Health Care Needs during Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Childrearing of Chinese Immigrant Women in Korea

Geum-Hee Jeong¹, Sunghee Baik², Kyungwon Kim³
¹Hallym University, Department of Nursing, gjeong@hallym.ac.kr;
²Baekseok University, Department of Nursing, bs4600@hu.ac.kr;
³Daegu Haany University, Department of Nursing, kyungwok@dhu.ac.kr

Purpose: With the increase in international marriage, the number of immigrant women who were married to Korean men has been on the rise to 120,146 in 2010. Major portion of those who immigrated to Korea through inter-racial marriage was Chinese. Married immigrant women are usually lack of appropriate health intervention and educational services. They were more likely to have problems before and after giving birth than the native Korean women. Therefore, this study was conducted to identify health care needs for the entire process of reproduction, including pregnancy, delivery, postpartum care, and childrearing, among Chinese women who immigrated to Korea through international marriage, for the purpose of providing the baseline data for developing reproductive health promotion programs for married immigrant women in Korea.

Methods: Subjects in this study included 148 Chinese immigrant women visiting 25 health centers in Korea. Based on Roy’s four modes of adaptation, this study used a preliminary tool for childbearing and childrearing process, which included the total of 53 question items. Chronbach’s α of the internal reliability of the data was .96. The data were collected in 2012. Translators working at health centers visited and had an interview with subjects. Data analyzed by SPSS 18.0 Window Program. For the characteristics of subjects’ demographic and the entire process of childbearing and childrearing, descriptive statistics were calculated. For the subjects’ health care needs for the entire process of pregnancy, childbirth, and childrearing, descriptive statistics were calculated.

Results: The average age of the subjects was 32.0. Educational background showed that high school graduates are the largest portion, 48.67%. Average length of time living in Korea after immigration is 3.3 years. Portion of jobless subjects is 85.2%. As much as 66.2% of the subjects reported the past experience of pregnancy prior to this study, 20.3% was pregnant at the time of collecting the data. The majority of the subjects (96.6%) had an experience of getting prenatal care during pregnancy at a hospital (87.1%), and at health center (10.8%). Almost everyone in this study gave birth at a hospital (87.8%). As far as the information and educational methods were concerned, attending lectures or educational programs (52.0%) was the most common form of getting information, followed by educational booklets (20.9%), internet data (16.2%) and individual interview (10.9%) (fig1). As much as 35.5% of the subjects reported that husband was the most helpful person in taking care of them during pregnancy and childbirth, hospital personnel to 26.0%, health center workers to 25.0%, and husband’s family members to 13.5% (fig2). The total average of health care need for during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum was 3.27. According to items, nutrition during pregnancy (3.51), baby rearing and family support (3.43), cross-cultural understanding and personal respect (3.39), physical and emotional adaptation after childbirth (3.39), understanding of process of pregnancy and delivery (3.36), adaption for daily activity during pregnancy (3.27), and Sexual life adaptation (3.20) were higher needs (fig3).

Fig 1   Methods of information and education

Fig 2   The most helpful person

Fig 3   Health Care Needs during Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Childrearing

Conclusion: When the effect of fertility power of Chinese immigrant women on the future paradigm in fertility rates of Korea is taken into consideration, it would be urgent to develop a more effective health care services and educational programs that lead those ethnic group of women to be adjusted to fit the mainstream of the Korean society in order to give birth to healthy children and successful outcomes of pregnancy. It is necessary to develop cross-cultural educational programs focused on educating Korean men to have friendly attitude toward gender role exchange.