

## **The Effect of Relaxation Therapy with Aromatherapy on Community Anxiety during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Cikaret Village, West Java in 2020**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The prevalence of the number of COVID-19 patients is increasing day by day. The Covid-19 Task Force announced the number of COVID-19 patients in Indonesia as of January 7, 2021 as many as 797,723, in West Java as many as 92,547 cases and in Bogor Regency there were 5,709 positive cases. This condition creates an impact of fear and anxiety on the whole community, causing anxiety. For this reason, there needs to be a handling of the anxiety experienced by the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the study stated that 54% of adolescent anxiety levels are in the high category because adolescents are said to be unstable in facing unexpected conditions. Providing relaxation therapy with aromatherapy is able to reduce anxiety in the community. This study aims to determine the effect of giving relaxation therapy with aromatherapy on public anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study used a quasi-experimental pre-post-test one group design. The sample in this study amounted to 30 people, consisting of adolescents 12-24 years. The sampling technique used total sampling. The research instrument consisted of the HARS anxiety questionnaire and aromatherapy. The data were analyzed using non-parametric tests, namely paired samples T-Test. The results showed that there was a significant effect on anxiety scores before and after being given relaxation therapy with aromatherapy with a sig. (2-tailed) of  $0.000 < 0.005$ . Relaxation therapy with aromatherapy can reduce anxiety for the public during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is hoped that people who experience anxiety can use aromatherapy independently.

**Keywords:** Anxiety during the Covid-19 Pandemic, Aromatherapy, Relaxation Therapy

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**BACKGROUND**

The world is being hit by a pandemic (COVID-19) which is quite worrying nowadays. Almost all countries in the world have experienced this COVID-19 pandemic, including Indonesia (Widiyani, 2020), (Roosinda & Suryandaru, 2020). COVID-19, is a new type of virus (Zulva, 2020) that was discovered in 2019 and has never been identified as attacking humans before (World Health Organization, 2019). The number of Covid patients in Indonesia is still increasing thus far. The Covid-19 Task Force (Satgas Covid-19) announced that the number of COVID-19 patients in Indonesia as of January 7th, 2021 reached 797,723 cases, while in West Java reached 92,547 cases and in kabupaten Bogor were 5,709 positive cases.

That condition created an impact of fear and anxiety on all members of the community. This sudden condition made people not ready to face it, physically or psychologically (Sabir & Phil, 2016). The psychological conditions experienced by the community was a sense of anxiety if they are infected (Fitria, 2020), (Hanifah, Yusuf Hasan, Nanda Noor, Tatang Agus, & Muhammad, 2020).

Anxiety is a vague feeling of discomfort or worry accompanied by an autonomous response (source unknown to the individual) so that the individual will increase alertness to anticipate (NANDA, 2015). This anxiety is also experienced by teenagers (Gozali, Tjahyo, & Vidyarini, 2018), because they are still unstable in facing unexpected conditions (Tjukup, Putra, Yustiawan, & Usfunan, 2020). The results of this study stated that 54% of adolescent anxiety levels were in the high category.

Based on research, this is most likely due to the lack of information obtained by adolescents related to the Covid-19 pandemic (Purwanto et al., 2020). Of course, the anxiety condition experienced by adolescents during this pandemic cannot be ignored (Harirah & Rizaldi, 2020). Anxiety can be measured by measuring the level of anxiety according to an anxiety measuring tool called the HARS (Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale). The HARS scale is a golden measurement based on individuals experiencing anxiety. (Anif, 2012).

One of the ways that can be done to overcome anxiety is relaxation therapy using aromatherapy. Relaxation is an action to free mentally and physically from tension and stress so that it can increase tolerance to pain (Andarmoyo, 2013). Aromatherapy is a non-pharmacological type that uses high concentration essential oils extracted from plants and given through massage, inhalation, mixed with bath water, compressed through mucous membranes in the form of perisarium or suppository and sometimes in pure form. Even though the aroma holds an important role in influencing the natural feeling, in fact, the chemical substances contained in various types of oil work pharmacologically and it can be increased depending on the type of delivery method (Hidayat, 2010).

**METHODS**

This type of research used a quasi-experimental design using pre-test and post-test without control group design. The sample used was 30 people, consisting of adolescents aged 12-24 years old. The sampling technique used total sampling. The research instrument consisted of the HARS anxiety questionnaire and aromatherapy. The data were analyzed using a non-parametric test, namely the chi-square X2 test to determine the difference in scores in one group.

**RESULT**

The results of research on the effect of relaxation therapy with aromatherapy are presented in the following table:

Table 1.  
Respondents Age Frequency

Usia	Frekuensi	%
18	2	6,7
19	4	13,3
20	7	23,3
21	13	43,3
22	4	13,3
Total	30	100

Table 1 shows that the most respondents aged, which are 21 years old, were 13 people (43.3%).

Table 2.  
Respondent Occupation Frequency

Pekerjaan	Frekuensi	%
Tidak Bekerja	4	13,3
Buruh	1	3,3
PNS	0	0
Swasta	6	20
Wirausaha	0	0
Pelajar/Mahasiswa	19	63,3
Total	30	100

Table 2 shows that the respondents with the highest frequency of work were students with a total of 19 people (63.3%).

Table 3.  
Respondents' Education Frequency

Pendidikan	Frekuensi	%
Tidak Tamat SD	0	0
SD	0	0
SMP	0	0
SMA	26	86,7
Perguruan Tinggi	4	13,3
Total	30	100

Table 3 shows that respondents with the highest education frequency were SMA with a total of 26 people (86.7)

Table 4.  
Frequency of Respondent Gender

Jenis Kelamin	Frekuensi	%
Laki-laki	10	33,3
Perempuan	20	66,7
Total	30	100

Table 4 shows that the respondents with the highest gender frequency were 20 women (66.7%)

Table 5.  
Frequency of Respondents' Pre-Test Anxiety Scores

Kecemasan	Frekuensi	Persentase (%)
Tidak ada Kecemasan	0	0
Kecemasan Ringan	21	70
Kecemasan Sedang	7	23,3
Kecemasan Berat	2	6,7
Kecemasan Berat Sekali	0	0
Total	30	100

Table 5 shows that the respondents with the highest level of anxiety in the pre-test group were mild anxiety as many as 21 people (70%).

Table 6.  
The Frequency of Respondents' Post-Test Anxiety Scores

Kecemasan	Frekuensi	Persentase (%)
Tidak ada Kecemasan	20	66,7
Kecemasan Ringan	9	30
Kecemasan Sedang	1	3,3
Kecemasan Berat	0	0
Kecemasan Berat Sekali	0	0
Total	30	100

Table 6 shows that the respondents with the highest level of anxiety in the Post-test group were no anxiety with a total of 20 people (66.7%).

Table 7  
Paired Samples T-Test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Std. Error Mean
Kelompok Pre-test –	30	18.67	4.838	0.000	0.640
Kelompok post-test	30	11.97	3.873		

Table 7 shows that there is an effect of giving relaxation techniques with aromatherapy on anxiety.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **The Age of The Respondent**

The frequency distribution table of respondents based on age shows that the most respondents were 13 teenagers aged 21 (43.3%), 2 teenagers aged 18 (6.7%), 4 teenagers aged 19 (13.3%), 7 teenagers aged 20 (23.3%), and 4 teenagers aged 22 (13.3%).

Based on research (PH et al., 2018), one of the factors that influence anxiety is age. It plays an important role because different ages mean different stages of development. This anxiety is also experienced by teenagers (Gozali, Tjahyo, & Vidyarani, 2018), because they are still unstable in facing unexpected conditions (Tjukup, Putra, Yustiawan, & Usfunan, 2020). The emotional condition of adolescents will be easily shaken, such as excessive anxiety, fear of contracting by the virus and so on (Dani & Mediantara, 2020). The Covid-19 that occurs will add to the storm and pressure and even cause anxiety on adolescents. Indonesia experiences an increase in anxiety every year. It is estimated that 20% of the world's population experiences anxiety and 47.7% of them are adolescents (Hasibuan & Riyandi, 2019). Researchers assume that age can influence anxiety. Especially in adolescence, because adolescence is a transitional phase from children to adults so that there are some changes both physically and psychologically. One of the psychological changes is emotion, so it is easier to experience anxiety.

### **Occupation**

The frequency distribution table of respondents based on occupation shows that the highest frequency respondents were students that reach 19 teenagers (63.3%), 4 unemployed workers (13.3%), 1 laborer (3.3%), and 6 teenagers who work in private sector (20%).

Based on research, the feelings of anxiety experienced by students are not always associated with mental or mental disorders, this can be caused by a form of adaptation to new conditions (Chodijah, 2020). Students experience more anxiety not only because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is also caused by distance learning factors. In accordance with research (Chodijah et al., 2020; Kristianto et al., 2013) that anxiety in students with distance learning, especially in covid-19 pandemic, can cause ongoing anxiety and have an impact on decreasing student achievement and student's disability to fulfill their roles and obligations. If they are not immediately controlled and handled, researchers assume that based on theory and previous research, it is proven that work affects anxiety levels

### **Education**

The frequency distribution table of respondents based on education shows that the most of respondents (26 teenagers) get high school degree (86.7%), and 4 people get higher education (13.3%).

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### **Gender**

The sex frequency distribution table shows that the respondents with the highest gender group were women (66.7%), the rest are men (33.3%).

The results of research from Maryam et al in (Vellyana et al., 2017) states that the gender factor can significantly affect a person's anxiety level. The study stated that female has more potential to experience anxiety than male, the difference the brain and hormones are the main factors. It is estimated that the number who suffer from acute and chronic anxiety reaches 5% of the total population with a ratio of 2 to 1 between women and men (Hawari, 2013). Kaplan and Sadock in Suherman (2016) stated that anxiety occurs more in women. Women have a high level of anxiety due to excessive autonomic nervous reactions with an increase in the sympathetic system, an increase in norepineprine, an increase in the release of cotelamin, and the presence of abnormal serotonergic regulation disorders. Giddens et al., (2012) also shows that women experience more anxiety than men. Researchers assume that based on theory and previous research, it is proven that gender affects a person's anxiety level. Researchers assume that women experience anxiety more easily due to hormonal factors, especially during menstruation, pregnancy hormonal changes in women so that there are emotional changes and women think more using feelings. Thus, women experience anxiety more easily than men.

### **Anxiety Before Intervention**

The results of the pre-test group distribution table shows that the respondents with the highest level of anxiety were 21 people with mild anxiety (70%), 7 people with moderate



anxiety (23.3%), and 2 people with severe anxiety (6.7 %). From the above statement it can be concluded that the respondents with the highest level of anxiety in the Pre-test group were mild anxiety as many as 21 people (70%).

Based on the results of research by Hasibuan & Riyandi, 2019, it is stated that the Covid-19 that occurs will increase the storm and pressure and cause anxiety on adolescents. The rate of anxiety in Indonesia continues to increase every year. It is estimated that 20% of the world's population suffer from anxiety and 47.7% of them are adolescents. According to research by Manurung Nixson (2016), it was found that mild anxiety is related to tension in everyday life, this anxiety causes a person to be alert and increases the field of perception. The coping mechanism possessed by a person with mild anxiety has a positive effect on him, so that the level of anxiety that he/she experiences is only at a mild level of anxiety. Researchers assume that based on theory and previous research it is proven that Covid-19 period is affected a person's anxiety level to a different degree. As time goes by, the public understands more about the Covid-19 pandemic, so that the highest level of anxiety that is obtained in January 2021 is mild anxiety.

### **Anxiety After Intervention**

The results of the study showed that the respondent's level of anxiety in the Post-test group, those who did not experience anxiety were 20 people (66.7%), mild anxiety was 9 people (30%), moderate anxiety was 1 person (3.3%). It can be concluded that the respondents with the highest level of anxiety in the Post-test group were no anxiety as many as 20 people (66.7%).

The results of this study are in accordance with the results of previous studies. Kritsidima, Newton, and Asimakopoulou (2010) reported in their study that giving lavender aromatherapy to clients with dental problems significantly reduced anxiety levels when compared to the group that was not given lavender ( $p = 0.001$ ). Research conducted by Woelk and Schlafke (2010) also shows that giving lavender is very effective in reducing generalized anxiety levels compared to giving lorazepam. The results of a study by Conrad, et al (2012) show that giving aromatherapy can significantly reduce the level of anxiety and depression in high-risk childbirth women. Another study conducted by Warjiman, et al (2016) stated that of the 10 respondents after being given lavender inhalation aromatherapy, the anxiety level fell into the mild anxiety category of 8 respondents (80%). Researchers assume that based on theory and previous research it is proven that there is a significant effect on the provision of relaxation techniques by giving aromatherapy to anxiety. Because relaxation techniques can be useful for stretching and increasing oxygenation and aromatherapy, one of which is cortisol, which can provide a calming effect, thereby reducing anxiety.

### **Effect of Anxiety Before and after being given relaxation therapy with aromatherapy.**

Based on the results of the Paired Samples T-Test, it can be concluded that there is a difference in the mean of respondents for the pre-test group and the post-test group, with a sig. (2-tailed) of  $0.000 < 0.005$ .

This study is in accordance with the results of research conducted by Kiani, et al (2016) which stated that lavender inhalation aromatherapy significantly reduced anxiety levels from  $13.86 \pm 6.91$  to  $6.04 \pm 5.35$ . According to Afrianti et al (2015) Lavender aromatherapy is a therapy that uses essential oils which are considered to help reduce and even overcome psychological disorders and comfort disorders such as anxiety, stress, depression, and so on. Ricintia, et al. (2017) states that student evidence results from the

identification of the effect of stress levels on semester VI class VIII students at the time of OSCE before giving lavender aromatherapy relaxation techniques is 100% with moderate stress levels. Researchers assume that there is a change between the pre-test and post-test anxiety level scores, with different anxiety reduction scores for every individual, some post-test scores drop dramatically but some have a slight decrease in anxiety scores, because when the intervention was done there were several respondents who are less focused and the environmental situation is less supportive, such as noise and so on, so it different with respondents whose focus and environment are supportive.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, the conclusion of this study is that the provision of aromatherapy with relaxation techniques has a significant effect on reducing anxiety levels in Cikaret Village, West Java.

It is expected that respondents, especially those who experience anxiety, choose recommendations for the use of aromatherapy with relaxation techniques to overcome anxiety, and they can do it independently.

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