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The effectiveness of logotherapy in powerlessness in cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy

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Abstract

Background: Cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy often have physical and psychological impacts. The psychological impact caused is powerlessness. The problem of powerlessness must be handled well because otherwise it can develop into despair and the risk of suicide. The intervention to overcome powerlessness is logotherapy. Logotherapy is a type of psychotherapy that aims to help patients find the meaning of life.

Purpose: To determine the effectiveness of logotherapy in cancer patients who experience powerlessness during chemotherapy.

Method: A quantitative with a quasi-experimental nonequivalent control design. The total sample was 56 participants and used a nonprobability sampling technique with purposive sampling type. The instrument used was the Powerlessness Assessment Tool for Adult Patients Questionnaire. This research uses statistical tests are the Wilcoxon Sign Rank Test, Mann-Whitney U Test, and Independent Sample T Test.

Results: Statistical test results showed that there was a significant effect of logotherapy on the powerlessness of cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy with p value (0.000) < alpha (0.05).

Conclusion: Logotherapy is effective in overcoming the problem of powerlessness in cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy.

Keywords: Cancer; Chemotherapy; Logotherapy; Powerlessness.

INTRODUCTION

Cancer is one of the biggest health problems in Indonesia and is the second highest cause of death after cardiovascular disease (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022). Data from the Global Burden of Cancer released by the World Health Organization states that the number of cases and deaths due to cancer up to 2018 was 18.1 million cases and 9.6 million deaths in 2018. Deaths due to cancer are expected to continue to increase to more than 13.1 million by 2030 (World Health Organization, 2020; Sung, Ferlay, Siegel, Laversanne, Soerjomataram, Jemal, & Bray, 2021).

Global Burden of Cancer (2020) states that countries in Asia contribute greatly to cancer cases in the world, one of which is Indonesia. The total number of cancer cases in Indonesia in 2020 experienced an additional 396,914 new cancer cases with the five most common types of cancer, namely breast cancer (16.6%), cervical cancer (9.2%), lung cancer (8.8%), colorectal cancer (8.6%), and cancer. liver (5.4%), which means an increase of 13.8% compared to the addition of new cases in 2018 with a total death rate of 234,511 cases (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019). Based on recapitulation data from Arifin Achmad Hospital Medical Records, Riau

Province from 2018 to 2022, the total number of cancer cases was 209,773 people (Riau Provincial Health Office, 2023). Therapeutic approaches used to treat cancer are surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. These three therapies are most widely used to treat cancer (Saruhan, 2020; Haryani, 2022).

Chemotherapy is a therapy using chemicals which aims to suppress the growth and proliferation of cancer cells (Septina, Mardiyantoro, Wineas, & Balbeid, 2020). Chemotherapy not only affects cancer cells but also affects healthy cells, causing side effects that are generally seen during treatment. The results of a study conducted on breast cancer patients at the Yogyakarta City Government Hospital showed that the physiological impacts felt by chemotherapy patients included nausea (89.3%), vomiting (88%), neutropenia (60%), leukopenia (54%) and anemia (46.7%) (Oktastika, Supadmi, & Yuniarti, 2021).

The psychological impact felt by patients is disruption of self-esteem, level of well-being, sexuality, and stress regarding a potentially life-threatening diagnosis (Smeltzer & Bare, 2002). Furthermore, this psychological disorder causes feelings of loss of hope, perceiving illness as a punishment, and considering oneself as a burden to others until ultimately experiencing powerlessness (Lestari, Budiarti, & IImi, 2020). Powerlessness is the patient's perception or response that the behavior or actions that have been carried out do not bring the expected results, so that the patient finds it difficult to control situations that have occurred or that will occur in the future (Kamitsuru, & Herdman, 2019). The problem of powerlessness is 30% overall found in patients with chronic diseases (Niman, Keliat, & Mustikasari, 2014).

Based on research on qualitative interview studies on the needs of lung cancer patients, patients diagnosed with cancer produce feelings of helplessness (Stanze, Schneider, Nauck, & Marx, 2019). The powerlessness that occurs begins when cancer is newly diagnosed, then cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy until feelings of powerlessness emerge after the patient's efforts to fight cancer are unsuccessful (Azari & Zururi, 2020; Lestari et al., 2020; Wajid, Rajkumar, Romate, George, & Lakshmi, 2021; Werdani & Prasetya, 2021). To overcome the patient's desire to die, psychotherapy is needed which can increase the meaning of life for the patient.

Psychotherapy can be an intervention that can be done to deal with powerlessness (Niman, Keliat, & Mustikasari, 2014). Psychotherapy is an action that has economic benefits, not only for patients with mental disorders but also for patients with medical illnesses and accompanying psychiatric problems. One type of psychotherapy that aims to help patients find the meaning of life is logotherapy (Frankl, 1992; Bastaman, 2007). Logotherapy is psychotherapy that can see individuals clearly and holistically, including self-image, self-confidence and the individual's ability to handle stress (Bastaman, 2007). Research shows that logotherapy has a very positive effect on various psychological cases (Wahyuni, Keliat, & Budiharto, 2010; Koulaee, Khenarinezhad, Abutalebi, & Bagheri-Nesami, 2018). Logotherapy can be an intervention that can be given in conditions of low meaningfulness of life (Pramana, Cahyanti, & Fridari, 2021).

Based on several literature that researchers found, there are several logotherapy techniques developed by Frankl. This research uses the Values Awareness Technique. The Values Awareness Technique (VAT) is a logotherapy technique that helps patients realize the values they still have and can use even in difficult conditions (Hutzell, & Jerkins, 1990; Wahyuni et al., 2010).

Logotherapy can be useful for obtaining behavioral values such as accepting with full fortitude, patience, courage to face forms of suffering that cannot be avoided and providing enthusiasm for life to be meaningful. This research was conducted using quantitative research with the problem formulation "Is logotherapy effective in powerlessness cancer patients in undergoing chemotherapy".

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a quantitative with a quasi-experimental nonequivalent control design. The population in this study were all cancer patients who were undergoing chemotherapy at the One Day Care Adult Chemotherapy Room, Arifin Achmad Hospital, Riau Province. The sample in this study was 56 participants and used a nonprobability sampling technique with purposive sampling type.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria are age 20-70 years, priority cancer patients (breast cancer, cervical cancer, ovarian cancer and lung cancer), cancer patients who experience mild or severe powerlessness based on the results of questionnaire

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scoring, participants never participated in psychotherapy or logotherapy, participants able to communication coherent, participants able to writing and reading. In this study, no participants dropped out during the logotherapy intervention.

This research consisted of 56 participants divided into two groups, namely the experimental group and the control group, each group numbering 28 participants. Before carrying out the research, all participants were pretested using a questionnaire to measure powerlessness. The instrument used is the Powerlessness Assessment Tool for Adult Patients Questionnaire by Braga and Cruz, (2009) which has been tested for validity and reliability. The questionnaire consists of 12 statement items using a Likert scale. Questionnaire scores are divided into two categories, namely mild powerlessness (score 12-35) and severe powerlessness (score 36-60). The experimental group was given the logotherapy value awareness technique (VAT) intervention for 4 sessions. Meanwhile, the control group received no intervention and only carried out daily living activities during the study. Implementation of the logotherapy VAT in 4 sessions, includes session I identifying problems, session II stimulating creative imagination,

session III presenting situations that give meaning and session IV the meaning of life.

This research was conducted for 4 weeks. One meeting session is held for 45-60 minutes, with a logotherapy guidebook and observation sheet according to the schedule that has been made with the participants. After all sessions and stages of logotherapy were completed, the posttest continued using a questionnaire to measure powerlessness in both groups (experimental and control).

Research data analysis was carried out through univariate analysis to see the characteristics and powerlessness experienced by respondents. Normality test results showed that the data was not normally distributed ($p < 0.05$) using the Shapiro Wilk test. The results of the homogeneity test, all data were homogeneous ($p > 0.05$), so the bivariate analysis was the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, Mann Whitney U Test and Independent T Test in conducting data analysis with a statistical significance level set at $p < 0.05$.

This research has been approved by the Nursing and Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Nursing, University of Riau with the number: 447/UNI9.5.1.8/KEPK.FKp/2024.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1. Characteristic of Participant (N=56)

Variable	Group	
	Experimental (n=28)	Control (n=28)
Age (Mean±SD)(Range)(Year)	(51.72±7.931)(20-70)	(47.57±6.521)(20-70)
Age (n/%)		
Early Adult 20-44 years	6/21.4	10/35.7
Middle Adult 45-64 years	21/75.0	17/60.7
Late Adult ≥65 years	1/3.6	1/3.6
Gender (n/%)		
Male	6/21.4	2/7.1
Female	22/78.6	26/92.9
Education (n/%)		
Elementary School	7/25.0	6/21.4
Junior High School	5/17.9	8/28.5
Senior High School	12/42.9	12/42.9
Diploma Degree	2/7.1	1/3.6
Bachelor Degree	2/7.1	1/3.6

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Variable	Group	
	Experimental (n=28)	Control (n=28)
Marital Status (n/%)		
Single	3/10.7	1/3.6
Married	25/89.3	26/92.8
Divorce	0/0	1/3.6
Occupation (n/%)		
Unemployed	24/85.7	24/85.7
Employed	4/14.3	4/14.3
Types of Cancer (n/%)		
Breast Cancer	16/57.1	22/78.6
Cervical Cancer	2/7.1	2/7.1
Ovary Cancer	4/14.3	1/3.6
Lung Cancer	1/3.6	1/3.6
Other Cancers	5/17.9	2/7.1
Cancer Stage (n/%)		
0-1	3/10.7	1/3.6
2-3	24/85.7	24/85.7
4	1/3.6	3/10.7
Powerlessness Pre-test (n/%)		
Mild	7/25.0	6/21.4
Severe	21/75.0	22/78.6
Mean (Range)	40.14 (19-51)	41.04 (23-51)
Powerlessness Post-test (n/%)		
Mild	28/100	7/25.0
Severe	0/0	21/75.0
Mean (Range)	28.89 (19-35)	40.96 (24-52)

Based on table 1, it shows that of the 56 participants, the majority of the experimental group were in middle adult aged 45-64 years (75.0%) while the control group (60.7%). The majority were female in the experimental group (78.6%) and control group (92.9%). The majority of education was senior high school in the experimental group (42.9%) and the control group (42.9%). The majority of participants were married in the experimental group (89.3%) and the control group (92.9%). The majority of participants unemployed in the experimental group (85.7%) and the control group (85.7%). The majority of participants with breast cancer were in the experimental group (57.1%) and the control group (78.6%). The majority of participants were in stage 2-3 cancer in the experimental group (85.7%) and the control group (85.7%). Before being given logotherapy most (75.0%) for experimental group and control group (78.6%) participant felt severe powerlessness. After being given logotherapy experimental group most (100%) participant felt mild powerlessness and the control group continued to feel severe powerlessness most (75.0%). The experimental group shows that the powerlessness before given logotherapy was 40.14 in the severe powerlessness category, while the powerlessness after given logotherapy decreased significantly by 28.89 in the mild powerlessness category. Apart from that, in the control group it was also known that participants powerlessness during the pre-test was 41.04 in the severe powerlessness category. While the participants powerlessness during the post-test was 40.96, still in the severe powerlessness category.

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Table 2. Wilcoxon Test Results

Variable	Experimental Group (n=28)	p-value	Control Group (n=28)	p-value
Powerlessness (Mean±SD)				
Pre-test	(40.14±9.544)	0.000	(41.04±8.203)	0.637
Post-test	(28.89±4.740)		(40.96±7.853)	

Based on table 2, it can be seen that in the experimental group the average powerlessness of participants before given logotherapy was 40.14 (severe powerlessness) with a standard deviation of 9.544, while the average powerlessness of participants after given logotherapy was 28.89 (mild powerlessness) with a standard deviation of 4.740. The Wilcoxon test results obtained p value $0.000 < \alpha 5\%$ ($p < 0.05$), it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of logotherapy on the powerlessness of cancer patients in undergoing chemotherapy. Apart from that, in the control group it can be seen that the average powerlessness of participants during the pre-test was 41.04 (severe powerlessness) with a standard deviation of 8.203, while the average powerlessness of participants during the post-test was 40.96 (severe powerlessness) with a standard deviation of 7.853. The test results obtained p value $0.637 > \alpha 5\%$ ($p > 0.05$).

Table 3. Mann Whitney U Test Results

Experiment and Control Group	Mann Whitney	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Information
Post-test	99.000	-4.810	0.000	There is a significant difference

Based on table 3, the results of the Mann-Whitney statistical test showed a p value of $0.000 < \alpha 5\%$ ($p < 0.05$), it was concluded that there was a significant difference in powerlessness between participants experimental group and the control group after given logotherapy intervention.

Table 4. Independent T Test Results

Powerlessness	t	Df	p value	Mean difference
Pre-test	0.375	54	0.709	0.893
Post-test	6,964	54	0,000	12,071

Based on table 4, the results of the Independent Sample T Test statistical test show that the p value from the pre-test is $0.709 > \alpha 5\%$ ($p > 0.05$). This means that there is no difference in powerlessness during the pre-test in the experimental group and the control group. Meanwhile, the p value from the post-test is $0.000 < \alpha 5\%$ ($p < 0.05$). This means that there is a difference in powerlessness during the post-test in the experimental group and the control group.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research results, it was found that before being given logotherapy the average powerlessness in the experimental group had a mean value of 40.14 which was in the severe powerlessness score range and after being given logotherapy it was 28.89 which was in the mild powerlessness score range which means there was a decrease in the level of powerlessness score.

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Through statistics, the p value = 0.000 $\alpha < 0.05$ is obtained, so it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of logotherapy on the powerlessness of cancer patients in undergoing chemotherapy.

Psychological problems of powerlessness can occur in cancer patients. The powerlessness experienced by patients not only affects the quality of life, but also has an impact on the patient's chemotherapy treatment (Putri & Jannah, 2019; Lewandowska, Rudzki, Lewandowski, Próchnicki, Rudzki, Laskowska, & Brudniak, 2020). Research at Baladhika Husada Hospital Jember, found differences in depression in cancer patients before and after the first chemotherapy (A'la, Arini, Wantiyah, Setioputro, & Ridla, 2023). Cancer and the repeated and long chemotherapy process that patients undergo play a role in causing powerlessness. Routine chemotherapy makes patients very dependent on help from family or other people (Rosaria, Susilowati, & Septimar, 2024). The patient's dependence on other people often causes the patient to feel like a burden to others, lose hope in life and view himself as low (Latumaerissa, 2019). Apart from that, patients become pessimistic about their future, feel helpless and life becomes meaningless. Research conducted on patients with cancer referred to Imam Khomeini Hospital, states that participating in a logotherapy group helps patients share emotions and experiences with other people (Emafti, Hedayatzadeh-Omran, Noroozi, Janbabai, Tatari, & Modanloo, 2019).

The meaning of life can be found through individual attitudes, experiences and behavior. Life never stops having meaning, when someone feels that life has no meaning it is because that individual has been cut off from the meaning it has, not because that meaning no longer exists (Frank, 1992; Bastaman, 2007). In this study, logotherapy was given in conditions of low meaningfulness of the patient's life. This is in line with research at Imam Khomeini Hospital, which states that logotherapy is an effective intervention in reducing psychological problems such as anxiety and depression, and is useful for improving quality of life (Emafti et al., 2019).

In this research, logotherapy teaches that finding meaning in suffering can help patients to survive and find strength in facing these challenges. The principles of logotherapy encourage patients to take responsibility for their choices and attitudes towards

the suffering they experience (Alreda, Mohameed, Al-Hili, Jawad, & Khamees, 2022). During the research, logotherapy made patients aware of responsibility for their own choices. This therapy can be given to patients with terminal illnesses, chronic illnesses, post-traumatic stress syndrome, alcohol dependence, sadness, depression, personality disorders and obsessive-phobic disorders (Bastaman, 2007).

Logotherapy can help patients undergoing chemotherapy to maintain their independence in facing the tiring treatment process. In this study, logotherapists provide psychological support to cancer patients in their search for meaning and purpose in life, this helps patients to face powerlessness and psychological problems experienced during treatment and chemotherapy. This is in line with research in Iran which states that logotherapy significantly reduces levels of depression and anxiety and has a positive impact on mental health and improves the quality of life of breast cancer patients (Sajadian, Motaharinasab, Heydari, Farokhi, Haghighat, & Hashemi, 2024). One way for patients to reduce pressure during treatment is communication. Communication is very important for patients. In the family, they provide support to each other and do not blame the patient's condition, they are close, open to each other, listen to each other's complaints and both understand each other's condition, so that they have a strong emotional closeness so that the accompanying family and the patient do not have the slightest distance (Al-Kindy, 2023). During chemotherapy treatment, it is hoped that a good communication pattern will be formed between the patient and family (Rusmiati & Maria, 2023). During the logotherapy intervention, family support really helps the patient find the true meaning of life.

The difference in powerlessness before and after logotherapy occurred significantly in cancer respondents undergoing chemotherapy. The ability to interpret events in life is a part that greatly influences a person's life. After logotherapy, respondents were able to interpret life and have a commitment to themselves. A person who is unable to interpret the illness he is experiencing will feel that the pain he is experiencing has resulted in his life being meaningless, feeling useless and unmotivated to try to recover from his illness (Bastaman, 2007). A person who is sick must of course have a goal to recover, because this goal encourages the individual

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to be adaptive to the changes that occur during illness, apart from that he is also more patient in dealing with his condition (Werdani & Sari, 2024).

Logotherapy can generally be interpreted as psychotherapy which guides individuals to recognize the meaning and desires in their lives so that they are motivated to achieve the meaningful level of life desired by each individual (Bastaman, 2007). The meaning of life is important and provides value to life. Each individual views the meaning of life differently depending on the experiences they have during their life (Dinata, Kholifah, Lestari, Mumpuni, & Rafli, 2023).

The powerlessness experienced by cancer patients arises due to physical changes in the disease process. The feeling of powerlessness is exacerbated by a poor prognosis, even showing worsening and new physical problems that further reduce body function when the patient undergoes chemotherapy. Logotherapy is really needed by patients who experience powerlessness due to their illness because it helps patients to find the meaning of life and free themselves from negative thoughts and makes patients have the spirit to survive with positive thoughts, determine their life goals, and utilize family support sources to overcome decreased abilities without feeling inadequate. empowered.

CONCLUSION

There is a significant influence and difference in powerlessness between the experimental group and the control group in undergoing chemotherapy after logotherapy intervention ($p < 0.05$). This research shows that logotherapy significantly reduces the level of powerlessness and increases the patient's adaptability in facing the chemotherapy process. This research confirms that logotherapy can be an effective intervention approach to support the psychological well-being of cancer patients, while also helping patients face the treatment journey with more optimism and meaning.

SUGGESTION

It is hoped that this research can be used as evidence-based nursing practice as an independent nursing intervention that can be applied to cancer patients with psychological problems who are undergoing chemotherapy in hospital.

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