This study was conducted among postpartum mothers, elders and traditional birth attendants at Brgy. Casilian, Bacarra, Ilocos Norte to provide detailed description in the beliefs and practices on postpartum care.

Observation, tape-recorded unstructured interview, informal conversation and documentation of the cultural practices were the main tool used in gathering data. The data gathered were transcribed and categorized, analyzed and interpreted according to themes based on minor problems of the study and their scientific explanation were determined using available studies and literature.

The participants came to know about the cultural beliefs and practices in postpartum from elders, significant persons and traditional birth attendants who at the same time provided these cultural cares.

Findings on Nutrition revealed that culturally-recommended food or cultural preferences to food are found to have scientific meaning as documented by books and studies from nutrition. These practices are primarily directed to improve lactation, provide energy and regulate the physiologic changes that accompany delivery towards the end of postpartum period. On the other hand the cultural restrictions or proscriptions on food have been found to have no scientific implications. However, these cultural cares are practiced by the participants because they believed that these will prevent the occurrence of illness and discomforts. Postpartum mothers who experience illness and discomforts during the period and later years in life are always regarded as failure due to non-compliance with the culturally-prescribed diet. Furthermore, cultural drinks derived from plants have scientific or therapeutic use but it does not agree with the belief of the participants.
Hygienic practices on the breast are geared towards cleanliness, prevention of pain, swelling and to foster continuous production of breast milk to meet the demand of the newborn for nourishment. Some of these beliefs and practices have scientific meaning, while some may be regarded as ridiculous and probably not acceptable to modern society. Regarding perineal care, participants practice perineal hygiene but not sufficient to harmonize with the practices postulated by authorities in obstetrics.

Bathing practice for postpartum mothers is not similar to ordinary bath. The performance usually starts the day after delivery using warm water with the omission of hair shampoo until permitted by elders. Warm water is said to be beneficial and has scientifically proven advantages but the non-inclusion of hair shampoo, though harmless, makes the mother feel a bit of discomfort.

Laceration proved to have no significant effect on postpartum mothers. They perceived this as a normal occurrence of childbirth which doesn't require special care. Episiotomy, on the other hand, is not a pleasant experience and participants disgust the idea of having perineal cut and then sutured. However, participants are performing cultural practices that hasten the healing of perineovaginal laceration like sidor although mothers are not aware of their benefits.

*Dadang* is performed to dry-up the body, to prevent chilliness and for the body to be “well cooked”. This practice can be categorized as beneficial since heat has lots of therapeutic effect established scientifically not only for postpartum mothers but for all ages. Likewise, the practice of “sidor” which uses heat though the practice varies among participants, this holds true to all practices utilizing heat and that the therapeutic effect are similar and the effectiveness has been proven way back the ancient time. It soothes healing tissues, decrease inflammation by vasodilatation to the area and therefore effectively reduces discomfort.

The binder applied at the waist and hips are therapeutically effective in promoting involution of the internal reproductive organ. It further relieves pain and discomfort, therefore the practice is beneficial.

Massage, as practiced in many countries, is essential part of postpartum care. However, the practice/performance depend on the mothers’ ability to pay and the availability of traditional birth attendants. This practice does not only have specific effect on certain body parts but can affect indirectly the bodies’
mental and emotional state. This practice is beneficial and with sound scientific basis.

Sexual practices/activities are somewhat delayed with varied responses as to when they resume sexual contact. They believed that sex earlier than culturally prescribed period leads to subsequent pregnancy, tuberculosis and make the mother become skinny.

Based on the findings of the study, majority of the cultural beliefs and practices have scientific bases, therefore, these should be utilized and reconciled with the modern postpartum practices to give more intense and effective result for health promotion and health maintenance.