

## A STUDY OF SELF-CARE BEHAVIORS AMONG POST –PARTUM WOMEN AT FAMILY PLANNING CLINIC, SURIN HOSPITAL

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this research aimed to study the self-care behaviors and the relationship between selected factors and self-care behaviors among postpartum women at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital. The sample consisted of 74 patients in post-partum women after childbirth between 6-8 weeks which was derived from random system sampling. The instrument in this study used was the self-care behaviors among postpartum women consisting of two parts: Part 1 general information, Part 2 self-care behaviors among postpartum women divided into 6 components: 1) nutrition 2) elimination process 3) rest and sleep 4) social interaction 5) prevention of hazards to human life and 6) promotion of human well-being. The reliability of using Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .90. Data were analyzed using statistical hypothesis which was mean (M ) and standard deviation (SD.) and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient.

#### **The research found:**

1. The overall self-care behaviors of postpartum women, was at moderate levels (M =3.44, SD=0.25) Considering the self-care behaviors of postpartum women in each component found that was the self - care behaviors about nutrition were at a good level (M = 4 .2 8 , SD=0.33), the self-care behaviors about the elimination process were at a moderate level (M = 3.33, SD=0.43), the self-care behaviors about rest and sleep was moderate (M = 3.35, SD=0.33), the self - care behaviors social interaction were at a moderate level (M = 3.08, SD=0.44), the self - care behaviors prevention of hazards to human life was at moderate level (M = 3.26, SD=0.34) and the self-care behaviors promotion of human well-being were at a moderate level (M = 3.36, SD=0.32)
2. Factors correlated with the self-care behaviors among postpartum women were sufficient income, history of obstetric, and age at a 0.05 level.

Based on the findings, health care providers should be aware of self-care knowledge, nutritional support, and behavioral modification in systematic care for post-partum women. Moreover, these results can be used to plan information for behavior change counseling and developing a health education program for post-partum women about self-care behaviors before going home.

*Keywords: self-care behaviors, postpartum, self-care behaviors of women after childbirth.*

## **Background and significance of the study**

The mortality statistics for mothers in health zone 9 in Nakorn Chai Burin district in 2015 were 10 cases, of which 27.03 were maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. (Health Center 5, Nakhon Ratchasima Department of Health, Ministry of Public Health, 2015). In Nakhon Ratchasima and Surin Provinces, the number of maternal deaths was highest in 4 provinces. Also, the number of postpartum women who had normal delivery and re-treatment was increased. Postpartum complications at Surin Hospital for the past 5 years show that there are 22 patients in 2011-2015 and 2 patients in January-October 2016. From the statistics mentioned above. There are still some postpartum women who experience postpartum complications due to various reasons such as inappropriate self-care behaviors, drinking herbal medicine, staying of fire is not appropriate. The return to the treatment affected the different aspects. It is important to note that self-care behaviors are essential. Self-care is the promotion and maintenance of a person's health (Sattawaja, J et al. 2009). Thus, postpartum women are required to have appropriate self-care behaviors to promote postpartum health and prevent complications.

Self-care behaviors of postpartum women are self-care needs according to their developmental stage. Since postpartum women have to change both physically, mentally, emotionally and socially postpartum women must know postnatal care to be able to take care of themselves and to feed their babies efficiently. Self-care is a deliberate action. Therefore, self-care behaviors of postpartum women are essential, and proper action is needed to influence good health. Every woman needs to take care of themselves in various aspects to maintain the structure and the functions of the body and the healthy life. Postpartum women will have a change in the body, mind, and emotions. When these changes are made, the postpartum women need to take care of themselves to develop and sustain the physical and mental health that support the process of ordinary life. This is consistent with Orem's self-care theory regarding self-care needed. Emphasizing the ability of the person to meet the needs of self-care is to maintain air, water, adequate food, maintain the excretion and drainage to normal, keeps balance between activities and leisure, maintain a balance between spending time privately and interacting with others, protection against harm to life, and duty and welfare promote healthy living. This is consistent with postpartum women who need to take care of their well-being.

As mentioned above, there are still some postpartum women who have had postpartum complications and need advice and knowledge for self-care before returning home. Surin Hospital also has postpartum women with complications that require treatment. Returning to get treatment impacts on various aspects. Corrective actions need to be taken to ensure good health and prevent complications after delivery. Self-care behaviors have been practiced by individuals for a long time. Self-care behaviors of postpartum women are important to be aware of the need for proper knowledge about postpartum care to be able to take care of themselves effectively. Thus, the researchers are interested to study self-care behaviors of postpartum women to know the behavior that should be promoted according to Orem's concept of self-care.

## **Research questions**

1. What are self-care behaviors among postpartum women at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital?

2. What are the factors relate to self-care behaviors among post –partum women at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital

## **Purposes of the study**

The purpose of this study was

1. To study self-care behaviors among postpartum women at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital.
2. To study the relationship between selected factors and self-care behaviors among postpartum women at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital

## **The Scope of the study**

This research is conducted in post-partum women after childbirth between 6-8 weeks and follow-up at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital.

## **Methodology**

### **Research design**

The descriptive research design was used to study self-care behaviors among postpartum women at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital.

### **Population and sampling**

The population used in this research is post-partum women after childbirth between 6-8 weeks and follow-up at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital.

The sample consisted of 74 patients in post-partum women after childbirth between 6-8 weeks which was derived from random system sampling as follows:

1. After childbirth between 6-8 weeks.
2. No physical and mental illness.
3. Voluntary and willing to cooperate in this research.

### **Instrumentation**

The questionnaires were used for data collection which was divided into 2 parts as follows:

Part 1 The demographic characteristics questionnaire of post-partum women.

This questionnaire was used to gathering general personal information and reproductive history

Part 2 self-care behaviors among postpartum women questionnaire. There were 60-items and divided into 6 components: 1) nutrition (10 items), 2) elimination process (10 items), 3) rest and sleep (10 items), 4) social interaction (10 items), 5) prevention of hazards to human life (10 items) and 6) promotion of human well-being (10 items).

The researcher develops an instrument in this study as the followings.

1. Study secondary data on constructing a questionnaire to use as a guideline in constructing the questionnaire on self-care behaviors among postpartum women.
2. Construct a set of a questionnaire with (5 Rating Scale) a total of 60 items.

3. Bring the questionnaire to 3 experts with certain specialties /qualifications to check the quality of content validity by considering the coverage of content, the consistency between questions items and definition. The result from the experts' judgment showed that all of the items have the value of IOC from 0.92 to 1.00, which meet the criteria of  $\geq 0.50$  (Taweerat, P. 2007).

4. Furthermore, the researchers tested the reliability of the self-care behaviors among post –partum women questionnaire with 30 post –partum women at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital. The reliability by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .90.

### **Data collection**

An introductory letter from Boromarajonani College of Nursing, Surin was sent to directors of family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital. When permission was granted, the researchers made an appointment to meet directors to explain in detail regarding objectives and procedure of this study. The samples were selected from a group of post-partum women after childbirth between 6-8 weeks and follow-up at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital. When the subject agreed to participate, the researchers explained the purpose of the research and gave the opportunity for the subject to ask questions. The researchers explained the way to answer the questionnaires. When the subject understood the method, the subject was then allowed to do the questionnaires. No time limit was set. When the questionnaires were handed back, the researchers checked that all the information was completed.

### **Protection of Human Subjects**

This research has been endorsed by the Ethics Committee on Human Research number S-EC 03-11-59. The protection of human subjects in the current study was ultimately concerned. The researchers explained the purposes of this study to the potential subjects eligible for the study and asked for their permission to participate in the study. Informed consent was used to ensure that the subjects voluntarily participated in this study. The subjects were assured that all of the responses would be kept strictly confidential, and their identity would not be revealed. There were no known risks in participation, and the subject had the right to agree or refuse to answer the questionnaire. They were also assured that they had the right to withdraw from this study at any time.

### **Data analysis**

The researchers analyzed the data by using data analysis software. The procedure was as follows:

1. Descriptive statistics used to describe the results of demographic characteristics. It is presented in term of numbers and percentage.

2. Calculating the mean and standard deviation of the score of self-care behaviors among postpartum women and analyzed the relationship using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

The mean of scale score was calculated for the overall score and the subscale scores by using criteria (John W. Best, 1981) as follows:

Excellent level: The average score was 4.51- 5.00

Good level: The average score was 3.51- 4.50

Moderate level: The average score was 2.51- 3.50

Fair level: The average score was 1.51- .250

Low level: The average score was .10 0-.150

## Results

The samples in this study consisted of 74 Post –Partum Women. The age of the subjects ranged from 14 to 40 years old. Regarding marital status, the majority of the subjects (77.02%) were married. Most subjects (60.81%) completed secondary school, and 13.51% graduated from a bachelor's degree. Regarding family income, the subjects earned income ranging from 2,000 to 10,000 Baht per month. Most of the subjects (43.24%) had a family income of fewer than 5,000 Baht per month. Moreover, most of the subjects (58.10%) had primigravida and 90.54% no abortion

### The research found that:

1. The overall self-care behaviors of postpartum women were at moderate levels ( $M = 3.44$ ,  $SD = 0.25$ ). Considering the self-care behaviors of postpartum women in each component we found that the self - care behaviors about nutrition were at a good level ( $M = 4.28$ ,  $SD = 0.33$ ), a moderate level ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = 0.43$ ) in elimination process, a moderate level ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = 0.33$ ) in rest and sleep, a moderate level ( $M = 3.08$ ,  $SD = 0.44$ ) in social interaction, a moderate level ( $M = 3.26$ ,  $SD = 0.34$ ) in prevention of hazards to human life, and a moderate level ( $M = 3.36$ ,  $SD = 0.32$ ) in promotion of human well-being as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Mean and standard deviation in each component of self-care behaviors among postpartum women at Family Planning Clinic, Surin Hospital

components	self-care behaviors of postpartum women	Mean	SD.	Behaviors- level
1	nutrition	4.28	0.33	good level
2	elimination process	3.33	0.43	moderate level
3	rest and sleep	3.35	0.33	moderate level
4	social interaction	3.08	0.44	moderate level
5	prevention of hazards to human life	3.26	0.34	moderate level
6	promotion of human well-being	3.36	0.32	moderate level
	overall	3.44	0.25	moderate level

2. Factors correlated with the self-care behaviors among postpartum women were sufficient income, history of obstetric, and age at a 0.05 level as shown in Table 2

Table 2 Correlation in each component with the self-care behaviors among postpartum women

Factors	Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r)	Level of significance
Sufficient income	0.38	< 0.05
History of obstetric(primigravida)	0.55	< 0.01
Age	0.46	< 0.05

## Discussion

According to the result of self-care behaviors among postpartum women at family planning Clinic, Surin Hospital, the researcher could implicate as follows;

The research found that the self-care behaviors of postpartum women in the nutritional aspect were at a high level ( $M= 4.28$ ,  $SD = 0.33$ ), which was a good trend in gaining knowledge on appropriate dietary choices. This is consistent with research by King Kaew Ketsawit et al. (2012) who studied folk wisdom inherited in the feeding of pregnant women and postpartum women in Nongkae district, Khon Kaen province and found that after birth women did not eat spicy food because the taste of the food will make the milk that passes through the baby change. Corresponds to the question of eating spicy foods, such as very salty, very sour, and very spicy, do not drink tea or coffee due to the drink containing caffeine can affect the baby directly when drinking milk from the mother. This may cause the baby to have abnormal symptoms if given for a long time, such as a fast heartbeat.

The research found that self-care behaviors of postpartum women in the excretory system were at a moderate level ( $M= 3.33$ ,  $SD = 0.43$ ). When they had constipation problems, they fix them by drinking plenty of water 8 to 10 glasses a day or more and eat foods with high fiber. This corresponds to Phromsaka na Sakon Nakhon (2008), who explained that constipation was caused by abdominal cramps and the time to excrete the abdominal pressure is reduced. The result is difficult to urinate or constipation.

The research found that self-care behaviors of postpartum women in rest and sleep were at a moderate level ( $M= 3.35$ ,  $SD = 0.33$ ), Maybe due to postpartum women perceived benefits of rest and sleep. This results in a healthy body and mind. Also, the ideal time to rest and sleep is from 22.00 to 06.00 am because the body will restfully, making the system more efficient. This is similarly with Leejana (2013) who studied the program of social support and education on postpartum stress and showed that postpartum women should sleep at least 6-8 hours a day for the daytime. Insufficient body fatigue tiredness results in slower recovery

The self-care behaviors of postpartum women in interaction with others were at a moderate level ( $M= 3.08$ ,  $SD = 0.44$ ). This was due to postpartum women giving birth at first pregnancy (55.2%, which is well-taken care of by the family. Similarly to Wongwisitsirikul et al. (2001) who studied relationship between personal factors, social support, motherhood ability perception, newborn behaviors perception and role adaptation of postpartum women found that the role of mothers in the postpartum is a complicated process that depends on both internal and external factors to achieve goals and predict the adaptation of roles.

The research found that self-care behavior of postpartum women in the prevention of various dangers was at a moderate level ( $M= 3.26$ ,  $SD = 0.34$ ). This may be due to occupations that promote time for self-care such as housewives the self-care behavior of housewives (28.40%) and trafficking (26.90%). This is in accordance with Invat (2006) who studied the effect of health promotion program on exercise behaviors and stress management of postpartum women and found that promoting health to exercise routines and stress management can cause postpartum women to have more exercise behaviors and stress management, good hygiene, and prevent or reduce the severity of harm or postpartum complications.

The research found that The self-care behaviors of postpartum women in the promotion of normal life were at a moderate level ( $M= 3.36$ ,  $SD = 0.32$ ). This may be due to the belief of postpartum women who received the ancient medicines make the uterus return to normal faster, vaginal tightening, and milk increasing. Similarly, Wonglar et al. (2009) who conducted a study on

self-care behaviors of postpartum in the municipality and the suburbs of Nakhon Ratchasima and found that postpartum women used either traditional medicine or alcoholic beverages about 1 in 10 people who believe in using ancient medication to nourish women after childbirth.

### **Suggestions**

Based on the findings, health care providers should be aware of self-care knowledge, nutritional support, and behavioral modification in systematic care for post-partum women. Moreover, these results can be used to plan information for behavior change counseling and developing a health education program for post-partum women about self-care behaviors before going home.



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