INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

A STUDY TO ASSESS THE INCIDENCE OF DEPRESSION AMONG CANCER PATIENTS AND ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SELF-AFFIRMATION TECHNIQUE IN REDUCING DEPRESSION AMONG CANCER PATIENTS IN SELECTED HOSPITAL OF NEW DELHI.

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

A pre-experimental two phase study was conducted to identify the incidence of depression among cancer patients and assess the effectiveness of self-affirmation technique in reducing depression among cancer patients in selected hospital of Delhi. The objective of the study were (a) To assess the incidence of depression among cancer patients (b) To assess the effectiveness of self-affirmation technique in reducing the depression as measured by HDRS among cancer patients (c) To find the association of depression among cancer patients with selected demographic variables, (d) To find the association of mean difference in depression score before and after administration of self-affirmation technique among cancer patients with selected demographic variables. The conceptual framework for the study was based on modified King Imogine Goal Attainment Theory. Quantitative Research Approach was selected. It was a two phase study. In phase 1 of the study Descriptive Survey Design was used to assess the incidence of depression among 200 cancer patients. In phase 2 of the study Pre-Experimental Design was used to assess the effectiveness of self-affirmation technique on 30 cancer patients with depression. Purposive sampling technique was used in both the phases. Structured interview schedule was used to collect data. A standardized tool, Hamilton rating scale was used to assess the depression level in cancer patients. The findings of the study showed that 87% patients with cancer were suffering with depression and out of them 2% were suffering with severe depression, 36.5% were suffering with moderate depression and 48.5% were suffering with mild depression. The results revealed that the administration self-affirmation technique was found to be effective as the calculated 't' value was 11.298 which is higher than the table value and the mean pre-test score was 13.70 and post-test score was 11.23 with the mean difference of 2.47. The study also showed the significant association between pre-test score and gender, type of cancer and financial assistance.

KEYWORDS

Depression, Cancer, Self-affirmation, Effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO). Mental, intellectual, emotional and social health refers to a person's ability to handle stress, to acquire skills and to maintain relationships, all of which form resources for independent living.

The WHO World Health Survey (WHS), involving 245404 participants from 60 countries in all regions of the world, showed that between 9.3% and 23% of participants with one or more chronic physical diseases had comorbid depression and that depression had the largest effect on worsening mean health scores and on increasing disability compared with the other chronic conditions [1].

Self-affirmation can promote health behaviour change and yield long-term improvements in health, via its effects on receptiveness to risk associated with chronic issues of health [2].

One way to reliably decrease defensiveness and increase receptivity to potentially threatening health messages is through self-affirmation. Self-affirmation is a process of thinking or writing about one's core values.

Kalita Dwipen, Krishnatreya Manigreeva et al suggested that out of 183 cancer patients screened, 44 (24%) patients were identified to have depression. Mild to moderate depression was seen in 68% of married patients and severe to very severe depression in unmarried and widowed group, severe to very severe depression was prevalent in the illiterate group of patients (33%) [3].

Creswell J. David, Dutcher MJ et al have reported that self-affirmation improved problem-solving performance in underperforming chronically stressed individuals. Hence, study suggests that self-affirmation may increase creativity and insight in stressed individuals [4].

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Research Design

Phase-1- Descriptive Survey Design and Phase -2 - Pre-Experimental Design.

Sampling technique- Purposive Sampling Technique for both phases of the study.

Sample- Phase-1 = patients suffering with any stage and type of cancer. Phase-2 = cancer patients suffering with depression as determined by HDRS, Score 8 and above during phase-1 of the study.

Sample size- Phase-1= 200 and Phase-2 = 30

Results

Findings related to the description of the sample characteristics of the patients with cancer attending the OPD and admitted in the Hospital

Suggested that Majority of the cancer patients (32%) were in the age group of 45-55 years, 25% were in 32-43 years, 20% were in 56-67 years and 68-79 years respectively and only 3% were in 20-31 years. There were 66.5% male cancer patients and 33.5% were female cancer patients. Majority of the cancer patients (36%) were doing private jobs, 26% were in other category (like housewives, and unemployed), 18.5% cancer patients were having their own businesses, 12% were doing government jobs, and only 7.5% cancer patients were retired.

Majority (36%) of cancer patients were having 1-2 years of duration of illness, 35.5% were having 3-4 years of duration of illness, 15% cancer patients were having more than 4 years of duration of illness and only 13.5 % were having less than 1 year of illness.

Majority (23.5%) of the cancer patients were suffering with oral cancer, 19% were suffering with breast cancer, 17% were suffering with lung cancer, 10% cancer patients were suffering with prostate and stomach cancer, 7% were suffering with liver cancer, 6% were having cervical cancer, 4% were having colon cancer and 3.5% cancer patients were suffering with bladder cancer.

Majority (45.5%) of the cancer patients were in stage 2 of cancer, 30.5% were in stage 3 of cancer and only 24% were in stage 1 of cancer. Majority (65.5 %) of the cancer patients had health insurance, 13.5% were government beneficiaries, for 12% patients, family was there to bear the expense of the treatment, 7.5% cancer patients were taking care of their treatment expenses, 1.5% had relatives to provide financial assistance.

Findings related to the Incidence of Depression among cancer patients by using HDRS for assessing the level of depression.
During phase 1 of the study, the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale was administered to all the 200 cancer patients suffering with depression and frequency and percentage was calculated.

Table-1 Frequency and percentage distribution of level of depression among cancer patients   n=200

Levels	Frequency	Percentage
Normal (No depression) (Score 0-7)	26	13%
Mild depression (score 8-13)	97	48.5%
Moderate depression (score 14-18)	73	36.5%
Severe depression (score 19-22)	4	2%
Very severe depression (score ≥ 23)	0	0%

Findings related to the description of the sample characteristics of the cancer patients with depression admitted in the hospital during phase 2 of the study.
Revealed that majority of the cancer patients with depression (50%) were in the age group of 32-43 years, 23.33% were in 44-55 years, 13.33% were in 56-67 years, and only 2% were in 20-31 years and 68-79 years respectively. There were 53.33% male cancer patients with depression and 46.67% were female cancer patients with depression. Majority of the cancer patients (40%) were in other category (like housewives, and unemployed), 36.67% were doing private jobs, 13.33% cancer patients were having their own businesses, 6.67% cancer patients with depression were retired, and only 3.33% were doing government jobs.

Majority (43.33%) of cancer patients were having 1-2 years of duration of illness, 23.33% were having 3-4 years of duration of illness, 20% cancer patients were having more than 4 years of duration of illness and only 13.33 % were having less than 1 year of illness.
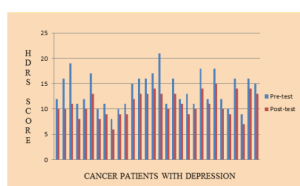
Majority (30%) of the cancer patients with depression were suffering with oral cancer, 20% were suffering with stomach cancer, 16.67% were suffering with breast cancer, 10% cancer patients with depression were suffering with prostate cancer, 6.67% were suffering with colon and cervical cancer respectively, 3.33% were having lung, bladder, and liver cancer.

Majority (46.67%) of the cancer patients with depression were in stage 2 of cancer, 26.67% were in stage 1 and stage 3.

Majority (46.67 %)of the cancer patients with depression had health insurance, for 36.67% patients, family was there to bear the expense of the treatment, 10% were government beneficiaries, 6.67% cancer patients with depression were taking care of their own treatment expenses.

Findings related to the effectiveness of self-affirmation technique in reducing depression among cancer patients.
This section describes the analysis, description and interpretation of data related to the effectiveness of self-affirmation technique in reducing depression among cancer patients. During the phase 2 of the study post-test was administered to 30 cancer patients who were admitted in the hospital in order to determine the significance between means of pre-test and post-test scores of Hamilton Depression Rating Scale.

Figure-1: A bar diagram showing the individual pre-test and post-test scores of cancer patients with depression

Table-2 Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation and t-test score of the effectiveness of self-affirmation technique in cancer patients with depression.   n=30

	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard deviation	Mean difference	Df	t value
Pre-test scores	13.70	12.5	16	3.334	2.47	29	11.298*
Post-test scores	11.23	10.5	10	2.763			

$p<0.05$, *Significance, ** Non-Significance

Table 2 shows the significant difference between the mean pre-test and post test score. The mean and standard deviation of pre-test score was 13.70 and 3.334 respectively. The mean and standard deviation of post-test score was 11.23 and 2.763 respectively. The t test value is 11.298. This indicates that the post-test score was consistently lower than the pre-test score.

Findings related to the association between pre-test score with the selected demographic variables of patients with cancer.
Results shows that there was significant association between the pre-test score of depression and gender of the cancer patients. It was found that majority of the male cancer patients were having mild depression (74) than the female cancer patients (23).

There was a significant association between the pre-test score of depression and type of cancer which shows that the majority of the oral cancer patients (26) were suffering with mild depression than breast cancer (14), lung cancer (15), prostate cancer (13), liver cancer (11), stomach cancer (8), colon cancer and cervical cancer (4), and bladder cancer (2).

It was found that majority of the cancer patients (60) had health insurance as financial assistance to bear the expense of the treatment were suffering with mild depression than government beneficiaries (15), self (11), family (7), and the cancer patients for whom relatives (3) were there to bear the expense of the treatment were suffering with mild depression. Therefore, there was significant association between the pre-test score of depression and financial assistance.

There was no significant association between the pre-test score of depression and age, occupation, duration of illness, and stage of cancer.

Hence, the research hypothesis was partially accepted and partially rejected and null hypothesis was partially accepted and partially rejected.

DISCUSSION
In the present study the findings showed that 87% patients with cancer were suffering from depression. The incidence of depression as, majority (48.5%) of the cancer patients had mild depression, 36.5% had moderate depression, 2% had severe depression, and 13% were not suffering with depression at all. Self-affirmation technique was effective in reducing the level of depression among cancer patients. And there was significant association between the pre-test score of depression and gender, type of cancer and financial assistance.

CONCLUSION
The entire process of being diagnosed with cancer and its treatments is a profoundly stressful experience for patients and may lead to significant immediate and long-term psychological problems. Therefore, patients have a growing interest in seeking out mind-body intervention as adjuncts to medical treatment in their efforts to cope with their illness and to promote healing.

On the basis of the findings of this study, it can be concluded that there is a high incidence of depression in patients suffering with cancer. Hence, Self-affirmation technique is effective in reducing depression among cancer patients.

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