

INTRODUCTION

North Shore Visiting Mothers Program (NSMVP) was developed by public health nurses to provide free postpartum visits to caregivers in the North Shore area.

The program aimed to support new mothers with education, care coordination, and access to community resources requiring insurance or referrals.

Pre-pandemic reviews highlighted the program's positive influence on maternal confidence and well-being. However, COVID-19 caused a temporary halt to the program.

INTERNSHIP PROJECT OBJECTIVE

This project's objective was to evaluate data from before the pandemic with the restart planning phase to explore how caregiver needs and health trends may have shifted due to the pandemic's disruption.

Contribute to program redesign efforts based on data-driven needs assessments.

RELATED LITERATURE

COVID-19 amplified maternal health disparities by reducing access to in-person care, mental health services, and community resources (Goyal et al., 2021).

Postpartum depression and anxiety have significantly increased during the pandemic, particularly among women from low-income or minority backgrounds (Lebel et al., 2020).

Food insecurity, already a determinant of poor maternal and infant health, worsened during COVID-19 due to job loss and inflation (Adams et al., 2022). This evaluation contributes to that growing body of research by analyzing real-world clinical data from NSMVP.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Data Collection:

- Data were collected via a Google Form filled out by a public health nurse after home visits. This data was provided by the epidemiologist.

Informed consent was obtained prior to entry.

Data Analysis:

- Data were exported to Excel and analyzed. Data collection occurred both before and after the COVID-19 program pause, offering a comparative view across phases.

- An opportunity for nurses to provide qualitative feedback was also provided on the Google form

Baseline Data:

Clinical assessments of 36 participants were gathered pre- and post-COVID.

Topics included:

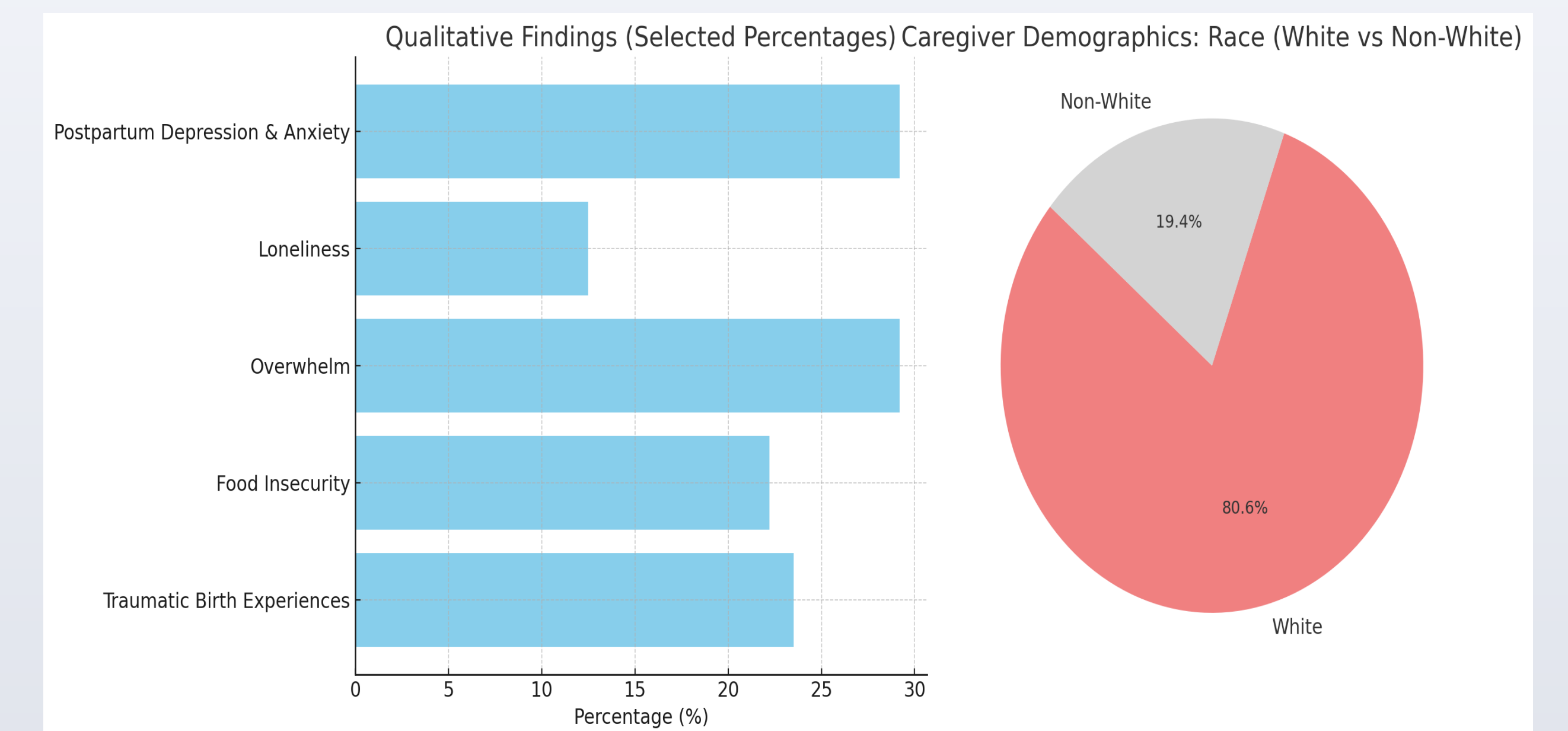
- Demographic
- Socioeconomic
- Self-rated health
- Birth outcomes
- Work status
- Food access
- Insurance coverage

Data Analysis Goals:

- Assessment of maternal health outcomes and social challenges experienced before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Identification of any gaps in healthcare access and social support among postpartum caregivers.
- Comparison of indicators of postpartum depression, anxiety, food insecurity, and birth trauma between pre- and post-COVID periods
- Issues/Barriers:

Some participants left questions blank, leading to incomplete datasets.

RESULTS



- Bar Chart (left) – Illustrates qualitative findings related to caregiver experiences: (n=36)
- High rates of postpartum depression/anxiety (29.2%)
- Feelings of overwhelm (29.2%)
- Food insecurity (22.2%)
- Traumatic birth

CONCLUSIONS

COVID-19 has exacerbated pre-existing postpartum challenges in the North Shore region. This data shows how the program can make improvements, such as:

- Increasing awareness about postpartum depression (PPD)
- Advocating for more mental health screenings
- Tailoring support services to better meet the needs of mothers.
- Support training for nurses on identifying early warning signs of PPD and ensuring the best care.

There were increased mental health concerns, trauma from birthing experiences, and barriers to essential services. These findings indicate the need for enhanced mental health support, stable insurance coverage, and culturally appropriate food access. This data stresses the importance of postpartum services and care for mothers and infants.

REFERENCES

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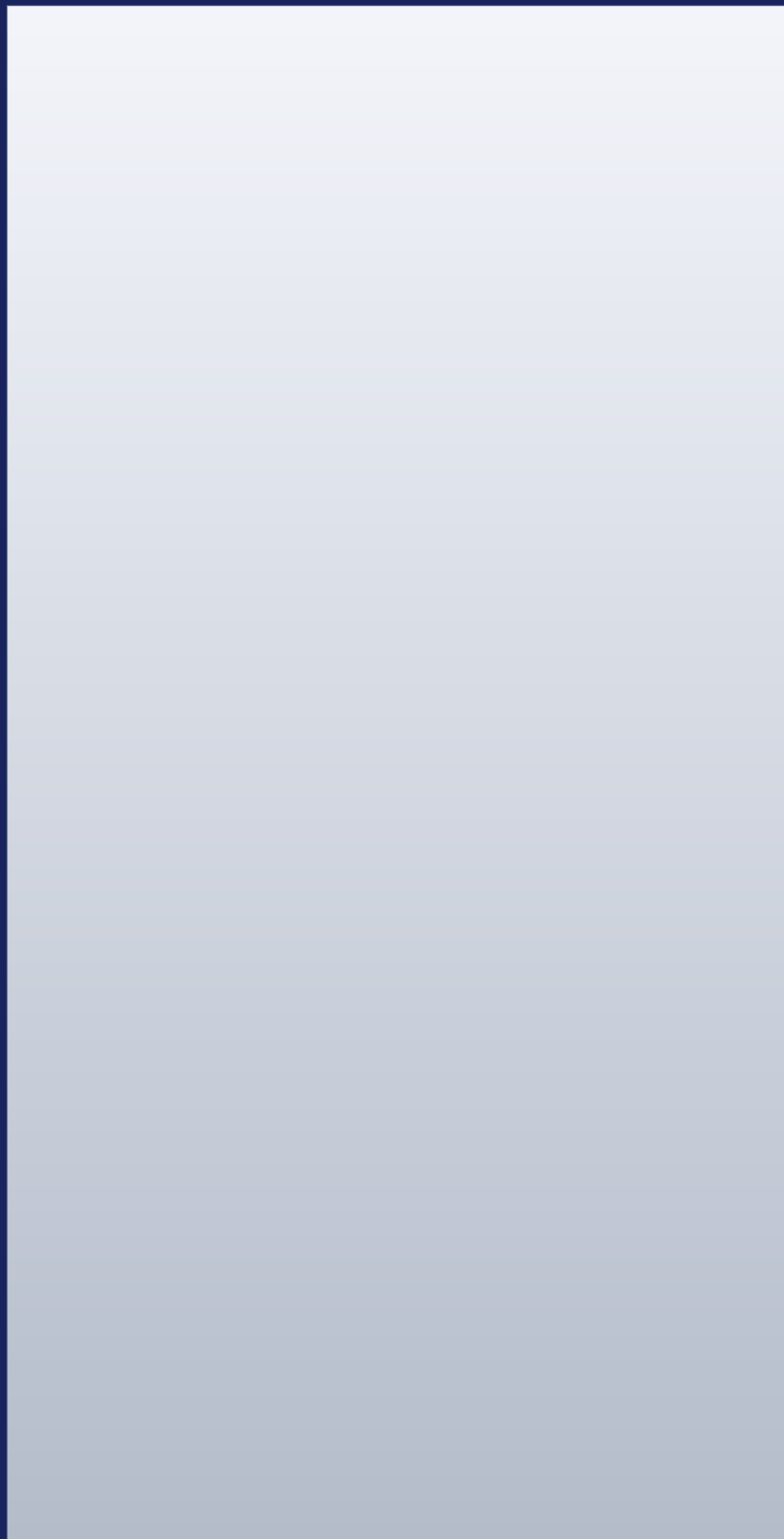
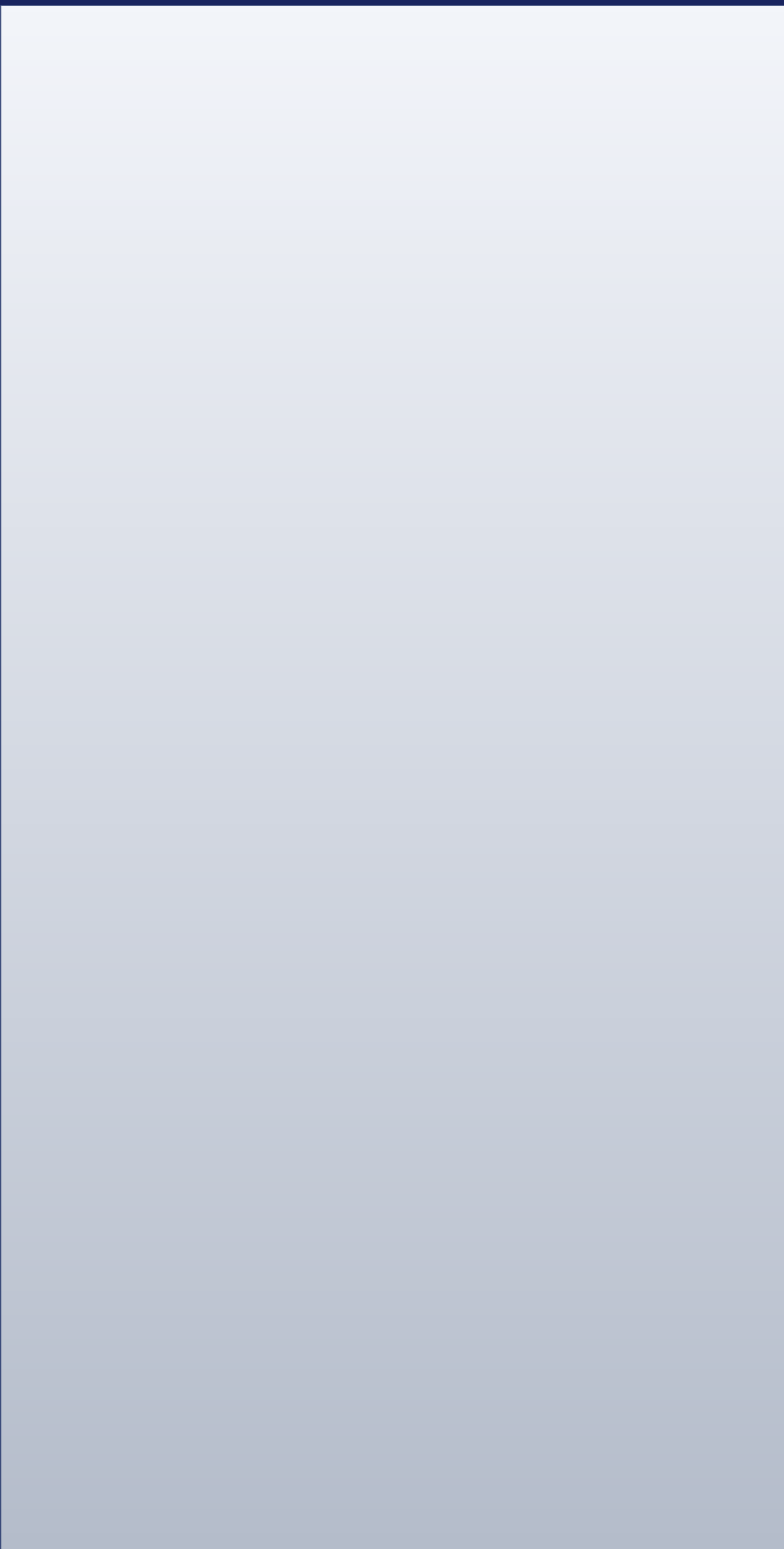
Lebel, C., MacKinnon, A., Bagshawe, M., Tomfohr-Madsen, L., & Giesbrecht, G. (2020). Elevated depression and anxiety symptoms among pregnant individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 277, 5–13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2020.07.126>

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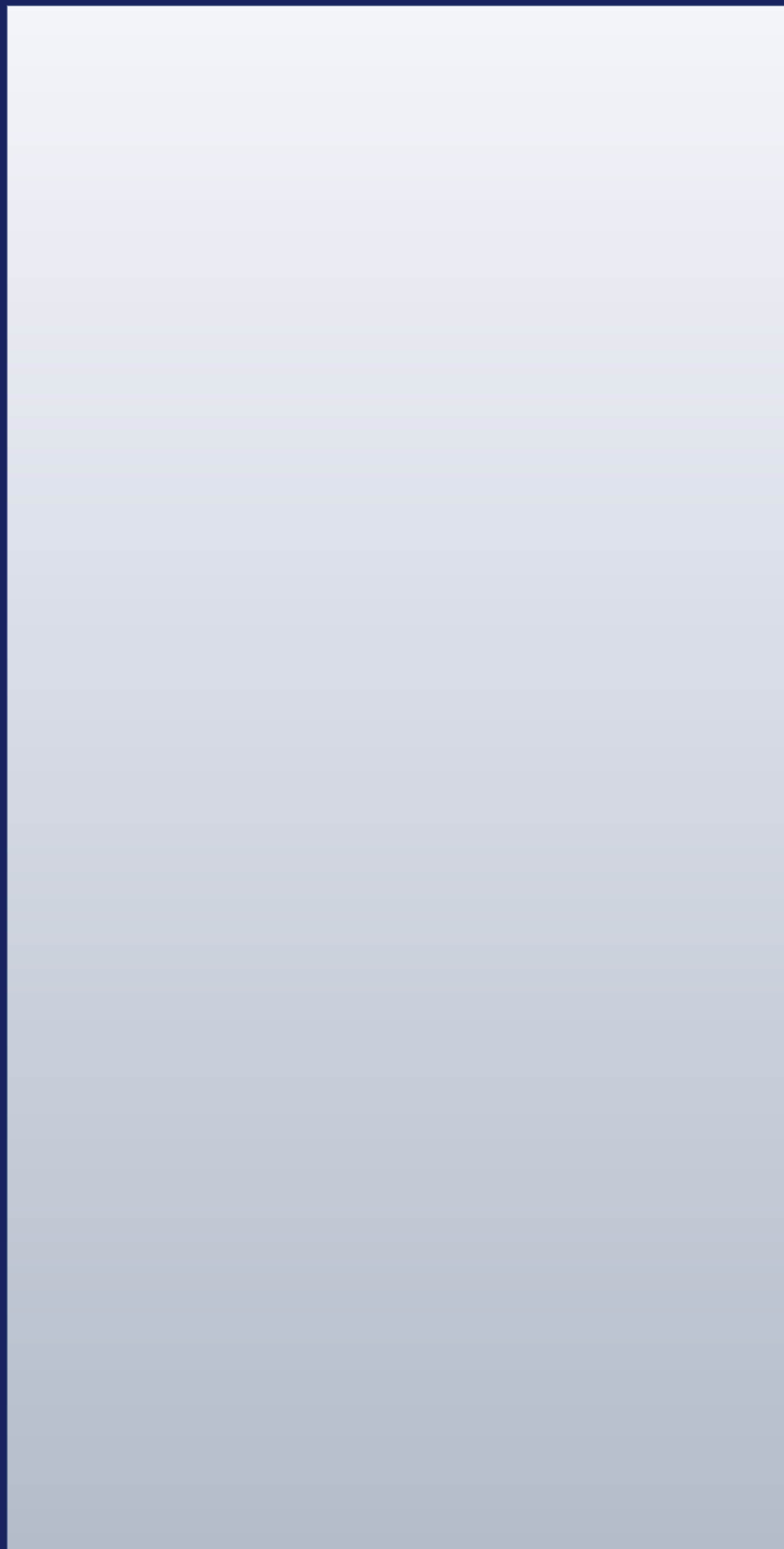
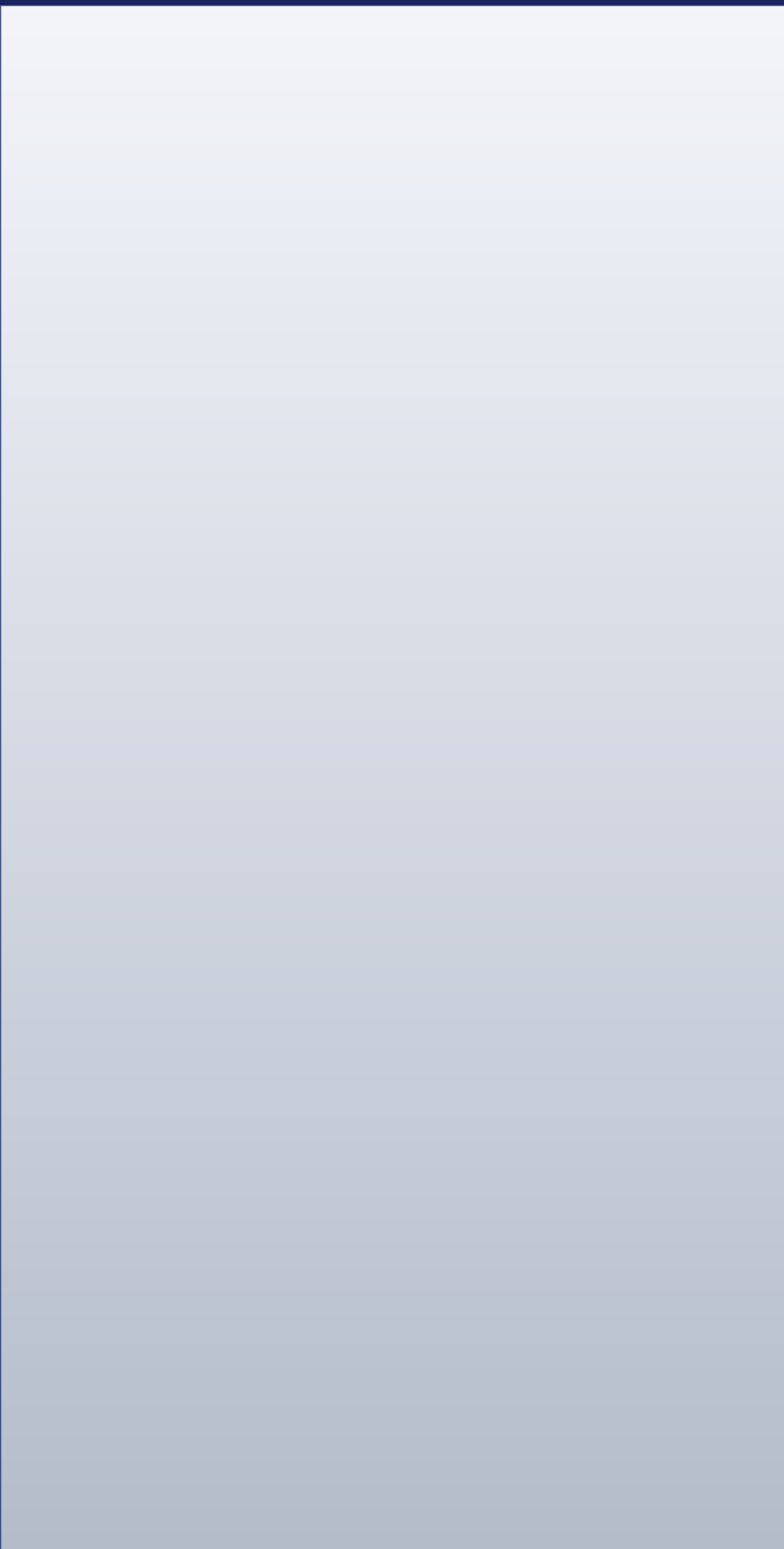


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