

**The Effect of Benson's Relaxation Technique on Decreasing Depression in the Elderly at UPT Social Services for the Elderly Pasuruan, Lamongan**

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**ABSTRACT**

Emotional disturbances in the elderly can lead to depression if not treated immediately. Depression in the elderly can be associated with low socioeconomic status, death of a spouse, accompanying physical illness, and social isolation. Benson's relaxation technique is a technique that focuses on deep breathing and can calm the mood so that it can control or reduce emotional disturbances. Benson relaxation techniques for the elderly can be done anywhere, do not cost much and do not cause side effects, so the Benson relaxation technique is an efficient alternative to exercise for the elderly. The purpose of this study was to analyze the effect of Benson's relaxation technique on reducing depression in the elderly at the Pasuruan Elderly Social Service Unit in Lamongan. This study uses a one group pre-post test design with a time cohort approach involving 15 respondents who were taken by purposive sampling. Collecting data using a checklist. Data were analyzed using t test with a significant level of 0.05. Based on the results of the study, 7 (47%) respondents were not depressed, 8 (53%) respondents were still depressed. From the data, it was found that 10 (66.6%) respondents experienced a decrease in depression after being given Benson relaxation, and 2 (13.3%) respondents experienced an increase in depression after being given Benson relaxation, and 3 (20%) respondents did not experience a decrease in depression after being given Benson relaxation. The results of the analysis with the t test showed p value = 0.002, which means that H<sub>0</sub> was rejected, so that there was an effect of Benson's relaxation technique on reducing depression in the elderly at UPT Pasuruan elderly social services in Lamongan. Benson relaxation has been shown to be more effective in reducing depression in the elderly with depressive disorders. This can be used as a program to realize healthy elderly and make optimal use of elderly time with useful things.

**Keywords:** Benson relaxation technique; depression reduction

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**INTRODUCTION**

Depression is a feeling of sadness, worthlessness, and pessimism associated with self-directed suffering or feelings of deep anger, with symptoms such as a blank stare, decreased activity, lack of appetite, difficulty sleeping, sadness, loss of enthusiasm, inability to concentrate, and lack of or loss of attention to self, others, and the environment (Nugroho, 2002). One of the problems that exist in the elderly is the lack of ability to adapt psychologically to the changes that occur in them.

The growth of the elderly in East Java will have 9.36% elderly of the total population. This situation requires us to pay more attention to improving the quality of life of the elderly. The prevalence of depression in the elderly is estimated at 15.9% (FKUI, 2000). Meanwhile, according to Kay, et al (1994) 7-10% of elderly >65 years experience depression. WHO estimates that around 121 million people currently suffer from depression. As many as 5.8 percent are men and 9.5 percent are women worldwide who have experienced a depressive episode in their lifetime.

Interventions that are often used to treat depression in the elderly are using antidepressant drugs. The use of antidepressant drugs in the elderly is complicated by side effects, such as postural hypotension (a drop in blood pressure when a person is in a standing position), which causes some patients to experience dizziness and then fall (Davitson, 2002). To overcome depression in the elderly is to use a non-pharmacological method, namely the Benson relaxation technique.

Benson's relaxation technique is useful in a variety of situations, such as pain, anxiety and lack of sleep, display of anger, lowering blood pressure, and depression. Relaxation maintains the body's reaction to the fight or flight response, decreasing respiration, pulse, and the amount of metabolism, blood pressure and energy used. Relaxation can be done to individuals or groups and is especially useful because it requires control of feelings and the environment. A variety of techniques are used, but breathing is done regularly, relaxation of muscle strength and awareness (Taylor, 1997).

## **METHODS**

In this study, the population was all the elderly living in the Pasuruan Elderly Social Service UPT in Lamongan, a total of 55 elderly people.

The instrument used in this study was a depression reduction observation sheet which was measured using GDS (Geriatric Depression Scale).

Data collection in this study was by observation using a one group pre-post test design. Where data collection begins with licensing from the STIKES NU Tuban institution and then continues, researchers meet prospective respondents and provide informed consent, then ask prospective respondents to sign a statement of approval to become respondents. Benson relaxation and its effect on reducing depression. The researcher made the initial observation (pretest), then the researcher gave the treatment by giving Benson relaxation, after that the researcher made the second observation (posttest). Observations and treatments were carried out 3 times a week for 2-3 weeks and observations were made after the intervention was given for 2-3 weeks to get maximum results from the process of giving Benson relaxation.

## **RESULTS**

Table 1. Distribution of depression before applying Benson relaxation

No	Depression status	Frequency	Percentage
1	No depression	0	0
2	Depression	15	100

Before being given the Benson relaxation technique, 15 respondents were depressed; mean = 9.2000, median = 9.0000, sd = 1.78085, min 6.00, max = 13.00.

Table 2. Distribution of depression after applying Benson relaxation

No	Depression status	Frequency	Percentage
1	No depression	7	46.7
2	Depression	8	53.3

After being given the Benson relaxation technique, 15 respondents were depressed; mean = 7.7333, median = 7.0000, sd = 3.39046, min 3.00, max = 12.00.

The results of the paired samples t-test showed a p-value of 0.002, so it could be interpreted that there was a difference in depression status in the elderly between before and after the Benson relaxation technique was given. Thus, Benson's relaxation technique is effective in reducing depression in the elderly.

## **DISCUSSION**

From this study, it was found that 15 elderly people (100%) were depressed, before the Benson relaxation technique was performed at UPT PSLU Pasuruan, Lamongan. After using Benson's relaxation technique, depression in the elderly was reduced to 53.3 percent. Meanwhile, the results of the paired sample t-test prove that there is a significant difference in depression status between before and after the Benson relaxation technique is given, so it can be said that this technique is effective in reducing depression in the elderly.

Researchers analyzed the occurrence of depression, decreased depression levels in the elderly at the Pasuruan elderly social service unit in Lamongan because the elderly did Benson relaxation for 10-20 minutes a day for 3 times a week so that the elderly experienced a decrease in depression levels, from this Benson relaxation needs to be applied to the elderly who experiencing depression.

There were 5 elderly people who did not experience a decrease in depression after being given Benson relaxation because maybe the elderly did not really do Benson relaxation in the allotted time.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that the Benson relaxation technique was effective in reducing depression in the elderly at UPT Social Services for the Elderly Pasuruan, Lamongan.

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