

A Comparative Study of Postpartum Stress and Stressors Factors Related to Appearance, Behavior and Care of Neonate in the Primiparous and Multiparous Mothers in the First and Second Months after Delivery

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Abstract

Introduction: Parenthood is always a big challenge, especially in primiparous mothers who encounter an infant for the first time; however, multiparous mothers encounter with new challenges. This study was conducted to compare postpartum stress and stressors related to appearance, care and behavior of neonates in primiparous and multiparous mothers in the first and second month after delivery.

Methods: This study was conducted on 400 primiparous and multiparous women with no medical or psychological history, who had healthy children, referring to health centers of Mashhad, in their 8 to 28 days after delivery, in 2011, based on multistep cluster sampling as well as available sampling methods. The instruments used in this research were as follows: a questionnaire of demographic characteristics, pregnancy and childbirth dates, infant demographics, and stress questionnaire of appearance, behavior and care of neonate. Reliability and validity of the questionnaires were verified in the first two months postpartum. The data were analyzed using descriptive analytical statistics by SPSS.

Results: The results showed that primiparous women appeared in all the aspects of appearance, behavior and care of neonate, causing more stress than multiparous women. The difference was significant ($P < 0.05$). The stressors in the first month in primiparous and multiparous women were respectively appearance, care and behavior of neonate, child's sickness, and child's movements during sleep and bathing. In the second month in primiparous mothers, child's sickness, child's movements during sleep and bathe and in multiparous women, children's sickness, asleep, education and development in the future were respectively the stressors.

Conclusions: Regarding the fact that primiparous women experience more stress encountering infants for the first time, it seem that education could lead to beneficial results. In addition, considering that the stressors of the two groups were associated with different factors, the educational programs need to be different for these two groups of women.

Keywords: Primiparity, Multiparity, Postpartum, Appearance, Care, Behavior, Neonate