work?	82	18
	iv. Do you do postnatal exercises?	38	62
5	SEXUAL ACTIVITIES		
	During postnatal period:		
	i. Do you avoid sex for period of six weeks?	100	100
6	SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES		
	During postnatal period:		
	i. Do you avoid praying daily at home?	87	13
	ii. Do you restricted to go to temple?	85	15
	iii. Do you do purification ceremony after delivery?	93	7
7	CULTURAL PRACTICES		
	During postnatal period:		
	i. Do you tie a thread around the wrist?	69	31
	ii. Do you keep bowl of water under the bed?	38	62
	iii. Do you lit fire near the entrance door?	45	55
	iv. Do you keep seeds of wheat under the pillow?	49	51
	v. Do you sleep in isolated room for few days?	44	56
	vi. Do you keep broomstick or metal under pillow or bed?	55	45
	vii. Do you avoid touching utensil or any person or go anywhere except toilet for few days?	63	37
	viii. Do you avoid entering in to the kitchen?	79	21
8	MEDICATION AND FOLLOW UP		
	During postnatal period:		
	i. Do you take prescribed medicine?	94	6
	ii. Will you go for Follow up?	95	5

The area of sexual activities illustrated that maximum number (100%) of mothers avoids sex for period of 6 weeks in which (38%) mothers were advised by the health workers and (27%) believed that it is harmful for her baby and her husband and (25%) believed that early intercourse can affect the uterus. Majority (99%) of mothers agreed that they will use contraception for family planning.

Majority (94%) of mothers take prescribed medicines for better health and early recovery. Majority (95%) of mothers agreed to go for follow ups for their better future health.

Description of traditional expressed practices adopted by mothers and reason for adopting:

The data presented in the table-4 depicts the traditional expressed practices adopted by the mothers during postnatal period where in the area of diet, (18%) of mothers preferred more ghee, methi and garlic in postnatal period to prevent bleeding. Sixty four percent of mothers said that they avoid chewing the corn or hard foods where (38%) of mothers believed that hard foods make the loosening of the teeth and (26%) said their digestive system is weak and hard food is not easily digested by the digestive system.

TABLE: 3 Frequency percentage distribution of healthy expressed practices adopted by mothers and reason for adopting n=100

S.No.	EXPRESSED PRACTICES	Reasons	f (%)
1.	DIET During postnatal period do you:		
	i. Eat more green leafy vegetables.(n=93)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better health Increase blood Hb level Prevent cold 	43 (46.2) 30 (32.2) 20 (21.5)
	ii. Take protein rich diet (pulses, eggs).(n=91)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulates production of breast milk Enrich blood and help in recovery Strengthening of body 	41 (45) 30 (32.9) 20 (21.9)
	iii. Eat double quantity of food as compared to pre- pregnant diet. (n=52)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebuild her strength Promote recovery and improve breast feeding 	32 (61.5) 20 (38.5)
	iv. Avoid spicy food. (n=80)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevent itching and burning sensation in sutures or in anus Baby will have mouth sores 	72 (90) 8 (10)
2.	PERSONAL HYGIENE: During postnatal period do you:		
	i. Change your clothes daily (n=92)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain hygiene 	92 (100)
	ii. Change your undergarments daily(n=94)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain hygiene 	94 (100)
	iii. Dry your undergarments under direct sunlight (n=80)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dries off soon in sun Prevent from infection 	45 (56.3) 43.7)
	iv. Soak your undergarments in any antiseptic solution (n=50)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevent from infection 	50 (100)
	v. Clean Perineal area with antiseptic solution after each micturation (n=68)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevent from infection 	68 (100)
	vi. Clean your breast before and after every breast feeding (n=88)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevent from infection to baby 	88 (100)
3.	SELF CARE During postnatal period do you:		
	i. Limit the visitor to come to your room for few days.(n=54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advised by their elders May pass infection to mother and baby and may disturb milk production 	31(57.5) 23(42.5)
4.	REST AND EXERCISE During postnatal period do you		
	i. Take 8-10 hrs rest. (n=92)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body is weak and rest is compulsory Heavy work leads to lower back pain and prolapsed uterus in future Protect against postnatal depression 	41 (44.5) 28 (30.5) 23 (25)
	ii. Avoid standing long period of time.(n=96)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevent pressure on the stitches or on the legs 	96 (100)
	iii. Avoid strenuous work.(n=82)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body is weak after delivery 	82 (100)
	iv. Do postnatal exercises(n=38)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advised by health worker Maintain their physic 	20 (52.6) 18 (47.4)

TABLE 4: Frequency percentage distribution of traditional expressed practices adopted by mothers and reason for adopting n=100

S.NO.	EXPRESSED PRACTICES	Reasons	f (%)
1.	DIET: During postnatal period do you:		
	i. Take more ghee, methi & garlic (n=18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase breast milk 	18 (100)
	ii. Avoid chewing the corn or hard foods (n=64)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loosening of teeth • Not easy digested 	38 (59.3) 28 (43.7)
	iii. Drink the milk mixed with turmeric. (n=29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heal the wound 	29 (100)
	iv. Avoid eating lemon and water melon. (n=53)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate diarrhea, body swelling, pain and cough • Decreases lochia 	33 (62.2) 20 (37.7)
2.	PERSONAL HYGIENE: During postnatal period do you:		
	i. Avoid bathing for few days (n=84)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affect the suture in caesarean section • Advised by family member • Advised by elders 	43 (51.19) 41 (48.80) 40 (57.1)
	ii. Avoid washing hair for few days. (n=70)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevents cold and headache in future 	30 (42.8)
	iii. Avoid combing hair for some days (n=34)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent from hair fall 	34 (100)
	iv. Restrict to body massage with oil before hot water bath for few days after delivery. (n=30)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skin loosening • Disturb suture line 	24 (80) 6 (20)
	v. Restrict from using cold water for washing hands, taking bath & toilet use.(n=42)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent from cold and some chronic disease 	42 (100)
	vi. Avoid brushing teeth for some days (n=78)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent gum bleeding and loosening of teeth 	78(100)
	vii. Use cotton cloth pad (n=80)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-useable • Easily affordable • It is soft 	30 (37.5) 27 (33.7) 23 (28.7)
3.	SELF CARE: During postnatal period do you:		
	i. warm cloth around the abdomen after delivery to support abdomen (n=38)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent bulging and loosening of abdominal muscles 	38 (100)
	ii. Wash personal cloth separately from men and family members (n=64)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clothes considered to be impure • personal clothes more dirtier than others clothes 	33 (51.5) 31 (48.4)
	iii. Use cotton buds in ear (n=28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent entry of air into body which leads to chills and cold 	28 (100)
	iv. Avoid seeing in or using the mirror for few days (n=44)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent wrinkles on face 	44(100)
	v. Reside in your parents house (n=30)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For better care 	30(100)
	vi. Massage abdomen with oil (n=28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent from stretch marks 	28(100)
	vii. Avoid watching TV (n=64)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent eye sight from getting weak 	64(100)
4.	SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES: During postnatal period do you:		
	i. Avoid praying daily at home (n=87)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impure and cannot pray • Advised by the elders 	46 (52.8) 41 (47.1)
	ii. Restricted to go to temple (n=85)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impure and cannot go to temple or else will be punished by God 	85 (100)
	iii. Do purification ceremony after delivery. (n=93)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tradition to purify the baby and mother 	93 (100)
5.	CULTURAL PRACTICES During postnatal period do you:		
	i. Tie a thread around the wrist (n=69)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advised by their elders • Prevent from evil spirits 	38 (55.1) 31 (44.9)
	ii. Keep bowl of water under the bed (n=38)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent herself from black magic and evil spirits • Advised by their elders 	20 (52.6) 18 (47.3)
	iii. Lit fire near the entrance door (n=45)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burn off all the evil spirits outside the door 	45 (100)
	iv. Keep seeds of wheat under the pillow (n=49)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For their better health 	49 (100)
	v. Sleep in isolated room for few days (n=44)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional belief where mother is considered impure 	44 (100)
	vi. Keep broomstick or metal under pillow or bed (n=55)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid bad dreams • Prevent from evil eyes and witches attack 	43 (78.1) 12 (21.8)
	vii. Avoid touching utensil or any person or go anywhere except toilet for few days (n=63)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impure and fear of God punishment 	63(100)
	viii. Avoid entering in to the kitchen (n=79)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impure • Rest is important 	53 (67) 26 (32.9)

It further shows in the area of personal diet that majority (84%) of mothers believed that hot food will increase breast milk. Only (29%) of mothers preferred drinking milk mixed with turmeric for healing the wound most (53%) of mothers avoid eating lemon and water melon, where (33%) believed cold food will initiate diarrhea in baby and mother, body swelling stomach discomfort, aches pains and cough and (20%) reported that cold food effect on the lochia and decrease the amount of it. Eighty four percent of mothers avoid bathing for few days in which (47%) of mothers said that bathing will affect the suture in the caesarian section and (31%) said that family member advised it to them. Seventy percent of mothers avoiding washing hair for few days where (30%) believe that it prevents the mothers from cold and headache in future from the wet hair and (40%) said it was advised to us by our elders. Thirty four percent of mothers avoid combing hair for some days to prevent from hair fall. Thirty percent of mothers restrict body massage with oil before hot water bath for few days after delivery where (24%) believed that the skin loosening after massaging and (6%) believe suture line will disturbs. Forty two percent restricts for using cold water for washing hands, taking bath and for toilet to prevent from the cold to the mother's body at postpartum period and in the future prevent from leading some chronic disease. Majority (78%) of mothers avoid brushing teeth for some days to prevent gums bleeding and prevent from loosening teeth. Eighty percent of mothers preferred cotton clothe pad where (23%) said that it is soft, (27%) said that it is easily affordable and (30%) said that it is re-useable.

Further it revealed in the area of self care that (38%) of mothers agreed that they tie warm cloth around the abdomen to prevent the bulging and loosening of the abdominal muscles. (28%) of mothers

massage abdomen to prevent from the stretch marks. Most (64%) mothers wash their cloths separately from men and family members in which (31%) mothers said that personal clothes are dirtier than others clothes. Thirty three percent mothers said that their clothes are considered to be impure. Only 28% of mothers use cotton buds in ear to prevent the entry of the air into the body and leads to chills and cold. Forty four percent of mothers avoid seeing in or using mirror for few days to prevent wrinkles on the face. Only (30%) of mothers agreed that they will reside in their parent home for better care. Most (64%) of mothers avoid watching TV to prevent eye sight from getting weak.

The area of spiritual activities illustrated that majority (87%) of mothers avoid praying daily at home in which (41%) mothers said that they were advised for this by their elders and (46%) of mothers believed that they were impure and cannot pray. Majority (80%) of mothers were restricted to go to temple because they believe that they are impure and cannot go to the temple or else will be punished by the God. Majority (93%) of the mothers do purification ceremony after the delivery because they said it is their tradition to purify the baby and the mother.

The area of cultural activities further revealed that most (69%) of mothers tie a thread around the wrist in which (38%) said that it is their tradition and were advised by their elders and (31%) said that they did it to prevent from evil spirits. Thirty eight percent of mothers keep bowl of water under the bed where (18%) said that they did not know about this, they were just advised by their elders, (20%) of mothers did it to prevent her from black magic and evil spirits. Forty five percent of mothers lit fire near the entrance door to burn off all the evil spirits outside the door. Forty nine percent of mothers keep seeds of wheat under the pillow for mothers and babies better

health. Forty four percent of mothers sleep in isolated room for few days due to traditional belief where the mother is considered impure. Most (55%) of mothers keep broomstick or metal under the pillow or bed where (43%) of mothers do this to avoid bad dreams and only (12%) do this to prevent herself and her baby from evil eyes and witches attacks. Most (63%) of mothers avoid touching utensil or any person or go anywhere except toilet for few days because mother is supposed to be impure and also due to fear of Gods punishment. Majority (79%) of mothers avoid entering into the kitchen where most (53%) of mothers supposed themselves to be impure and (26%) of mothers believed that taking rest during postnatal period is more important.

DISCUSSION

The study findings show that most (67%) of the mothers avoid chewing hard foods. These findings are consistent with the findings of the study conducted at Ojibwa of northern Minnesota [5] showed that raw food or anything hard or crunchy was not eaten.

The study findings revealed that majority (80%) of the mothers avoid spicy food and most (53%) avoid eating lemon and watermelon during postnatal period. These findings are consistent with the findings of the study conducted at Mangalore [6] where fried or spicy food was restricted, some fruit like watermelon, lemon; grapes etc were avoided as it may cause diarrhoea and influence the quality of milk.

The study findings further illustrated that majority (84%) of mothers avoid bathing, (70%) avoid washing, (34%) combing hairs to avoid future headache and entry of air into body and (42%) restricted to hot water bath during postnatal period. These findings are consistent with the findings of the study conducted at Northern Vietnam [7] and Mangalore [6] where bath was restricted to

7 to 30 day because people believed that wind would harm the mother's body, shampooing and combing of hair was avoided which believed to prevent headache in future. Majority (98%) were restricted to hot water bath up to 40 days.

The study findings revealed that most (64%) of mothers wash personal clothes separately from men and family members and majority (85%) restricted to go to temple because mothers are considered impure. These findings are consistent with the findings of the study conducted at Northern Vietnam [7] where their clothes were washed separately and were not supposed to go to temple during lochial discharge.

CONCLUSION

Majority of the postnatal mothers had healthy expressed practices and their reasons behind them for adopting these practices were also good.

Some mothers used to avoid bathing; washing and combing hair, brushing teeth, changing of cloths for some days which were consider unhealthy practices.

Some of the mothers practiced traditional expressed practices like avoid praying, restriction for temple, and avoid entering into the kitchen etc. which were neither beneficial nor harmful.

Implications

Postnatal clinics could be set up and conducted on regular basis by nursing and medical personnel in Obstetrics and Gynecology departments in the hospitals and in the community health centres to provide efficient health care to the mothers during postnatal period and to detect the harmful practices and their effects as early as possible. Nurse administrators could facilitate various types of continuing education related to postnatal care. Existing research could be reviewed and analyzed with regard to postnatal care and practices. Further study may be replicated

using a larger sample to generalize the findings and to assess the observed practices adopted by mothers during postnatal period.

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