



The Impact Of Chinese Calligraphy On Anxiety And Comorbid Depression In Life Threatening Disease Patients In Hong Kong

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Citation: Zhang TongYuan & Zulkarnain A. Hatta (2024), The Impact Of Chinese Calligraphy On Anxiety And Comorbid Depression In Life Threatening Disease Patients In Hong Kong, *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(4), 10530-10534

Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i4.7632

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

This subtype of "female carcinoma of the breast incidence globally" is quite common. Anxiety is a huge issue for breast cancer patients and has terrible impacts on both emotional and physical health. A new study indicated that the levels of anxiety and sadness in breast cancer patients fluctuate over the course of the illness. Fatigue, insomnia, a racing heart, hypertension, gastrointestinal issues, restlessness, and a generalised feeling of powerlessness are common physical manifestations of anxiety. Numerous studies have shown that the immune response and other physiological regulating mechanisms are impaired in people with persistent anxiety. The need of researching effective therapies for anxiety is heightened by the fact that an increasing number of women suffer from it. The reason for this is: For centuries, people in China have turned to calligraphy as a spiritual practice that may help them become more self-aware and confident. Now, this ancient art form may also be a panacea for worry. The therapist-patient dialogue is at the heart of almost all Western-style psychotherapist approaches. Regardless of the theoretical framework, the primary goal of psychotherapy is to establish a mutually respected and trustworthy relationship between therapist and client. In most cases, the process begins with a consultation between the physician and patient. The therapist creates an accepting environment where the client feels comfortable expressing their worries without fear of judgement. Expression of emotion via words "Expressive treatments are prevalent and effective in individualistic cultures, where members are given permission to verbalise their grievances.

KEYWORDS: *Calligraphy, Comorbid Depression, Chinese, Hong Kong.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

carcinoma of the breast is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths among females worldwide, regardless of economic status. A total of almost 508,000 women lost their lives to this kind of cancer in 2011. Among female-identifying malignancies, breast cancer is by far the most common, making up 29% of newly detected tumours in the US and 26% in Canada. Breast carcinoma is the most common cancer in women worldwide, even in modern East Asian civilizations such as Singapore, Hong Kong. With 3,014 cases in 2010, breast cancer accounted for 2.41 percent of all newly diagnosed malignancies in Hong Kong in 2010. Between twenty-five and twenty-seven fifty percent of cancer diagnoses in Singapore are breast cancer, which affects over 1,100 women annually. Breast cancer is therefore becoming more common and more people are surviving it. Traditional cancer terminology states that breast cancer is characterised by the uncontrolled growth and development of cells in the breast. These days, the main ways to treat breast cancer are with surgery and additional treatments, including radiation, chemotherapy, and hormone therapy. carcinoma of the breast is the most common cancer among women globally, according to the Worldwide Health Organization. The disease was responsible for the deaths of 508,000 women as of 2011. Among North American women, 1 in 8 will get confirmed breast cancer at some point; in the US, 29% of newly detected neoplasia are breast cancers, and in Canada, 26% are. Similarly, among women in developed Eastern nations such as Singapore and Hong Kong, breast cancer ranks highest. Of all the malignancies identified in the Chinese territory of Hong Kong in 2010, 3,014 were breast cancers, accounting for 24.1% of the total, according to the Department for Health

Protection. Similarly, among every instance of cancer in Singapore, women accounted for twenty-five to thirty percent, or around 110 cases annually. Hence, both the incidence of breast cancer and the percentage of patients who manage to beat the illness are increasing (**Kao, 2018**).

2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:

Along with these treatments come a number of undesirable side effects. Many patients have a range of side effects that impact the physical and psychological adjustments they are required to make due to their conditions. Although life expectancy has risen due to developments in "medical technologies and rigorous therapies," patients with breast cancer still face more challenges when trying to adjust to their treatment plan. The main causes of stress for a woman after a breast cancer diagnosis are the symptoms of the illness and its treatment. Researchers found that "emotional morbidity fluctuates" for many women as their diseases develop. Concern for one's mental health is among the several symptoms experienced by breast cancer sufferers. Anxiety and sadness often occur together in therapeutic settings. Coexistence of the two mental illnesses is common. Overlapping diagnostic indicators, such as problems sleeping, problems concentrating, fatigue, lack of energy, etc., may account for some of the cases of this illness, says Ingram. Nevertheless, a substantial comorbidity remains between anxious and depressive states even after accounting for diagnostic overlap. Anxiety symptoms are common among those suffering from depression. "Anxiety" is a normal reaction to unpleasant stimuli that helps the body adjust to changing needs. But it might be dangerous if it becomes worse. When it's extreme and ongoing, it might lower one's stress tolerance. Anxiety is characterised by the responses of areas of the autonomic nervous system (thus., rapid heartbeat, high blood pressure, shallow breathing, and rigid muscles), an individual's perception of internal tension, and the presence of anxious or worried thoughts. The life expectancy for those diagnosed with breast cancer has been improved because of medical developments and intense medicines. However, the challenges these patients face in adapting to these treatments have been amplified. The illness and its symptoms, as well as those associated with therapy, are the primary causes of stress for breast cancer patients throughout treatment. Research shows that many female patients have emotional morbidity, the severity of which varies with the course of their disease. People diagnosed with breast cancer often report experiencing anxiety as a symptom. Anxiety is common in depressed people, according to both clinical studies and anecdotal evidence. The co-occurrence of these two mental diseases is common (**Chiang, 2019**).

3. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

Worldwide, it is one of the most common form of cancer among females. Worrying too much has a devastating effect on the mental and physical well-being of breast cancer sufferers. According to a new research, the emotional distress experienced by breast cancer patients varies over the course of the illness. Typical symptoms of anxiety include a lack of energy, trouble sleeping, racing heart, high blood pressure, gastrointestinal problems, restlessness, and a generalised sense of helplessness. Researchers have shown that those who suffer from persistent anxiety have compromised immune systems and physiological regulatory processes. Due to the detrimental effects on patients and the rising incidence of female cancer diagnoses, research into effective treatments for anxiety is of the utmost importance. For millennia, Chinese calligraphy has been used as a spiritual practice to help people become more self-aware and confident. This suggests that it may be used as a tool to help people reduce anxiety. Most psychotherapy methods developed in the West rely on verbal exchanges as their main mode of communication. Psychotherapy, in general, is a therapeutic technique based on the therapist and patient working together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, independent of the patient's theoretical orientation. Typically, the process will start with several rounds of discussions. When working with a therapist, one may feel safe enough to talk about personal struggles in an accepting and safe environment. Effective "verbal" expressive therapy is common and promoted in individualistic societies, where individuals are more likely to speak up about their problems. But in many Asian cultures, it is seen as improper and even immature to express emotions like rage or sadness via words rather than one's face. The results will demonstrate that people's mental states improve when exposed to Japanese culture, which is collectivist and encourages the suppression of expression in social life. Because it may go against their heritage, encouraging verbal expression may not have the same impact on people in these cultures. The cultural responsiveness of the patient and the cultural congruence of their selected culture should be considered when choosing a psychotherapy treatment technique. Despite the fact that psychotherapy will still mostly include vocal mediation, it would be beneficial to use nonverbal techniques to bring about good change in populations who are not very receptive to verbal expressive treatment. The main objective of this research is to examine the effectiveness of Chinese calligraphy for breast cancer patients who have Chinese cultural origins (**Dobkin, 2018**).

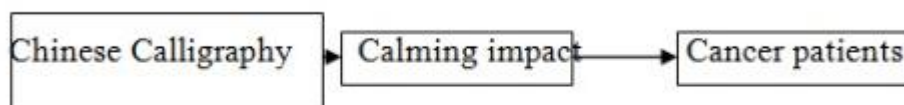
4. LITERATURE REVIEW:

The major focuses of this research study are Chinese calligraphy and contemporary effective medicines for breast cancer patients in reducing anxiety. In this chapter, researchers will present a concise history of Chinese calligraphy along with some background information. The most recent studies on the healing properties of Chinese calligraphy that benefit well and ill individuals are presented here. After this, researchers will go over some useful strategies and therapies that may alleviate the emotional and mental challenges faced by breast cancer sufferers. In the end, researchers go over several things that need further research. The word "calligraphy" describes the practice of creative, elegant handwriting. Calligraphy in Chinese is called shufa, which literally means "the technique of writing" in Chinese. A delicate brush and ink are used to write the Chinese characters by hand. It is currently highly esteemed as one of those most cherished traditional arts and was a common way to communicate in ancient China. Though it may not be practiced much these days, calligraphy is nevertheless highly esteemed in the art world. Understanding the structural differences between Western and Eastern languages is the first step in comprehending the overall effects of Chinese calligraphy. The phonetic symbols, or alphabets, are used to represent the various sounds that comprise words in written forms of the majority of languages, including English. Many Eastern languages, like Japanese and Chinese, make heavy use of pictographs and symbols to depict ideas, words, including ideographs. The characters used to write Chinese are derived from hieroglyphics. Even if some of the letters have changed somewhat throughout the years, the deeper significance of the graphical representations has been kept. Many modern Chinese characters continue to be just simplified or abstracted representations of real-life pictures (Yum, 2019).

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- What are some interesting facts about Chinese calligraphy?
- How did Chinese calligraphy impact the world?
- What extent can "Chinese calligraphy help breast cancer patients in Hong Kong cope with their worry and" depression?
- What are the characteristics of Chinese calligraphy?
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6. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:



7. METHODOLOGY:

The psycho-physiological stimulation characteristics (as measured by the heart rate, blood pressure, and respiration rate) of breast cancer patients who would be taking part in this research were monitored at the start and finish of every session of Chinese calligrapher handwriting. The anxiety levels of the participants will be evaluated after a 4-week course of therapy with the use of the Inventory of State-Trait Anxiety and the Stress, Depression, and Anxiety Scales 21. (after the intervention of eight weeks). None of the people taking part in this research were disturbed as they performed Chinese calligraphy. The course of calligraphy writing will consist of eight 90-minute sessions held weekly in a row. Participants will also be encouraged to practice calligraphy at home throughout the research period. Using paired sample t-tests and repeated measures ANOVA, the data will be examined.

7.1 Research Methodology:

A one-group repeated-measures methodology will be used to investigate the changes in anxiety levels in breast cancer patients, however only a small percentage of them will finish the whole calligraphy intervention. Prior to, during, and after their treatment, these patients had completed an 8-week course in Chinese calligraphy. The researchers will use both physiological and self-report assessments. Participants learnt and practiced Chinese calligraphy in a tranquil environment over the period of eight 90-minute sessions. The purpose of this research is to test the hypothesis that practicing Chinese calligraphy might reduce anxiety. The pulse, blood pressure, and breathing rate are some of the physiological variables that will be monitored both prior to and following each calligraphy session. Before the intervention, at the end of the fourth week, and after the calligraphy intervention, each patient took the STAI and DASS 21 to measure her psychological fear level.

7.2 Sampling and Data Collection:

The research subjects will have been recruited by Maggie's Cancer Caring "Centre. The nurses and social workers at the centre will encourage women who meet the study's inclusion criteria—those who have been

diagnosed with breast cancer and are presently receiving treatment for the disease—to take part. The doctors' office at Tuen Mun Hospital also got brochures. In order to recruit eligible patients, nurses at Maggie's Cancer Care Centre informed physicians at Tuen Mun Hospital about the study.

8. RESULT:

The researchers can see whether calligraphy helps Chinese patients cope with the stress of breast cancer therapy. Breast cancer patients may get some relief from their illness-related sorrow and anxiety via an eight-week intervention programme that focuses on Chinese calligraphy. This is why researchers are going to compare STAI/DASS 21 results in the fourth week before and after the intervention to test hypothesis. This research tested the idea that practicing slow, deliberate movements of Chinese calligraphy may have a sedative or hypotensive impact on the body via the use of "stimulation techniques," as evaluated by blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing rate. The STAI and DASS 21 total and subscale scores, as well as heart rate and blood pressure, were analysed using the Statistics Package for Social Sciences, or SPSS, to conduct paired-samples t-tests and analyses of variance. Researchers will use frequency statistics to describe demographic variables such as marital status, educational level, age, handedness, and medical history. A total of 45 patients diagnosed with breast cancer were included in the research. Everyone who took part was a member of a cancer support group in the newly established territories and a Chinese national living in Hong Kong. From 38 to 65 years old, the participants' ages ranged from an average of 52.58 (variance = 6.17). Only 30 out of 45 participants who participated in the 8-one-week Chinese calligraphy course were able to complete it. With ages ranging from 38 to 65, the average age of these 30 people was 51.9 (also called a = 5.97). The SPSS calculations, which included paired samples t-tests and other statistical methods, were limited to using data from 30 participants as only 30 had completed all 8 weeks that comprised the intervention. The sample size was 45, and they were all Chinese women undergoing treatment for breast cancer. The treatment plans included hormone therapy for fourteen patients, targeted treatment for six, radiation for six, chemotherapy for eighteen, and other similar procedures. Ten patients said they were in the 3rd stage of cancer, one patient in the fourth stage, and twenty-nine patients in the first or subsequent stage of their condition. Five individuals reported not knowing what stage of cancer they were dealing with. Participating students constituted 91% of the total with at least some college degree. Even though they're left-handed, two individuals nevertheless participated. A whopping 91% of respondents said they hadn't taken a class in Chinese calligraphy of the thirty individuals that took part in the whole the calligraphy intervention, nineteen were married, making up 63.3% of the total. The percentage of those who said they were left-handed was a meagre 3.5 percent. Of those who participated, twenty (74.1%) reported being in the initial stage of their illness, six had advanced to the third the platform, and one was in the last phase of her cancer. In all, eleven patients (or 36.7% of the population in total) were receiving some kind of chemotherapy, radiation, targeted treatment, or hormone therapy. Nearly all of the participants had earned at least a bachelor's degree. Nearly eighty-seven percent of respondents claimed they had no prior experience with Chinese calligraphy classes. Nineteen people (or 63.3% of the total) said they did some home practice while the calligraphy intervention was underway.

9. DISCUSSION:

While more women are affected by breast cancer than any other kind of cancer, those diagnosed and undergoing treatment still face a considerable set of challenges. Patients with breast cancer have a decline in quality of life, fatigue, and immune system function due to worry. Furthermore, anxiety and sadness tend to occur together more often in therapeutic settings like hospitals. More severe symptoms, longer recovery, poorer outcomes, and a larger demand for healthcare resources have been associated with cancer patients who also suffer from co-occurring anxiety and depression.

Due to the prevalence of anxiety and depression that serve as adverse psychological symptoms of breast cancer, effective treatments are necessary for this population. Research has shown that those who practice Chinese calligraphy have improvements in their mental acuity, perception, physiological slowdown, and emotional stability. As a treatment for breast cancer, it shows promise in alleviating patients' emotional distress. This study aims to investigate the potential benefits of Chinese calligraphy for the management of anxiety and depression experienced by breast cancer patients residing in Hong Kong. Chinese calligraphy is the practice of hand-writing Chinese characters using a brush that has a delicate tip and ink. As a form of expression and art, it was highly esteemed in ancient China.

For a long time, Chinese people believed that practicing calligraphy would help them live longer, reflect more deeply, and strengthen their minds and bodies. The art of Chinese calligraphy offers several purported benefits, according to Henry Kao, a specialist in the field with research spanning over 30 years. These include improved attention and focus, less stress, more stable emotions, and more acute perceptions. Researchers have looked at both clinical and nonclinical populations. A state of physiological slowness and psychological quiescence increased cognitive activity, and sharpened senses are all positively impacted by practicing Chinese calligraphy, according to the research.

10. CONCLUSION:

Breast cancer is the "most widespread cancer in females worldwide," meaning it most often begins in female breasts; patients undergoing treatment for this disease may encounter formidable obstacles. Feelings of exhaustion, sadness, and pessimism over prognosis are common among breast cancer patients who worry about the immune system being compromised due to treatment side effects, disease progression, or losing control of their lives. Anxiety and depression often arise along in therapeutic settings. Research has shown that both depression and anxiety are associated with worse outcomes for cancer patients, longer recovery times, and more severe symptoms. As a result of the illness and the accompanying anxiety and depression, effective therapeutic approaches are "essential" for breast cancer patients. Studies have shown that when one does Chinese calligraphy, it affects their brain hustle and bustle, perception, physiological slowness, and emotional stability. This kind of therapy has the potential to alleviate depression and anxiety in breast cancer patients. The goal of this study is to find out if women with breast cancer in Hong Kong find that practicing Chinese calligraphy helps them deal with the "sadness" that comes along with their condition.

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