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Rural Jordanian Mothers as a Vulnerable Population Group

Objective of the study: was to explore and analyse the cultural beliefs, knowledge and practices of rural Jordanian mothers regarding infant care.

Background: Exploration cultural beliefs, knowledge and practices of infant care are essential (Mennella et al 2005) to understand the caring manners of the rural Jordanian mothers. These mothers mostly depend on cultural approach through their dealing with daily infant care practices. However, cultural beliefs and knowledge influence infant care practices which can be harmful or useful to infants.

Methods: a critical ethnographic approach was used to explore, understand and critique the underpinning cultural knowledge and beliefs of cultural practices of infant care within a cultural context. A sample of 13 postpartum mothers from four rural areas in Mafraq Governorate/ Jordan, were recruited to participate in this study. Data was collected using a semi- structured interview and direct observation methods. Leininger's Phases of Ethnonursing Qualitative Data Analysis (Leininger 1997) were used to analyse the data and extract major themes.

Findings: it has been showed that most of the rural Jordanian mothers have low level of education and health awareness that enhances adopting the cultural approach. Cultural beliefs, knowledge and practices influenced infant care. This influence can interfere with the health practices in a way that may harm the infant like salty bathing or may be useful as breastfeeding.

Conclusion: The rural Jordanian mothers are in need for enlightenment and empowerment via supportive health education to increase the level of health knowledge and enhance the recommended health practices according to the scientific evidences.