

**Name of Student: Ng Chun Yuen**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Much has been written about the worldwide increasing cesarean rate, as well as an increased emphasis on involving the patient in childbirth decision making. Nonetheless, it is little known about the perspectives of the women's perception of elective cesarean section with no clinical indication, especially amongst the Chinese with their first birth. The aim of this study was to understand the lived experience of elective cesarean birth of the Chinese women by exploring the governing factors affecting them to make the choice. The use of naturalistic inquiry ensured focusing on the perspectives of the participants. Qualitative methods were used, including data collection, analysis of the content and themes of the dialogue. A purposive sample of 6 nulliparous, middle-class Chinese women had been selected as the research subjects. Data were collected through unstructured, open-ended interviews, tape recordings and verbatim transcription. The interviews had been held in the maternity unit of a local private hospital in Hong Kong. The women had the opportunity to disclose their thoughts and feelings freely whereas privacy and confidentiality with anonymity were ensured. This study demonstrated that contemporary Chinese women had a strong sense to take an active part in the control of their childbirth. Cesarean section were perceived by these women as a safe and better mode of delivery with less adverse effects and could escape from the labor pain which they thought was not necessary to suffer. An expression of lunar birth timing in the Chinese society had been highlighted by means of selecting a 'lucky day' for the baby to be born. Care providers could lead the clients to make an accurate decision on their childbirth by providing professional advice and information and as a result, the clients might feel satisfied on their choice. Finally, a research-based midwifery care was advocated in order to enhance the quality of care.