

## The Effectiveness of Murottal Al-Qur'an on Anxiety Levels in Cancer Patients : Literature Review

Nur Afni Sharfina<sup>1\*</sup>, Endras Amirta Hanum<sup>2</sup>  
Politeknik Borneo Medistra

**Corresponding Author:** Nur Afni Sharfina [finafina@poltekborneomedistra.ac.id](mailto:finafina@poltekborneomedistra.ac.id)

---

### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Murottal Quran,  
Cancer Patient, Anxiety,  
Undergoing Chemotherapy

*Received :* 12, April

*Revised :* 25, april

*Accepted:* 22, May

©2025 Sharfina, Hanum : This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



### ABSTRACT

Anxiety management constitutes a component of independent nursing interventions aimed at alleviating psychological distress in patients. Qur'anic recitation therapy (*murottal*) has demonstrated beneficial effects on listeners' emotional well-being. This study aims to evaluate the effects of Murottal Al-Qur'an Therapy on anxiety in cancer patients, particularly those undergoing chemotherapy treatment. The research method utilized a secondary data analysis approach through a literature review. The researcher an accessible Google Scholar databased. Keywords used in the search included "Murottal Quran," "Cancer Patient," "Anxiety," and "Undergoing Chemotherapy." The conclusion of this study confirm *Murottal* therapy, involving the recitation of the Qur'an, not only provides temporary psychological calm but also strengthens the patient's spiritual dimension

---

## INTRODUCTION

The incidence of cancer has increased globally over the past three years. Each year, new cases are identified in various countries. According to data from the World Health Organization (2022), approximately 20 million new cases were recorded. Around 53.5 million people were living within five years of being diagnosed with cancer. This trend aligns with the cancer prevalence in Indonesia, where 408,661 new cases were reported in 2022.

Anxiety is a common psychological response experienced by cancer patients, especially those undergoing chemotherapy. Addressing this anxiety is a crucial component of palliative care interventions (Rosyidul 'Ibad & Napik, 2021). Anxiety management constitutes a component of independent nursing interventions aimed at alleviating psychological distress in patients (Siregar et al., 2024). Qur'anic recitation therapy (*murottal*) has demonstrated beneficial effects on listeners' emotional well-being (Nuraeni et al., 2024). Furthermore, Qur'anic recitation serves as a form of *dhikr* (remembrance of God), which functions as a spiritual practice and can thus be classified as a spiritual therapeutic modality (Abu Khait & Lazenby, 2021; Best et al., 2023).

This approach is particularly pertinent for patients diagnosed with breast cancer, who not only experience heightened anxiety but also confront existential uncertainty related to the prospect of death, rendering them especially susceptible to spiritual distress (Al-Jubouri et al., 2021a). One approach that has been widely studied in this context is spiritual therapy, such as listening to Qur'anic recitation (*murottal*) (Rianti et al., 2021). *Murottal Qur'an* has been found to have a calming effect, stimulating the release of endorphin hormones that help reduce stress and anxiety (Nasution et al., 2021). This therapy provides significant benefits for cancer patients experiencing anxiety by creating a sense of calm and supporting their emotional and spiritual needs (Sun et al., 2021). Given the psychological impact that accompanies cancer, holistic interventions are essential in nursing practice (Abu Khait & Lazenby, 2021).

Spiritual therapy, such as listening to Qur'anic recitation, has been proven effective in reducing anxiety levels and enhancing psychological calmness in patients (Sun et al., 2021). A holistic approach that includes emotional, psychological, and spiritual support is considered vital in managing anxiety in cancer patients (Abu Khait & Lazenby, 2021; Nasution et al., 2021). Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the effects of Qur'anic Recitation Therapy on anxiety in cancer patients, particularly those undergoing chemotherapy treatment (Iryani et al., 2023).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

A cancer diagnosis in women often triggers anxiety as a primary psychological response (Gallaway et al., 2021). Research indicates that women with cancer are particularly vulnerable to psychological disorders due to significant life changes and uncertainty about the future (Putri et al., 2024). Chemotherapy, as the main form of treatment, significantly impacts physical health through various side effects, including fatigue, digestive issues, hair loss, and dysfunctions in muscle, nerve, and blood formation (Fujianti et al., 2023).

Prior to undergoing chemotherapy, patients with breast cancer frequently experience significant psychological distress, particularly anxiety related to the treatment process (Gallaway et al., 2021). Chemotherapy, as a form of medical intervention, often induces concern due to anticipated adverse effects such as nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, weight reduction, alopecia, and in some cases, the fear of mortality (Umam et al., 2024). Individuals who have previously received chemotherapy may report severe and sometimes intolerable side effects, which can potentially be life-threatening (Sujadi et al., 2024). For many cancer patients, the physical and emotional consequences of chemotherapy elicit profound feelings of worry, anxiety, and fear associated with pain and the possibility of death during treatment (Chargari et al., 2022). When anxiety becomes excessively manifested as an overwhelming fear of the therapy, it can negatively impact the patient's willingness to adhere to treatment protocols, potentially leading to refusal or discontinuation of chemotherapy (Best et al., 2023).

## METHODOLOGY

### *Literature Search*

This study employs a secondary data analysis approach through a literature review method. The literature review involves the compilation of a comprehensive summary of previous research relevant to the topic under investigation. Data sources were obtained from scholarly articles published at both national and international levels, accessed through open-access databases such as Google Scholar and Pubmed, which provide full-text access to relevant publications.

The literature search was conducted in May 2025. The authors utilized an accessible Google Scholar and Pubmed database. Keywords used in the search included "Murottal Quran," "Cancer Patient," "Anxiety," and "Undergoing Chemotherapy." The search was restricted to research articles published within the last five years (2020–2025) to ensure the inclusion of valid sources that reflect current advancements and contemporary relevance in the field.

### *Data Selection and Analysis*

The data analysis in this literature study was conducted through the stages of identification, selection, evaluation, and synthesis of previous research

relevant to the topic of discussion. Scientific articles and journals obtained from open-access databases such as Google Scholar and Pubmed were first filtered based on inclusion criteria, including topic relevance, year of publication (within the last 5 years), research methodology used, and availability of full-text access. Following the selection process, a critical review was carried out on the main findings of each study, including research design, sample population, observed variables, as well as the results and conclusions drawn. The findings were then categorized based on emerging themes or patterns to obtain a systematic and comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of the intervention examined in the context of this study.

The researcher conducted a literature review by accessing the Google Scholar database using the keywords: "Murottal Quran AND Cancer Patient AND Anxiety AND Undergoing Chemotherapy." The initial search yielded 156 articles from Googlescholar databased and 1 article from Pubmed with the same keywords. These articles were then filtered based on their publication year, limited to the past five years. The selection process continued by reviewing article titles, followed by the application of specific inclusion and exclusion criteria, as outlined below:

Inclusion Criteria:

1. Articles published between 2020 and 2025.
2. Articles with full-text access.
3. Articles written in either English or Indonesian.
4. Articles containing information relevant to the predetermined research topic.

Exclusion Criteria:

1. Articles available only in abstract form.

## RESEARCH RESULT

The results of the literature search can be seen in Figure 1.

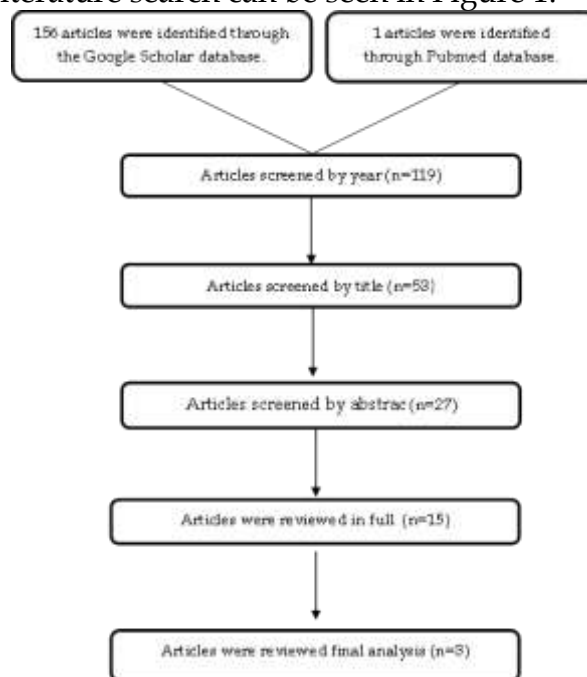


Figure 1. PRISMA Diagram

Table 1. Summary of articles included in the review

No	Researcher	Purpose	Research Design	Sample	Result
1	(Rosyidul 'Ibad & Napik, 2021)	Identify the effect of Quranic sound therapy on reducing anxiety levels in cancer patients	Pre-experimental	n=24 respondents	Got a significance value of 0.000 which is greater than the value of (0.05) . Anxiety Level respondent from Moderate to majority mild
2	(Arlin et al., 2024)	Effect of Murottal Al - Quran on the Level of Anxiety in Breast Cancer Patients Undergoing Chemotherapy	Quasi-Experimental	n=30 respondents	Murrotal listening has the same effect as anti - anxiety drugs
3	(Susanti et al., 2025)	Determine the difference in reducing anxiety using the Murottal Qur'an auditory stimulus compared to the Mujawwad Qur'an Auditory Stimulus in Breast Cancer patient	Quasi-Experimental	n=30 respondents	The auditory stimulus of the Qur'an using either Murottal or Mujawwad can reduce anxiety with a value of p = 000.

The results of the three journals reviewed indicate that all were quantitative studies employing an experimental design to examine the effect of music therapy on anxiety in breast cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy.

*First Article:* The study conducted by Rosyidul 'Ibad and Napik (2021) examined the management of anxiety, which is commonly addressed through a combination of medical treatment and psychotherapeutic approaches such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), relaxation therapy, supportive psychotherapy, and mindfulness therapy. One form of sound therapy that has

been widely studied is therapy using Qur'anic recitation. This study aimed to investigate the effect of Qur'anic sound therapy on reducing anxiety levels in cancer patients. A total of 24 respondents were selected using purposive sampling.

Inclusion criteria included: patients diagnosed with cancer within the past five years, receiving chemotherapy treatment at Aisyiyah Islamic Hospital of Malang, verbally reporting anxiety, and willing to participate until the study was completed. The research design was a pre-experimental one-group pre-test post-test, using Murottal Qur'an therapy with Surah Ar-Rahman administered over 12 days. The intervention was delivered twice daily for 22 minutes per session. Anxiety levels were measured using the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HARS). Data were analyzed using a non-parametric Wilcoxon test. The findings indicated that prior to the intervention, most participants experienced moderate anxiety, while post-intervention, the majority reported mild anxiety. The analysis yielded a significance value of 0.000, which is less than the alpha value of 0.05, indicating statistically significant results.

*Second Article:* The study by Arlin et al. (2024) explained that listening to murottal recitation of the Qur'an can stimulate brain activity and the release of chemical compounds such as Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid (GABA), enkephalin, and beta-endorphins. These neurotransmitters have calming effects by reducing anxiety, depression, and stress, thereby enhancing feelings of relaxation and tranquility in listeners. The study involved 30 respondents undergoing chemotherapy treatment at Ibnu Sina Hospital in Makassar.

This quasi-experimental study involved an intervention using Murottal Qur'an recitation of Surah Al-'Alaq, An-Nas, and Al-Ikhlâs. Data were analyzed using the Wilcoxon test. The results showed significant improvements in anxiety levels within both treatment groups ( $p < 0.05$ ), with no significant difference between groups ( $p = 0.13$ ). Listening to murottal was found to have similar effects to anti-anxiety medication, with advantages such as ease of administration, absence of side effects, no requirement for a prescription, and the added benefit of spiritual reward.

*Third Article:* The study by Susanti et al. (2025) aimed to examine the differences in anxiety reduction between auditory stimuli using murottal Qur'an recitation and mujawwad Qur'an recitation in breast cancer patients. This quasi-experimental study involved three groups: one receiving murottal recitation at a medium tempo, another receiving mujawwad recitation at a slow tempo, and a control group receiving no intervention. Anxiety levels were measured using the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) questionnaire. Sample selection was based on inclusion criteria such as: patients diagnosed with breast cancer, aged 18–55 years, experiencing mild to moderate anxiety, identifying as Muslim, and willing to participate for the full duration of the study. Data were analyzed using the Wilcoxon test. The results demonstrated that auditory stimuli using either murottal or mujawwad Qur'anic recitation effectively reduced anxiety levels, with a significance value of  $p = 0.00$ .

## DISCUSSION

Anxiety is an emotional condition characterized by increased physiological arousal, an unpleasant sense of tension, and worry about the potential occurrence of adverse events. In patients undergoing hemodialysis, anxiety may be influenced by various factors, including the high cost of treatment and the threat of mortality, both of which can significantly elevate anxiety levels (Arlin et al., 2024). One non-pharmacological intervention that can be utilized to reduce anxiety is listening to the recitation of the Qur'an. This activity is known to have a calming effect on the body through mechanisms involving autosuggestion, meditation, and relaxation (Susanti et al., 2025). The sense of tranquility produced can foster a positive perception, which in turn stimulates the hypothalamus to secrete endorphins. Endorphins are hormones released by the pituitary gland and the central nervous system, playing a role in modulating pain and stress responses, enhancing relaxation, and diverting attention away from fear, anxiety, and tension (Rosyidul 'Ibad & Napik, 2021).

Listening to *murottal* (Qur'anic recitation) not only provides a momentary sense of calm but also significantly contributes to strengthening patients' spiritual connection with God (Rianti et al., 2021). This spiritual dimension plays a crucial role in fostering hope and providing meaning and purpose throughout the treatment process. Therefore, *murottal* recitation should not be viewed merely as a therapeutic medium, but also as a form of spiritual support with the potential to enhance patients' holistic well-being (Zahra et al., 2023). In the context of cancer care, this approach can be integrated as part of a comprehensive intervention strategy that encompasses psychological, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. The implementation of *murottal* therapy in anxiety management supported by healthcare professionals, families, and the social environment can have a positive impact in helping patients cope with the physical and psychological burdens experienced during treatment (Umam et al., 2024).

Healthcare providers, particularly nurses and physicians, play a strategic role in this regard. Their responsibilities extend beyond delivering medical services to include addressing the emotional and spiritual needs of patients. By understanding each patient's level of anxiety and providing appropriate interventions such as *murottal* therapy. Healthcare providers can support more effective stress management. *Murottal* itself refers to recorded recitations of Qur'anic verses, performed by a *qari* (reciter) in a deliberate and rhythmic manner (*tartil*), aiming to induce psychological and physiological benefits (Umam et al., 2024). Studies have shown that listening to these recitations can reduce stress hormone levels, promote a sense of calm, and divert attention from anxiety and fear. Furthermore, this therapy is believed to help stabilize physiological functions, such as lowering blood pressure, regulating breathing patterns, and normalizing heart rate and pulse (Abu Khait & Lazenby, 2021; Susanti et al., 2025).

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*Murottal* therapy, involving the recitation of the Qur'an, not only provides temporary psychological calm but also strengthens the patient's spiritual dimension, which plays a vital role in fostering hope and meaning throughout

cancer treatment. This therapy can be integrated into comprehensive care to address anxiety, supported by medical professionals, family, and social networks. Healthcare providers hold a strategic role in meeting patients' emotional and spiritual needs through interventions such as murottal therapy, which has been shown to reduce stress hormones and stabilize physiological functions, thereby enhancing the holistic well-being of patients.

#### ADVANCED RESEARCH

Further research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of *Murottal* therapy in populations beyond cancer patients, in order to gain a broader understanding of patients' spiritual needs.

#### REFERENCES

- Abu Khait, A., & Lazenby, M. (2021). Psychosocial-spiritual interventions among Muslims undergoing treatment for cancer: An integrative review. *BMC Palliative Care*, 20(1), 51. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12904-021-00746-x>
- Arlin, A., Sommeng, F., Pramono, S. D., Purnamasari, R., & Syahrudin, F. I. (2024). The Effect of Murottal Al-Quran on the Level of Anxiety in Breast Cancer Patients Undergoing Chemotherapy at Ibnu Sina Hospital Makassar. *Media Publikasi Promosi Kesehatan Indonesia (MPPKI)*, 7(10), Article 10. <https://doi.org/10.56338/mppki.v7i10.6148>
- Best, M. C., Vivat, B., & Gijsberts, M.-J. (2023). Spiritual Care in Palliative Care. *Religions*, 14(3), Article 3. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14030320>
- Fujianti, M. E. Y., Kristianto, H., & Yuliatun, L. (2023). Combination of Music Therapy and Murottal Therapy on Pain Level of Breast Cancer Patients. *Jurnal Aisyah : Jurnal Ilmu Kesehatan*, 8(1), 405. <https://doi.org/10.30604/jika.v8i1.1649>
- Nuraeni, A., Suryani, S., Trisyani, Y., & Anna, A. (2024). Islamic Spiritual Care, Depression, and Quality of Life Among Patients With Heart Disease: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, 42(2\_suppl), S7-S25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08980101231180514>
- Putri, D. S. R., Sulistyawati, R. A., & Thooyibah, D. (2024). THE EFFECT OF APPLICATION OF THE RASUL SUNNAH ON THE LEVEL OF

ANXIETY IN LUNG CANCER PATIENTS UNDERGOING CHEMOTHERAPY AT MOEWARDI HOSPITAL: PENGARUH PENERAPAN SUNNAH RASUL TERHADAP TINGKAT KECEMASAN PASIEN KANKER PARU YANG MENJALANI KEMOTERAPI DI RSUD MOEWARDI. *Journal of Nursing Care and Biomoleculer*, 9(2), 48–57.

Rianti, K. I., Septadina, I. S., & Prananjaya, B. A. (2021). HOLY QURAN RECITATION OF SURAH AL-MULK AND AL-HASYR ON DECREASING ANXIETY IN MEDICAL STUDENTS. *International Journal of Islamic and Complementary Medicine*, 2(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.55116/IJIM.V1I1.1>

Rosyidul 'Ibad, M., & Napik, A. M. (2021). Effect of Al-Qur'an Therapy on Anxiety Cancer Patients in Aisyiah Islamic Hospital Malang, Indonesia. *Jurnal Keperawatan*, 12(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.22219/jk.v12i2.13774>

Siregar, A. N., Syaputri, M. H., Putri, M. A., Azizah, N., & Jannah, T. D. R. (2024). Studi Literatur: Murottal Al-Quran Sebagai Penurun Kecemasan pada Pasien Pengidap Kanker. *Catha: Journal of Creative and Innovative Research*, 1(3), Article 3.

Susanti, R. W., Kadar, K. S., & Bahar, B. (2025). Comparison of the Effectiveness of Murottal and Mujawwad Qur'anic Auditory Stimulus in Reducing Anxiety in Breast Cancer Patients: A Quasi-Experimental Study. *Indonesian Journal of Cancer*, 19(1), Article 1.

Umam, L. K., Kusnawan, A., & Arifin, I. Z. (2024). Islamic Spiritual Guidance in Reducing the Anxiety of Chemotherapy Patients with Spiritual Emotional Technique (SEFT). *Al-Afkar, Journal For Islamic Studies*, 7(3), Article 3. <https://doi.org/10.31943/afkarjournal.v7i3.1595>

Zahra, Z., Effendy, E., Mawarpury, M., Marthoenis, null, & Jaya, I. (2023). Psychotherapies for chronic kidney disease patients with hemodialysis: A

systematic review of randomized control trials and quasi-experiments.

*Narra J*, 3(3), e215. <https://doi.org/10.52225/narra.v3i3.215>