



**A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF THE VIEWS AND
ATTITUDES TOWARDS MATERNITY CARE HELD BY
MIGRANTS IN RURAL TASMANIA**

by

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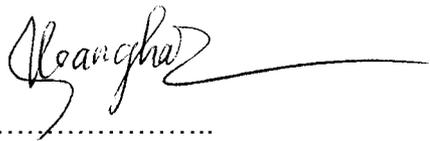
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Declaration

I declare that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree, diploma in any institute or university, and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, has no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.



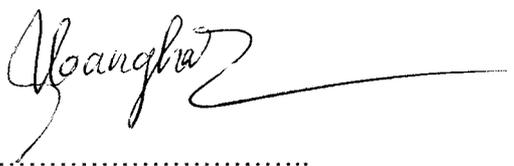
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Abstract

When migrants arrive in Australia, they bring with them cultural lenses which may affect the way in which they view the new cultural environment, particularly their attitudes and behaviours may not be understood by the dominant groups. One of the top concerns of migrants in Australia is about health care. The concern is not about the quality of health care but fundamentally how they access and make full use of it. Problems arise due to communication failure, misunderstanding, cultural interference, social isolation, and particularly lack of social capitals which support them to adapt to the new land. For migrant women, childbirth is an enriching experience but also poses many challenges in their acculturation into a new country. There are mixed emotions of happiness, anxiety, and fear. Asian women may have different views and expectations about childbirth experience and this also applies to health care workers, particularly to those in rural areas where there are very few migrant women.

The study investigated the views and attitudes of Asian migrant women on maternity care in rural Tasmania and their reflection on their own experiences on childbirth in Tasmania. It was a first study dealing with Asian migrant women's views and attitudes towards childbirth in a rural context. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. Questionnaires were used to collect data for SPSS-based analysis. For qualitative data, interviews were used as a research tool for data collection. Ten Asian women from diverse

backgrounds were invited to participate in this study. Interview data was entered into a word document and NVivo software was used for data analysis.

The findings reveal that Asian migrants in Tasmania have faced language and cultural barriers when dealing with the health care system in the new environment. As some Asian migrants still keep their traditional views and practices on maternity care, confusion and mismatched expectations were evident. Family plays an important role in supporting a migrant woman through her maternity journey. It is seen as a crucial cultural and social capital for the migrant woman's survival. The study offered some recommendations to policy makers and community organisations in relation to health care to improve health care services for Asian migrants in rural Tasmania.

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