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Spiritual Guidance Has an Effect on Decreasing The Level of Anxiety in Mothers During The First Stage of Labor

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A B S T R A C T

The birth process is a physiological event. Every mother who will give birth will experience pain as a manifestation of the baby's birth process. The effects of pain experienced by the mother will cause anxiety which often has a negative impact on birth outcomes. Many ways to deal with anxiety during labor are related to reducing pain, but only a few have researched the effect of spiritual guidance on reducing this pain. This study aims to assess the effect of spiritual guidance on the level of anxiety in mothers in the first stage of active labor. This study used a one-group pretest and post-test pre-experimental design on 71 mothers in the first active phase of labor. Anxiety levels were measured using the Hamilton Rating Scale for Anxiety (HSRA). The statistical analysis used is Wilcoxon. The results of the study found that there was a decrease in anxiety from before and after being given spiritual support to mothers in the first stage of labor. It is very important to provide childbirth support such as spiritual guidance to birth mothers in reducing their anxiety levels.

I. INTRODUCTION

The birth process is a physiological thing that every woman will go through. It's just that the experience of childbirth will give unpleasant things to the mother, especially when she feels labor pain if she is not properly prepared and supported (Simkin & Bolding, 2004; Sitepu et al., 2021). Labor pain occurs to increase following the increase in the labor process. Increased labor pain if not handled properly will cause anxiety which has a negative effect on the mother and fetus (Lowe, 2002).

An expectant mother will face labor pain as well as anxiety and stress during the delivery process. Moreover, this will harm both the mother and the fetus. Anxiety and stress experienced by the mother during labor will activate biomarkers in the body which increase the risk of adverse birth outcomes (Alder et al., 2007). During labor, the mother's psychological changes due to anxiety will activate the neuroendocrine system. This will directly affect the fetal and maternal circulation as well as the fetal-placental circulation. In addition, specific abnormalities in the hypothalamus and adrenal glands caused by neurological changes can have a negative impact on obstetric outcomes (Alder et al., 2007; Benfield

et al., 2008).

Anxiety is characterized by the experience of fear resulting from a mental assessment. Anxiety experienced by a mother during labor is usually experienced because of the pain she is facing. This is also because of the childbirth events she will pass through. Excessive anxiety during labor will have a negative impact on labor outcomes such as the possibility of pre-term labor, labor by action and cesarean section, until the baby is born with asphyxia (Deklava et al., 2015; Alder et al., 2007).

Several ways have been found to reduce pain in labor which is useful to make the mother more comfortable and avoid excessive anxiety, including by doing various relaxation techniques such as yoga, acupressure, using a birthing ball during the first stage and also accompanying the closest people (Karningsih et al. ., 2022; Hanjani et al., 2012; Sukamti et al., 2022). Various approaches have been taken to reduce anxiety in mothers during labor, including by inviting the closest people, providing relaxation, and providing assistance by giving spiritual suggestions to mothers in labor (Taghizdeh et al., 2017; Mathur et al., 2020). Research in America on women giving birth found that a person's level of anxiety is heavily influenced by the culture and beliefs held by each individual. Trust and a sense of resistance to pain that causes excessive anxiety are very closely influenced by the beliefs and values they hold (Taghizdeh et al., 2017; Mathur et al., 2020). For this reason, spiritual support and guidance is needed for every mother in labor in reducing the level of anxiety in the delivery process. Until now, little research has explained the link between spiritual guidance and reducing anxiety levels during childbirth. For this reason, this study aims to assess the effectiveness of providing spiritual support in decreasing anxiety levels in the first stage of labor in women giving birth.

II. METHODS

The type of research in this study was quasi-experimental to know a symptom or effect that arises as a result of the treatment. This design does not have strict restrictions on randomization, and at the same time can control validity threats. It is called a quasi-experiment because this experiment does not yet or does not have the characteristics of the actual experimental design because the variables that should be controlled or manipulated cannot or are difficult to do.

In this study, researchers conducted research on the effect of spiritual guidance on the first stage of the active phase in pregnant women in the inpatient room of Kalianda Hospital, South Lampung. The design or research carried out in this study was the "One Group Pretest Posttest" design. In this design there is no comparison group (control), but at least the first observation (pretest) has been carried out which allows testing the changes that occur after the experiment. This study looked at the effect of providing spiritual support on reducing anxiety levels in mothers in the first stage of labour.

The population used for this study were women in the first active phase of labor in the inpatient room of Kalianda Hospital in 2019. The population in this study were 246 mothers in the first active phase of labor, included in the inclusion criteria (mothers with normal pregnancy and childbirth history, no history of mental disorders, current condition of mother and fetus are healthy), and exclusion criteria (mothers with mental disorders, mothers taking anti-depressants). The sample calculation used purposive sampling with a total sample of 71 people.

The measuring tool used to assess anxiety was the Hamilton Rating for Anxiety (HSRA) Scale, with a total score of 69 (Rahayu & Ariningtyas, 2023). While the questionnaire was also used to obtain data on the characteristics of the respondents. Spiritual support was carried out by midwives by involving family or closest people. Families or those closest to the women were trained in advance to provide spiritual support such as inviting mothers to pray according to their religion, listening to murotal al-Quran for those who are Muslim, and inviting mothers to think positively by always remembering the creator. The process of providing spiritual support was carried out at any time during the first stage of labor until entering the second stage.

III. RESULT

1. Respondent characteristics

Table 1. Respondent characteristics according to the obesity in women in the childbearing age

Variables		N (71)	%
Education	Basic-middle education	43	60.6
	High education	28	39.4
Age (year)	<20, ≥ 35	17	23.9
	20 – 35	54	76,1
Occupation	House wives	42	59.1
	Worker	29	40.9
Parity	0	12	16.9
	1-4	55	77.5
	>4	4	5.6

Based on table 1, it is known that most of the respondents are aged 20-35 years, namely 54 mothers (76.1%), **have** basic middle education, namely 43 (60.6%), most are housewives, namely 42 (59.1), and most of mothers have children 1-4 , namely 55 (77.5%).

2. Analisis Univariat dan Bivariat

Tabel 2. Anxiety level of pregnant women in the first active phase of labor before and after being given Spiritual Guidance

Level of anxiety	Pretest		Posttest	
	n	%	n	%
Normal	0	0	0	0
Mild	21	29,6	44	62,0
Medium	39	54,9	26	36,6
Severe	11	15,5	1	1,4
Total	71	100	71	100

From the table 2, it is known that the level of anxiety before spiritual guidance was carried out on the first stage of active phase of labor mother was mostly moderate, namely 39 people (54.9%) and severe, 11 people (15.5%). After being given spiritual guidance there was a decrease in anxiety levels with most mothers experiencing mild anxiety, namely 26 (36.6%).

Tabel 3. Mother anxiety in the first stage of active labor before and after being given Spiritual Guidance.

	N	Median	Z	P-value*
Anxiety before spiritual guidance	71	61		
Anxiety after spiritual guidance	71	55	-4,967	< 0.001

* Wilcoxon test

From table 3 it is known that of the 71 mothers in the first stage of labor who were given spiritual guidance, there was a decrease in anxiety levels before and after being given spiritual guidance, with the median anxiety score before guidance being 61 and after anxiety guidance the median score was 55.

IV. DISCUSSION

This study found that mothers during the active phase of the first stage of labor who were given birth support were proven to be able to reduce anxiety levels. This research is in accordance with a mixed method study on 100 women in the US which states that with the spiritual support given, women are increasingly aware of being able to deal with pain and surrender fully to God, so they feel more relaxed and calmer (Mathur et al. , 2020). Surrendering pain that causes excessive anxiety can be accepted by women so that they become calmer and able to control their anxiety well and become more cooperative (Mathur et al., 2020). This spiritual assistance process can be carried out by health workers or the closest people such as husbands and family. Giving strength using the spirit of a person's religion or belief can create a sense of comfort and increase enthusiasm to go through a process that causes anxiety in them (Adams & Bianchi, 2008).

Spiritual support can be provided in a number of ways, namely related to a sense of self, feeling protected by God, believing that God will help us give a good life and an era of relationship between ourselves and God (Boscaglia et al., 2005). In this study, spiritual support was provided by midwives and also the closest people, namely husbands, by providing support by teaching mothers to recite the holy sentences in religious scriptures and also by playing spiritual songs in the delivery room.

Longitudinal research in the UK on groups of women with breast cancer who are accompanied by spiritual support during the therapy process proves that the presence of a spiritual support approach is known to increase personal spiritual strength, can achieve life transformation, and also be more accepting of her condition related to illness. suffered (Thuné-Boyle et al., 2013). Someone who has a strong belief in his relationship with God will be able to increase his sense of comfort because he believes that God will always help and accompany us (Krause & Hayward, 2016).

Spiritual support in this study had a good impact on reducing anxiety levels during the first stage of labour. This is related to the sense of calm experienced by the mother thanks to the spiritual support provided by the closest people and health workers. With this spiritual support, it can create positive feelings during the delivery process, achieve self-actualization and achieve spiritual self-development towards the childbirth process it faces (Taghizadeh et al., 2017).

Anxiety has a negative impact on the birth process. If it is not handled properly, it will have a negative impact not only on the mother but also on the fetus in the uterus. Stress on the

mother that occurs during pregnancy and childbirth will cause stimulation of the hypothalamus gland which will be directly related to utero-placental circulation and also fetal placental circulation. The process of activation of the hormonal system will cause disturbances in the balance of norepinephrine and dopamine which will directly cause poor birth outcomes such as prolonged labor, premature labor, and fetal distress (Alder et al., 2007).

The importance of providing birth support and several normality-based interventions has proven effective in reducing the level of anxiety in pregnant women during the first stage of labor. Spiritual support given in situations of fear and situations that need support plays an important role and produces significant benefits in reducing the level of anxiety in a woman, especially in labor conditions (Benfield et al., 2008).

V. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that there is a decrease in the level of anxiety before and after being given spiritual support to mothers in the first stage of labor. Spiritual guidance is known to be effective in reducing the level of anxiety in mothers in the first stage of labor (Benfield et al., 2008).

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