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Effectiveness of Pocket Books to Increase Mothers' Knowledge and Ability About Baby Massage

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ABSTRACT

Background: Massage in children has been recognized as an effective method to stimulate growth due to its impact on neurochemical processes. One of the primary mechanisms involved is the stimulation of beta-endorphin, a neurochemical that plays a crucial role in increasing the amount and activation of the enzyme ornithine decarboxylase (ODC) in tissues. This enzyme is essential for cell growth and differentiation, contributing to optimal development in infants. Additionally, massage promotes the release of other growth hormones, further supporting physical and neurological development. Baby massage is performed through gentle rubs on the skin's surface, which not only enhances growth but also provides comfort, improves circulation, and strengthens the emotional bond between mother and baby.
Purpose: This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of providing pocketbooks as an educational tool to enhance maternal knowledge and ability in performing baby massage. By improving maternal skills and awareness regarding baby massage techniques, this intervention sought to maximize the potential benefits of baby massage in infant development.
Methods: This study utilized a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design, specifically employing a non-equivalent control group research method. The research was conducted at Rini Hartini's Midwife Practice Place and involved a total of 34 respondents selected through purposive sampling. The respondents were divided into an intervention group and a control group. The intervention group received educational pocketbooks and was assessed on their knowledge and ability to perform baby massage before and after the intervention. Data collection was carried out using structured questionnaires and a skills checklist to measure both knowledge and practical ability.
Results: The findings revealed a significant improvement in maternal knowledge and ability in the intervention group compared to the control group. Pre-test and post-test assessments demonstrated a statistically significant difference in the scores, with a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). This indicates that the intervention, in the form of providing pocketbooks, had a positive effect on increasing maternal competence in baby massage.

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Conclusion: Based on the results, it can be concluded that the provision of pocketbooks as an educational tool effectively enhances maternal knowledge and practical skills in performing baby massage. The study findings highlight the importance of accessible educational resources in improving maternal childcare practices. The outcomes of this research are expected to contribute to further studies and interventions aimed at optimizing infant growth and development through informed parental involvement. The research findings have been published in accredited national journals, ensuring the dissemination of valuable knowledge to a broader audience in the medical and child health sectors.

Keywords: *baby massage, pocketbook, knowledge, ability.*

BACKGROUND

Massage in children has been recognized as an effective method to stimulate growth due to its impact on neurochemical processes. One of the primary mechanisms involved is the stimulation of beta-endorphin, a neurochemical that plays a crucial role in increasing the amount and activation of the enzyme ornithine decarboxylase (ODC) in tissues. This enzyme is essential for cell growth and differentiation, contributing to optimal development in infants. Additionally, massage promotes the release of other growth hormones, further supporting physical and neurological development. Baby massage is performed through gentle rubs on the skin's surface, which not only enhances growth but also provides comfort, improves circulation, and strengthens the emotional bond between mother and baby (Pandiangan & Ningsih, 2023; Sulasdi & Ismarwati., 2023).

Massage in children can significantly enhance growth due to the stimulation of the enzyme ODC (ornithine decarboxylase), which increases in response to tactile sensations or applied pressure. The pressure exerted on a baby's body leads to the release of beta-endorphins, a neurochemical that plays a crucial role in activating and increasing the amount of ODC in tissues. This process also triggers the release of other essential growth hormones, ensuring optimal development in infants. Babies who lack adequate sensory stimulation may experience delayed growth and developmental issues.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 5-25% of preschool-aged children suffer from minor brain dysfunction, including impaired fine motor development. In Indonesia, approximately 16% of toddlers experience developmental disorders, such as cognitive impairment due to brain development issues, hearing loss, and motor skill difficulties (Andria et al., 2021). Insufficient stimulation in early childhood can lead to a decline in brain function as the brain tissue shrinks, which in turn hinders cognitive and motor development. If left unaddressed, this can have long-term

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consequences, including lower intelligence quotient (IQ) levels (Adams et al., 2015; Afrida & Ardiansyah, 2024; Setiawati et al., 2022b).

Given the critical role of stimulation in early childhood development, baby massage emerges as an important intervention to be introduced as early as possible. Regular massage sessions help stimulate sensory and motor responses, enhancing brain function, emotional bonding, and overall well-being. By incorporating baby massage into daily childcare routines, parents can support their child's cognitive and physical growth, ultimately fostering a healthier and more developed future generation. This highlights the necessity of educating parents, particularly mothers, about the benefits and proper techniques of baby massage, ensuring they can effectively contribute to their child's early development.

One form of print media widely used as reading material is books. Among them, pocketbooks have emerged as an effective medium for health education, serving as a tool to empower individuals, groups, and communities to maintain, improve, and protect their health. Pocketbooks help increase knowledge, willingness, and the ability to adopt clean and healthy behaviors. Their compact size makes them easy to carry and access, allowing users to refer to them whenever needed, reinforcing health messages effectively (Fauziah et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023).

Knowledge plays a vital role in shaping an individual's actions and behaviors. A strong foundation of knowledge helps individuals make informed decisions and adopt sustainable health practices. Research indicates that behaviors rooted in knowledge are more enduring and impactful than those developed without a solid informational basis. Therefore, pocketbooks serve as an essential tool in bridging the gap between information dissemination and practical application. By providing accessible and concise health-related content, they contribute to behavior change and long-term health improvements (Mufdlilah et al., 2018).

Pocketbooks can be particularly beneficial in maternal and child health education, as they offer easy-to-understand guidance on critical topics such as baby massage, nutrition, and hygiene. Through these materials, mothers can gain the confidence and competence necessary to provide proper care for their children. The structured presentation of information ensures that users can grasp key concepts effectively, fostering better health outcomes for both individuals and the broader community. In summary, pocketbooks play a crucial role in health education by promoting knowledge-based behavior change and empowering individuals to take proactive steps toward healthier lives (Hayati, 2023; Setiawati et al., 2022a).

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Baby massage is a therapeutic practice that involves gentle and rhythmic rubbing on the baby's skin using the hands. This practice stimulates various physiological systems, including the nervous system, muscles, respiratory system, and blood circulation. By massaging different parts of a baby's body, tension in the muscles is reduced, leading to relaxation and improved circulation. A well-performed baby massage supports the overall well-being of the infant by promoting deeper sleep, reducing stress, and enhancing digestion (Mrljak et al., 2022).

Massage is considered a form of skin touch therapy, where the hands are used as the primary medium to provide gentle yet effective stimulation (Onah, 2021). The manipulation of body tissues and organs through massage has long been recognized for its medicinal benefits. In infants, this therapy can help with colic, gas problems, and overall relaxation. Regular baby massage strengthens the bond between the caregiver and the baby, fostering a sense of security and trust. Additionally, the tactile stimulation helps in the development of sensory and motor skills, laying a strong foundation for future growth (Sulasdi & Ismarwati, 2023).

Incorporating baby massage into daily routines can have long-term positive effects on a child's health. This ancient practice, supported by modern research, highlights the importance of early physical interaction in promoting optimal development. By educating parents about proper massage techniques and their benefits, baby massage can become an integral part of nurturing healthy and happy infants (Setiawati et al., 2022a).

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of providing pocketbooks as an educational tool to increase maternal knowledge and ability regarding baby massage. By distributing pocketbooks containing essential information on baby massage techniques, benefits, and guidelines, the study sought to assess whether this method could enhance mothers' understanding and skills in performing baby massage correctly (Martorell & Zongrone, 2012). The pocketbooks were designed to be simple, accessible, and easy to understand, making them a practical resource for mothers in learning and applying baby massage techniques. Through this approach, the study evaluated the impact of pocketbooks as an effective medium for health education, helping mothers improve their confidence and ability in caring for their infants.

The scope of this study is to include an intervention group consisting of mothers who have babies and will be given intervention, namely the provision of an Android application about baby massage for mothers to learn. The next is to identify the mother's knowledge and skills before and after being given the application (WHO, 2013; World Health Organization, 2022). As for the control group, namely mothers who have babies and are given information to see baby massage techniques through

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social media, namely YouTube. And then through the same process, namely in the control group, the knowledge and skills of carrying out baby massage before and after watching videos on YouTube were also identified.

METHODS

This research is a type of quantitative study that employs a quasi-experimental approach with a non-equivalent control group design. The research was conducted at Rini Hartini's Midwife Practice Place, involving a total of 34 respondents selected through purposive sampling.

The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of an intervention in increasing maternal knowledge and skills regarding baby massage. The respondents were divided into two groups: an intervention group and a control group. Both groups were assessed before and after the intervention using the same set of structured questionnaires and a skills checklist to measure their knowledge and ability levels. The intervention group received an educational program, while the control group did not receive any additional treatment. After the intervention period, a post-test was conducted for both groups, and the results were compared to determine whether there were significant differences in their scores.

Data analysis was performed to evaluate the effect of the intervention. A significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores in the intervention group, compared to the control group, would indicate that the treatment had a measurable impact on improving knowledge and ability related to baby massage. This study contributes valuable insights into the role of educational interventions in enhancing maternal competency in childcare practices.

The ethical considerations in this study are to ensure the confidentiality of the respondent's data, then provide an consent sheet containing information about the research procedure, as well as explain the risks and benefits of being a respondent in this study. Therefore, the steps taken include providing informed consent, using anonymous data and carrying out regular monitoring.

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RESULTS

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents

Characteristics	Group		Frequency	%
	Intervention	Control		
Age				
≥ 35 yr	4	0	4	13,3
< 35 yr	13	17	30	86,7
Jumlah	17	17	34	100
Education				
< SMU	3	7	10	29,4
≥ SMU	14	10	24	70,6
Jumlah	17	17	34	100

Characteristics Based on Age

Th

e total 34 respondents, the majority were under 35 years old, namely 30 people (86.7%). There were only four respondents aged 35 years or more (13.3%). In the intervention group, there were four respondents aged ≥35 years and 13 respondents aged <35 years. Meanwhile, in the control group, all respondents (17 people) were <35 years old.

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Characteristics Based on Education Level

Based on education level, 24 respondents (70.6%) had a minimum education level of General High School (SMU) or higher, while 10 respondents (29.4%) had an education below high school. In the intervention group, the majority of respondents (14 people) had ≥ high school education, while three people had less than a high school education. In the control group, there were 10 respondents with ≥ high school education and seven respondents with < high school education.

Table 2. Differences in Knowledge Scores Before and After Intervention

Intervention Group	N	Mean	Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	ρ Value
Pre	17	9,88	3,77	2,288	
Post	17	13,65		0,931	0,000

Control Group	N	Mean	Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	ρ Value
Pre	17	10,71	0,64	1,448	
Post	17	11,35		1,693	0,000

Intervention Group

In the intervention group, the pre-intervention average (Mean) value was 9.88 with a standard deviation of 2.288. After intervention, the average value increased to 13.65 with a standard deviation of 0.931. The mean difference between pre-and post is 3.77, which shows a significant improvement. The statistical test results show a value of ρ = 0.000, which means there is a significant difference before and after the intervention.

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Control Group

In the control group, the pre-intervention average score was 10.71, with a standard deviation of 1.448. After intervention, the average value increased to 11.35 with a standard deviation of 1.693. The mean difference between pre-and post was only 0.64, indicating a relatively small improvement compared to the intervention group. The statistical test results show a value of ρ = 0.000, which indicates there is a significant difference before and after the intervention, although the increase is not as big as the intervention group.

Table 3. Differences in Skill Scores Before and After Intervention

Intervention Group	N	Mean	Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	ρ Value
Pre	17	7,06	19,65	7,587	
Post	17	26,71		3,804	0,000

Group Control	N	Mean	Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	ρ Value
Pre	17	2,94	6,53	3,976	
Post	17	9,47		6,737	0,000

Intervention Group

In the intervention group, the average pre-intervention score was 7.06, with a standard deviation of 7.587. After the intervention, the average value increased significantly to 26.71, with a standard

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deviation of 3.804. The mean difference between pre-and post was 19.65, which shows a very large improvement after the intervention. The statistical test results show a value of ρ = 0.000, which means there is a significant difference before and after the intervention.

Control Group

In the control group, the average pre-intervention score was 2.94, with a standard deviation of 3.976. After intervention, the average value increased to 9.47 with a standard deviation of 6.737. The mean difference between Pre and post was 6.53, which shows an improvement, but not as big as what happened in the intervention group. The statistical test results show a value of ρ = 0.000, which indicates that the difference before and after the intervention is also significant in the control group.

Table 4. Differences in Knowledge Scores

between the Intervention Group and the Control Group

Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	ρ Value
Intervention	17	13,65	0,931	0,226	0,000
Control	17	11,35	1,693	1,411	

From the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that the intervention group showed higher results than the control group. A larger average value and significant statistical test results (ρ = 0.000) indicate that the intervention provided had a more effective impact than the treatment received by the control group.

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Table 5. Differences in Skill Scores between the Intervention Group and the Control Group

Group	N	Mean	SD	ρ Value
Intervention	17	26,71	3,804	0,000
Control	17	9,47	6,737	

From the results of this analysis, it can be concluded that the intervention group experienced a more significant improvement in results compared to the control group. The fairly large mean difference (26.71 vs. 9.47) and the value of ρ = 0.000 indicate that the intervention provided had a significant effect in improving outcomes compared to the treatment received by the control group.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the analysis carried out, it was found that there was an increase in the knowledge and ability of the intervention group mothers after being given a pocketbook. According to (Hayati, 2023) one of the efforts that can be made to improve mothers' knowledge and skills about baby massage is by conducting training and education. Baby massage has a tremendous positive impact, including lowering levels of catecholamine stress hormones, increasing immunity, positively changing brain waves, improving blood circulation and respiratory system, stimulating digestive and disposal functions, and increasing weight. In addition, baby massage can make the baby's sleep more sound, reduce depression and tension, and increase the volume of breast milk.

Giving pocketbooks is a form of promotion that aims to improve the knowledge and skills of mothers who have babies towards baby massage. Knowledge is the result of human sensing or the result of an object obtained through the five human senses in the form of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Each individual has different knowledge depending on how much the individual focuses his attention

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on an object. According to (Notoatmodjo, 2012), the higher the center of attention using the five senses, the higher the knowledge obtained and vice versa. At the same time, skills are a continuation of cognitive (understanding something) and affective (deeds or behavior) outcomes. The predisposing factors that can affect the knowledge and skills of mothers in doing baby massage are age and education (Barus & Sembiring., 2022).

The factor that influences the mother's knowledge about the first baby massage is the age factor. Most of the maternal age in the intervention group was in the early adult category (26-35 years). This is in line with Thulil's research (2017), where, at that age, the respondent's ability to receive and seek information about baby massage can be said to be sufficient, thus affecting the mindset and comprehension of respondents. This is strengthened by increasing age, the more maturity a person has in thinking, and from this maturity of thinking will arise good knowledge so that the baby's massage skills will also improve (Pandiangan & Ningsih, 2023).

In addition to the age factor above, a person's knowledge is also influenced by education. The results of this scientific work are also in line with research conducted by (Sabiq & Midwifery, 2024) that mothers' knowledge about baby massage in the good category is also influenced by education because most mothers who have babies have high school education. This happens because education greatly affects one's knowledge. Most of the mothers with good knowledge are high school educated. So that they can receive the information just given by health workers and respondents can digest the information provided.

Mothers need to learn baby massage, because baby massage has many benefits. Among other benefits for mothers are increasing milk production, reducing stress, increasing bonding with babies. Meanwhile, the benefits for babies are increasing weight, improving blood circulation, increasing the frequency of breastfeeding and becoming restful sleep. Baby massage is a very easy technique. By performing baby massage independently, mothers can interact closely with the baby. Because in baby massage there are activities of touch, eye contact, and interaction can be verbal or non-verbal. These various activities are very important contributions to the health of babies (Afrida & Ardiansyah, 2024).

Based on research conducted by (Fauziyah, 2019) the results of mothers' knowledge about baby massage are mostly sufficient. The results show that most of the conditions are influenced by several factors, namely the availability of information about baby massage, experience, formal and no formal eduuction, and cultural factors The study is in line with the results obtained by researchers where the

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pre-test results obtained most of the mother's knowledge is less related to baby massage. Therefore, it affects the cognitive and motor abilities of the mother before being given intervention in performing improper baby massage. After being given a pocketbook, there was an increase in knowledge about baby massage. Increased knowledge can also improve the mother's ability to do baby massage.

CONCLUSION

Based on data analysis, it was concluded that most of the mothers who participated in the study belonged to the early adult age group (25-35 years) and had a high school education level. These demographic factors played a significant role in influencing their ability to absorb and apply the knowledge gained from the intervention. The results showed that after receiving the pocketbooks, there was a measurable increase in maternal knowledge and ability in performing baby massage.

The improvement in knowledge and skills was not only influenced by age and education but was also strongly supported by the structured educational information provided in the pocketbooks. The pocketbooks served as an effective learning tool, allowing mothers to review the material at their own pace and apply the techniques with greater confidence. The accessibility of the information ensured that mothers could refer back to the guidelines whenever needed, reinforcing their understanding and improving their ability to perform baby massage correctly.The results of this study are expected not only to improve mothers' knowledge and skills about baby massage, but also to provide an understanding that baby massage can provide good enough benefits to establish a close relationship between mother and baby.

Effective mothers who carry out baby massage, this can improve blood circulation so that it can increase appetite which can ultimately increase the baby's weight (Fatmawati et al., 2021). This is in accordance with the results of the study, which shows that baby massage is effective in increasing attachment between mother and baby. And in addition to that, it can also increase the baby's weight and appetite.

Additionally, the findings highlighted the importance of continuous education in maternal and child healthcare. Providing easily comprehensible educational resources such as pocketbooks can bridge knowledge gaps and empower mothers to take an active role in their child's development. The significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores in the intervention group, compared to the control group, further affirmed the effectiveness of the pocketbook-based intervention in enhancing maternal competency in baby massage practices. This suggests that similar educational

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strategies could be implemented in broader healthcare programs to improve child health outcomes (Lestari et al., 2021).

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