

Emotional Freedom Therapy (EFT) As an Effort to Improve Post Partum Mother's Preparedness in Facing Pre-Disaster

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Abstract

Indonesia is a country that is vulnerable to natural disasters. Natural disasters cannot be predicted when they will occur. Natural disasters can impact anyone, children, parents, adults, pregnant women, giving birth, and breastfeeding women. The impact of natural disasters can cause anxiety at various ages, including postpartum mothers. If this happens, the mother may experience a decrease in breast milk production so that exclusive breastfeeding fails. This community service aims to increase the knowledge and skills of postpartum mothers and cadres regarding EFT in reducing maternal anxiety and increasing the smooth production of breast milk. Activities were carried out in Setiawargi village, Tasikmalaya city. The method used is training in small groups, using demonstration techniques by service providers and re-demonstration by postpartum mothers and cadres. The media used in the training are audio-visual broadcast materials and EFT videos. The activity results showed an increase in the knowledge and skills of postpartum mothers and cadres regarding EFT in reducing maternal anxiety and increasing the smoothness of breast milk production as preparedness in facing pre-disaster conditions.

Keywords: EFT, disaster preparedness, postpartum

INTRODUCTION

Disasters and emergencies can cause significant problems with infant nutrition. During the first six months postpartum, babies must be exclusively breastfed and must continue to be breastfed until they are one year old or more (DeYoung & Mangum, 2021). Protecting the rights of breastfeeding mothers in emergencies is related to the hope of reducing the death rate of infants under five in the post-disaster period due to diarrhea (MirMohamadaliie et al., 2019; Khajehaminian et al., 2019). Although breastfeeding is considered a natural physiological process, many postpartum women experience breastfeeding anxiety. Anxiety related to maternal stress reduces breast milk production by inhibiting the milk ejection reflex, disrupting the release of oxytocin, and has detrimental physiological effects on breastfeeding such as reducing the incidence of Early Breastfeeding Initiation (IMD), reducing the duration of breastfeeding, reducing the incidence of exclusive breastfeeding (Nguyen & Aduna, 2020; Hoff et al., 2019). Difficulty breastfeeding can also have an impact on mental health, including depression (Coo et al., 2020).

Ways to overcome stress and anxiety while breastfeeding include relaxation, meditation (relaxation exercises, guided imagery, music therapy, yoga, *progressive muscle relaxation*), music, lighting relaxation and a combination of the three can increase breast milk production, cortisol levels, anxiety-related behavior, and self-reported relaxation and anxiety (Yu et al., 2018; Nguyen & Aduna, 2020).

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) is a non-pharmaceutical therapy that can independently reduce stress, anxiety, and pain. EFT therapy can help overcome stress by reducing levels of the hormone cortisol which known as the stress hormone. If levels in the body increase, a person will experience stress. Meanwhile, the hormone cortisol has the effect of inhibiting the release and activity of the hormone oxytocin which is needed for the process of producing breast milk (Bach et al., 2019). EFT can make the part of the brain that regulates a person's emotions work more effectively, thereby reducing stress. Reducing stress is a positive thing for efforts to increase the effectiveness of breastfeeding.

Setiawargi Village is the working area of Tamansari Community Health Center, Tasikmalaya, and has a population of 12,967 people. Setiawargi Village has 34 postpartum mothers in the 3rd quarter of 2023. The distance from the village to the Tamansari Health Center is relatively far, which causes postpartum mothers to have many obstacles in having their babies and themselves checked. With the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, everyone is worried, including postpartum mothers. This causes postpartum mothers to experience a decrease in breast milk production. Therefore, this community service activity aims: to increase the knowledge and skills of postpartum mothers and cadres regarding EFT in reducing maternal anxiety as an effort to increase preparedness in dealing with pre-disasters.

METHOD

Community service activities were carried out in Setiawargi village, Tasikmalaya city. The method of implementing activities is training in small groups. Training is carried out using discussion, demonstration, and re-demonstration. The servant explains about anxiety, factors that influence anxiety, the impact of unmanaged anxiety, the goals and benefits of EFT, and steps for implementing EFT. Demonstration of EFT implementation carried out by service providers. Redemonstration carried out by postpartum mothers.



Figure 1. Flowchart of community service activities

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Characteristics of PKM Activity Participants

Variable	n	%
Parity:		
Primipara	17	77,27
Multiparous	5	22,72
Exclusive Of breastfeeding:		
Yes	15	68,18
No	7	31,81
Types of childbirth:		
Vaginal	19	86,36
SC	3	13,63

Table 1 shows that 17 postpartum mothers had just had their first child (primipara) (77.27%). 15 mothers gave exclusive breastfeeding (68.18%). The type of delivery was vaginal as many as 19 people (86.36%).

Table 2. Average Anxiety Score for Breastfeeding Mothers before and after EFT Training in breastfeeding mothers (n = 22)

Variable	Mean	SD	Min –Max
Anxiety Score Before EFT	16,64	6,19	10 – 32
Anxiety Scores After EFT	8,32	2,59	4 – 14

Table 2 shows that the average anxiety score for breastfeeding mothers before receiving EFT training was 16.64, and after receiving EFT training was 8.32. Anxiety scores in breastfeeding mothers changed between before and after receiving EFT training.

Table 3. Average breast milk fluency score for breastfeeding mothers before and after receiving EFT training for breastfeeding mothers (n=22)

Variable	Mean	SD	Min –Max
Breastfeeding Fluency Score Before EFT Training	58,24	24,52	20 – 100
Breastfeeding Fluency Score After EFT Training	85,60	13,90	60 – 120

Table 3 shows that the average score of breast milk fluency for breastfeeding mothers before receiving EFT training was 58.63, and after receiving EFT training was 61.10. The mother's breastfeeding fluency score changed between before and after EFT training.

Disasters can be defined as events or series of events that threaten and disrupt people's lives and livelihoods caused by natural, non-natural, or human factors. These events can cause

casualties, environmental damage, property loss, and psychological consequences (BNBP, 2007). The COVID-19 pandemic has led to poor responses to global disasters, including its psychological impact and ongoing economic hardship (Sheek-Hussein et al., 2021). Disasters and mental health have extensive relationships; Disasters can affect the communities affected by them. Mental instability, which can lead to Anxiety, Depression, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), occurs alongside social and economic disadvantage. In general, disaster measures are based on social and economic damage, but these measures are not commensurate with the emotional suffering people experience after a disaster (Makwana, 2019). Uncertainty, fear, and confusion in the medical, social, economic, occupational, and political aspects of life in the US add to the stressors experienced by perinatal women (Chen et al., 2020). Because Indonesia is a country that has many areas with a high risk of disasters, disaster mitigation and preparedness must be owned by everyone, including postpartum mothers.

Anxiety is a condition in which several physiological responses are produced, accompanied by feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression in various scenarios where a person feels threatened. Situational anxiety is a temporary emotional state with varying levels of intensity over time that occurs as a result of the individual feeling threatened in a particular situation. It is characterized by unpleasant sensations, such as sadness and tension, caused by stimulation of the central nervous system (Inangil et al., 2020). Anxiety in postpartum mothers can affect the condition of the mother and baby. Psychological stress can influence the hypothalamus and pituitary gland to secrete Adrenocorticotrophic Hormone to produce cortisol. High amounts of cortisol result in hampered breast milk production (Ayu Muthiatulsalimah et al., 2022; Fatmawati et al., 2022; Wahyuni et al., 2021). There are many ways to overcome anxiety using non-pharmacological methods, including Emotional Freedom Therapy (EFT) (Fadli et al., 2020).

EFT is a new therapy that combines cognitive and somatic elements. A systematic review and meta-analysis have demonstrated its efficacy for physiological and psychological symptoms (Bach et al., 2019). It is a combination of elements used in exposure therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). Somatic stimulation is carried out through the distribution of twelve acupressure points on the patient's hands, body, and head. As a result, this technique is often referred to as "Tapping". The subject describes and visualizes certain distressing events or memories while stimulating these acupressure points one by one. Each element is then linked to a reframing statement of self-acceptance. This statement is usually uttered by the EFT practitioner and repeated by the patient over and over again. In this way, the patient can maintain his focus on the chosen problem while repeating statements of self-acceptance, which helps him redevelop the chosen problem (Friel, 2019; König et al., 2019). One of the benefits when anxiety disappears in postpartum mothers is that it increases the smooth production of breast milk (Ayu Muthiatulsalimah et al., 2022).

CONCLUSIONS And RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions related to community service activities that there was a significant increase in the knowledge and skills of postpartum mothers and cadres in reducing anxiety and there was an increase in the smooth flow of breastfeeding.

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