
Analysis of Mental Health Nursing Clinical Practice on Mr. H with Positive Affirmation Therapy Innovation on Changes in Signs and Symptoms of Chronic Low Self-Esteem in the Elang Ward, Atma Husada Mahakam Mental Hospital, Samarinda

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Abstract

Low self-esteem is a common mental health nursing problem among patients with severe mental disorders and has a significant impact on self-evaluation, self-confidence, and social functioning. This study aims to examine mental health nursing clinical practice in Mr. H through the application of positive affirmation therapy as an innovative intervention to reduce signs and symptoms of low self-esteem in the Elang Ward of Atma Husada Mahakam Mental Hospital, Samarinda. The method used was a case study with a mental health nursing care process approach, including assessment, nursing diagnosis determination, care planning, implementation, and evaluation. Positive affirmation therapy was applied in a structured manner as a non-pharmacological nursing intervention. The results showed a reduction in signs and symptoms of low self-esteem, accompanied by improvements in the client's ability to recognize personal strengths, develop self-confidence, and increase participation in activities and social interactions. Based on these findings, positive affirmation therapy is recommended as a supportive intervention in mental health nursing care for clients with low self-esteem and may be further developed in psychiatric nursing practice within mental health hospitals.

Keywords: *Low Self-Esteem, Posittive Affirmation Therapy, Ppsychiatric Nursing.*

INTRODUCTION

Mental disorders are psychological conditions that affect an individual's quality of life by impacting behavior, emotions, thought processes, and social functioning. These disorders can lead to difficulties in adaptation, decreased productivity, and impaired interpersonal relationships (Tombokan, 2023).

Several common types of mental disorders include depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is classified as a chronic psychotic disorder that affects perception, thoughts, emotions, and behavior, making it difficult for individuals to distinguish reality from hallucinations and leading to a decline in social and cognitive functioning.

According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO, 2022), the number of people living with schizophrenia worldwide is approximately 24 million, equivalent to 1 in 300 individuals (0.32%), and about 1 in 222 people (0.45%) are in the adult population. In Indonesia, based on data from (SKI, 2023), the prevalence of mental disorders with schizophrenia is approximately 3.3 per mille, or around 315,621 individuals living with schizophrenia. Based on the same data (SKI, 2023), East Kalimantan Province has a prevalence of schizophrenia/psychosis of 1.6%, or approximately 4,319 individuals experiencing mental health disorders. Patients with schizophrenia often experience low self-esteem, characterized by negative self-evaluation, feelings of worthlessness, lack of self-confidence, and difficulty recognizing their abilities and potential.

Low self-esteem in patients with schizophrenia often manifests as persistent feelings of failure, difficulty accepting success, and a tendency to withdraw from social interactions, which further exacerbates emotional stress and hinders the recovery process (Hofer et al., 2023). Low self-esteem is defined as a persistent feeling of worthlessness, insignificance, and inferiority caused by negative self-evaluation. It also involves a loss of self-confidence and feelings of failure due to the inability to achieve desired goals. Individuals with low self-esteem may experience high levels of anxiety, frequent stress, and panic disorders (Amalia, N., B, S. W., & Karyawati, 2023).

According to Afnuhazi et al. (2023), prolonged low self-esteem leads to negative self-evaluation and diminished self-perception of one's abilities. It is often accompanied by poor self-care, such as untidy appearance, decreased appetite, reluctance to make eye contact during conversations, a tendency to lower the head, slow speech, and a weakened tone of voice.

This condition represents a significant problem as it affects patients' mental well-being and reduces the effectiveness of nursing interventions. To address the impact of low self-esteem, innovative nursing interventions are required, one of which is positive affirmation therapy. Positive affirmation therapy is a therapeutic approach that involves repeatedly expressing positive statements, either verbally or internally, with the aim of strengthening positive beliefs within individuals, transforming negative thought patterns, and enhancing patients' self-confidence (Ildrem, 2025).

This therapy involves the regular expression of positive and constructive statements, such as beliefs in recovery, the ability to be independent, and appreciation of one's role within the family. The aim is to transform negative thought patterns into more positive ones, enhance self-perception, and build the patient's self-confidence (Siswati, 2023).

Positive affirmation therapy can influence both the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous systems, triggering the secretion of endorphins that generate positive energy within the body, reduce blood pressure, and alleviate physical tension. This therapy can produce beneficial physical and psychological effects, including calmness, inner peace, and positive thinking, which are associated with the release of anti-stress hormones, thereby promoting relaxation and fostering positive emotional responses (Aji & Rizkasari, 2021).

This is also supported by a study conducted by Septyanti et al. (2024) entitled *The Implementation of Positive Affirmation Therapy in Patients with Low Self-Esteem at Palembang Mental Hospital*, which demonstrated an increase in patients' self-esteem scores as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale through the modification of patients' negative thought patterns.

A study by Nurul Hasanah (2022), entitled *Analysis of Nursing Care in Patients with Chronic Low Self-Esteem Using Positive Affirmation Interventions*, showed that positive affirmation interventions can reduce the signs and symptoms in patients with chronic low self-esteem. The situation at RSJD Atma Husada Mahakam Samarinda highlights the importance of targeted nursing interventions addressing low self-esteem issues.

Based on the *Service Quality Indicator Survey* (2025), low self-esteem ranks fourth among seven nursing problems identified in the Elang Ward, with a total of 47 clients. Although it is not the most prevalent nursing problem, this finding indicates that low self-esteem remains a significant clinical issue, particularly among patients with mental disorders such as schizophrenia. This condition illustrates that disturbances in self-concept and negative self-evaluation continue to be challenges in psychiatric nursing practice. Therefore, the implementation of positive affirmation therapy as a nursing innovation is expected to help reduce the signs and symptoms of low self-esteem, foster a healthier self-perception, enhance self-confidence, and support the recovery process and overall quality of life of patients optimally.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a case study design. The subject was Mr. H, a client diagnosed with schizophrenia and a nursing diagnosis of chronic low self-esteem, who was treated in the Elang Ward at RSJD Atma Husada Mahakam Samarinda.

Data collection was conducted through interviews, observation, mental status examination, and documentation review. The client's level of self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), a standardized instrument widely used to assess individual self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965), which has been adapted into Indonesian by Maroqi (2019). The nursing care process included assessment, nursing diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

The main intervention provided was positive affirmation therapy, which was carried out over three consecutive days alongside the implementation of nursing strategies for low self-esteem in this study. The media used included a pen and paper, following the standard operating procedures (SOP) for positive affirmation therapy in accordance with psychiatric nursing principles. This therapy aims to help clients replace negative thoughts with realistic and meaningful positive statements, thereby improving self-evaluation and self-confidence (Angraini, 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the initial assessment of Mr. H indicated the presence of signs and symptoms of chronic low self-esteem. Subjectively, the client expressed feelings of worthlessness, perceived a lack of personal strengths, and demonstrated low confidence in his abilities. The client also evaluated himself negatively and showed a pessimistic attitude toward the future. Objectively, the client appeared to lack confidence, maintained poor eye contact, had a slouched posture, spoke in a low and slow tone of voice, and exhibited a tendency to withdraw from social interactions. These findings indicate a persistent disturbance in self-concept that affects the client's psychosocial functioning.

The results of the self-esteem measurement using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) during the initial assessment showed that the client's score fell within the low self-esteem category. After receiving positive affirmation therapy for three consecutive days, there was a consistent increase in self-esteem scores each day. The post-intervention improvement reflects enhanced self-evaluation, indicating that the client became more capable of accepting and internalizing positive statements about himself.

In addition to the quantitative results, observable changes were also noted during the implementation of positive affirmation therapy. At the beginning of the intervention, the client appeared hesitant when expressing affirmations and frequently lowered his head. However, as the therapy progressed, the client was able to articulate affirmations more clearly, showed improved eye contact, and displayed a calmer facial expression. The positive affirmations focused on reinforcing personal strengths, the ability to carry out daily activities, and the client's aspirations to become a better and more independent individual.

Positive behavioral changes were also observed in the client's daily activities and social interactions. The client became more cooperative, began participating in simple activities within the ward, and showed increased initiative to interact with nurses and other patients. These findings indicate that positive affirmation therapy not only impacts cognitive aspects but also emotional and behavioral aspects, thereby contributing to the reduction of signs and symptoms of chronic low self-esteem.

Measurement results showed that on the first day, the client's RSES pre-test score was in the low self-esteem category. Following the implementation of positive affirmation therapy, there was an increase in the post-test score, indicating an initial response to the intervention. The progressively significant increase in scores on the second and third days suggests that the client began to internalize positive affirmations, recognize personal potential, and reduce previously persistent negative self-evaluations. These results indicate that continuous positive affirmation therapy provides consistent positive effects on improving the client's self-esteem.

The procedure for implementing positive affirmation therapy was conducted in a structured manner according to the nursing care plan in KIAN, including time contracting, pre-test measurement using RSES, identification of negative thoughts, formulation and repetition of positive affirmations, and post-test evaluation. This approach actively involved the client, ensuring that the client did not merely receive the intervention passively but also participated in the process of changing self-concept.

Clinically, the increase in RSES scores is consistent with observable behavioral changes in the client, such as improved eye contact, clearer verbal communication, increased self-confidence, and greater participation in daily activities and social interactions. These findings indicate that positive

affirmations not only impact cognitive aspects but also influence the emotional and behavioral dimensions of the client. The following are the results of the pre- and post-assessment using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES):

Table 1. Results of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) Questionnaire

No	Day/Date	Pre Score Value	Post Score Value
1	Tuesday, 6 Januari 2026	12	18
2	Wednesday, 7 Januari 2026	16	24
3	Thursday, 8 Januari 2026	17	28

Based on the table of pre- and post-measurement results using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) over three days of positive affirmation therapy, there is a consistent daily increase in self-esteem scores. This improvement reflects a gradual shift in the patient's self-perception from predominantly negative self-evaluation toward a more positive self-acceptance.

On the first day (Tuesday, January 6, 2026), the patient's pre-test score of 12 indicated low self-esteem with dominant negative self-evaluation. This condition is consistent with the patient's initial subjective data, in which he reported feeling like a failure, useless, and ashamed of his surroundings. Objectively, the patient frequently lowered his head, had poor eye contact, spoke in a soft tone, and displayed minimal emotional responses. After receiving positive affirmation therapy, the post-test score increased to 18, indicating an initial response to the intervention. At this stage, the patient began to accept and express positive affirmations, although still accompanied by hesitation.

On the second day (Wednesday, January 7, 2026), the pre-test score increased to 16, indicating a continued effect from the previous day's therapy. After the second session of positive affirmation therapy, the post-test score rose significantly to 24. This improvement suggests that the patient became increasingly able to internalize positive statements, began to recognize personal strengths, and reduced focus on negative self-evaluation. Clinically, the patient appeared more cooperative, demonstrated improved eye contact, and showed more appropriate emotional responses compared to the first day.

On the third day (Thursday, January 8, 2026), the pre-test score was 17, indicating that the patient's self-esteem had become more stable compared to the first day. After the third session of positive affirmation therapy, the post-test score increased to 28, demonstrating a meaningful improvement in self-esteem. At this stage, the patient appeared more confident, calmer, and able to express positive affirmations more independently and convincingly.

Overall, the increase in pre- and post-test scores over the three days indicates that positive affirmation therapy is effective in reducing the signs and symptoms of low self-esteem and in gradually helping patients develop a more positive self-perception. The patient's affirmation, "I can rise," reflects a shift in thinking patterns from negative self-evaluation toward a more adaptive self-perception. During the initial assessment, the patient believed that he "always fails in everything," including maintaining a household and securing employment, which is characteristic of chronic low self-esteem with persistent negative self-evaluation.

In addition, the affirmation "I am calm" is associated with the patient's initial condition, which showed signs and symptoms of low self-esteem, including feelings of sadness, shame, and negative self-evaluation. Objectively, the patient frequently lowered his head, maintained limited eye contact, spoke in a soft tone, and exhibited emotional tension as a result of negative self-evaluation. After structured positive affirmation therapy, the patient was able to express the affirmation "I am calm," indicating a reduction in emotional tension and an improvement in self-acceptance. The patient appeared more comfortable with himself and was no longer entirely focused on negative self-evaluation.

Furthermore, the patient's ability to express the affirmation "I can rise" demonstrates an increase in hope, motivation, and confidence in his ability to improve his condition. The patient is no longer entirely bound by past failures but has begun to develop a more positive outlook on recovery potential and personal capability. Thus, the affirmation "I can rise" serves as an indicator of the success

of positive affirmation therapy in helping the patient transform negative self-evaluation into more adaptive and realistic self-beliefs.

Based on the results of measurements using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), behavioral observations, and the patient's ability to express positive affirmations, the author assumes that the improvement in self-esteem scores is the result of a structured and repeated process of internalizing positive affirmations. Positive affirmation therapy serves as a cognitive stimulus that helps the patient challenge and replace persistent negative self-evaluations with more realistic and acceptable positive statements. This process occurs gradually, in line with the increasing involvement and acceptance of the patient toward the intervention provided.

The patient's ability to express the affirmation "I can rise" indicates an increase in hope, motivation, and confidence in their ability to improve their condition. The patient is no longer entirely bound by past failures but has begun to develop a more positive and realistic perspective on recovery potential and personal capability. Therefore, the affirmation "I can rise" can be considered an indicator of the success of positive affirmation therapy in helping the patient transform chronic negative self-evaluation into more positive self-beliefs.

Discussion

In addressing the problem of low self-esteem, nurses implement interventions gradually in accordance with the nursing care plan and the Implementation Strategy (SP). Nurses assist clients in recognizing their abilities and strengths, provide positive reinforcement for every improvement, and involve clients in simple activities that can enhance self-confidence. These actions are carried out consistently to help clients become accustomed to viewing themselves more positively.

In line with this approach, positive affirmation therapy is applied as an innovative nursing intervention to support the development of healthier thought patterns in clients. Through this therapy, clients are trained to regularly express and internalize positive statements about themselves as an effort to improve self-concept. This therapy aims to reduce negative self-evaluation, enhance confidence in one's abilities, and help clients develop more adaptive coping strategies. With the continuous implementation of positive affirmation therapy, clients are expected to improve their self-esteem, participate in social activities, and demonstrate a more positive attitude toward themselves.

The author's assumption is consistent with the theory proposed by Septyanti et al. (2024), which states that positive affirmation therapy is effective in reducing low self-esteem by strengthening positive beliefs within individuals. Positive affirmations work by replacing negative thoughts and maladaptive self-evaluations with more positive and realistic thinking, thereby influencing both conscious and subconscious processes, which subsequently affect changes in thought patterns, attitudes, and behaviors in patients with low self-esteem. The study results demonstrated an increase in self-esteem scores based on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, as well as a reduction in the signs and symptoms of low self-esteem after the implementation of positive affirmation therapy.

In addition, the study by Anggraini (2025) supports the author's assumption by showing that the consistent application of positive affirmation therapy can improve quality of life, enhance self-concept, and reduce levels of low self-esteem. Positive affirmation therapy not only impacts cognitive aspects but also influences psychological well-being and social functioning of patients. Based on the alignment between previous research findings and the implementation results observed in the patient in this study, the author assumes that positive affirmation therapy is an effective, practical, and evidence-based psychiatric nursing intervention in helping patients develop a more positive, adaptive, and realistic self-perception on a sustained basis.

Theoretically, the effect of positive affirmation therapy on improving chronic low self-esteem can be explained through Self-Affirmation Theory proposed by Steele (1988). This theory states that individuals have a fundamental need to maintain a sense of self-integrity and positive self-worth. In conditions of chronic low self-esteem, individuals experience repeated threats to their self-concept, resulting in persistent negative thinking patterns. The use of positive affirmations functions as a psychological mechanism to reaffirm an individual's values, strengths, and sense of self-worth. This

affirmation process helps shift the focus from personal failures or weaknesses toward the positive aspects that still exist, thereby strengthening self-concept and gradually improving self-evaluation. Thus, based on Steele's theory, positive affirmations can help restore self-integrity and serve as a foundation for adaptive and sustainable improvements in self-esteem.

The results of this study are consistent with various previous studies. Research by Nurul Hasanah (2022) showed that the implementation of positive affirmation therapy in patients with chronic low self-esteem significantly increased self-esteem scores and improved the clients' self-concept. The study emphasized that structured repetition of positive affirmations can help clients reduce long-standing negative thought patterns.

In addition, the findings of this study are also in line with the research by Zuraidy (2025), in the journal *Positive Affirmation Self-Talk and Psychological Well-Being*, which explains that positive affirmations play a role in improving psychological well-being, emotional regulation, and individual resilience.

Research by Septyanti et al. (2024) reported that positive affirmation therapy is effective in increasing self-confidence, motivation, and social participation among patients with mental disorders experiencing low self-esteem. The findings indicate that positive affirmations work through cognitive restructuring mechanisms by strengthening positive beliefs about the self and weakening negative thinking patterns.

Similarly, Nurhidayat (2024) explained that the mechanism of positive affirmations involves the interaction between cognitive and emotional aspects. Positive statements expressed consciously function as positive suggestions that help regulate patients' emotional responses. When patients begin to accept and believe these affirmations, improvements occur in emotional regulation and self-control, enabling them to develop more adaptive coping mechanisms in dealing with psychosocial stressors.

Other studies have also indicated that psychosocial interventions based on positive affirmations can enhance patients' coping abilities and social functioning, particularly when implemented continuously and supported by therapeutic assistance from nurses. The consistency of findings between this study and previous research indicates that positive affirmation therapy is an effective, practical, and easily applicable psychiatric nursing intervention in mental hospital settings.

Thus, it can be concluded that the implementation of innovative positive affirmation therapy has been proven to help patients improve self-esteem, correct negative self-perceptions, and foster confidence in their abilities and self-worth. The increase in self-esteem scores observed after the intervention demonstrates that positive affirmation therapy is effective as a nursing intervention in addressing chronic low self-esteem.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of psychiatric nursing practice conducted on Mr. H in the Elang Ward at RSJD Atma Husada Mahakam Samarinda with the implementation of positive affirmation therapy, it can be concluded that the psychiatric nursing assessment carried out on January 6, 2026, at 09:00 AM indicated that the client was 43 years old with a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia and had been hospitalized since December 30, 2025. The client was admitted with complaints of restlessness and destructive behavior, including damaging a fence at a foundation, accompanied by feelings of worthlessness, negative self-evaluation, repeated failures in employment, and a tendency to withdraw and isolate himself. Physically, the client's condition was within normal limits; however, psychologically, he appeared depressed, had limited eye contact, and showed minimal initiative for interaction.

Based on the assessment results, several nursing problems were identified, with the primary priority being chronic low self-esteem, accompanied by social isolation and ineffective coping. The nursing interventions were developed based on SIKI and SLKI standards, focusing on improving self-concept through the implementation of positive affirmation therapy as both an innovative and

complementary intervention.

The structured implementation of positive affirmation therapy over three consecutive days had a positive impact on the client's psychological condition. The client demonstrated improved ability to recognize personal strengths, express positive statements about himself, and began to show increased confidence in participating in care-related activities. Following the intervention, the signs and symptoms of low self-esteem showed improvement, as evidenced by a reduction in self-deprecating statements, increased eye contact, more cooperative behavior, and greater participation in interactions and activities within the treatment setting.

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