

# 23<sup>rd</sup> World Nursing and Healthcare Conference

July 10-12, 2017 Berlin, Germany

## Changes in traditional postpartum rituals in a modern healthcare context: An ethnographic study

Yueh-Chen Yeh<sup>1</sup>, Yu-Ping Huang<sup>2</sup> and Yeu-Hui Chuang<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>National Taichung University of Science and Technology, Taiwan

<sup>2</sup>National Quemoy University, Taiwan

<sup>3</sup>Taipei Medical University, Taiwan

In Chinese culture, postpartum women are considered to be weak, vulnerable to a Yin and Yang imbalance, and in need of special care. They are encouraged to follow the traditional postpartum practice called “doing the month,” which is a 30-day ritual involving physical and social prescriptions and taboos. Traditionally, Chinese and Taiwanese postpartum women perform this practice at home. Currently, many Taiwanese women undertake this ritual in postpartum nursing centers (PNCs). However, information on how the PNCs have modified the traditional Chinese postpartum practices for first-time mothers in the context of modern healthcare is limited. The present ethnographic study conducted the observations and formal interviews of 27 first-time mothers at a PNC in Taipei, Taiwan. The present study observed that the “doing the month” ritual has been adapted to modern healthcare requirements through the relocation of home settings to healthcare facilities. At these facilities, nurses assume the roles traditionally held by family members, thus influencing the family structure and relationships. In addition, adherence to the traditional dietary, hygiene, activity, and social restrictions varied. Although some practices were performed on the basis of traditional justifications, many were modified or abandoned on the basis of current scientific justifications. The present study provides information that may aid healthcare professionals in guiding postpartum women to integrate traditional beliefs with modern healthcare and evidence-based practices. Nurses and midwives must be respectful towards their clients’ beliefs. In addition, respect and flexibility should be maintained in the ritual by incorporating modern values and facilities. The present findings demonstrate how traditional and modern cultural beliefs and attitudes are integrated in the “doing the month” ritual to provide culturally appropriate and sensitive postpartum care and support for first-time mothers.

### Biography

Yueh-Chen Yeh has completed her PhD from Griffith University School of Nursing and Midwifery in Australia. She is an Assistant Professor and teaches at National Taichung University of Science and Technology, Department of Nursing.

### Notes: