



ANALYSIS OF TRADITIONAL CARE OF POSTPARTUM MOTHERS

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ABSTRACT

Traditional postpartum care is still practiced in Cimanggu District. Based on 2024 data, 27 mothers experienced problems during the postpartum period caused by the use of bengkung, consumption of sambel peupeuh, application of campuh, and practicing the traditions of nyanda and sangsurkeun. Several factors influencing the practice of traditional care according to theories and previous studies include knowledge, attitude, culture, family support, and health worker support. Objective to analyze traditional postpartum care in Cimanggu District, Pandeglang Regency, Banten. This research used a mixed-methods approach with a sequential explanatory strategy design. The sample consisted of 88 postpartum mothers selected using purposive sampling. The instruments used were questionnaires and open interviews. Data were analyzed using Chi-Square statistical tests, multiple logistic regression, and qualitative analysis. There was a significant relationship between knowledge, attitude, culture, family support, and health worker support with traditional postpartum care (p -value < 0.05). Qualitative findings showed that the better the mother's knowledge and attitude, the stronger the cultural influence, and the greater the family and health worker support, the higher the tendency for mothers to practice traditional care in a safe and sustainable way. The most dominant factor in traditional postpartum care was health worker support, with an OR of 24,064.

Keywords: attitude; culture; family support; health worker support; knowledge; postpartum mothers; traditional care

How to cite (in APA style)

Pibriani, P., Arlym, L. T., & Widowati, R. (2025). Analysis of Traditional Care of Postpartum Mothers. *Indonesian Journal of Global Health Research*, 7(6), 505–514. <https://doi.org/10.37287/ijghr.v7i6.188>.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional postpartum care remains prevalent in Cimanggu District, where recent data reveal considerable postpartum complications associated with customary practices. These practices include the use of bengkung (a traditional binding cloth), consumption of sambel peupeuh (a herbal condiment), application of campuh (herbal compresses), and cultural rituals such as nyanda and sangsarkeun, all deeply ingrained in local culture. Influencing factors for these practices encompass maternal knowledge, attitudes, cultural beliefs, family support, and healthcare worker support.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that approximately 80% of populations in Asia and Africa depend on traditional medicine. Recognizing this, the WHO Congress on Traditional Medicine advocated for safe integration of traditional health services into formal healthcare systems, an approach further endorsed by the World Health Assembly (WHA) resolution urging member states to develop localized traditional healthcare frameworks. This global endorsement highlights the role of traditional medicine within public health strategies (WHO, 2021; Rokom, 2022).

In Indonesia, traditional postpartum care continues to be widely practiced, with the 2022 Basic Health Survey indicating that nearly half of postpartum mothers utilize such services, particularly manual methods like bengkung. In Banten Province and specifically in Pandeglang District, the customary practice remains significant, illustrating continued reliance on traditional postpartum remedies alongside modern healthcare advancements (Wulandari, 2024; Puskesmas Cimanggu.

Objective To analyze traditional postpartum care in Cimanggu Subdistrict, Pandeglang Regency, Banten.

METHOD

The research site was conducted at the Cimanggu Pandeglang Health Center, Banten. The research time will be conducted in April 2025. The subjects in this study were postpartum mothers in February-March 2025. Sampling in this study used purposive sampling. The instruments used were questionnaires and closed interviews. This research was carried out because based on data in 2024, it was found that 7 mothers complained of tightness and itching after using bengkung for a long time (more than 7 hours a day), 6 mothers complained of diarrhea after consuming sambel peupuh, 3 mothers experienced swelling in the perineal wound and loose stitches due to the use of campuh, 4 mothers experienced swollen legs after performing the nyanda tradition, and 7 mothers bleeding after performing the tradition of ejection. If this action is taken not in accordance with the rules, it can have a bad impact on the mother's health condition. The independent variables in this study are knowledge, attitudes, culture, family support, and health worker support. Variables were bound in this study, traditional care of postpartum mothers. The design in this study is quantitative analytics with a mixed methods design.

RESULT

Characteristics of Informants

Table 1.
Distribution Frequency of Informant Characteristics

| Participant Code | Gender | Age (years) | Education Level | Role | Informant Type |
|------------------|--------|-------------|--|-------------------|----------------------------|
| I1A | Female | 36 | Junior High School (SMP) | Postpartum Mother | Primary Informant |
| I1B | Female | 29 | Senior High School (SMA) | Postpartum Mother | Primary Informant |
| I1C | Female | 32 | Elementary School (SD) | Postpartum Mother | Primary Informant |
| P1A | Female | 64 | Did not complete SD | Shaman Birth | Gives Supporting Informant |
| P1B | Female | 58 | Elementary School (SD) | Shaman Birth | Gives Supporting Informant |
| P1C | Female | 61 | Did not complete SD | Shaman Birth | Gives Supporting Informant |
| P2A | Male | 63 | Completed Elementary | Community Leader | Supporting Informant |
| P2B | Male | 58 | Junior High School (SMP) | Community Leader | Supporting Informant |
| P2C | Male | 66 | Completed Elementary | Community Leader | Supporting Informant |
| P3A | Male | 54 | Bachelor of Sharia | Religious Leader | Supporting Informant |
| P3B | Male | 48 | Bachelor in Hadith | Religious Leader | Supporting Informant |
| P3C | Male | 60 | Islamic Boarding School + Bachelor in Da'wah | Religious Leader | Supporting Informant |
| P4A | Male | 35 | Junior High School (SMP) | Husband | Supporting Informant |
| P4B | Male | 41 | Senior High School (SMA) | Husband | Supporting Informant |
| P4C | Male | 38 | Junior High School (SMP) | Husband | Supporting Informant |
| K1A | Female | 39 | Diploma 3 (D3) | Midwife | Key Informant |
| P2A | Female | 45 | Diploma 4 (D4) | Midwife | Key Informant |
| P2B | Female | 36 | Diploma 3 (D3) | Midwife | Key Informant |

Based on table 1, it shows that this study was conducted on informants with an age ranging from 29-66 years old with education that did not finish school-S1 and IRT work, paraji, ulama and village midwives.

Knowledge about Traditional Postpartum Care

The study explored postpartum mothers' knowledge regarding traditional care practices during the puerperium through interviews and observations. All respondents demonstrated awareness of the cultural practices related to traditional postpartum care. Specifically, participants knew that *bengkung* refers to a cloth wrapped from the lower hips around the body up to the abdomen, aimed at providing comfort during daily activities and reducing abdominal size, although precise details about duration of use were less well understood. Similarly, all mothers recognized *sambel peupeuh* as a traditional herbal condiment composed of ingredients such as ginger, kencur, turmeric, and other local spices, believed to enhance breast milk production. However, most were uncertain about the recommended duration for consuming this preparation. Regarding *campuh*, a ginger-based compress applied to perineal wounds, participants acknowledged its traditional use but lacked detailed knowledge about ingredient proportions and therapeutic benefits, as preparation often rests with traditional birth attendants.

Regarding the *nyanda* tradition, all respondents correctly described it as sitting in a leaning-back posture with legs extended forward for prolonged periods, typically lasting up to one week. Perceptions about *sangsarkeun* were more varied; while theoretically it involves abdominal massage, many mothers perceived it as full-body reflexology massage. Some respondents mentioned traditional dietary restrictions during the postpartum period, including prohibitions against leaving the house with the baby for seven days, eating fish, consuming large amounts of liquid, and avoiding sour or spicy foods, reflecting embedded cultural beliefs. These findings indicate a general familiarity among postpartum mothers with traditional postpartum care practices, though detailed knowledge about specific applications and durations remains limited, suggesting areas for further education and culturally sensitive health guidance.

Attitudes toward Traditional Postpartum Care

The study explored postpartum mothers' attitudes regarding traditional care practices during the puerperium through interviews and observations. Many participants reported continuing traditional Sundanese cultural practices primarily based on parental advice and long-standing customs. While acknowledging some health-related concerns, such as discomfort from *campuh* (herbal compress) and *nyanda* (prolonged sitting posture), mothers generally perceived these traditional behaviors as having both positive and negative health impacts. Positive effects mentioned included increased comfort and mobility with the use of *bengkung* (binding cloth), improved breast milk production with *sambel peupeuh*, wound healing supported by *campuh*, and relaxation induced by *sangsarkeun* (massage by traditional birth attendants). Many mothers expressed agreement with performing these cultural practices during the postpartum period due to their believed benefits.

Participants also demonstrated positive attitudes towards routine health check-ups and follow-up visits with healthcare workers or midwives during the postpartum period. However, some mothers voiced concerns about potential adverse effects, such as vaginal abnormalities due to the heat sensation caused by *campuh*. In addition, a considerable number of mothers were uncertain about the religious permissibility of these traditions, reflecting a knowledge gap regarding the alignment of cultural practices with Islamic teachings. Overall, while acknowledging both benefits and risks associated with traditional postpartum care, integration of cultural respect and health education is necessary to ensure safe, informed postpartum practices.

Culture Related to Traditional Postpartum Care

This study examined the cultural context of traditional postpartum care by interviewing postpartum mothers, traditional birth attendants (*paraji*), community and religious leaders, husbands, and midwives. The findings revealed that traditional care practices have been preserved and transmitted through generations, deeply rooted in ancestral heritage. Respondents identified five main traditional practices actively maintained in the community: *bengkung* (postpartum binding cloth), *sambel peupeuh* (herbal condiment), *campuh* (ginger compress), *nyanda* (prolonged reclining posture), and *sangsarkeun* (postpartum massage). These practices are accompanied by specific prohibitions common in Sundanese culture, including restrictions on leaving the house with the newborn for seven days, avoiding consumption of fish, limiting fluid intake, and refraining from eating sour and spicy foods.

While these cultural norms aim to protect and support maternal and infant health, some practices present potential health risks if improperly applied. For example, *nyanda* can lead to discomfort and swelling, while *campuh* may cause wound infections if not carefully managed. Midwives noted rare adverse reactions among mothers, such as fainting linked to weakness and complications following some traditional procedures. Importantly, the community respondents affirmed that current traditional practices are largely consistent with ancestral customs but now often coexist with modern medical care. Traditional postpartum care is viewed as compatible with Islamic teachings, allowing women the autonomy to choose practices based on personal comfort. Continuity of these practices is influenced by cultural heritage, educational level, and access to information. Even among well-educated mothers, an integrative approach combining traditional and modern care is common, avoiding potentially harmful practices like continuous *nyanda* or harsh *campuh* applications while maintaining beneficial massages like *sangsarkeun*. Overall, preserving beneficial cultural practices while providing health education to mitigate risks is essential for improving postpartum care quality in this community.

Family Support (Husband)

This study examined the level and forms of support provided by husbands to postpartum mothers in practicing traditional postpartum care. Interviews with husbands revealed mixed involvement and attitudes toward their wives' postpartum practices. Several husbands expressed emotional support by attentively listening to their wives' concerns and offering comfort during times of distress, aiming to foster a sense of care and attention. Instrumental support was also reported, with some husbands assisting financially by providing funds to purchase traditional care materials such as *bengkung* cloth and ingredients for herbal remedies. Additionally, husbands helped in sourcing traditional birth attendants (*paraji*) and assisting with infant care. However, many men perceived postpartum care and infant rearing as primarily the responsibility of women, leading to limited active engagement unless specifically requested by their wives. Regarding informational support, some husbands advised their wives to rest adequately, avoid stress, seek traditional care when experiencing problems, and regularly replace *bengkung* to prevent skin irritation. Nevertheless, overall recognition of their role in postpartum care was limited. Importantly, findings indicated that husband support was generally insufficient, as many husbands considered traditional care and infant care outside their direct responsibility. This lack of involvement may influence the postpartum experience and healthcare practices of mothers. These results underscore the need to enhance husband engagement and education in postpartum care to improve maternal health outcomes and support within the family context.

Health Worker Support

The role of health workers, particularly midwives, in supporting postpartum mothers during traditional care practices was a focal point of this study. Midwives actively conducted postpartum visits as part of efforts to improve the quality of care and prevent complications during the puerperium. Health workers emphasized the importance of education to reduce the risks associated with inappropriate traditional care practices. They provided guidance on which traditional practices

should be avoided and supplemented this with daily health education and conventional medical care. Midwives routinely offered counseling on personal hygiene, including maintaining cleanliness of the genital area, regularly changing postpartum pads, adequate rest, and avoiding heavy physical activity. Specific advice was given regarding the use of *bengkung* cloth, recommending limited use (no more than 7 hours daily) with moderate tightness, as well as recommending warm water cleaning, avoidance of the *nyanda* position after childbirth, and sleeping in the left lateral position to improve blood circulation. Education about breastfeeding and breast care was also provided, including correct breastfeeding positions, proper latch covering the areola, breast hygiene, wearing supportive bras, and using warm compresses in cases of breast engorgement. Midwives offered substantial support through home visits and health education on safe traditional postpartum practices, aiming to enhance maternal wellbeing and prevent adverse outcomes associated with improper traditional care.

DISCUSSION

Traditional Postpartum Care

The study conducted in Cimanggu District, Pandeglang Regency, Banten, revealed that postpartum mothers are generally aware of common traditional care practices during the puerperium, including the use of *bengkung* (postpartum binding cloth), consumption of *sambel peupeuh* (herbal condiment), application of *campuh* (ginger compress), and adherence to local traditions such as *nyanda* (prolonged sitting posture) and *sangsarkeun* (postpartum massage). *Bengkung* is typically a cloth measuring 4–5 meters in length and 20–25 centimeters in width, wrapped tightly around the abdomen after being applied with a mixture of lime, eucalyptus oil, and lime powder. It is worn to support the body, maintain comfort during activities, and reduce abdominal size, usually for up to 40 days postpartum, not exceeding seven hours daily to avoid adverse effects such as respiratory problems or skin irritation (Sumarni & Nahira, 2022; Fajrin et al., 2022).

Sambel peupeuh comprises various anti-inflammatory and antioxidant herbs believed to enhance breast milk production and aid maternal recovery. It is traditionally consumed twice daily for 40 days postpartum (Pattinasarany, 2020; Azizah et al., 2023). However, some practices raise health concerns. The *nyanda* tradition, involving sitting with legs extended for prolonged hours, has been associated with discomfort, swelling, and increased risk of infection due to lack of mobility. Some mothers possess misconceptions regarding *sangsarkeun*, interpreting it as a full-body reflex massage rather than abdominal massage, which may impact its effectiveness and safety. The application of *campuh* can cause pain and wound complications if improperly used, especially for mothers who underwent episiotomy or cesarean delivery (Herawati & Septi, 2023; Kurnia et al., 2023; Dewi, 2024).

Cultural prohibitions such as restrictions on leaving the house postpartum, avoiding fish consumption, limiting fluid intake, and refraining from spicy or acidic foods have mixed effects. While some support infection prevention and maternal rest, others may inadvertently hinder nutritional intake or delay seeking urgent medical care in the case of complications, increasing risks of dehydration, poor breast milk production, and maternal stress. Many mothers follow these traditions primarily due to ancestral inheritance and low health literacy, with some integrating traditional and modern medical approaches to balance benefits and risks. The practices generally do not conflict with Islamic teachings, as health maintenance, cleanliness, adequate rest, and breastfeeding encouragement align with religious recommendations. The study underscores the need for culturally sensitive health education and supportive interventions by healthcare providers to optimize postpartum outcomes. Educating mothers on safe practices, risks, and benefits of traditional care can empower them to make informed decisions while preserving valuable cultural heritage.

Attitude toward Traditional Postpartum Care

The study identified that attitudes toward traditional postpartum care in Cimanggu are strongly influenced by cultural heritage, with most postpartum mothers feeling obliged to follow longstanding customs despite recognizing both positive and negative effects. Many respondents agreed to practice traditions such as *bengkung* (binding cloth), *sambel peupeuh* (herbal condiment), *campuh* (ginger compress), *nyanda* (prolonged sitting posture), and *sangsarkeun* (massage), primarily out of respect for parental advice and familial expectations. Positive attitudes were evident regarding regular postpartum check-ups, reflecting confidence in health workers who actively conduct home visits and provide education. Mothers also acknowledged some beneficial aspects of traditional care, such as improved comfort with *bengkung*, enhanced breast milk production with *sambel peupeuh*, wound healing through *campuh*, and relaxation via *sangsarkeun*. Conversely, some mothers displayed negative attitudes, particularly due to adverse effects experienced from certain practices. For instance, *campuh* was reported to cause pain and burning sensations on perineal wounds, while *nyanda* led to back and leg discomfort, swelling, and fatigue. These negative experiences, combined with limited knowledge regarding religious acceptability, contributed to mixed feelings toward traditional care. Many mothers were uncertain whether these practices were permissible within Islamic teachings, often continuing them primarily because of customary obligation. The findings highlight the crucial role of culturally sensitive education to foster balanced attitudes empowering women to retain beneficial traditions while recognizing and avoiding potentially harmful practices. Enhanced understanding can support safer, more informed postpartum care choices among mothers within this cultural context.

Cultural Influences on Traditional Postpartum Care

This study found that traditional postpartum care practices in Cimanggu District are deeply rooted in cultural heritage, passed down through generations primarily by *paraji* (traditional birth attendants). The community strongly adheres to ancestral customs without significant changes, except where integration with modern medical care has occurred. Common practices include the use of *bengkung* (binding cloth), consumption of *sambel peupeuh* (herbal condiment), application of *campuh* (ginger compress), *nyanda* (prolonged sitting posture), and *sangsarkeun* (postpartum massage). Several cultural prohibitions accompany these practices, such as restrictions on mothers and newborns leaving the house for seven days, avoiding fish consumption, limiting fluid intake, and refraining from acidic or spicy foods. These customs are believed to protect both mother and infant from harm, including spiritual disturbances. While some of these practices may promote rest and bonding, they can also potentially delay care-seeking and lead to nutritional deficits or emotional isolation.

Healthcare professionals reported occasional adverse reactions linked to traditional practices; for example, mothers experiencing fainting, leg swelling, or wound complications. This underscores the importance of health education to mitigate risks while respecting cultural values. Importantly, Islamic teachings were found to be compatible with traditional postpartum care in the community. Religious leaders affirmed that these practices do not conflict with Islamic law, emphasizing cleanliness, adequate rest, prayer, and nutritional maintenance during the postpartum period. The decision to continue traditional cultural practices is influenced by long-standing customs, limited educational levels, and lack of comprehensive information. Even among more educated mothers, there is an ongoing blend of traditional and biomedical care, with selective adherence based on perceived safety and benefit. This culturally sensitive understanding highlights the need for healthcare providers to engage respectfully with traditional beliefs, offering education that supports beneficial practices and advises against potentially harmful ones. Such an approach promotes safer postpartum care while honoring cultural identity and maternal.

Family Support (Husband)

Husbands provide emotional support by listening to the complaints of postpartum mothers, when sad husbands help comfort them in the hope that mothers feel cared for. However, the husband feels that the traditional care and taking care of the baby is a woman's affair so that the husband does not pay much attention to the problem of postpartum mothers, unless he asks for help. Husbands provide instrumental support by helping to provide funds for traditional care purposes such as buying bengkung, and other traditional materials including finding paraji and caring for babies. As for the other actions, everything was left to his wife, who was a postpartum mother. Some husbands provide information support by advocating adequate rest, avoiding stress, and advising to go to paraji when experiencing complaints and telling them to change bends frequently so as not to cause skin irritation. As for the other actions, all of them were left to his wife, who was a postpartum mother. The husband shows the results that the husband is less supportive in the care of the postpartum period, this is because the traditional care act and taking care of the baby is a woman's business so that the husband does not pay much attention to the problem of the postpartum mother, unless he is asked for help.

Healthcare Worker Support

Midwives actively conduct postpartum visits as an effort to improve the quality of health in preventing complications during the postpartum period. Efforts that can be made to reduce the possibility of health problems due to incorrect care in the maintenance of postpartum mothers by providing education related to traditional care that must be avoided by adding health education through daily care and other medical treatments. So far, midwives have provided counseling related to correct traditional care so as not to cause negative impacts by paying attention to and maintaining the general condition of postpartum mothers so that they do not experience abnormalities during the implementation of traditional care. The recommendations given by midwives in performing *personal hygiene* for postpartum mothers include maintaining the cleanliness of the feminine area, changing postpartum pads regularly, getting enough rest, and not doing strenuous activities first. The use of bends is allowed, but not more than 7 hours and not too tight, get enough sleep, clean yourself with warm water, avoid postpartum sleeping, and sleep on your left side to facilitate blood circulation. The education provided by midwives in terms of breastfeeding and breast care includes how to treat breast care correctly, the correct breastfeeding position, attachment must include the areola, not just the nipple. Breasts must be kept clean and dry, and use a bra that supports the breasts. And do a warm compress if you experience swelling.

So far, midwives have provided good support to postpartum mothers through postpartum visits, providing education about traditional cultures that are good and that are not with the impact if done in the wrong way. Midwives also provide ways to do personal hygiene for postpartum mothers, including maintaining the cleanliness of the feminine area, changing postpartum sanitary pads regularly, getting enough rest, and not doing strenuous activities first. The use of bends is allowed, but not more than 7 hours and not too tight, get enough sleep, clean yourself with warm water, avoid postpartum sleeping, and sleep on your left side to facilitate blood circulation. Midwives also tell postpartum mothers about how to breastfeed and do good and correct breast care as well as good and correct nutritional intake.

CONCLUSION

Mothers already know about traditional culture, but it is not so extensive that many of the answers that mothers give are not in accordance with theories resulting from the experiences that mothers get and wrong information from parents and previous parents. Most of the mothers were found to have a negative attitude in carrying out traditional treatments where the treatment not only had a positive impact but also had a negative impact caused by the effects obtained such as swelling which caused pain and swelling. Besides that, the mother does not know whether the culture is prohibited by religion or not, this is because the mother does traditional culture because she obeys the orders of her parents because the culture has been passed down from generation to generation.

Traditional treatments have a positive impact such as the use of bends can increase a sense of comfort when moving, shrink the stomach. Sambel peupeuh can increase breast milk production, and make the body light. Swelling can close the perineal wound, and sangsurken can make the body relax as a result of the massage carried out by the paraji. However, traditional treatments and buses have a negative impact, including scabies, which can cause open wounds and infections if the treatment is not good, as well as nyanda because the mother has to sit on the couch, so it is difficult to rest. Sangsurken is worried that it could cause uterine prolapse.

The husband shows the results that the husband is less supportive in the care of the postpartum period, this is because the traditional care act and taking care of the baby is a woman's business so that the husband does not pay much attention to the problem of the postpartum mother, unless he is asked for help. So far, midwives have provided good support to postpartum mothers through postpartum visits, providing education about traditional cultures that are good and that are not with the impact if done in the wrong way. Midwives also provide ways to do personal hygiene for postpartum mothers, including maintaining the cleanliness of the feminine area, changing postpartum sanitary pads regularly, getting enough rest, and not doing strenuous activities first. The use of bends is allowed, but not more than 7 hours and not too tight, get enough sleep, clean yourself with warm water, avoid postpartum sleeping, and sleep on your left side to facilitate blood circulation. Midwives also tell postpartum mothers about how to breastfeed and do good and correct breast care as well as good and correct nutritional intake.

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