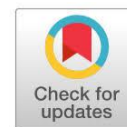


Application of antenatal care with a holistic approach in reducing anxiety



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ABSTRACT

For pregnant women, anxiety often comes and gets heavier near labor, plus they now must live side by side with COVID-19. Therefore, holistic antenatal care, which is thorough physical, psychological, emotional, social, and spiritual care is needed. This research aims to determine the application of antenatal care with a holistic approach to reducing maternal anxiety. This research employs a mixed method. The sample for this quantitative research was pregnant women in their third trimester at the *Sahabat Ibu dan Anak* Cliniq in Bandung, totaling 80 women (case and control) who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria from June-September 2021. The data were collected using the HRS-A questionnaire. Meanwhile, the qualitative research sample was carried out by purposive random sampling. The results of qualitative data collection were given in a case report. The results showed that the application of antenatal care with a holistic approach had an effect in reducing maternal anxiety levels during the new normal with a p-value of $0.007 < \alpha (0.05)$. In addition, the results showed that pregnancy checks with a holistic approach made the mother's delivery experience better than those with the previous approach, made the mothers calmer and able to control emotions, and increased spiritual confidence. In conclusion, antenatal care with a holistic approach had an effect in reducing anxiety.

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INTRODUCTION

Pregnancy and childbirth are natural processes that often create fear in women.(1) This is more or less influenced by panic and stress. For pregnant women, anxiety often comes and gets worse when they enter labor.(2) Fear-tension-pain concept is a fear of causing tension or panic that causes muscles to stiffen and ultimately increases morbidity rates for both the mother and the fetus.(3)(4) Depression, anxiety, and stress are some of the most common morbidities in pregnancy with a prevalence of 14% to 25% and even rival the rates of prenatal medical complications such as gestational diabetes and hypertension.(5) Psychological conditions such as this will have an impact on the outcomes of labor and postpartum. Stress during pregnancy can be concluded will affect the golden period in the first 1,000 days of life, which is 370 days during pregnancy and 730 days after birth, which is up to two years of life.(6)(7)

The anxiety increases as they are now faced with the adaptation to the new normal. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on all aspects of life. The mechanism for the spread of the COVID-19 virus causes panic and fear for some people, including pregnant women who need monitoring.(8) From the September 2020 data, the worldwide mortality rate was 2.1%. In Indonesia, 4.9% of the pregnant women group were confirmed positive for COVID-19 out of 1,483 confirmed cases with data on accompanying conditions. The data indicate that pregnant women, childbirth, postpartum, and newborns are also vulnerable targets for COVID-19 infection and it is feared that this condition will increase maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality.(8) Thus, this is certainly an additional challenge for midwives in creating reproductive experiences for women.

Two factors influence maternal anxiety during childbirth, namely biological and psychological factors where both influence each other.(6)(9) Due to this matter, care for mothers that start since pregnancy is needed so that they can be more prepared for childbirth. (7)(10) Basically, pregnancy care provided are health services by professional health workers for pregnant women that focus on promotive and preventive measures. It aims to lead pregnant women so that they can healthily give birth and have healthy babies and detect and anticipate early pregnancy and fetal abnormalities.(6) Midwives provide promotive care through talks. Antenatal care (ANC) is an important part of maternal health services and includes decision-making, screening for maternal diseases such as hypertension and anemia disorders, screening, preventing and managing infectious diseases, and providing prophylactic drugs and essential health education so it is considered important for early identification and management of high-risk pregnancy.(11)

Some antenatal services also apply several methods to create a pleasant reproductive experience to reduce anxiety in childbirth such as providing aroma therapy, self-emotional techniques, childbirth assistance, recital of Al-Qur'an verses, and several other relaxation techniques.(12) However, that alone is not enough. During the pandemic, everyone has their concerns, and even every mother has different causes and reasons for the anxiety experienced. Hence, midwives need to place women as partners with a holistic understanding of women, not only ensuring that pregnant women are physically healthy but also thoroughly healthy in their physical, psychological, mental, social, and spiritual conditions, namely by providing holistic care oriented on the needs of the client.

According to Jasemi(13), holistic is a complex concept and provides an in-depth understanding of patients and their various care needs and has important consequences in the system. Holistic care can contribute to patient satisfaction with health care and help them to accept and assume responsibility for themselves. Holistic midwifery care can be defined as a vague and subjective concept. In general, it describes approaches and interventions intended to meet the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of the patient.(14)(15) So, medical care alone is not enough to restore health. It also exposes the patient to serious threats, prolongs hospitalization, and increases the cost of care. In many countries, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and Iran, caring conditions are inappropriate. Many aspects of patient needs are forgotten. Health workers are too focused on physical care and ignore psychological, spiritual, and social aspects.(13)

Midwives have a philosophy that views the individual holistically, as a unified and complex whole, which has biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual aspects. All these aspects are interconnected. These five dimensions are needs that must be met during pregnancy. The failure to fulfill one aspect of the holistic dimension will affect the fulfillment of needs in the other four dimensions.(10)(16)(17) Following Kepmenkes (Decree of the Minister of Health) No. 320 of 2020 concerning midwifery professional standards that midwifery care provided needs to be holistic and humanistic based on evidence using midwifery care management approach, and pays attention to physical, psychological, emotional, socio-cultural, spiritual, economic, and environmental aspects. Therefore, holistic pregnancy care is needed during pregnancy in anticipating problems of

anxiety in childbirth that have an impact on the mother and fetus during the new normal and make childbirth a pleasurable reproductive experience.

Research conducted by Arini(18) in Bali showed that midwives as service providers must prioritize the provision of safe, comfortable, and inseparable midwifery care from the value of respect for local wisdom or local culture so that between service providers and service recipients there is a balance of relationships. The local wisdom in question is cultural customs, especially in Bali, which applies the *Tri Hita Karana* concept. The concept is divided into *Parahyangan, Pawongan, and Palemahan*. *Parahyangan* comes from the word *Hyang* which means *Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa* or God Almighty. Moreover, research by Balldacino(16) the essence of spiritual care is to perform where spirituality is personal and Self-therapeutic use contributes to effective holistic treatments. When taking inside consideration factors that may hinder and improve the provision of spiritual care, recommendations are proposed for the education, clinical, and management sectors for Further research and personal spirituality to improve the holistic care of patients.

In this current research, antenatal care is carried out through a holistic approach, which is oriented to the client's needs in the form of prenatal care, hypno-pregnancy with aromatherapy, prayers or recital of Al-Qur'an verses, and assistance from pregnancy check-ups to delivery or a combination of these various treatments.

This research aims to determine the application of antenatal care with a holistic approach in reducing maternal anxiety levels during the new normal.

METHOD

This research uses a combination of mixed methods with the results presented in a case report format related to the application, benefits, and constraints of pregnancy care with a holistic approach. The case group was given holistic midwifery care treatment according to the client's physical, psychological, cultural, and spiritual needs including a physical examination of pregnancy, hypno-pregnancy with aromatherapy, prayer or Al-Qur'an recital, as well as assistance during pregnancy and childbirth examinations or a combination of these various treatments. The process of collecting data on antenatal care used a holistic approach, which according to needs or care views women as a unified whole and complex. (10)(16) The measured of differences in anxiety levels in the case group who were given the care with a holistic approach and the control group who was given 10T antenatal care for third-trimester pregnant women. This research was conducted at *Klinik Sahabat Ibu dan Anak* (Mothers and Children's Friend Clinic) which has an orientation on comprehensive midwifery care and focuses on the needs of the client. This clinic has 80-90 near-delivery pregnant women per month. Seeing this phenomenon, there is a need for holistic maternity care, especially in reducing the level of labor anxiety in adapting to new habits.

The steps taken include conducting a physical examination, followed by a meeting that incorporates hypno-pregnancy as the opening gate for the mothers to convey or express their anxiety. Furthermore, the mothers were guided to eliminate the anxiety by various affirmations and relaxation techniques both psychologically, spiritually, and physically. If the anxiety is related to social/family and other aspects, the process was not only followed by the mothers but also their husbands or family members so that the holistic component can be fulfilled. The spiritual component was given through prayer or increased religious activities, (19)(9) The mothers were then given homework to do or practice relaxation techniques and replace their negative thoughts or anxiety with positive affirmations in hopes of changing their beliefs.(15)(20) Meanwhile, the control group was given prenatal care with the standard 10 T, counseling, and aromatherapy. After that, the difference in anxiety levels was assessed using the HRS-A questionnaire during the active phase of the first stage of labor between the case group who were given holistic care and the control group who received standard antenatal care at least 2 times during the third trimester of pregnancy. The sample in this research amounted to 80 third-trimester pregnant women consisting of

40 women assigned to the control group and 40 women assigned to the case group. Exclusion criteria in this study were mothers who experienced complications of pregnancy and childbirth and pregnant women who had a history and plan of cesarean delivery. The quantitative analysis used the unpaired *t*-test.

Meanwhile, the qualitative research sample was taken by purposive random sampling. There were five main informants and two supporting informants, namely the implementing midwives at the Klinik Sahabat Ibu dan Anak. The results of qualitative data collection were analyzed using transcription, reduction, coding, and categorization. This research received ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of STIKes Bakti Tunas Husada Tasikmalaya Number 166/kepk-bth/VII/2021.

RESULTS

Table 1. Characteristics of mothers in maternity at *Sahabat Ibu dan Anak* Cliniq Bandung

Characteristics	n	Min	Max	Mean
Age		18	42	27
Gravida	80	1	6	2
Parity		0	4	1

Based on Table 1, it can be inferred that the average age of 80 respondents is 27 years old. In addition, the highest number of pregnancies is 6, and the highest parity is 4.

Table 2. Occupation Overview of the mothers at the *Sahabat Ibu dan Anak* Cliniq Bandung

Occupation	f	Percentage%
Teacher	2	2.5
Housewife	62	77.5
Private Employee	7	8.8
Student	1	1.3
Private	2	2.5
Entrepreneur	6	7.5
Total	80	100

Based on Table 2, most of the mothers giving birth at Klinik Sahabat ibu dan Anak are housewives.

Table 3. Results of the effect of holistic midwifery care in reducing maternal anxiety during new normal at *Sahabat Ibu dan Anak* Cliniq Bandung

Group	Median	Min	Max	St. Deviation	p-value
Holistic	4	1	23	4.605	0.007
Control	7	1	35	8.226	

Based on Table 3, it is found that the anxiety of the holistic (case) group is 4 and the highest value is 23 while the control group is 7 and the highest value is 35. The results of the bivariate analysis obtained a p-value of $0.007 < (0.05)$ meaning that H_a is accepted. This

means that the application of antenatal care with a holistic approach had an effect in reducing the level of maternal anxiety in the new normal period.

Meanwhile, based on the research results, the informants participated in antenatal care with a holistic approach with enthusiasm. After conducting the hypnosis to 5 informants, 3 informants said that they were really worried about their unborn child, namely about them being disabled, infected with COVID-19, and having complications during childbirth. Another informant said that she was worried that her husband could not accompany her during the delivery because he was working outside the city. Meanwhile, another informant was worried that she would not be able to take care of her baby with the previous child being less than one year old and she was not working. Their anxiety can be seen in the following quotes:

".....I got scared, ma'am when I saw the news that many pregnant women and their babies died from COVID. I am scared that something bad will happen...."

"...What if I gave birth alone. My husband is still in Java, PPKM (the restrictions on community activities are still in effect, so he) cannot go home yet...."

"...I am sad, ma'am. The older sibling is still very young. What if I could not take care (of the baby)? Now everything is expensive. I don't have a job...."

In addition, the research results on postpartum informants in the group of mothers with holistic ANC showed that a holistic pregnancy examination makes the mother's delivery experience more enjoyable. The informants said that the laborers felt more comfortable and calmer, they could control their emotions when the pain arose, and they increased their spiritual belief that God always accompanies and protects His servants. The informants said that this time the delivery was different from the previous child—it felt faster.

The obstacle faced in antenatal care with a holistic approach is the implementer's ability to collect information, especially if the patient has difficulties concentrating. Moreover, the time needed by the midwives in carrying out holistic care was quite long considering that the care provided was based on the client's needs, and these needs vary.

DISCUSSION

For pregnant women, anxiety arises and escalates during labor. Psychological conditions such as this will have an impact on the outcomes of childbirth and postpartum. (6)(7) This anxiety increases when added to the new normal. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on all aspects of life. The mechanism for the spread of the COVID-19 virus causes panic and fear for some people, including pregnant women who need monitoring.(8)

To ensure good perinatal health, high-quality and easily accessible ANC is essential. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), ANC can be defined as care provided by skilled healthcare professionals to female adolescents and pregnant women to ensure the best possible health conditions for both mothers and babies during pregnancy. ANC components include risk identification; prevention and management of pregnancy-related or concomitant diseases; and health education and Health promotion. ANC is also intended to provide support and guidance to parents and families to help ensure a positive experience for all. However, that alone is not enough, during this pandemic, each person's concerns and even every mother has different causes and reasons for the anxiety she experiences; therefore, midwives need to place women as partners with a holistic understanding.(14)(15) Based on the research results, the median of the control group (mothers who were given standardized antenatal care) was 7 and the highest score was 35. This indicates that there is a high level of anxiety among the respondents. This is following research conducted by Kingston, et al.(5) that anxiety is the most common morbidity in pregnancy. This is indeed harmful during and after pregnancy: it has short and long-term consequences for women's health, affects mother-child interactions, and increases the risk of various ongoing emotional, behavioral, and cognitive problems in children.(21)

It also shows that integrated ANC is also not enough, client-centred care is needed. For example, research that has been done by applying pregnancy care with a holistic approach can reduce the number of anxiety in childbirth, with a median value of 4 and the highest anxiety value of 23, meaning moderate anxiety. This is in line with the research that has been done by Arini(18) the application of holistic midwifery care based on Tri Hita Karana can create harmony and harmony between religious creatures, so that patients can recover quickly. According to Jasemi in his 2017 research, using only medical care is not enough to restore health but also exposes patients to serious threats, prolonging hospitalization and increasing treatment costs.(22)

Based on the results in Table 3, the p-value is 0.007 (<0.05), which means that there was an effect of pregnancy care with an antenatal approach in reducing anxiety in childbirth. This is similar to Poplar's 2014 study on holistic care for high-risk pregnant women. Clinical care is necessary but emotional reassurance, comfort in an emergency, touch, and spirituality increases the time of the healing process and reduces pregnancy risks and complications.(23) It is also following the philosophy of midwifery, which views the individual holistically, as a unified and complex whole that has biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual aspects. All these aspects are interconnected. These five dimensions are needs that must be met during pregnancy. Failure to fulfill one aspect of the holistic dimension will affect the fulfillment of needs in the other four dimensions.(10)(16)

According to Jasemi(13), holistic is a complex concept and provides an in-depth understanding of patients and their various care needs and has important consequences in the system. Holism can contribute to patient satisfaction with health care and help them to accept and assume responsibility for themselves. This is following the results of the interview in which the informant stated that the delivery was more comfortable, and calm, and they could control emotions when pain arose, and the care increased spiritual belief that God always accompanies and protects His servants. Even the informant said that the delivery was different from the previous one and that it felt faster. This will certainly increase client satisfaction with the service.

Holistic means 'whole'. Whereas a holistic view has a broad meaning in building a complete, healthy, and balanced human life, related to all aspects of the elements of life such as physical, emotional, spiritual, moral, imaginative, intellectual, cultural, and aesthetic aspects. Therefore, 'healthy' is not only about the physical aspect, but more than that, healthy is a synergy of mind, body, and spirit. Efforts in the aspect of healing are, of course, based on a scientific process. Because the human body is a very complex integrated system, and the components influence one another.(15)(16)

According to Hollander and Miranda(24), several things need to be applied in providing holistic midwifery care, including relationships as a basis for empowerment, and client-centered care. and future orientation. Thus, the care provided can address the needs of the patients. Using medical care alone is not enough to restore health. It also exposes the patient to serious threats, prolongs hospitalization, and increases the cost of care. In many countries, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and Iran, many aspects of the patient's needs are neglected and the health workers are too focused on physical care and ignore psychological, spiritual, and social aspects.(13)

In pregnancy care with a holistic approach, hypnosis is a way for pregnant women to convey their concerns so that the care provided is following their needs. Hypnosis is an effective method of communication to enter new information or ideas into one's subconscious mind, including oneself. In self-hypnosis we have a specific goal, namely to instill positive intentions in the subconscious. This will make a person's soul calmer, more centered, and less stressed.¹¹ Hypnosis builds positive perceptions and self-confidence and reduce fear, anxiety, tension, and panic before, during, and after childbirth. Hypno-pregnancy is a new paradigm in reducing anxiety during childbirth.(15) Holistic medicine is often equated with complementary or alternative medicine, such as acupuncture, Ayurveda, and homeopathy. In complementary therapy, traditional and alternative interventions and

treatments are intended to produce emotional well-being, healthier lifestyles, and more satisfaction in the long term.

The relationship between the midwife and the patient is based on relative openness, equality, and mutuality. The healthcare provider's need for care and support is treated as important as the patient's. Health is believed to come from a balance between a person's physical, spiritual, psychological, and social dimensions.

In carrying out midwifery care with a holistic approach, of course, there are obstacles to be faced. Based on data from supporting informants, the obstacle is the ability of the implementer to collect information, especially if the patient has difficulties concentrating on the implementation of hypnosis. In addition, the time needed by midwives in carrying out pregnancy care with this holistic approach is quite lengthy considering that the care provided is based on the client's needs which can vary. This is following research conducted by Jasemi(13) that holistic midwifery care is a vague and subjective concept. In general, it describes approaches and interventions intended to meet the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of the patient. (14)·(15)

CONCLUSION

Antenatal care with a holistic approach had an effect in reducing anxiety during the new normal period. It is necessary to apply holistic care in antenatal care that is oriented to the client's needs hopefully to reduce morbidity and mortality, especially complications caused by anxiety.

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