



The Effect of Flower Candle Aromatherapy on Postpartum Mother's Anxiety

Dina Dewi Anggraini¹, Marlynda Happy Nurmalita Sari²

^{1,2} Poltekkes Kemenkes Semarang, Jl. Tirta Agung, Pedalangan, Kecamatan Manyumanik, Kota Semarang, Jawa Tengah, 50268, Indonesia.

Email: dewidina90@gmail.com¹, marlyndasari89@gmail.com²

ABSTRACT

Postpartum mothers experience psychological changes, one of which is anxiety. Lavender flower aromatherapy candles contain linalyl acetate and linalool which relax the mind and body. This study aims to determine the effect of giving flower candle aromatherapy on postpartum mother's anxiety. The method used is quasi-experimental with a pretest and posttest design model, with the sampling technique being purposive sampling. The statistical tests used for pretest and posttest in both groups used the dependent t-test (normal) or the Wilcoxon test (not normal). And between control and treatment groups using the independent t test (normal) or Mann Whitney test (not normal). The results of the study showed that there was a difference in the anxiety of postpartum mothers who were given aromatherapy flower candles compared to postpartum mothers who were not given aromatherapy flower candles. The average anxiety in the treatment group (flower candle aromatherapy) was 0.77, while the average anxiety in the control group (psychological education) was 2.03. The mean rank results show that postpartum mothers who were given treatment (flower candle aromatherapy) had a lower average anxiety, namely 20.77, than postpartum mothers in the control group (psychological education), namely 40.23.

Keywords: *Flower Candle Aromatherapy, Anxiety, Postpartum Mother*

INTRODUCTION

Postpartum starts from the birth of the placenta until 6 weeks after delivery. In the first two weeks after giving birth, many women show psychiatric symptoms, especially symptoms of mild to severe depression, so this situation needs special attention. In the postpartum period, midwives provide care in the form of monitoring physical and psychological conditions, providing education and counseling to prevent or even reduce MMR and IMR (Maylani, R. K., Wiyadi, W., & Virawati, 2020).

Not all mothers can go through the postpartum period well. If a postpartum mother cannot adjust, she will fail to get through this period, and the mother may even experience anxiety and even postpartum depression (Pratiwi, A., I., 2022).

Anxiety is a condition that makes people uncomfortable and unsettled because of a feeling of worry related to events so that it can influence the perception of postpartum mothers. In Indonesia, postpartum mother anxiety reaches 22.4% and unresolved postpartum mother anxiety can cause depression and other mental illnesses that affect health (Syarif, K. R., Rahmatia, S., & Lestari I., 2023).

Some women manage to adjust well and are enthusiastic about caring for their babies, but others fail to adjust and experience

psychological disorders, such as feeling sad, irritated, tired, angry and hopeless. This feeling is what makes a mother reluctant to take care of her baby, and is called postpartum blues by experts or commonly known as baby blues (Ningsih, S., 2020).

Postpartum maternal psychological disorders can occur, ranging from anxiety disorders, postpartum blues, postpartum depression, and postpartum psychosis (Zagoto, S., 2020).

Initial treatment by providing non-pharmacological therapy is an alternative because it does not provide side effects, one of the non-pharmacological therapies is by administering lavender aromatherapy which has anti-confulsant, anti-depressant and calming properties (Maryani, D., & Himalaya, D., 2020).

Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils derived from herbal plant materials that contain volatile aroma compounds such as flowers, leaves, seeds and other plant parts that are used in complementary health. One of the essential oils used in lavender aromatherapy (Refti, W. G., et al., 2024).

Aromatherapy can be used directly through smell. When aromatherapy is inhaled, volatile molecules will carry aromatic elements that stimulate memory and emotional responses which cause feelings of calm, relaxation and improve blood flow (Nainggolan, 2020).

Inhalation aromatherapy is essential oils that are inhaled into the lungs, which provides both psychological and physical benefits. One way to use lavender flower aromatherapy is by inhaling it to get direct benefits into the body (Romadhon, Wimar A., RR Dewi R. A. P., 2022).

Aromatherapy candles are an alternative to inhaling aromatherapy applications and will produce an aroma that has a therapeutic effect when burned. Aromatherapy candles can be made in various interesting shapes (Melviani, K. Nastiti, 2021). Various aromatherapy has been used to treat anxiety, including lavender. In aromatherapy, lavender flowers contain linalyl acetate and linalool which relax the mind and body (Fitria, L., Ningsih, V. D., Navisah, Z., & Putri, 2022).

Midwives are tasked with providing women's health services in their reproductive cycle, one of which is postpartum maternal services (Achyar, K., & Azizah, 2019). Health services that can be developed are flower candle aromatherapy which is useful for postpartum mothers (Nainggolan, 2020).

METHOD

This research uses a quasi-experimental method. There are two groups, namely the control and treatment groups. The control group was given education related to the psychology of postpartum mothers, and the

treatment group was given flower candle aromatherapy and education related to the psychology of postpartum mothers. The population used was postpartum mothers in Blora Regency. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, with the criteria being postpartum mothers from day 3 to day 5, giving birth spontaneously and not experiencing complications. The number of samples used in the control and treatment groups was 30 postpartum mothers each. Research subjects were given a pretest about anxiety on the 3rd day postpartum. Education about the psychology of postpartum mothers is provided until the 5th day postpartum. The treatment group was supplemented with flower candle aromatherapy. The posttest was carried out on the 5th day to measure postpartum mother anxiety. The statistical tests used for pre and posttests in both groups used the dependent t test (normal) or the Wilcoxon test (abnormal). And between control and treatment groups using the independent t-test (normal) or Mann-Whitney test (abnormal). This research has been declared ethically appropriate under Number 1059/EA/KEPK/2023 by the Health Research Ethics Committee of the Ministry of Health, Semarang Health Polytechnic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

The results of the research that has been carried out are as follows:

The characteristics of respondents in research activities are as follows:

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

A. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Control Group		treatment group		
	n	%	n	%	
Age	< 20 years	2	6.7	1	3.3
	20 – 35 years	25	83.3	29	96.7
	> 35 years	3	10	0	0
	Total	30	100	30	100
Parity	Primipara	12	40	14	46.7
	Multiparous	18	60	16	53.3
	Total	30	100	30	100

Source: Primary data, 2023

Based on table 1 above, it shows that the majority of postpartum mother respondents in the control and treatment groups were 20 - 35 years old, and postpartum mothers were multiparous.

B. Data Normality Test

The results of the data normality test on research activities are as follows:

Tabel 2. Data Normality Test

	Mean	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest anxiety (treatment)	2.07	0,254	30	0,000	0,707	30	0,000
Posttest anxiety (treatment)	0.77	0,285	30	0,000	0,759	30	0,000
Pretest anxiety (control)	2.17	0,212	30	0,001	0,860	30	0,001
Posttest anxiety (control)	2.03	0,216	30	0,001	0,842	30	0,000

Source: Primary data, 2023

Based on table 2 above, it shows that the results of the Shapiro-Wilk data normality test showed that the variables (pretest and posttest intervention group anxiety and pretest and posttest control group anxiety) had a sig value of <0.05 so the data was not normally distributed so was used the Mann Whitney and Wilcoxon tests.

after intervention (sig 0.000), all data was not normally distributed, namely <0.05, so data analysis used a non-parametric test with the Wilcoxon test.

Table 3. Average Distribution of Pretest and Posttest Postpartum Mother Anxiety in the Treatment Group in the Blora Regency Area in 2023

C. Difference Test in Treatment Groups

Based on the results of the data normality test with Shapiro-Wilk (Table 2), anxiety before intervention (sig 0.000) and anxiety

Variable		Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	P value	N
Treatment Group Anxiety	Negatif Rank	14.50	406.00		28
Pretest	Positif Rank	0.00	0.00	0.000	0
Posttest	Ties				2

Source: Primary data, 2023

Based on table 3 above, it shows that the difference (positive) between the anxiety results of postpartum mothers before and after being given the intervention (flower candle) is 0, so there is no increase in anxiety before or after being given the intervention (flower candle) in postpartum mothers. The average mean rank increase is 0, and the number of positive rankings or sum of ranks is 0.00. Meanwhile, the difference (negative) between postpartum mothers' anxiety before and after being given the intervention (flower candle) was 28, meaning that 28 postpartum mothers experienced a decrease in anxiety before and after being given the intervention (flower candle). The average mean rank decrease was 14.50, and the number of negative rankings or sum of ranks was 406.00. And there were 2 postpartum mothers who experienced an increase or decrease (same value) in anxiety before and after being given the intervention (flower candle).

Variable		Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	P value	N
Control Group Anxiety	Negatif Rank	2.50	10.00		4
Pretest	Positif Rank	0.00	0.00	0.046	0
Posttest	Ties				26

Source: Primary data, 2023

Based on the results of statistical tests, it is known that the significance value is 0.000, namely <0.05 , meaning that there is a difference in the anxiety of postpartum mothers between before and after being given the intervention (flower candle). So it can also be concluded that there is an effect of providing intervention (flower candles) on reducing the anxiety of postpartum mothers.

D. Difference Test in Control Group

Based on the results of the Shapiro-Wilk data normality test (Table 2), postpartum mother anxiety pretest in the control group (sig 0.001) and postpartum mother anxiety posttest in the control group (sig 0.000), all data was not normally distributed, namely <0.05 then data analysis uses non-parametric tests with the Wilcoxon test.

Table 4. Average Distribution of Pretest and Posttest Postpartum Mother Anxiety in the Control Group in the Blora Regency Area in 2023

Based on table 4 above, it shows that the difference (positive) between the anxiety results of postpartum mothers before and after being given psychological education (control group) is 0, so there is no increase in anxiety before or after being given psychological education (control group) to postpartum mothers. The average mean rank increase is 0, and the number of positive rankings or sum of ranks is 0.00. Meanwhile, the difference (negative) between postpartum mothers' anxiety before and after being given psychological education (control group) was 4, meaning that 4 postpartum mothers experienced a decrease in anxiety before and after being given psychological education (control group). The average mean rank decrease is 2.50, and the number of negative rankings or sum of ranks is 10.00. And there were 26 postpartum mothers who experienced an increase or decrease (same value) in anxiety before and after being given psychological education (control group).

Based on the results of statistical tests, it is known that the significance value is 0.046,

Postpartum Mother Anxiety	Mean	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	P value	N
Treatment Group	0.77	20.77	623.00	0.000	30
Control Group	2.03	40.23	1207.00		30

Source: Primary data, 2023

Based on table 5 above, it shows that the average anxiety in postpartum mothers who were given treatment or intervention (flower candle aromatherapy) was 0.77,

namely <0.05 , meaning that there is a difference in the anxiety of postpartum mothers between before and after being given psychological education (control group). So it can also be concluded that there is an influence of providing psychological education (control) on reducing the anxiety of postpartum mothers.

E. Test of Differences Between Groups

Based on the results of the data normality test with Shapiro-Wilk (Table 2), postpartum mother anxiety in the treatment group (sig 0.000) and postpartum mother anxiety in the control group (sig 0.000) all data was not normally distributed, namely <0.05 , so data analysis using non-parametric tests with the Mann Whitney test.

Table 5. Average Distribution of Postpartum Mother Anxiety between the Treatment Group and Control Group in the Blora Regency Area in 2023

while the average anxiety in postpartum mothers in the control group (psychological education) was 2.03. Likewise, the mean rank results show that postpartum mothers

who were given treatment or intervention (flower candle aromatherapy) had a lower average anxiety, namely 20.77, than postpartum mothers in the control group (psychological education), namely 40.23. Based on statistical tests, it is known that the significance value is 0.000 (<0.05), meaning that there is a difference in anxiety in postpartum mothers who were given treatment or intervention (flower candle aromatherapy) compared to postpartum mothers in the control group (psychological education) with a mean difference of 1.26.

Discussions

Indonesia is a country that has a wealth of plants, one of which is various types of plants that produce essential oils. The chemical content in these plants is a volatile oil with a distinctive aromatic odor (Mulyani, S., Purwanto, & Sudarsono, 2021).

The aroma and molecules in essential oils which are the basic ingredients for making candles can trigger areas of the brain that control emotions. This aroma can release chemicals in the body, making the body more relaxed and a good mood regulator. Aromatherapy can reduce stress, anxiety and fatigue (Supatmi, et al., 2024). Therefore, aromatherapy treatment is an alternative for reducing stress and anxiety levels (Sundara, A. K., et al., 2022).

Complementary midwifery services are part of the application of complementary and alternative medicine in midwifery services. Complementary midwifery services are an option for midwives and women to reduce medical interventions, one of which is during the postpartum period. The use of complementary therapies in the field of obstetrics must be proven safe through research. Complementary therapies are relatively safer (Hayati, F., 2022).

In the postpartum period, mothers experience fatigue and use lavender aromatherapy as a complementary therapy that can help postpartum mothers to relax and provide comfort, so that anxiety or stress does not occur (Destri U., Sarkiah, S., & Friscila, I., 2021).

The results of the research that has been carried out show that there is a difference in the anxiety of postpartum mothers who are given aromatherapy flower candles compared to postpartum mothers who are not given aromatherapy flower candles.

This is in accordance with research conducted by Y. Aulya (2021) with the results of giving treatment to mothers giving birth, namely before and after being given aromatherapy, anxiety levels decreased (Y. Aulya, 2021).

Aromatherapy by smelling and inhaling aromas containing essential oils can reach the circulatory system through the blood

capillaries of the tissue in the nose and bronchi in the lungs and stimulate the brain area directly through the olfactory epithelium. The mechanism of action of essential oils administered by inhalation involves stimulation of olfactory receptor cells in the nasal epithelium which is connected to the olfactory bulb (S.-S. TSAI, 2020).

This is also in line with research conducted by Sulistyorini (2020) which stated that there was a reduction in postpartum anxiety given lavender aromatherapy and facial massage in carrying out daily baby care, as shown by the results of the paired t-test analysis with a p value of 0.000 (Sulistyorini, 2020).

Aromatherapy can also improve sleep quality, reduce pain and anxiety. This is due to increasing alpha waves in the brain. These waves help to create a relaxed state (Achyar, K., & Azizah, 2019). Aromatherapy is used as an alternative to relax the body and plays a role in emotional regulation, overcoming disorders related to the nervous system, especially the central nervous system, such as insomnia, headaches, and anxiety or stress (Pratiwi, F., & Subarnas, A., 2020).

Other similar research was also conducted by Handayani (2023) which stated that giving a combination of hypnobreastfeeding and lavender aromatherapy was effective in reducing

postpartum mothers' anxiety, one of which was regarding breast milk production with a p value of 0.000. Midwives can provide counseling on how to reduce anxiety, one of which is by hypnobreastfeeding and giving lavender aromatherapy (Handayani, 2023).

Similar research was also conducted by Rahayu, et al. (2020) which states that lavender aroma therapy given to postpartum mothers, one of which is postpartum mothers with cesarean section, can help increase relaxation and reduce anxiety so that optimal health recovery for postpartum mothers and post cesarean section mothers can be achieved immediately, and the p value 0.0000 (Rahayu, et al., 2020).

Giving lavender aromatherapy affects the sleep quality of postpartum mothers, one of which is postpartum mothers with caesarean sections. Giving lavender aromatherapy shows that it can make oneself calm, balanced, comfortable, and there is a sense of openness and self-confidence. Apart from that, it is useful for reducing pressure, anxiety problems, pain, emotional imbalance, hysteria and frustration. Post partum mothers, one of whom is a postpartum mother with a caesarean section, experience difficulty sleeping due to pain in the section wound, which causes anxiety. Lavender aroma therapy has many benefits, especially for

reducing pain, and can make you feel comfortable and relax. Suggestions for postpartum mothers and postpartum mothers with caesarean section can apply the use of lavender aromatherapy and live their new role with good adaptation, can go through the postpartum period without worry, and feel supported in carrying out their new duties and roles, so that they can avoid feelings of anxiety during the postpartum period (Ropika, H., & Meliati, L., 2021).

Lavender aromatherapy can affect the limbic system in the brain, which is central to emotions, and is able to produce the hormones endorphins and enkephalins which have pain relieving properties, and serotonin which has the effect of relieving tension or stress and anxiety (Baroroh I., 2021).

A number of studies show that complementary therapy, especially using lavender aromatherapy, can increase feelings of comfort and can be used to prevent infection. The benefits that can be felt from lavender essential oil are relaxation, suppressing anxiety and increasing feelings of happiness. Lavender aromatherapy can increase alpha waves in the brain, where the function of these waves is to give a person a feeling of comfort and calm. The scent of lavender also provides a feeling of reassurance and can reduce

stress, hysteria, imbalance and excessive anxiety (Mayangsari D., Sari D. G., 2021). Another study conducted by Sa'idah, N., et al., (2022) stated that in postpartum mothers with normal deliveries there was a decrease in the intensity of pain in perineal suture wounds before and after lavender aromatherapy was given, where lavender aromatherapy had a significant effect in reducing pain in perineal suture wounds that occur in postpartum mothers. Lavender aromatherapy inhalation provides benefits as a traditional therapy option for postpartum mothers. Lavender aromatherapy can relieve pain, so that postpartum mothers can avoid feelings of anxiety during the postpartum period (Sa'idah, N., et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

The results of the research that has been carried out show that there is a difference in the anxiety of postpartum mothers who are given aromatherapy flower candles compared to postpartum mothers who are not given aromatherapy flower candles. The average anxiety in postpartum mothers who were given treatment or intervention (flower candle aromatherapy) was 0.77, while the average anxiety in postpartum mothers in the control group (psychological education) was 2.03. Likewise, the mean rank results show that postpartum mothers who were given treatment or intervention

(flower candle aromatherapy) had a lower average anxiety, namely 20.77, than postpartum mothers in the control group (psychological education), namely 40.23.

Based on statistical tests, it is known that the significance value is 0.000 (<0.05), meaning that there is a difference in anxiety in postpartum mothers who were given treatment or intervention (flower candle aromatherapy) compared to postpartum mothers in the control group (psychological education) with a mean difference of 1.26.

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