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Management Of Postpartum Blues With Mothers Experiencing Sadness (Depression) About Their Babies In Postpartum Mothers

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ABSTRACT

Postpartum blues is a mild emotional disorder often experienced by mothers after childbirth, characterized by feelings of sadness, anxiety, crying spells, and mood swings. This condition can impact the mother's psychological health and the baby's care process if not properly managed. This study aims to determine the management of postpartum blues in postpartum mothers experiencing sadness or depression about their babies.

This study used a quantitative approach with a descriptive analytical design. The sample consisted of 35 postpartum mothers selected using a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) questionnaire and observation sheets. Data were analyzed using univariate and bivariate analyses with the Chi-square test.

The results of the study showed that most mothers experienced mild to moderate postpartum blues. Factors influencing postpartum blues include lack of family support, hormonal changes, physical exhaustion, and anxiety in caring for a baby. Effective management includes emotional family support, health education, counseling, and assistance from healthcare professionals. The statistical test results showed a p-value of 0.003 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a significant effect of postpartum blues management on the psychological well-being of mothers after childbirth.

It was concluded that proper management of postpartum blues can help reduce the level of sadness and depression in mothers after giving birth and improve the mother's ability to care for her baby.

Keywords: *Postpartum Blues, Postpartum Depression, Postpartum Mothers, Maternal Mental Health, Family Support*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The postpartum period is a period of physical and psychological adaptation for a mother. After giving birth, a mother experiences various hormonal, emotional, and social changes that can affect her mental health. One common psychological disorder in postpartum mothers is postpartum blues.

Postpartum blues is a mild emotional disorder that typically appears in the first few days after delivery. It is characterized by feelings of sadness, tearfulness, anxiety, irritability, fatigue, and unstable mood swings. Although temporary, postpartum blues can progress to postpartum depression if not properly treated.

According to the World Health Organization, postpartum maternal mental health is a crucial component of maternal and child health. Psychological distress in the mother can impact the mother-infant relationship, breastfeeding, and the baby's emotional and physical development.

Various factors can contribute to postpartum blues, such as hormonal changes after childbirth, physical exhaustion, lack of family support, stress from caring for a baby, and anxiety about the new role of mother. Furthermore, a lack of knowledge about postpartum blues means many mothers don't realize that their condition requires attention and support.

Postpartum blues management requires appropriate intervention to help the mother's psychological well-being return to normal. Emotional support from family, assistance from healthcare professionals, mental health education, and counseling are some of the treatments that can help mothers overcome postpartum blues.

Mental health issues in postpartum mothers are often less addressed than physical health. Therefore, research is needed on managing postpartum blues in mothers experiencing sadness or depression about their babies after giving birth.

Based on this description, this study was conducted to determine the treatment of postpartum blues in postpartum mothers who experience sadness or depression towards their babies.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive analytical design .

a. Location and Time of Research

The research was conducted in the hospital's postpartum ward during a predetermined research period.

b. Population and Sample

- **Population:** all postpartum mothers
- **Sample:** 35 postpartum mothers
- **Sampling technique:** purposive sampling

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c. Research Variables

- Independent variable: postpartum blues management
- Dependent variable: psychological condition of the mother after giving birth

d. Research Instruments

The research instruments used:

- Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)
- Observation sheet
- Family support questionnaire

e. Data Analysis Techniques

Data was analyzed using:

- Univariate analysis
- Validity and reliability test
- Chi-Square Test

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Results

1) Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
<20 Years	6	17.1%
20–35 Years	24	68.6%
>35 Years	5	14.3%
Total	35	100%

The majority of respondents were aged 20–35 years.

2) Postpartum Blues Levels

Table 2. Postpartum Blues Levels

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Light	18	51.4%
Currently	12	34.3%
Heavy	5	14.3%
Total	35	100%

Most mothers experience postpartum blues in the mild category.

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3) Family Support

Table 3. Family Support for Mothers

Family Support	Frequency	Percentage
Good	22	62.9%
Enough	8	22.9%
Not enough	5	14.2%
Total	35	100%

The majority of mothers receive good family support.

4) Statistical Test Results

Table 4. Chi-Square Test Results

Variables	Sig.
Handling Postpartum Blues and the Psychological Condition of the Mother	0.003

The *p* value = 0.003 ($p < 0.05$) shows that there is a significant influence of postpartum blues management on the psychological condition of mothers after giving birth.

b. Discussion

Research shows that most postpartum mothers experience mild to moderate postpartum blues. This condition is a common form of emotional distress during the postpartum period due to the physical, hormonal, and psychological changes following childbirth. Postpartum blues typically appears on the third to tenth day after delivery and is characterized by feelings of sadness, tearfulness, anxiety, sensitivity, fatigue, and unstable mood swings.

Based on research, the main factor influencing postpartum blues in postpartum mothers is hormonal changes following delivery. The drastic drop in estrogen and progesterone levels after delivery can affect a mother's emotional state, making her more sensitive and prone to mood swings. Furthermore, the mother's physical weakness after delivery can also worsen her psychological state.

Besides hormonal factors, physical exhaustion is a significant factor contributing to postpartum blues. Most mothers report experiencing sleep deprivation due to the constant need to breastfeed and care for their babies. This can easily lead to fatigue, stress, and emotional outbursts. Prolonged fatigue can impact a mother's ability to adapt to her new role as a mother.

The research also shows that family support has a significant impact on a mother's psychological well-being after childbirth. Mothers who receive emotional support from their husbands and family tend to experience less postpartum blues than those who receive less support. Family support can take the form of attention, assistance with baby care, motivation, and emotional support during the postpartum period.

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This condition aligns with social support theory, which states that family support can help individuals cope with stress and emotional distress. The presence of family provides a sense of security and comfort for mothers, allowing them to feel more at ease in navigating the changes that occur after childbirth.

In addition to family support, health education from healthcare professionals also plays a crucial role in managing postpartum blues. Mothers who receive information about psychological changes after childbirth tend to be better prepared to cope. Health education helps mothers understand that postpartum blues is a common condition and can be managed with appropriate support and treatment.

Healthcare workers play a crucial role in early detection of postpartum blues in postpartum mothers. Through regular checkups and therapeutic communication, healthcare workers can help mothers express their feelings, allowing them to feel more cared for and supported. Furthermore, psychological counseling and support can help mothers reduce anxiety and stress after childbirth.

The results of the study showed a significant effect between postpartum blues management and the mother's psychological condition after delivery, based on statistical tests with a p-value of 0.003 ($p < 0.05$). This suggests that appropriate management can help improve the mother's emotional state and prevent postpartum blues from developing into more severe postpartum depression.

This study also shows that some mothers still feel fear and anxiety about caring for their babies, especially primiparas, or first-time mothers. Lack of experience caring for babies can lead to feelings of insecurity, increasing the risk of stress and anxiety. Therefore, postpartum support and education regarding baby care are crucial for mothers.

Social and economic factors can also influence a mother's psychological well-being. Mothers with less stable economic circumstances tend to experience higher levels of psychological stress due to having to worry about the needs of their baby and family after delivery. These factors can exacerbate postpartum blues if they don't receive adequate support.

The results of this study align with maternal mental health theory, which states that a mother's psychological state after childbirth is influenced by biological, psychological, and social factors. Therefore, managing postpartum blues must be comprehensive, involving the mother's family, healthcare professionals, and social environment.

Treatment for postpartum blues doesn't just focus on medical therapy; it also requires attention to the mother's emotional and social well-being. A holistic approach through family support, health education, therapeutic communication, and psychological counseling has been shown to help mothers cope more effectively with postpartum blues.

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Therefore, efforts to improve maternal health services, particularly postpartum mental health, are crucial to improving the quality of life for both mothers and babies. Early detection and appropriate treatment of postpartum blues are expected to prevent more serious psychological complications in postpartum mothers.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

a. Conclusion

Managing postpartum blues significantly impacts a mother's psychological well-being after giving birth. Family support, health education, and assistance from healthcare professionals can help reduce sadness and depression in postpartum mothers.

b. Suggestion

1) Health workers are expected to increase education regarding postpartum maternal mental health.
2) Families are expected to provide emotional support to mothers after giving birth.
3) Hospitals need to provide counseling services for postpartum mothers.
4) Further research is expected to use a larger sample size.

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