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A study to assess the efficacy of activity therapy on stress among patients with cancer at selected cancer hospital in Chennai

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Abstract
The study was aimed to evaluate the efficacy of activity therapy on stress among patients with cancer at selected hospitals in Chennai. A pre-experimental one-group pretest post-test design was used to conduct the study with 30 samples, selected by purposive sampling technique from a selected hospital. The data was collected by using Part1 demographic data and part II with standardized perceived stress scale developed by Sheldon Cohen in 1983 consisting of 14 questionnaire. A planned activity therapy like drawing, coloring, join the numbers, games like puzzles, spot the difference, snake and ladder were given to the cancer patients on daily basis for 14 days. On the final day of intervention, post-test stress level score was obtained using the same scale. The pre-test revealed that, the mean stress score was 18.73, with a standard deviation of 1.84. In post-test, there was a significant increase in the mean stress score to 48.77, accompanied by a standard deviation of 2.08, which shows the reduction of stress after the activity therapy to the cancer patient. The paired t-test was conducted to determine the significance of this change in stress levels. The t-value was calculated to be 71.625, which was found to be statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a highly significant difference in stress levels before and after the activity therapy. The result of this study can be used as alternative therapy to reduce the stress among cancer patients.

Keywords: Activity therapy, stress, patient with cancer

Introduction
In recent times we have seen an increase in the incidence of cancer. This is mainly attributed to urbanization, industrialization, lifestyle changes, population growth and increased life span in turn leading to an increase in the elderly population. Depression, anxiety, stress and other forms of psychological morbidity such as adjustment disorders are common in cancer patients. Stress hormones may play new role in speeding up cancer growth, A study showed that an increase in nor epinephrine, a stress hormone, can stimulate tumor cells to produce certain compounds, Activity therapy is the therapeutic use of activity-making, within a professional relationship, by people who experience illness, trauma or challenges in living and by people who seek personal development. Through creating activity and reflecting on the art products and processes, people can increase awareness of self and other scope with symptoms, stress and traumatic experience enhance cognitive abilities and enjoy the life-affirming pleasures of making art. Activity therapy can be a useful tool to distract cancer patients from their painful medical treatments. The creative act of drawing can itself be healing because it can reduce anxiety by helping to release suppressed emotions.

Statement of the problem
A study to assess the efficacy of activity therapy on stress among patients with cancer at selected cancer hospital in Chennai

Objectives
- To Assess the Pretest and post-test level of stress among cancer patients in selected cancer hospital.
- To evaluate the efficacy of activity therapy on stress among patients with cancer at selected cancer hospitals.

- To find out the association between posttest the level stress among cancer patients with their selected demographic variables.

Hypothesis

- **H1:** There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test level of stress among cancer patients.
- **H2:** There is a significant association between the posttest level of stress among patients with cancer with their selected demographic variables after activity therapy.

Methodology

The quantitative approach was selected for the study. The design selected for study is pre-experimental one group pretest and post-test design. The study is conducted in selected cancer hospitals at Chennai. Around 1000 patients were residing in the hospital. The sample size consists of 30 cancer patients who fulfill the inclusion criteria were selected by using purposive sampling technique. The data was collected by using perceived stress tool with 14 questions which measures physical discomfort, emotional discomfort, and personal discomfort. This scale rates from 0-4 and interpreted as 0-1 was mild stress, 2-3 is moderate stress, 4 is severe stress. After obtaining permission from the hospital authority and patient the pretest was confuted to assess the stress level followed by the implementing activity therapy were given to the cancer patients on daily basis for 14 days, on last day of intervention the post-test was conducted by using the same standardized perceived stress scale.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of the demographic variables were depicted with age group of 14(46.7%) were within the age range of 20-30 years. 12(40%) were f 31-45 years remaining 4(13.3%) were 46-50 years of age . In term of gender, 17(56.7%) were male and then female samples were 13(43.3%). Regarding activities of daily living, 16(53.3%) of the samples were able to perform activities by themselves, 10(33.3%) required assistance and 4(13.3%) were completely dependent.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution on level of stress among patients with cancer before and after activity therapy, N=30

Level of Stress	Pre-test		Post test	
	F	%	F	%
Mild	0	0.0	30	100.0
Moderately	21	70.0	0	0.0
Severe	9	30.0	0	0.0

Table 1 depicted the frequency and percentage distribution of level of stress among patients with cancer before and after activity therapy. Before the therapy, the majority of patients 21(70.0%) experienced moderate stress and remaining 9(30.0%) experienced severe stress, while none them reported mild stress. After the activity therapy to the cancer patients, there was a significant shift in stress levels among the patients. All patients 30 (100.0%) had experienced mild stress after activity therapy.

The findings suggest that activity therapy was effective in reducing stress levels among patients with cancer, with a complete elimination of moderate and severe stress after therapy. The results highlight the potential benefits of activity therapy in managing stress in the patient population.

Fig 1: Presents percentage distribution on level of stress among patients with cancer before and after activity therapy.

Table 2: Mean stress score and standard deviation among patients with cancer before and after activity therapy and its level of significance, N=30

Observation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Paired, t-value, DF=29	Sig value
Before	18.73	1.84	71.625 *	0.000
After	48.77	2.08		

* Significant at p<0.05

Table 2 presents the mean stress score and standard deviation among patients with cancer before and after activity therapy and its level of significance. Before the activity therapy, the mean stress score was 18.73, with a standard deviation of 1.84. After the activity therapy, there was a significant increase in the mean stress score to 48.77, accompanied by a standard deviation of 2.08, which shows the reduction of stress. The paired t-test was calculated to determine the significance of this change in stress levels. The t-value was calculated to be 71.625, which was found to be statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a highly significant difference in stress levels before and after the therapy.Statistically there was a significant difference between the level of stress among patients with cancer before and after activity therapy. Hence, H_1 was accepted.

The results indicated that activity therapy had a substantial impact on reducing stress levels among patients with cancer, as evidenced by the significant increase in mean stress score after the therapy. The findings suggest that activity therapy may be an effective intervention for managing stress in this patient population.

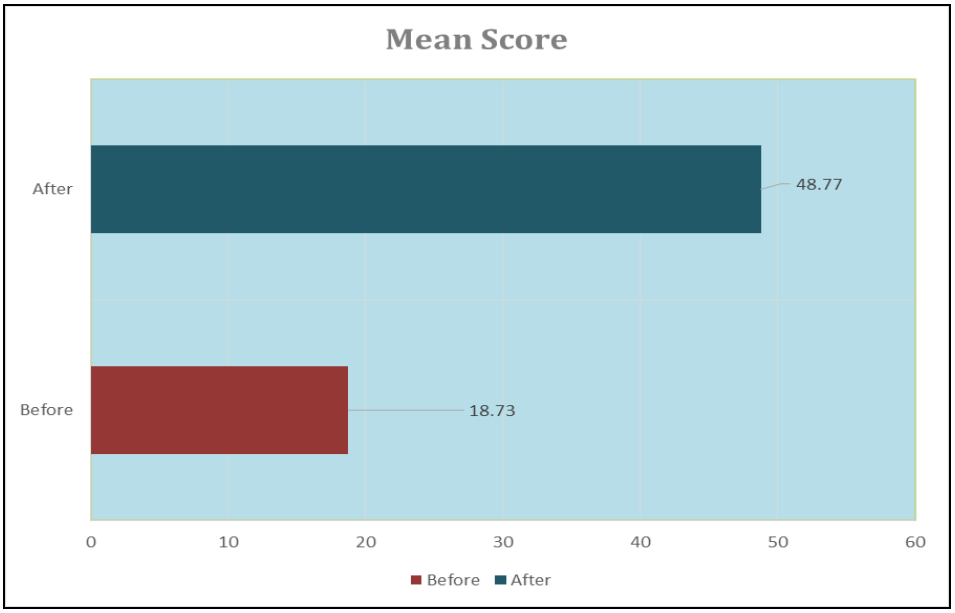

Fig 2: Presents the mean stress score among patients with cancer before and after activity therapy

Table 3: Association between the demographic variables with level of stress among patients with cancer before activity therapy, N-30

SL No.	Demographic Characteristics	Level of Stress		χ^2 value	DF	Significant value
		Moderately	Severe			
1	**Age in Years**			2.869 NS	2	0.238
	20-30 Years	1	4			
	31-45 Years	6	7			
	46-50 Years	2	10			
2	**Gender**			0.130 NS	1	0.719
	Male	7	15			
	Female	2	6			
3	**Educational status**			1.322 NS	3	0.724
	Illiterate	1	4			
	Primary School	2	6			
	High school	4	5			
	Graduate	2	6			
4	**Occupational Status**			1.633 NS	3	0.652
	Unemployee	2	6			
	Daily Wages	4	6			
	Professional	2	3			
	Technical	1	6			
5	**Duration of Illness**			0.068 NS	2	0.967
	< 6 Month	2	5			
	6 Month – 1 Year	4	10			
	>1 Year	3	6			
6	**Duration of Treatment**			0.323 NS	2	0.851
	< 6 Month	2	6			
	6 Month – 1 Year	4	10			
	>1 Year	3	5			
7	**Habits**			0.340	3	0.952
	Smoking	2	5			
	Alcohol	1	4			
	Both smoking and alcohol	3	6			
	None	3	6			

NS-Not significant at $p<0.05$ * - Significant at $p<0.05$

Table 3 revealed that the association between level of stress among patients with cancer before activity therapy with their selected demographic variables using chi-square test

The finding from the table reveals that there was no significant association between the selected demographic characteristics such as age, gender, educational status, occupational status, duration of illness, duration of treatment and habits, with level of stress among patients with cancer before activity therapy.

Statistically, there was no significant association between the level of level of stress among patients with cancer before activity therapy with their selected demographic variables. Hence, H_2 was rejected.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of Activity therapy on stress among patients with cancer. The result of this study can be used as

alternative therapy to reduce the stress among cancer patients.

Conflict of Interest
Not available

Financial Support
Not available

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