

# **Association among Death Anxiety, Quality of Life and Spirituality in Hemodialysis Patients; Systematic Review**

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## **Abstract**

Hemodialysis defined as the effective procedure dealing with renal failure patients. It helps patients to function properly which ultimately enhances their life-span. The review is done with purpose to illustrate the impact of hemodialysis on patient's quality of life and death anxiety and how spirituality deals with that. The review explored the association among death anxiety, quality of life and spirituality in hemodialysis patients. For this, 141 articles were examined initially and then finally 19 articles were finalized. The review included studies from 2013 to Sep 2023. The review comprised one qualitative and 18 quantitative studies. The review extracted four theme (i) spirituality the main factor associated with death anxiety (ii) dialysis patients experienced anxiety (iii) spirituality lessens death anxiety and improves quality of life (iv) kidney disease leads to death anxiety. The review claimed that spirituality showers positive influence on patient's psychological health. It specified that enhancing spiritual based programs in hospitals and promoting spiritual knowledge to patient lessens their death related anxiety and enhances quality of life.

**Keyword:** hemodialysis, death anxiety, quality of life, spirituality

## **Introduction**

Hemodialysis is an effective treatment procedure for the patients living with renal failure. When the kidney stops working naturally, the procedure of hemodialysis helps the kidney to function properly and to enhance the life span of patient. But the procedure demands the visit to hospital twice or thrice a week, which completely affects their life. Hemodialysis patients experiences many changes in life such as physical deteriorations, fatigue, increased risk of heart disease, financial disturbances and psychological problems such as anxiety and depression which directly affects their quality of life (Ghiasi et al., 2021). As other chronic patients,

hemodialysis patients also experience stress and depression but by using different coping strategies and promoting spiritual awareness can help the patient to better understand the reality which improves their quality of life. The study reveals that death anxiety because of dialysis affects quality of life, but can be reduced by spirituality (Taghipour et al., 2017).

Studies published in International journals from Pakistan reveals that renal failure is caused by diabetes mellitus 33%, hypertension 12% and kidney stones 7% approximately (Mahmud et al., 2014).

Anees et al., (2008) conducted research on dialysis patients and reported that depression in patients undergoing dialysis affects their mortality and also affects quality of life. The study reported that 10% to 66% of dialysis patients are under depression. The study also reported factors associated with depression were marital status, socio-economic status, financial support, and number of family members, hypertension and illiteracy (Solomon et al., 2022). The study concluded that depression can cause many other issues such as gastro-intestinal issues, sleep disturbance and loss of appetite. Study findings also revealed that depression can be lessened by enhancing quality of life. Study suggested that dialysis treatment should must add psychological help in treatment procedures.

Mahmud et al., (2014) reported in their study that renal failure is a chronic illness what result in high cost of treatment with fear of death and poor life quality. The study reported that from 189 patients of renal disease 87 patients were diabetic, which means diabetes is a cause for renal failure. They also described in their study, majority patients were not aware from their disease and not receiving treatment because of improper health related facilities or poverty. The study concluded that diabetes and hypertension are common leading causes for renal failure.

Anees et al., (2014) worked on evaluating demographic factors which affect quality of life in hemodialysis patients and explained quality of life as individual's own perception regarding their life including their expectations and cultural and social concerns. They concluded that hemoglobin level, literacy, sex, nutritional status, socio-economic status, comorbidities such as cardiovascular issues, hypertension, diabetes, and hepatitis had a great impact on patient's quality of life. Dialysis patients faced various adverse effects such as a major change in diet, body image, mental fatigue, dependency on machines caused an increase in patient's quality of life. The study also described patient's financial status had a great impact on quality of life in hemodialysis patients. Income has a positive impact on patient's satisfaction with life. The study concluded that patients having good source of income have less financial stress and good quality of life.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Material**

For the systematic review, initially 141 articles were searched. After collecting and screening the articles duplicate articles were removed. After the retrieving of irrelevant articles 19 articles were elected considering most relevant for examining the association among death anxiety, quality of life and spirituality in hemodialysis patients. The literature for the review was included from 2013 to Sep 2023.

### **Criteria for Selection**

The criteria of choosing the relevant studies for review was hemodialysis studies specifically discussed death anxiety, quality of life and spirituality in patients undergoing hemodialysis.

### **Inclusion Criteria**

The criteria was made for studies included in the review, only those researches were incorporated which worked on hemodialysis patients in context with death anxiety, quality of life and spirituality.

### **Exclusion Criteria**

Studies which have discussed other type of dialysis such as peritoneal dialysis were excluded. Studies which have focused on death anxiety due to some other reason rather dialyses were excluded. Studies which have focused on some other construct which reduces death anxiety and enhances quality of life were also excluded from the review. Studies before the year of 2013 were also excluded.

### **Search Strategy**

The literature for review was extracted from Google, Google scholar, PsycInfo, ScienceDirect, research gate and PubMed.

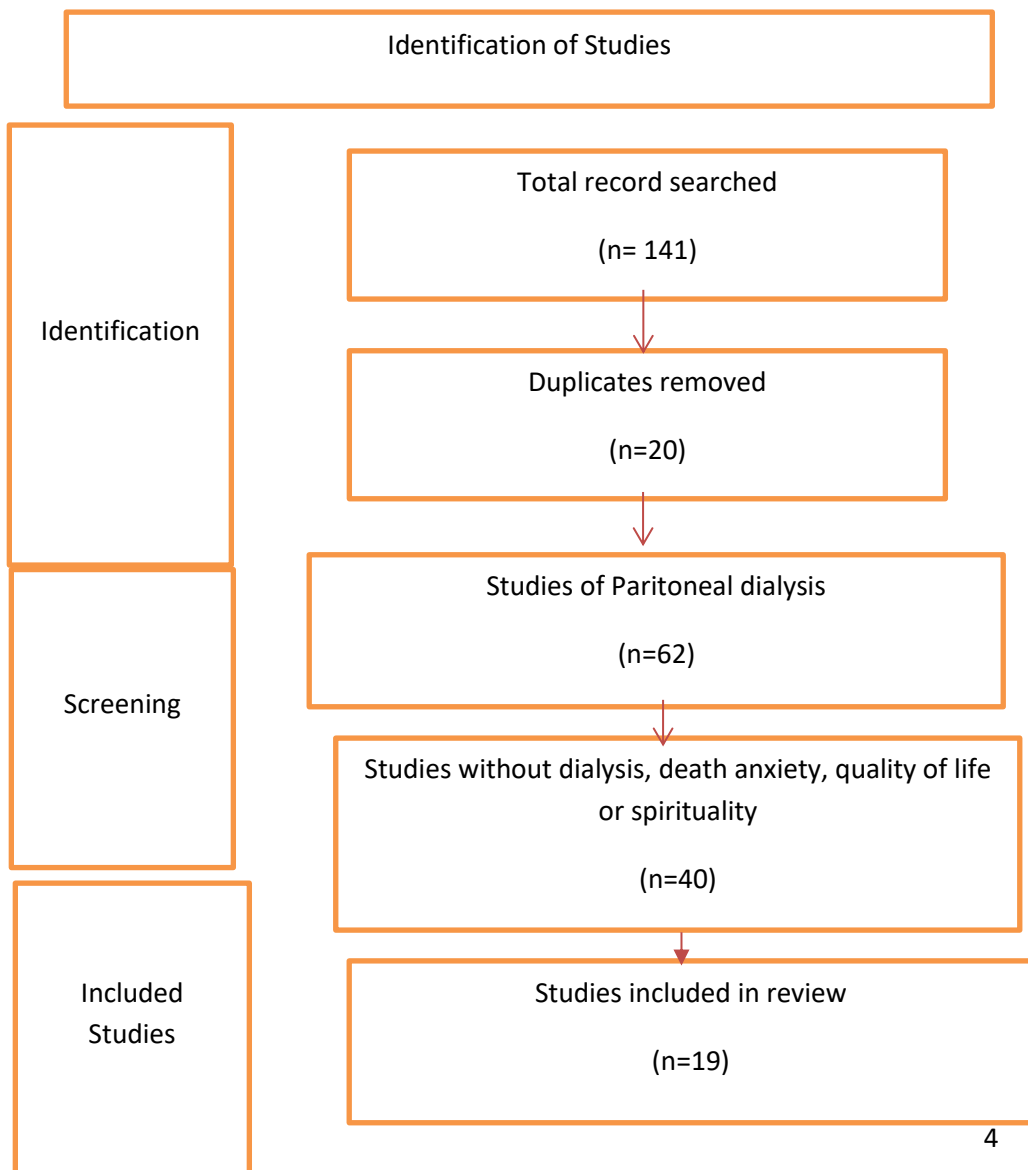
### **Search Terms**

The terms which have been used for searching the data for review were death anxiety and hemodialysis, spirituality and hemodialysis, quality of life and hemodialysis, death anxiety + quality of life among hemodialysis patients, death anxiety and spirituality among hemodialysis patients, spirituality enhances quality of life among hemodialysis patients.

## **Process of Study Selection**

For the review selection process, firstly titles and abstracts of the studies were reviewed many times on screen very carefully. Secondly, before selecting studies for review it was decided that the search studies will be considered only if they met the inclusion criteria, all the other searched studies would be excluded from the review. After selecting final studies, all of the final studies were reviewed again to add in systematic review.

**FIGURE: FLOW DIAGRAM**



## **Quality of Included Studies**

The quality of included studies and its usefulness was evaluated. Quality of the studies considered for the review was they discussed hemodialysis patients specifically with related to experiences of death anxiety, spirituality and quality of life. The population in all studies was hemodialysis patients, purpose of the research, result and conclusion of studies was reported.

## **Data Extraction**

The form of data extraction was designed to add the essential information which was discussed in earlier studies such as purpose of study, design/plot of study, population, main findings and conclusion (Table 1).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Characteristics of the study**

The systematic review has done on hemodialysis patients in-context with death anxiety, quality of life and spirituality. Dialysis is actually the treatment for kidney to work properly when the kidney stopped functioning naturally. Dialysis treatment has so many side effects on patient's mental and physical health as well as it affects financial status. The review concluded four themes: spirituality is the main factor associated with death anxiety, dialysis patients experienced anxiety, spirituality lessens death anxiety and improves quality of life, kidney disease leads to death anxiety.

### **Qualitative Studies**

The review incorporated only one qualitative study which discovered that kidney disease patients suffered a lot from anxiety after hearing their disease.

### **Quantitative Studies**

The current review comprised 18 quantitative studies focused on psychological problems arise after being kidney patient/hemodialysis patient. Hemodialysis is the very common procedure of kidney failure. The review studies revealed that hemodialysis patients suffered a lot from psychological problems.

#### **1- Spirituality is the main factor associated with death anxiety**

The review has been done on spirituality, death anxiety, quality of life. The review concluded that spirituality had a great impact on psychological health of a kidney disease patient. Kidney disease patients who are more spiritual suffers less with death anxiety. They actually believe on the Almighty, believes that this

is by GOD. And He will definitely heal their problem. They also believes that being more spiritual and being more close to Almighty their problem will go soon. Taghipour et al., (2017) conducted a research and illustrated that by enhancing spirituality death anxiety of a kidney patient can be minimized.

## **2- Dialysis patients experienced anxiety**

Studies revealed that patients undergoing dialysis suffers a lot with anxiety. When they underwent a dialysis they got anxious toward their physical health, family burden, financial issues and so on.

## **3- Spirituality lessens death anxiety and improves quality of life**

Studies exposed that spirituality reduces death anxiety and maintains quality of life of a kidney patient makes the better life for her/him. Spirituality makes them feel relax emotionally. Davison and Jhangri (2013) conducted and concluded that spirituality plays a vital role in a patient's life. Taghiabadi, (2017) illustrated in a study that patient with poor mental health have lower level of spiritual well-being. Spiritual experiences also minimize anxiety and stressors. Fradelos et al., (2021) pinpointed that spirituality have significant positive effect on a patient's quality of life.

## **4- Kidney disease leads to death anxiety**

A qualitative study conducted and highlighted that patients with kidney disease leads to higher level of death anxiety. They assume that by being a patient of kidney disease they will die soon and this destroys their mental state (Thejavathi & Talwar, 2023).

**Table 1**

### *Data Extraction Form*

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<b>Author/Year</b>	<b>Study Type</b>	<b>Sample/population</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
Taghipour et al., 2017	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	Health Templer's Death Anxiety Scale, Spiritual Intelligence	The study revealed close relation between the spiritual

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			Scale, Paloutzian & Ellison's spiritual health Questionnaire, McGill Quality of life scale	intelligence and death anxiety; also predicts spiritual health associated with quality of life in hemodialysis patients. It seems enhancing spirituality death anxiety can be lessen.
Ghiasi et al., 2021	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	WHO Quality of life scale, Revised NEO Personality Inventory, Templer's death anxiety scale.	The study exhibits that hemodialysis maintains renal function and it enhances life span. However, personality plays a vital role in health related quality of life and death anxiety.
Shafaii et al., 2017	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	Templer's death anxiety scale, McGill quality of life questionnaire	No significant association was detected between death anxiety and quality of life in hemodialysis patients.
Jaberi et al., 2022	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	Multidimensional scale of perceived social support, quality of life, death anxiety	The study illustrated that there is no significant relation b/w social support and death anxiety. However,

				decreasing death anxiety quality of life can be enhanced.
Schouten et al., 2020	Quantitative	Dialysis patients	Beck Anxiety Inventory, quality of life	The study concluded that anxiety is so common in dialysis patients.
Dewina, Emaliyawati, & Praptiwi 2018	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	Templer's death anxiety scale, quality of life	The study concluded that death anxiety is important factor that can be managed in patients undergoing hemodialysis. for this, one can approach spiritual therapy and counseling.
Kang et al., 2015	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	Multidimensional scale for perceived social support, hospital anxiety & depression scale, Montreal cognitive assessment, Pittsburgh sleep quality Index	The study found that health-related quality of life was associated with age and anxiety.
Bastos, Reis & Cherchiglia, 2021	Quantitative	Dialysis patients	Quality of life SF-36, Cox population Risk Model	Study found that early interventions enhances quality of life & definitely manages death anxiety.



Davison & Jhangri, 2013	Quantitative	Dialysis patients	Spiritual well-being scale, Psychological adjustment to illness scale, kidney dialysis quality of life short form	The study concluded that spirituality plays a vital role in enhancing Health-related quality of life.
Martinez Custodio, 2014	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	General Health Questionnaire, Spiritual well-being	Study concluded that patients with poor mental health falls on lower level of spiritual well-being.
Hosseini et al., 2022	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	Spiritual counseling session, Fear of death	Study determined that spiritual oriented psychological counseling lessens fear of death.
Taghiabadi, 2017	Quantitative	General patients	Spiritual experience scale, life satisfaction index, death anxiety scale	Study showed that spiritual experiences reduce death anxiety and stressors.
Asadzandi et al., 2022	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	Daily spiritual experience questionnaire	Study found that spiritual care and spiritual experiences had great impact on hemodialysis patients.
Sanli et al., 2023	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	Beck Anxiety Inventory, spirituality scale, Brief psychological resilience scale	Study illustrated effective relation b/w spirituality, anxiety and resilience.

Aghajani, Afaze, Morasai, 2014	&	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	Hospital Anxiety Depression Scale, spiritual counseling	Study found that spiritual counseling significantly decreases anxiety & depression in hemodialysis patients.
Kharama al., 2014	et	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	SF-36 quality of life, spiritual well-being	Study illuminated that spiritual well-being plays vital role in making quality of life better.
Ebrahimi al., 2014	et	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	Paloutzian spiritual health & SF-36 quality of life scale	Results revealed that quality of life have significant positive relation with spiritual well-being
Fradelos al., 2021	et	Quantitative	Hemodialysis patients	FACIT-SP-12, Missouta Vitas quality of life scale	Study illumined that spirituality have significant positive effect on quality of life.
Thejavathi & Talwar, 2023		Qualitative	Kidney disease patients		Review concluded that kidney disease patients have severe level of death anxiety.

The review was conducted on death anxiety, spirituality and quality of life among patients undergoing dialysis. The review basically focused on treatment outcomes influenced psychological health of a patient such as death anxiety and quality of life affected by dialysis. The review focused on both qualitative and quantitative studies.

Specifically, the current review emphasized on spirituality; believing that being more spiritual death related anxiety can be lessened and quality of life can be enhanced. The review has four major themes. Ashwandi et al., (2018) worked on hemodialysis patients and concluded that promoting spiritual care related programs can lessen the death anxiety among hemodialysis patients. Hosseini et al., (2022) also worked on shia-Muslim hemodialysis patients and pinpointed that spiritual-oriented programs minimizes fear of death in hemodialysis patients.

## **CONCLUSION**

The current review was intended to highlight the effect of spirituality among hemodialysis patients. For this purpose, the study explored the influence of spirituality on death related and patient's quality of life. The study pinpointed four major themes (i) Spirituality is the main factor associated with death anxiety, (ii) Dialysis patients experienced anxiety, (iii) Spirituality lessens death anxiety and improves quality of life, (iv) Kidney disease leads to death anxiety. The review claimed that spirituality has a positive impact on patient's psychological health. It stated that enhancing spiritual programs in hospitals and promoting spiritual knowledge to patient minimizes their death related anxiety and maximizes quality of life.

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