



## THE EFFECT OF SPIRITUAL EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUE (SEFT) THERAPY ON PRIMARY DYSMENORRHEA INTENSITY

*Hidayanti Desi, Titi Legiati, Dewi Purwaningsih<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Department of Midwifery, PoltekkesKemenkes Bandung. Jalan SederhanaNo. 2 Bandung, Indonesia. ZIP code 40161  
Email : [rumahbidan.desi@gmail.com](mailto:rumahbidan.desi@gmail.com)

### Abstract

#### Background :

Dysmenorrhea (menstrual pain) can be experienced by more than half of women who are menstruating with varying prevalence. For about 50% of all women in the world suffer with dysmenorrhea in a menstrual cycle. Patients report pain during menstruation, where as many as 49% of light menstrual pain, 37% of moderate menstrual pain and 12% of menstrual pain is severe, which causes them to be unable to carry out any activities there by reducing the quality of life in each individual. Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT) therapy is non-pharmacological management to reducedysmenorrhea. The working principle of SEFT is as simple as acupuncture technique that works directly on the body's meridian points. As the technique, it combines the body energy system (energy medicine) and spiritual therapy by using tapping at certain points on the body. This healing technique can heal emotionally and can also heal the symptoms of physical illness, including symptoms of dysmenorrhea.

The objective of the research is to determine the effect of SEFT therapy on the intensity of primary dysmenorrhea. While, the benefits of this research is to make it easier for women to reduce the intensity of pain in primary dysmenorrhea so that students can optimize their activities without the problem of dysmenorrhea.

#### Methods :

This research used quasi-experimental with one group pretest-posttest design approach by giving SEFT treatment to one intervention group, then the participants were observed before and after the intervention on the intensity of primary dysmenorrhea using the Numerical Rating Scale (NRS) form. There were 36 people who became the sample of this research. The participants were chosen because they have experienced dysmenorrhea according to the inclusion criteria. Marginal Homogeneity Test was used to analyze the effect of SEFT therapy on the intensity of primary dysmenorrhea.

#### Results :

The result showed that before given SEFT therapy, there were 24 respondents (66.7%) who experienced moderate pain intensity and there were 4 respondents (11.1%) who experienced severe pain intensity. However, after given the therapy, there were 33 respondents (91.7%) who experienced mild pain intensity and there were no respondents who experienced pain in the severe category.. This research shows that there is an effect of SEFT therapy on the decrease in the intensity of primary dysmenorrhea, the value of Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) p of 0.00 (p <0.05).

#### Conclusion :

Based on the results of the research, it is expected that each midwives can make SEFT therapy as an alternative care for women to prevent primary dysmenorrhea and it can be socialized to community that SEFT therapy is an alternative treatment to reduce primary dysmenorrhea, because this therapy is relatively safe and not using drugs.

### Introduction

Puberty is an important stage in the process of child development. Menstruation is the final stage of puberty, generally menarche occurs within two years of breast development with a mean age of 12.8 years with an age range of 10-16 years [1]. The various problems that arise during menstruation are gynecological problems that have often complained of by teenagers, such as

menstrual irregularities, menorrhagia, dysmenorrhoea, and other related symptoms [2]. Among these complaints, the most commonly reported is dysmenorrhoea which occurs in 60% - 90% of adolescents, and is the most frequent cause of absenteeism in schools and a reduction in daily activities [3,4,5].

Dysmenorrhea is defined as menstrual pain which usually cramps and centers on the lower abdomen [6].

Dysmenorrhea can be experienced by more than half of women who are menstruating, and the prevalence varies greatly. Based on data from various countries, the incidence of dysmenorrhea in the world is quite high. For about 50% of all women in the world suffer from dysmenorrhea in a menstrual cycle. Patients report pain during menstruation, where as many as 12% menstrual pain is severe, 37% moderate menstrual pain, and 49% menstrual pain is still mild [7]. In the United States, it is estimated that nearly 90% of women experience dysmenorrhea and 10-15% of them experience severe dysmenorrhea, which causes them to be unable to carry out any activities and this will reduce the quality of life in each individual [8].

There are two ways that can be done to reduce dysmenorrhea, namely pharmacology and non-pharmacology. Pharmacological is one of ways to reduce the symptoms by giving the patient an analgesic drug. NSAIDs (Nonsteroid Antiinflammatory Drugs) can relieve this pain by blocking prostaglandins that cause pain. However, there is a harmful side effect on other body systems by using NSAIDs, for example, it can cause gastric pain and the risk of kidney damage [9].

Non-pharmacological techniques consist of massage, ice and heat therapy, Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS), distractions, herbal concoctions, exercise, relaxation and imagination [10].

Other non-pharmacological treatments include the treatment of the Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT). SEFT therapy is a simple version of acupuncture technique that works directly on the body's meridian points. SEFT including relaxation techniques, is one form of mind-body therapy from complementary and alternative nursing therapies. SEFT is a technique of combining the energy system of the body (energy medicine) and spiritual therapy by using tapping at certain points on the body. This is based on a revolution that develops in conventional psychological beliefs. It explains that all negative emotions that arise can damage the energy system in the body when there are physical and emotional setbacks that disrupt the memory actually remains the same, but the symptoms of the disease disappear [11].

The results of the Hermawan (2013) study showed that Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) therapy reduced the intensity of dysmenorrhea, where respondents who had been given EFT therapy had a lower pain intensity compared to before therapy was given [12]. This is in line with Aswar (2010) that EFT can cure physical and psychological problems, one of which is dysmenorrhea [13]. But it is not yet known how the

effect of EFT combined with spiritual therapy is SEFT with the incidence of dysmenorrhea.

## Methods

Quasi-experimental design was used in this research with the approach of one group pretest-posttest design. The study was conducted in MTsN 2 Bandung, with female students who experiencing dysmenorrhea. Purposive sampling was used to gather the respondents and 36 people were chosen based on the inclusion criteria.

The research instruments included the respondents' identity questionnaire, Numeric Rating Scale (NRS) and Checklist for the implementation of SEFT therapy and Informed consent. The research procedure was as follows, respondents were trained to do the SEFT technique to reduce the dysmenorrhea they felt, then fill the NRS sheet to assess the level of pain felt before and after doing the SEFT.

## Results and Discussion

The results showed that the first time respondents experienced menstruation (menarche) increased the most dysmenorrhea at age  $\geq 12$  years (75%). The results of this study are in line with the results of research conducted by Sirait (2014) to high school students in Medan in 2014, from 128 respondents, the highest age of menarche at the age of 13-14 years (51.6%) [14].

This is in accordance with the opinion of Bobak (2004), that dysmenorrhea begins when women aged 2-3 years after menarche [15]. The average age of respondents at the time of this study was 13.4 years, while they got the first menstruation (menarche) more at the age of 12 years or more.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of Respondents

No	Characteristics of Respondents	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Age of Menarche		
	< 12 years old	9	25%
	$\geq 12$ years old	27	75%
2	Menstrual Cycle		
	<21 days	0	0%
	21-35 days	36	100%
3	$\geq 35$ days	0	0%
	Body Mass Index (BMI)		
	Underweight	11	30,6%
	Normal	21	58,3%
4	Overweight	4	11,1%
	Activity		
	No activity	5	13,9%
	Physical exercise	18	50%
	Scientific Activities	7	19,4%
	Art Activities	6	16,7%

From the results of the study, as shown in Table 2, it can be seen that the frequency distribution of the intensity of dysmenorrhea before SEFT therapy shows the highest category of dysmenorrhea with a moderate category of 24 people (66.7%). The results of the study is in accordance with the research conducted by Calis (2011), it was reported that the incidence of pain during menstruation, as much as 12% of menstrual pain was severe, 37% moderate menstrual pain, and 49% menstrual pain was still mild.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Dysmenorrhea Intensity before and after SEFT

Intensity Dysmenorrhea	Before SEFT		After SEFT	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Mild	8	22,2%	33	91,7
Moderate	24	66,7%	3	8,3
Severe	4	11,1%	0	0
Total	36	100%	36	100%

SEFT therapy was given as the treatment to respondents to reduce dysmenorrhea. After SEFT therapy, as shown in table 5, the intensity of the most dysmenorrhea felt by respondents was in the mild category as many as 33 people (91.7%). In addition, it was no longer found respondents who experienced pain in the severe category after SEFT therapy. The data show that there are differences in the intensity of dysmenorrhea before and after SEFT therapy. Respondents who did SEFT therapy experienced a decrease in the intensity of menstrual pain.

Tabel 3. Analysis of the Effect of SEFT Therapy on Dysmenorrhea Intensity

Dysmenorrhea Intensity before SEFT	Dysmenorrhea Intensity after SEFT			Total	P
	Mild	Moderate	Severe		
Mild	8	0	0	8	0,00
Moderate	22	2	0	24	
Severe	3	1	0	4	
Total	33	3	0	36	

The results of the statistical test analysis with a marginal homogeneity test obtained a p value of 0.00, it can be concluded that there is an effect of SEFT therapy on the intensity of dysmenorrhea. Based on table 3, it can be seen that after SEFT therapy, respondents experienced a decrease in pain intensity.

This is consistent with the results of the study by Hermawan (2013) and Sastra (2016) which showed that Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) therapy reduced the intensity of

dysmenorrhea, where respondents who had been given EFT therapy had a lower pain intensity compared to before therapy was given [12,16]

The treatment from Hermawan (2013) and Sastra (2016) research used the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) method while in the study, the authors applied the Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT) method [12,16]. SEFT is a technique of combining the energy psychology (EFT) system and spiritual therapy developed by Ahmad Faiz Zainuddin, since 2005. The combination of the energy power psychology with spiritual power, or SEFT, produces "the amplifying effect" to give solution for physical and psychological problems [17]. The Office of Prayer Research, an institution founded by the Parliament of the World's Religions in July 2004 has documented and reviewed more than 500 researches on prayer since Francis Galton's research in 1872, there is a great deal of scientific evidence that prayer and spirituality indeed affects health [17].

The results of the study by Latifah and Rahmawati (2014), stated that the majority of seciocaesarae (SC) post respondents experienced a decrease in pain after emotional freedom technique (EFT) therapy [18]. Research by Arifin (2010) also found that there was a decrease in pain in postoperative femoral fracture patients after being given emotional freedom technique (EFT) therapy [19].

Church (2013) in the journal Psychology revealed that EFT has been clinically proven to provide solutions as a safe, fast, reliable, and effective treatment for both psychological and medical diagnoses [20].

Vangsapalo (2010) describes the mechanism of emotional freedom technique (EFT) in reducing the scale of pain by combining the physical effects of nursing meridians with mental effects in focusing on the pain felt. In stimulating the body's meridian points, SEFT uses the fingertips to make tapping on the meridian points of the body. Tapping on the meridian points will send kinetic energy to the system's energy and free up obstacles that cover the energy flow. So that the pain that is felt will decrease [21]

## Conclusion

There is an influence of the Spritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT) therapy on the decrease of primary dysmenorrhea intensity.

There was a decrease in the dysmenorrhea intensity experienced by the respondents after SEFT therapy, they are stated as follows: there were 33 people (91.7%) who experienced mild dysmenorrhea and there was no longer found respondents who experienced pain in the heavy category.

This SEFT method can be included in the adolescent reproductive health education program, as one of the handling of dysmenorrhea problems in schools, health centers or in the community.

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