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## THE CORRELATION BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA INTENSITY USE AND MOTHER'S ANXIETY LEVEL (A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY IN PRIMIPAROUS MOTHERS KELURAHAN ROWOSARI SEMARANG)

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Anxiety disorder is one of the most common psychological disorder that often occurs in mothers after childbirth. One factor that is considered to have a correlation with the prevalence of anxiety level is the intensity of the social media use. In using social media, people tend to compare themselves and their lives with those of others and there is pressure to feel accepted by social media stereotypes. This study wants to focus on seeing whether there is a relationship between the intensity of social media use and maternal anxiety levels. **Methods:** This study was a cross-sectional study of 47 primiparous mothers in Kelurahan Rowosari Semarang. The data collection including: social media use intensity that was examined by SONTUS questionnaire, mothers' anxiety level examined by Zung questionnaire and family socio-economical circumstances. Data was analyzed using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient. **Results:** The majority of respondents were in the group with low intensity social media use (89.4%). The level of respondents' anxiety assessed using the Zung questionnaire grouped 51.1% of patients in the group with no anxiety and 48.9% of patients in the group with mild anxiety. There were no patients classified as moderate or high anxiety group. Based on the results of statistical analysis showed no significant correlation between social media intensity use and mother's anxiety level in primiparous mothers in Kelurahan Rowosari Semarang ( $p=0,214$ ). **Conclusion:** There were no significant correlation between social media intensity use and mother's anxiety level in primiparous mothers in Kelurahan Rowosari Semarang.

**Keywords:** social media, maternal anxiety

### INTRODUCTION

The mother's psychological condition can affect the way they do parenting. Mothers' parenting, especially in the early development period will greatly affect the child's development in the long run. A study by the Norwegian Institute of Public Health found that children who are cared for by mothers with anxiety disorders and depression are at greater risk of experiencing anxiety and depression disorders as well.<sup>1</sup>

Anxiety can arise because of a response to something that is considered to have a potential threat.<sup>2</sup> The transition to parenthood, both for men and women, is one

of the times in life that often cause stress due to the emergence of many changes. Changes occur include changes in body function and shape, changes in social roles, self-concept and relationships with people closest to them.<sup>3</sup> Pressure and perceived changes often cause perinatal psychological disorders.<sup>4</sup> Based on a 2016 meta-analysis study, percentages of postpartum women clinically diagnosed with anxiety disorders were 9.6% in the 5-12 weeks postpartum, 9.9% in the 1-24 weeks postpartum and 9.3% in the > 24 week postpartum period.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to demographic factors, in adult users, there is a correlation found



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between the use of social media and increased levels of anxiety. There are various theories that explain the mechanism of the relationship between the intensity of social media use and anxiety levels.

This study aims to see whether there is a correlation between the intensity of social media use and the level of anxiety in primiparous mothers.

## METHODS

This study was a cross-sectional study involving 47 primiparous mothers lived in Kelurahan Rowosari Semarang.

Clinical features of samples taken include: primipara, the age of the child is more than five days and less than five years and having at least one active social media account. The data collection including: social media use intensity that was examined by SONTUS, mothers' anxiety level examined by Zung questionnaire and family socio-economical circumstances. Data was analyzed using *Spearman's rank correlation coefficient*.

## RESULTS

**Tabel 1.** General Characteristics of Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean ± SD
Age			25,96 ± 3,489
Marital status			
- Married	46	97,9	
- Widowed	1	2,1	
Employment Status			
- Housewife	36	76,6	
- Non-Housewife	11	23,4	
Residence status			
- Parent's house	28	59,6	
- Own house	19	40,4	
Education Level			
- Junior High School	2	4,3	
- Senior High School	33	70,2	
- D3	3	6,4	
- S1	9	19,1	
Family Welfare Status			
- Pra Sejahtera	3	6,4	
- Sejahtera I	4	8,5	
- Sejahtera II	12	25,5	
- Sejahtera III	18	38,3	
- Sejahtera III+	10	21,3	
Intensity of Social Media Use			
- Low	42	89,4	
- Mild	5	10,6	
Anxiety Level			
- Not anxious	24	51,1	
- Low anxiety level	23	48,9	



**Tabel 2.** Statistical Analysis Result of Correlation of Intensity Social Media Use with Anxiety Level

Variabel	Intensity of Social Media Use		
	P	Correlation Coefficient	N
Anxiety Level	0.148	0.214	47

\*Statistical correlation with the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was significant if  $p < 0.05$ .

**Tabel 3.** The Correlation Between Family Welfare Status, Employment Status and Education Level with Mother's Anxiety Level

Variabel	Anxiety Level		
	P	Correlation Coefficient	N
Family Welfare Status	0.887	0.21	47
Employment Status	0.797	-0.038	47
Education Level	0.979	0.004	47

\*Statistical correlation with the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was significant if  $p < 0.05$ .

## DISCUSSION

In this study, of the 47 respondents, the majority used social media with low intensity and for anxiety status, 51,1% had no anxiety and 48,9% respondents had low anxiety status. Analysis of the data with the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test showed no significant relationship was found between the intensity of social media use and the level of maternal anxiety in Kelurahan Rowosari. The initial hypothesis which states that there is a relationship between the intensity of social media use and anxiety levels is unacceptable.

Research on the relationship of the social media use intensity with anxiety levels has been widely studied before with mixed results. Several studies have found the relationship between the intensity of social media use and anxiety levels. Increased use of social media is associated

with an increased risk of anxiety disorders.<sup>6,7</sup> One of the studies found an association between the intensity of social media use with mental health, including anxiety levels, is a cohort study conducted on 6595 adolescent respondents in the United States who found that increasing the time of social media use per day was associated with an increased risk of mental health disruption.<sup>7</sup> The studies that have been conducted have focused a lot on young adulthood as an age group that uses social media with high intensity.<sup>6-8</sup>

There are several studies that get contradict results with the initial hypothesis and show results that are in line with the results of this study that: the intensity of social media use does not have a significant relationship with an increased risk and symptoms of mental health disorders, including anxiety.<sup>9,10</sup> A study found results



that in groups that use social media with low and medium intensity had no significant relationship with the anxiety level.<sup>11</sup>

There are several mechanisms mentioned that can explain the relationship between the intensity of social media use and the risk of anxiety. First, the use of high-intensity social media can affect sleep quality which becomes worse, which is one of the factors that is considered to affect mental health disorders, including anxiety.<sup>12</sup> Second, increasing the intensity of the use of social media allows users to be more exposed to certain stereotypes and increasing feelings of mutual comparison which can affect the level of anxiety.<sup>13,14</sup> Third, the use of social media with high intensity can shift the position of physical activity and direct social interaction which by some research is considered to have effects on mental health.<sup>15</sup>

The results of this study found that there was no significant relationship between the intensity of social media use and the level of anxiety of primipara mothers in Kelurahan Rowosari. This may occur because there are other factors that can affect the level of anxiety but are not measured and analyzed in this research. Several factors can influence anxiety, including internal factors such as the maturation of individual emotions, physical condition, level of education and external factors such as support from family and the closest and social environmental conditions. In this study, we analyze the relationship between family welfare status variables, mother's education level and mother's occupational status with mothers' anxiety level. Lower family welfare status is associated with an increased likelihood that mothers experience anxiety. The level of education is related to the way mothers respond to the received information. The

higher level of education is associated with a more rational way of thinking when receiving various information.<sup>16</sup> However, in this study there was no significant relationship found between the three variables with the level of anxiety, so the initial hypothesis could not be confirmed. This might occur because there are factors that can affect the level of anxiety in mothers that cannot be analyzed in this research.

The second reason, maybe we can relate it to the pattern of respondent social media use. The research data shows that the most motive of respondents using social media is to communicate with friends (82.98%), communicate with family (80.85%) and to find information about parenting (51.06%). This pattern might cause respondents not to be exposed to too much social media content which can affect anxiety. A study also mentioned, that the type of use of social media can affect anxiety. In this study it was found that people who use social media types of non-communication can be more at risk of experiencing increased anxiety than people who use social media for communication.<sup>17</sup>

Analysis of social media usage consists of several components such as intensity, content accessed, number of active social media accounts and user engagement with social media. This study only analyzes one component of social media use, namely the intensity of use so that it may affect the accuracy of the results of the study.<sup>11</sup>

## CONCLUSION

There is no significant relationship between the intensity of the social media use with the level of anxiety in primipara mothers in Kelurahan Rowosari, Semarang.



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