



LIVING IN THE FACE OF PAIN - CONFRONTING CANCER WITH OPTIMISM, SUSTAINING WELL-BEING

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ABSTRACT The present research delves into the psychological impact of cancer on survivors, exploring their experiences post-diagnosis and during treatment. By investigating the emotional responses and challenges faced by individuals affected by cancer, this study aims to enhance understanding and support for those navigating the complexities of the disease. The aim of the study is to investigate the correlational relationship between well-being, optimism, and the appraisal of pain among individuals with cancer, aiming to understand how these factors interact and impact the experiences of cancer survivors. The objectives include assessing the relationship between well-being and optimism, exploring how optimism influences the appraisal of pain, and understanding the impact of well-being on the perception of pain among individuals with cancer. Sample of 33 participants by purposive sampling was collected. Statistical analyses included Spearman's rho correlational analysis to examine the relationships between well-being, optimism, and the appraisal of pain among individuals with cancer. The results indicated contradictory findings compared to existing literature, highlighting the importance of considering psychological aspects, such as optimism, well-being, and the appraisal of pain, in the treatment and care of individuals with cancer.

KEYWORDS :

Usually, normal cells grow and divide to keep the body healthy and when these cells become old or damaged, they are replaced with new cells. But cancer cells continue the growth of abnormal cells and invade in other tissues of the body (American Cancer Society, 2021). There are about 200 different forms of cancer, and they can be categorized based on where they originate in the body. Cancer, along with its medical therapies, causes a wide range of physical and psychosocial issues. These include exhaustion, loss of autonomy, anxiety, physical pain, despair, denial, and strain on personal relationships, all of which have a significant influence on quality of life (Holland & Alici, 2010).

Cancer disease is to be regarded as a complex interlinked process, wherein cancer genesis, progression is contributed by psycho-social factors and on the other hand it also results into many psycho-social challenges and changes (Reiche et al., 2004). Whether acute pain or chronic pain, an essential component of a body's ability to heal is an individual's capacity to feel pain. Evaluation of pain is a crucial element of any chronic illness. Pain evaluation is how individuals perceive their pain. According to the stated findings and in accordance with other research investigations, the significance of the influence of neuroendocrine stress related depression on the promotion of cancer pathogenesis by suppressing anti-tumor immunity is confirmed (Carver & Scheier, 2014). Optimism is a personality trait that has received little study in the Cancer literature. Optimism is a mental disposition marked by hope and faith in future success and a favorable outlook.

Need for the Study

Cancer is one of the highest chronic illness in the world which not only causes physical pain to an individual but also results into various psychological issues. Thus, appraising pain is the important phenomena in the process which emphasized on how people an individual thinks about his/her pain. Which also causes changes in emotions, relationships, change in the meaning of life, engagement in daily tasks & Achievement of an individual & vice versa. The study also focuses on the levels of Optimism/pessimism among Cancer warriors. As, understanding all the three factors can give an overall understanding of an individual which can further help in planning treatment as High well-being & optimism can do wonders in overcoming, coping as well as dealing and managing side effects of the illness. Thus, the present study is conducted to find out the levels of well-being, appraisal of pain & optimism as well as relationship between them among individuals with cancer.

Review Of Literature

Jeong et al. (2008), examined Women with breast cancer expressing happy emotions in online support groups. From 2001 to 2003, undeserved women with breast cancer in rural Wisconsin and Detroit,

Michigan were recruited and given access to online support groups. With a sample of 231 women, pre and post-test surveys were done four months apart. 96 participants' messages were analyzed using a computerized text analysis programme. Greater psychological advantages resulted from the expressing of pleasant emotions among individuals who expressed more negative emotions (Yeob Han, et al., 2008).

Enskar et al. (2010), Conducted a study titled Young Adult Cancer Survivors: Experiences Affecting Self-Image, Relationships, and Present Life. The purpose of the present study was to identify and describe the long-term consequences of cancer treatment on young adults' self-image, relationships, and contemporary lives in relation to the impact of being a childhood cancer survivor. Seven twenty- to twenty-three-year-olds were interviewed. This core category was based on five subcategories: living a normal life, bodily changes local relationships and support, sentient life, and personal development. The outcomes of this study indicate that healthcare professionals must be aware of the experiences and long-term impacts of young adult cancer survivors. A support programme or support group is required to provide young adults with additional care and assistance from the healthcare system following the conclusion of treatment. (Enskar, Bertero, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

Objective of the Study

- The main objectives of the study are the following:
- To assess the relationship between well-being and optimism
- To assess the relationship between appraisal of pain and optimism
- To assess the relationship between appraisal of pain and well being

Hypotheses

Well-being & Optimism

- H1. There will be a significant positive relationship between well-being and optimism
- H2 There will be a significant negative relationship between appraisal of pain and Optimism.
- H3 There will be a significant negative relationship between appraisal of pain and wellbeing

Sample Selected

The present study is conducted on Individuals with cancer from 20-60 years of age. The sample included 33 participants. Purposive sampling was used to collect the data.

Tools Used

1. Perma profiler
2. Chronic Pain intrusion & Accommodation scale
3. Life orientation test – Revised

Data Analysis

Shapiro wilk test of normality was used to test the normality of the data & spearman's rho correlational analysis was used to evaluate the results by using Jamovi software.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Analysis:

Variables	Subtype of variables	Percentage
Age	20-30	9.09%
	30-40	15.15%
	40-50	38%
	50-60	38%
Gender	Male	30%
	Female	70%
Relationship status	Married	52%
	Single	12%
	Divorced	36%
Type of cancer	Leukemia	9.09%
	Gall bladder	40%
	Breast Cancer	56%
Commencement of treatment	Malignant tumor	3.03%
	1 year ago	33%
	2 years ago	47%
	More than two years ago	20%

Descriptive Statistics:

Correlation results of Well-being & Optimism			
Well-being	Spearman rho	Well-being	Optimism
	p-value	—	
Optimism	Spearman's rho	0.231	-
	p-value	0.098	-

A mild positive non-significant relationship between Well-being and Optimism is obtained, therefore Hypothesis 1 is neither rejected nor accepted.

Correlation results of Appraisal of pain & Optimism

Optimism	Spearman rho	Optimism	Appraisal of pain
	p-value	—	
Appraisal of pain	Spearman's rho	-0.209	-
	p-value	0.878	-

A Very Low negative non-significant relationship between Appraisal of pain and Optimism is obtained, therefore hypothesis 2 is rejected.

Correlation results of Appraisal of pain & Well-being

Well being	Spearman rho	Well-being	Appraisal of pain
	p-value	—	
Appraisal of pain	Spearman's rho	0.148	-
	p-value	0.794	-

A Very Low positive non-significant relationship between Appraisal of pain and Well-being is obtained, therefore hypothesis 3 is rejected.

DISCUSSION

The study investigated the relationships between well-being, optimism, and appraisal of pain among individuals with cancer. The results showed mixed support for the hypotheses and some contradictions with existing literature. A mild positive non-significant relationship was found between overall well-being and optimism, partially supporting the first hypothesis. Significant positive relationships were found between optimism and the well-being components of relationships and accomplishment, aligning with previous research. These significant findings suggest that for cancer patients, better relationships and a sense of accomplishment are associated with higher levels of optimism, highlighting the importance of social support and personal achievement in maintaining a positive outlook during cancer treatment. However, contrary to expectations, only negligible or non-significant relationships were found between optimism and other well-being factors like positive emotions, engagement, meaning, and health.

Interestingly, the results contradicted existing literature regarding the relationships between well-being, optimism, and appraisal of pain. Low positive non-significant relationships were found between appraisal of pain and most well-being factors, including overall well-being, relationships, meaning, accomplishment, and health. This was unexpected, as previous research typically suggests negative relationships between pain appraisal and well-being. A significant positive relationship was found between appraisal of pain and negative

emotions, which aligns more closely with existing evidence. This significant result underscores the strong link between pain perception and emotional state in cancer patients, emphasizing the need for comprehensive care that addresses both physical pain management and emotional support. The lack of significant negative relationships between optimism and pain appraisal, as well as between positive emotions and pain appraisal, also contradicted expectations based on prior studies.

These mixed findings highlight the complex interplay between psychological factors in individuals with cancer. The results suggest that the relationships between well-being, optimism, and pain appraisal may be more nuanced than previously thought in this population.

These findings contribute to the understanding of how psychological factors interact in the context of cancer, suggesting that interventions aimed at improving well-being and fostering optimism could play a significant role in cancer care. However, the results also underscore the need for personalized approaches that consider the diverse experiences and coping strategies of cancer patients. This study adds to the existing body of literature by offering a nuanced view of the relationships between well-being, optimism, and pain appraisal in individuals with cancer. While it confirms some established theories, it also challenges others, particularly the assumed negative relationship between pain appraisal and well-being.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to investigate the Correlational relationship between Well-being, Optimism and Appraisal of pain among individuals with cancer. It can be concluded that the results obtained between the variables Well-being & Optimism support the previous research conducted in the same field. Wherein a mild positive non-significant relationship between well-being, Relationships & optimism was obtained respectively. On the other hand, Significant negative relationship was found in Negative emotions & Optimism followed by High positive & low negative but non-significant relationship between Meaning with optimism & Appraisal of pain with Optimism was found. All these results are backed up by strong research evidence.

It can be concluded that Appraisal of Pain, Well-being & Optimism are inter-related in Individuals with Cancer. Wherein attention to these Biopsychosocial factors is important for the recovery of the patients.

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