

Family and Marital Functioning during the Transition to Motherhood

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Abstract : Background: Family and marital functioning has become an important public health issue because it is vital to child development and well-being. Objective: This study was designed to examine the changes in family and marital functioning among Chinese women during the transition to motherhood. Methods: A longitudinal design was used. A convenience sample of 202 Chinese childbearing women completed the Medical Outcomes Study Family and Marital Functioning Measures during pregnancy, at 6 weeks and at 6 months postpartum. Results: The results showed that women experienced substantial decline in their family and marital functioning from pregnancy to 6 weeks and 6 months postpartum. Conclusions: The findings of this study highlight the need for more attention to family and marital functioning among women after childbirth. Culturally relevant interventions should be developed to assist women in facing the challenges of new motherhood and achieving a better family and marital functioning.

Keywords : family and marital functioning, perinatal period, women

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