



The Effect of Classical Music Therapy and Expressive Writing Combination on Anxiety Scores of Primigravid Pregnant Women in the Third Trimester at Cibereum Public Health Center in Tasikmalaya City

Selvia Dewi^{1*}, Peni Cahyati², Ridwan Kustiawan³, Dudi Hartono⁴

¹²³⁴ Department of Nursing, D4 Nursing and Nursing Profession Major,

Tasikmalaya Ministry of Health Polytechnic

correspondence email: *selviadewi551@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Primigravida pregnant women in the third trimester are prone to anxiety triggered by uncertainty before giving birth and adapting to the new role as parents. Excessive anxiety risks causing negative impacts on maternal and fetal health, such as sleep disorders, preeclampsia, premature birth, and low birth weight. Therefore, effective non-pharmacological interventions are needed to help reduce anxiety levels in pregnant women. This study aims to determine the effect of a combination of classical music therapy and expressive writing on anxiety scores of primigravida pregnant women in the third trimester at the Cibereum Health Center, Tasikmalaya City. This study used a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design and a one group pretest-posttest approach. The research sample consisted of 26 respondents selected by purposive sampling. The intervention in the form of classical music therapy and expressive writing was given for three consecutive days with a duration of 20–30 minutes per session. Anxiety scores were measured using the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HARS) before and after the intervention. Data analysis used the paired sample t-test statistical test. The results showed a significant decrease in anxiety scores after being given a combination of classical music therapy and expressive writing. The p value obtained was 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), which indicated that the difference before and after the intervention was statistically significant. The combination of classical music therapy and expressive writing has been proven effective in reducing anxiety scores in primigravida pregnant women in the third trimester. This intervention is recommended as a non-pharmacological alternative that can be applied in primary health services to support the mental health of pregnant women.

Keywords: *Anxiety, classical music therapy, expressive writing, primigravida pregnant women, trimester III*

INTRODUCTION

Pregnancy is a phase filled with physical, social, and emotional changes, especially for primigravida pregnant women, i.e., those experiencing their first pregnancy. The third trimester is the final trimester of pregnancy. During this final trimester, there will be many psychological changes from before due to the increasing age of the pregnancy. This first pregnancy often causes various anxieties, due to fears about the uncertainty of the pregnancy process, childbirth, and the responsibilities of parenthood (Noviana Sari et al., 2024).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2020, the rate of anxiety during pregnancy ranges from 8-10%, increasing to 12% as delivery approaches. In Indonesia, out of 373 million pregnant women, around 107 million or 28.7% experience anxiety, especially as delivery approaches (Sutriningsih et al., 2024). Data from the Indonesian Ministry of Health in 2020 shows that 43.3% of pregnant women experience anxiety, and 48.7% feel anxious when facing childbirth. In 2023, in West Java, 36.2% of pregnant women experienced anxiety when facing childbirth (Oktya et al., 2024).

Based on a number of previous studies, it is known that the psychological condition of first-time mothers differs from that of mothers who have given birth before

(Nasrudin et al., 2025). This difference is due to the lack of experience of mothers who are pregnant and giving birth for the first time, so they tend to feel uncertain and anxious when facing the delivery process. In addition, mothers may also experience physical discomfort, feel tired and weak, and are often overwhelmed with concerns about the well-being of their fetus (Debora Kote & Susanti, 2024). Alternative therapies can be an effective solution for overcoming anxiety in pregnant women. Several methods that can be used include art therapy, music therapy, and expressive writing (Perceka, 2020). Art therapy is defined as an activity that utilizes art as a medium for self-expression with the aim of conveying feelings, not merely assessing beauty or producing works that are judged by others. However, based on research conducted by Pratidina & Yudiarso (2021), This therapy is considered ineffective in reducing anxiety levels. Using Cohen's effect size analysis, it shows that the impact of therapy on reducing anxiety is relatively low. In contrast, music therapy has been proven to provide calmness and comfort for mothers and fetuses, creating a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere, while significantly improving mood and reducing stress (Parung et al., 2020). In addition, expressive writing is an effective method for expressing emotions through writing,

allowing individuals to release feelings such as anxiety in a healthy and controlled manner. By channeling emotions in writing, this therapy can help reduce stress and encourage more positive and adaptive behavioral changes (Wiwin Dolang et al., 2022).

In addition, expressive writing is an effective method for expressing emotions through writing, allowing individuals to release feelings such as anxiety in a healthy and controlled manner. By channeling emotions in writing, this therapy can help reduce stress and encourage more positive behavioral changes (Perceka, 2020). The combination of classical music therapy and expressive writing was chosen because the two complement each other in reducing anxiety in pregnant women. Music therapy has been proven effective in creating calmness, improving mood, and significantly reducing stress (... et al., n.d.). Meanwhile, expressive writing allows individuals to channel their emotions in a healthy and controlled manner, thereby helping to reduce anxiety and encourage more adaptive behavioral changes (Wahyudin & Perceka, 2019). Compared to art therapy, which is considered less effective in reducing anxiety, the combination of music therapy and expressive writing provides a more optimal approach to managing anxiety in pregnant women.

Classical music therapy is an approach that involves the use of music and elements such as sound, rhythm, melody, and harmony by a professional therapist to achieve specific therapeutic goals. Studies by Debora Kote & Susanti (2024), shows that the results of the research in this journal indicate that anxiety decreased significantly after a week of music therapy lasting 7 minutes per day. By creating a calmer atmosphere, classical music therapy can help relieve the tension felt by individuals. Another advantage is that classical music therapy is easily accessible and relatively inexpensive, making it an affordable option for those who want to manage stress and anxiety (Berek et al., 2020).

Expressive writing therapy in a study conducted at the Kramat Jati Subdistrict Health Center showed that expressive writing therapy was effective in reducing anxiety in postpartum mothers (Ilsa Fahrina Savira, 2022). Research from V. Boominathan et al. (2022) It also proves that expressive writing therapy is an effective method for reducing test anxiety in adolescents. In the context of education, where test anxiety is often a major obstacle for many students, this therapy offers a practical and affordable solution (V. Boominathan et al., 2022).

Based on data from the Tasikmalaya City Health Office in 2024, there were

11,660 pregnant women in the Tasikmalaya City area. Of the 22 community health centers in Tasikmalaya City, the Cibereum community health center had the highest number of pregnant women and was one of the highest in Tasikmalaya City. Based on preliminary study results, the prevalence of pregnant women at the Cibereum Community Health Center, Tasikmalaya City.

RESEARCH METHODS

Based on data from the Tasikmalaya City Health Office in 2024, there were 11,660 pregnant women in the Tasikmalaya City area. Of the 22 community health centers in Tasikmalaya City, the Cibereum community health center had the highest number of pregnant women and was one of the highest in Tasikmalaya City. Based on preliminary study results, the prevalence of pregnant women at the Cibereum Community Health Center, Tasikmalaya City.

The population in this study consisted of 49 primigravida pregnant women in their third trimester who experienced anxiety at the Cibereum Community Health Center in Tasikmalaya City. The sample was taken using non-probability sampling technique, namely purposive sampling with the following inclusion criteria: 1) Primigravida pregnant women in their third trimester who

experienced anxiety with a score of more than 15, 2) Pregnancy age within a specific range (28-40 weeks), 3) Patients were present during data collection, 4) Did not have hearing impairment or writing limitations. Exclusion criteria: 1) Patients who withdrew during the research process. Data collection used a questionnaire derived from the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HARS), which has been validated by Noviandry et al. (2023), This was used in two stages of research: before the intervention (pretest) and after the intervention (posttest). The HARS instrument was used to measure anxiety levels in pregnant women. HARS consists of 14 questions that measure various symptoms of anxiety, such as psychological anxiety, somatic anxiety, and other symptoms. Each item is assessed using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (none) to 4 (very severe). The statistical test used is the Paired Sample t-Test. This study has been approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee (KEPK) of the Tasikmalaya Ministry of Health Polytechnic, with decision letter number: No.DP.04.03/F.XVIII.20/KEPK/191/2025.

RESULTS AND DISSCUSSION

Table 1. Frequency distribution of respondent characteristics based on gender, age, education, and occupation (n=24)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
20-24	16	61,5
25-29	10	38,5
Education		
Junior	8	30,8
High School		
Senior	18	69,2
High School		
Occupation		
Work	10	38,5
Not Work	16	61,5

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents' age characteristics were in the 20-24 range (61.5%). In terms of educational characteristics, high school education dominated (69.2%). In terms of employment, most respondents were unemployed (61.5%).

Table 2. Anxiety Scores of Primigravida Pregnant Women in the Third Trimester Before and After Receiving a Combination of Classical Music Therapy and Expressive Writing Intervention

Group	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	95% CI
Pretest	26	27,38	6,72	16	39	24,67 - 30,10
Posttest	26	15,35	3,28	10	21	14,02 - 16,67

Based on Table 2, the average anxiety score of primigravida pregnant women in the third trimester before being given the combination intervention of classical music therapy and expressive writing was 27.38. After the intervention,

the average anxiety score decreased to 15.35.

Table 3. Differences in Average Scores Before and After the Combined Intervention of Classical Music Therapy and Expressive Writing

Anxiety Score	Mean	SD	SE	P Value	n
Pretest	27,38	6,724	.829	0,000	26
Posttest	15,35	3,286			

Table 3 shows that the average anxiety score before the intervention was 27.38, while the average anxiety score after the intervention was 15.35. The statistical test resulted in a p-value of 0.000, so it can be concluded that there was a significant difference between the average anxiety scores before and after the intervention.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate a significant decrease in anxiety scores among primigravida pregnant women in their third trimester after receiving an intervention combining classical music therapy and expressive writing. Based on a paired sample t-test, a significant value of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$) was obtained, indicating a meaningful difference between anxiety scores before and after the intervention.

The results show that the combination of classical music therapy and expressive writing was able to reduce the average anxiety score from 27.38 to 15.35,

a considerable difference. This intervention is considered effective because it combines two approaches that work on the emotional and cognitive dimensions. Classical music helps create a relaxed atmosphere and calms the nervous system, while expressive writing provides space for mothers to express and process their pent-up feelings.

These findings are consistent with research which states that this combination intervention is effective in reducing anxiety levels in pregnant women and other vulnerable groups. In fact, in different contexts, such as students experiencing exam anxiety and postpartum mothers, expressive writing therapy has been proven to have a significant positive impact. (Ilsa Fahrina Savira, 2022) (Sulistiyowati & Arifah, 2024).

The majority of respondents were aged 20–24 years (61.5%). Although this age is biologically ideal for pregnancy, psychosocially, young pregnant women are at risk of anxiety because they are still in the process of adjusting to their new role. These results are reinforced by several previous studies showing that young age has the potential to increase the risk of anxiety during pregnancy (Fitri Yanti & Hasrida, 2024).

Most respondents had a high school education (69.2%). Higher education is generally associated with a better ability to understand health information, which can

help manage anxiety. However, some literature also states that education alone is not enough, as other psychological and social factors also have an influence (Br Situmorang et al., 2020).

Mothers who do not work tend to experience more anxiety. This may be due to a lack of distractions and social interaction that can ease the mind. However, work is not the only dominant factor; a combination of psychological stress, mental preparedness, and social support also play a major role (Suyani, 2020).

This study is consistent with several previous studies that prove the effectiveness of classical music therapy and expressive writing individually and in combination. In a study by Ilsa Fahrina Savira (2022), Expressive writing therapy has been proven to reduce anxiety in postpartum mothers. The same was also shown by a study by V. Boominathan et al. (2022) on adolescents experiencing test anxiety (Ilsa Fahrina Savira, 2022), (V. Boominathan et al., 2022).

The results of this study confirm that non-pharmacological interventions such as classical music and expressive writing are worth implementing in antenatal care (Patimah et al., 2023). The combination of these two therapies is not only statistically effective, but also practical and can be done independently by pregnant

women at home, as an independent effort to maintain mental health during pregnancy.

CONCLUSSION & SUGGESTION

Research conducted in the working area of the Cibereum Community Health Center in Tasikmalaya City shows that the majority of respondents were primigravida pregnant women in early adulthood, with a secondary education, and not working. Before the intervention, anxiety scores were in the moderate category with dominant symptoms of muscle tension and excessive worry. After receiving a combination of classical music therapy and expressive writing for three days, there was a statistically significant decrease in anxiety scores.

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