

## **Self-Acceptance in Breast Cancer Patients Undergoing Chemotherapy in an Integrated Cancer Installation in General Hospital**

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### **Abstrak**

Kemoterapi merupakan salah satu pengobatan bagi pasien kanker payudara yang berdampak pada kondisi fisik, psikologis, dan kualitas hidup pasien. Pasien perlu memiliki mekanisme koping yang baik untuk mempertahankan kualitas hidup yang baik. Beberapa faktor yang mempengaruhi kualitas hidup pasien kanker termasuk penerimaan diri. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan gambaran penerimaan diri pada pasien kanker payudara yang menjalani kemoterapi. Desain penelitian ini menggunakan deskriptif kuantitatif dengan rancangan cross sectional. Penelitian dilakukan di Instalasi Kanker Terpadu Rumah Sakit Umum Daerah dengan jumlah sampel 149 orang dengan menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian didapatkan pasien kanker payudara yang menjalani kemoterapi mengalami penerimaan diri sedang sebanyak 72 sampel (48,3%), dengan rentang usia terbanyak 46-55 tahun (54; 36,2%), kebanyakan responden sudah menikah (148;99,3%). kebanyakan responden berada pada stadium III (83;55,7%), telah terdiagnosa kanker selama 3-6 bulan (54; 36,2) dan sedang menjalani kemo terapi seri ke 2-3 (54: 36,3%). Semakin tinggi penerimaan diri seseorang maka semakin optimis dalam menjalani pengobatan demi kesembuhannya. Diharapkan perawat menggunakan pendekatan caring untuk meningkatkan penerimaan diri pasien saat menjalani kemoterapi dan memberikan dukungan kepada pasien agar selalu optimis dalam menjalani pengobatan.

**Kata Kunci: Penerimaan Diri; Kemoterapi; Kanker Payudara;**

### **Abstract**

Chemotherapy is one of the treatments for breast cancer patients that affects the physical, psychological, and quality of life of the patient. Patients need to have a good coping mechanism to maintain a good quality of life. Several factors that affect the quality of life of cancer patients include self-acceptance. This study aims to describe the picture of self-acceptance in breast cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy. The design of this study used quantitative descriptive with a cross-sectional design. The study was conducted at the Integrated Cancer Installation of the Regional General Hospital with a sample of 149 people using a purposive sampling technique. Based on the results of the study, it was found that breast cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy experienced moderate self-acceptance as many as 72 samples (48.3%), with the largest age range of 46-55 years (54; 36.2%), most respondents were married (148; 99.3%). most respondents were in stage III (83; 55.7%), had been diagnosed with cancer for 3-6 months (54; 36.2) and were undergoing 2-3 series of chemotherapy (54: 36.3%). The higher a person's self-acceptance, the more optimistic they are in undergoing treatment for their recovery. It is expected that nurses will use a caring approach to increase patient self-acceptance during chemotherapy and provide support to patients to remain optimistic during treatment.

**Keywords: Self-acceptance; Chemotherapy; Breast cancer**

## INTRODUCTION

Cancer has a higher prevalence today than it did 40 years ago. Every year cancer patients in the world are increasing. According to the Global Burden of Cancer data (Globocan) 2020, The number of cancer patients in 2018 reached 18.1 million cases with a death rate of 9.6 million. The most common cancer cases were breast cancer at 16.6%, cervix cancer at 9.2%, lung cancer at 8.8%, colon or rectum cancer at 8.6%, liver cancer at 5.4% and other cancers at 49.2%.(Global Cancer Observatory, 2020). Basic health research results (rikerdas) In 2018, there was an increase in cancer cases in Indonesia, where in 2013 from 1.4 per 1,000 population to 1.79 per 1,000 population. (Riskseddas, 2018). Breast cancer ranks first in terms of the number of cancers in Indonesia and contributes the most deaths. Breast cancer cases in Indonesia reached 68,858 cases or 16.6% of the total 396,914 cancer cases with more than 22,000 deaths. (Globocon, 2020).

The number of breast cancer patients in Bali Province in 2018 reached 556 cases, in 2019 amounted to 278 cases. (Dinas Kesehatan Provinsi Bali, 2021). In 2020, there were 955 new cases of breast cancer and most of them occurred in the age range of 24 years to 44 years, totaling 2,444 people. Data Dinas Kesehatan Provinsi Bali (2021), recorded an overall number of breast cancer cases of 2.3 per mile supported by breast cancer data in 2021 reaching 684 people in women. One of the treatments for breast cancer patients is chemotherapy. Chemotherapy is a treatment with the aim of destroying, stopping and slowing the growth of cancer cells that divide rapidly. (National Cancer Institute, 2018). Breast cancer patients who undergo chemotherapy experience many changes in themselves and their daily lives, which include physical and psychological conditions. (Wicaksono, 2017). This condition certainly requires a good coping mechanism in maintaining quality of life, where good quality of life can be influenced by several factors, one of which is good self-acceptance of himself. (Wicaksono, 2017).

Good self-acceptance will motivate a person to carry out treatment and daily activities. Research results from Merlin et al. (2021), showed that breast cancer patients in the inpatient room of RSUD Prof. Dr.W.Z Johannes Kupang experienced a negative self-concept of 25 people, with low self-acceptance of 13 people and a positive self-concept of 25 people with low self-acceptance of 4 people, so that of course it has an effect on the treatment process undertaken. Patients who experience low self-acceptance will often express various complaints in themselves, such as weakness, fatigue, nausea, vomiting and even choose not to continue the therapy regimen. (Kementerian Kesehatan RI, 2016). The impact of low self-acceptance in breast cancer patients is shown by patients choosing to drop out of the therapy process, such as patients choosing to stop undergoing chemotherapy even though the therapy regimen has not been completed so that the chemotherapy treatment cycle is not complete. Low self-acceptance can also affect negative emotions due to the inability to cope with the pain experienced. (Cipora et al., 2017). Patients are usually more stressed, have less confidence or ability to control pain from within and lack motivation to fight disease and health management (Czerw et al., 2016).

One of the referral hospitals in Bali that treats cancer patients, both those undergoing surgery, condition improvement and chemotherapy. The number of breast cancer patients treated at the Integrated Cancer Installation ranks first, where data shows that in the first quarter, January to March 2022, there were 474 people undergoing chemotherapy with an average of 158 people per month, while in the second quarter, April to June 2022, there were 601 people undergoing chemotherapy with an average of 200 people per month. Data from July 2022 showed that the number of breast cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy was 203 people. These results show an increase in patients undergoing chemotherapy. Preliminary studies conducted through interviews with 10 patients, showed 2 people (20%) who revealed that this chemotherapy was the first chemotherapy so it was still difficult to adapt to complaints of nausea, vomiting that was felt, 2 other people (20%) said that this was the third chemotherapy, during chemotherapy they revealed a lot of changes that occurred in their lives, often felt tired and pain and felt embarrassed to leave the house because of physical changes such as hair loss so that when going out wearing wigs and hats. Then after further study, 1 person (10%) revealed that they had experienced chemotherapy drug withdrawal because they were afraid of the effects of chemotherapy drugs that had been undertaken so that they had stopped chemotherapy even though they had only undergone three series of treatment, but returned to chemotherapy because they wanted to recover, while 5 people (50%) said they felt tired quickly even though they did light activities. Based on this data, it makes the basis for researchers to find out the description of self-acceptance in breast cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy. This study aims to determine the description of self-acceptance of breast cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy at the Integrated Cancer Installation in Bali.

## **METHODS**

The method used in the study was quantitative with a cross sectional design. The study was conducted in the Integrated Cancer Installation Room in one of the referral hospitals in Bali and was conducted from October 28 to November 19, 2022. The population in this study was 203 breast cancer patients who were on chemotherapy. Sampling used was non probability sampling with purposive sampling following inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria including breast cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, willing to participate fully in the study, and in a stable condition. Exclusion criteria including patients with complication. The respondents were 149. The research instrument used the Acceptance of Illness Scale (AIS) questionnaire by Felton which has been translated into Indonesian and has been tested for validity and reliability adapted from research (Merlin, 2019). Prior to data collection, this study was receive an ethical clearance from ethical commission in Bali Hospital and the respondents were asked to sign an informed consent. Data were analyzed using univariate tests.

## RESULTS

**Table 1. Respondents based on age, marital status, education, occupation, disease stage, duration of diagnosis, chemotherapy cycle**

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (years)	24-35	10	6,7
	36-45	37	24,8
	46-55	54	36,2
	56-65	37	24,8
	>65	11	7,4
Marital Status	Not yet married	1	0,7
	Married	148	99,3
Education	Elementary school	35	23,5
	Junior high school	12	8,1
	Senior high school	72	48,3
	Higher education	30	20,1
Work	Government official	12	8,1
	Private Employee	39	26,2
	Entrepreneur	18	12,1
	Laborer/farmer	1	0,7
	Unemployed	79	53,0
Stage of Disease	Stage 1	2	1,3
	Stage 2	38	25,5
	Stage 3	83	55,7
	Stage 4	26	17,4
Length of Diagnosis	1-3 month	23	15,4
	3-6 month	54	36,2
	6 month -1 Year	38	25,5
	1-3 Year	30	20,1
	>3 Year	4	2,7
Chemotherapy Cycle	Chemotherapy ke 1	12	8,3
	Chemotherapy ke 2-3	54	36,2
	Chemotherapy ke 4-5	45	30,2
	Chemotherapy >5	38	25,5
<b>Total respondents</b>		<b>149</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on table 1, most of the respondents were 46-55 years old as many as 54 people (24.8%), married (148; 99,3%). Most of the respondents were high school graduates (72; 48.3%), unemployed (79; 53%), and at stage 3 cancer (83; 55.7%). Most of the respondents were diagnosed in the last 3-6 month and had 2-3 chemotherapy cycles (54; 36.2%).

**Table 2 Respondents based on self-acceptance measurement using Acceptance of Illness Scale (AIS) questionnaire by Felton**

Self-acceptance	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Low	15	10,1
Moderate	72	48,3
High	62	41,6
Total	149	100

Table 2 shows that most of the samples can be classified as moderate self-acceptance (72 ; 48.3%).

## DISCUSSION

The results showed that self-acceptance of breast cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy was moderate self-acceptance (72; 48.3%), the remaining low self-acceptance was 15 respondents (10.1%) and high self-acceptance was 62 respondents (41.6%). These results indicate that breast cancer patients who undergo chemotherapy in the Integrated Cancer Installation at one of the hospitals in Bali can accept themselves experiencing breast cancer. Self-acceptance is an attitude that a person feels, where a person will feel satisfied with himself, his abilities, qualities and recognition of his own limitations (Chaplin, 2012).

Research results by Evanasti et al. (2020), showed that breast cancer patients have a sufficient self-image, namely 16 samples (55.2%). While different results were expressed by Merlin (2019), that showed, out of 64 samples, 38 samples (59.4%) were found to have low self-acceptance. This can occur due to differences in the number of research samples and demographic location. Moderate self-acceptance was found at the age of 46-55 years as many as 34 samples (22.8%). Notoatmodjo (2018), suggests that the age factor affects a person's mental development, the more mature a person's age, the better the thought process, but not as fast as adolescence. This research is in line with Puspita (2018), obtained half (50%) of patients in the age range 40-60 years have moderate self-acceptance. At that age, they have maturity in attitude and thinking so that they are able to achieve a realistic life and knowledge and loyalty will increase. Moderate self-acceptance in unmarried samples was 0.7%, while in married samples there were 71 samples (47.7%) in moderate self-acceptance. Someone who is married will be more accepting of their condition because of the support of their husband and children. According to Castillo in Ernawati et al. (2020), revealed that the positive energy provided by the family is a strength and happiness in increasing self-confidence to accept their illness. Attention from the family will be an emotional force that helps increase self-confidence and determination to fight the disease. Moderate self-acceptance was found in samples with a high school education level as many as 38 samples (25.5%). One of the factors that influence a person in thinking and behaving well is education, which will be the basis for making the right decisions. (Notoatmodjo, 2018). According to Hurlock in (Antry, 2017), said that good education at home and school will determine a person's ability to adjust himself in accepting his life. The higher a person's level of education, the more they will understand themselves and accept their situation. They will continue to strive to recover from their illness.

Moderate self-acceptance was found in patients who did not work as many as 39 samples (26.2%). Work is related to a person's income. Research conducted by Merlin (2019), stated that 65.8% of the sample did not work. The chemotherapy they underwent left them no time to work. Breast cancer patients who have a job and have a steady income will tend to be more ready to accept their condition. Patients will tend to be busy with activities and interact a lot with other people so that they can motivate themselves to accept their condition. Moderate self-acceptance was found in 44 respondents (29.5%) of

stage III cancer. Cancer staging was appointed for knowing the spread of cancer in the body based on the system classification. Based on Cancer Research UK (2017) breast cancer was classified into stages from I to IV. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Gelgel & Christian (2020), that showed breast cancer patients were usually found at stage IIIB (40 respondents; 46.5%). This stage is related to the length of time suffered and delaying coming to hospital for a check-up. Thus, the doctors were late in making a diagnosis and usually the diagnosis was made at a late stage.

Based on the length of time diagnosed with breast cancer, most patients have moderate self-acceptance have been diagnosed for 3-6 (31; 20.8%). Initially, at the first time the patients diagnosed with cancer, they would experience a denial phase. Research conducted by Czerw et al., (2016), stated that low self-acceptance with a  $p=0.027$  value was found in patients who had chemotherapy in the last 12 months. The differences obtained may be due to demographics and the number of samples studied. Over time, self-acceptance will increase because they have adapted to the disease and treatment so that they understand themselves. Patients will be more optimistic about undergoing the scheduled therapy regimen. Moderate self-acceptance in the 2-3rd chemotherapy cycle was 40 samples (26.8%). One chemotherapy cycle is done every 3 or 4 weeks or once a week. The effectiveness of chemotherapy treatment will be achieved if it is given according to the specified cycle or schedule. Research conducted by Juwita et al. (2018), Based on the chemotherapy cycle undergone, 17 patients out of 34 samples undergoing cycle 6 had the best quality of life. The patient's adaptation process to the symptoms experienced during chemotherapy is based on the experiences of the previous cycle. The longer the chemotherapy cycle, the better the patient's level of self-acceptance because they already know how to deal with the effects that appear during and after chemotherapy. In the first chemotherapy, patients do not know and only hear stories from people, and this information commonly cause fear and anxiety. If the patient has an unpleasant experience from the first time of their chemotherapy cycle, it is very likely that they will feel fear and anxiety in the next chemotherapy cycle.

Self-acceptance in the moderate category in patients undergoing chemotherapy in the Integrated Cancer Installation Room in one of the hospitals in Bali Ngoerah usually owned by a patient who has a desire and spirit to recover and assumes that by undergoing chemotherapy the disease they suffer will be cured. They prioritize healing over appearance and surrender more to God and believe life and death have been arranged by the Almighty.

## CONCLUSION

In accordance with the research objectives and the results of this study, it can be concluded that most of the chemotherapy breast cancer patients experienced moderate self-acceptance as many as 72 people (48.3%). Moderate self-acceptance was found among the respondents who were diagnosed for cancer in the last 3-6 months (31; 20.8%) and in their 2-3 series of chemotherapy (40; 26.8%). It is expected that nurses use a caring approach to improve patient self-acceptance while undergoing

chemotherapy and provide support for patients to always be optimistic about undergoing treatment. Future researchers to further homogenize the research respondents and look for factors that affect the self-acceptance of breast cancer patients as an effort to determine health interventions.

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