
PORTRAYALS OF CANCER IN *HINGGA JUMPA LAGI* (2018): UNDERSTANDING AND ENHANCING HEALTH LITERACY IN THE SCREEN MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

Screen media plays a vital role in shaping public perceptions of cancer. This article examines the Malay telefilm *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* (2018) and its representation of cancer's complexities. While the telefilm effectively showcases the personal struggles of Eva, it oversimplifies the multifaceted aspects of the disease. This oversimplification risks perpetuating misconceptions and stigmatisation. Identifying crucial gaps in information, this article suggests that the telefilm lacks depth needed for comprehensive understanding. Recommendations emphasise the necessity of providing additional, accurate information within the film to dispel misconceptions. By enhancing the portrayal's accuracy, this approach aims to foster informed support for cancer patients and promote better societal awareness of the disease.

Keywords: *cancer, awareness, telefilm, health literacy*

INTRODUCTION

The screen media plays a significant and broad function in health communication. It provides an engaging setting for illustrating health-related issues, with the potential to either clarify or complicate important health information (Schiavo, 2013). The public's understanding of sickness, particularly cancer, is greatly influenced by how these conditions are portrayed in both cinema and TV. The screen media is a powerful medium for influencing thoughts and attitudes towards health and sickness because of its compelling visual, emotive storytelling, and general accessibility (Fancourt and Finn, 2019). When it comes to cancer prevention,

treatment, and relationships between patients and healthcare providers, misconceptions, inaccuracies, or simplifications in cinematic portrayals might influence people's attitudes and choices. On the other hand, truthful and realistic depictions have the potential to improve health literacy, encourage wise decision-making, and lead to better cancer outcomes.

Therefore, it is impossible to understate the impact of popular media, especially TV, on public perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours. Cinematic representations have a special ability to express difficult concepts and feelings, making them an effective medium for sharing health-related knowledge (Magasi et al., 2019). By recognising and analysing the gaps and difficulties present in these representations, this study intends to dive into the complex relationship between the small screen and health literacy, with a specific focus on the portrayal of cancer. We aim to comprehend the presentation, assimilation, and interpretation of cancer-related health information in the context of TV. The aim of this review is to explore and identify issues and gaps in the Malay telefilm *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* (2018) which revolves around cancer as the main theme of how the message portrayed in this telefilm impacts the public's perception of cancer. By closely examining this intersection of media and education, we hope to reveal the subtleties that could affect viewers' perceptions of cancer and subsequent health-related choices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cinematic Representation of Cancer – An Overview

Screen media has been a crucial part of health communication due to its effectiveness in expressing thoughts and feelings, with an exceptional capacity to engross and interest audiences. With regards to society's perceptions of health, illness, and the complicated topography of cancer, cinematic depictions act as both a mirror and a lens. The impact of filmic representations of cancer on public perception and comprehension is significant and pervasive. These portrayals do more than just provide amusement; they also influence how others view and connect to cancer patients' experiences and difficulties. The significance of cinematic representations is shown by several important observations (Morel and Miyose, 2022):

- **Emotional Resonance:** Screen media has the capacity to evoke powerful emotions, enabling viewers to empathise with the physical and emotional struggles of cancer patients. This emotional connection can foster greater empathy and understanding in the audience.
- **Education and Awareness:** Cinematic representations often provide a platform for raising awareness about cancer, its risk factors, and the importance of early detection. They can educate viewers about various types of cancer and the potential consequences of lifestyle choices.
- **Perception of Treatments:** Cinematic screen depicts a wide spectrum of cancer treatments, from chemotherapy to experimental therapies. These portrayals can influence how individuals perceive the efficacy and side effects of different treatment modalities, which may in turn impact their health-related decisions.
- **Stigmatisation and Stigma Reduction:** Cinematic representations can either reinforce or challenge stereotypes and stigmas associated with cancer. They have the potential to reduce the stigma surrounding cancer by humanising the experiences of patients.

- **Complexity of Survivorship:** Survivorship and life after cancer treatment are themes that movies often explore. These representations can illuminate the challenges and triumphs that survivors face, helping the public better understand the long-term effects of cancer.

In essence, the cinematic medium transcends mere storytelling; it shapes narratives that resonate with audiences on a deep emotional and intellectual level. The impact of cinematic portrayals on public perception and understanding of cancer is substantial, making it essential to scrutinise these representations for their accuracy, educational value, and potential to foster health literacy. The convergence of media and health communication in cinema presents a unique opportunity to navigate the complexities of health literacy gaps and challenges within this context, as explored in our manuscript.

Health Literacy and Its Relevance in the Screen

Health literacy is defined as a complicated and crucial notion that comprises an individual's ability to receive, analyse, and apply health information in order to make educated decisions and navigate the healthcare system successfully (Liu et al., 2020). It is a combination of several talents, including the capacity to read and comprehend health-related information, analyse numerical data (e.g., prescription dosages), and comprehend sophisticated medical language. Furthermore, health literacy goes beyond cognitive characteristics to include the skills required to effectively communicate with healthcare practitioners and participate in collaborative decision-making processes. Health literacy is of utmost significance when it comes to cancer education and awareness (Fleary et al., 2019; Holden et al., 2021; Housten et al., 2021). A high level of health literacy is required among people and communities due to the complexity of cancer, both in terms of its aetiology and the wide range of treatments that are accessible.

The importance of health literacy in this situation can be highlighted by a number of important factors (Morris et al., 2013):

- **Making informed decisions:** Cancer patients and their families frequently have to make difficult decisions about treatment options, clinical trials, and end-of-life care. To enable educated decision-making and guarantee that choices are in line with personal preferences and values, adequate health literacy is necessary.
- **Early Detection and Prevention:** Promoting cancer screening and early detection depends heavily on health literacy. Health literacy skills are a prerequisite for knowing the value of screenings, identifying risk factors, and appreciating the advantages of early intervention.
- **Treatment Adherence:** Patient compliance with recommended medications and therapy are essential to the effectiveness of cancer treatment plans. Understanding treatment plans, following drug schedules, and effectively managing potential side effects are all made possible by health literacy.
- **Effective Communication:** Patients and healthcare professionals can communicate more effectively when both parties are proficient in health literacy. Patients are better able to actively participate in their care and advocate for their needs when they are able to express their concerns, ask questions, and understand medical jargon.

- **Reducing Health Disparities:** Poor health literacy is frequently linked to health disparities, especially in populations that are already at risk. By guaranteeing equal access to information and resources, addressing health literacy gaps in cancer education can help to reduce these inequalities.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite the pivotal role of health literacy in cancer education and awareness, there exists an underexplored terrain at the intersection of health communication, cinematic representations, and their impact on public health literacy. The influence of cinematic portrayals on shaping perceptions of cancer, treatment modalities, survivorship, and the potential implications for enhancing or impeding health literacy remains insufficiently understood. This knowledge gap prompts the need for an in-depth investigation into the accuracy, educational value, and nuanced effects of cinematic representations of cancer on public health literacy. By addressing this gap, this study aims to elucidate how cinematic depictions of cancer contribute to shaping health perceptions and decision-making processes, thereby paving the way for more effective strategies in leveraging media for fostering health literacy and enhancing cancer-related communication between patients, healthcare professionals, and the broader public.

METHODOLOGY

The telefilm *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* premiered on Saturday, November 17, 2018, at 9:00 PM, marking the most recent (as of late 2023) cancer exploration in any Malaysian screen media. The telefilm, directed by Wan Hazliza Wan Zainuddin, utilises cancer as the central theme throughout the narrative, playing a pivotal role in the primary plot, thus making it relevant to the objective of this research.

Analysis of the film was done by converting the film into text; therefore, the research methodology employed in this study is text analysis. *Text analysis* is a systematic approach for scrutinising and extracting valuable insights from extensive textual data. It is a versatile process widely employed across various academic and professional domains such as linguistics, data science, social sciences, and screen studies. Our analysis includes script, subtitle and transcript analysis; break down of the textual elements within the film; semantic and sentiment analysis, and finally, dialogue and discourse analysis deemed suitable for this discussion.

Screen media is considered a form of text within this analytical framework (Flick, 2018). This perspective arises from recognising that screen media, including television, film, and digital content, constitutes a complex and multifaceted communication medium. It communicates meaning through a rich tapestry of signs and symbols comprising visual and auditory elements. Analysing screen media as text permits the exploration of the layers of significance embedded within the content, fostering critical thinking and promoting media literacy. This approach is instrumental in comprehending the far-reaching influence and impact of screen media within contemporary society.

The rationale behind considering screen media as text lies in its inherent semiotic nature (Eco, 1980). The visual and auditory elements presented on screen can be semiotically decoded, with each image, sound, dialogue, and composition as a sign conveying meaning.

Furthermore, screen media typically follows narrative structures, where stories unfold, characters interact, and themes are explored. These narrative elements are foundational in textual analysis, allowing for the critical examination of plot development and the underlying messages and ideologies embedded in the content.

Cultural and social contexts influence the creation and reception of screen media. The content often reflects the values, beliefs, and norms of the society in which it is produced. This contextual backdrop adds depth to the textual analysis by considering how societal factors impact content creation and how the content, in turn, shapes culture and society (Kellner, 2003). The process of textual analysis involves close examination, particularly in the case study under consideration, which is the telefilm *Hingga Jumpa Lagi*. This examination is conducted meticulously, scene by scene, focusing on the presentation of cancer and its accuracy within the narrative. Throughout this scrutiny of cancer portrayal, the analysis incorporates opinionated discussions, providing a comprehensive assessment of the telefilm's approach to this critical theme.

RESULTS

Synopsis of *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* (2018)

Hingga Jumpa Lagi (2019) takes a poignant and emotionally charged approach to portray the impact of cancer as the central theme in the storyline. The film explores the complexities of fate and the depiction of true love amidst evading its grasp. At its core, the narrative revolves around a married woman who finds herself grappling with stage 4 uterine cancer, a grim diagnosis that irreversibly alters the course of her life and relationships.

The protagonist's internal struggle is the emotional core of the film. She yearns to rewrite the past, a desire fuelled by the pain of witnessing her husband's unwavering commitment to her as she battles her illness. This emotional burden deepens as she learns that her husband has made significant personal sacrifices, including forgoing a long-awaited job opportunity, all in the name of caretaking.

The telefilm explores the intersection of despair, hope, and the human desire to change the inevitable. One of the most intriguing elements is the introduction of an enigmatic beggar outside a laundry store, who seemingly possesses the power to grant her wish of turning back time. This mystical subplot adds a layer of magical realism to the narrative, enticing viewers with the possibility of rewriting fate. The repeated attempts to alter the past in an effort to prevent her past self from marrying her husband represent a powerful exploration of the idea that some things in life are destined to occur, regardless of our interventions. Despite her efforts to rewrite her own history, the film underscores the idea that certain events are inescapable, and that true love and destiny are inexplicably intertwined.

Perhaps the intended message of *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* is a moving portrayal of cancer's profound impact on individuals and their relationships. It delves into the emotional turmoil experienced by those facing the disease, the sacrifices made by loved ones, and the longing for a second chance in the face of an unforgiving reality. While the film effectively navigates themes of love, regret, and the indomitable spirit of the human heart in the shadow of a life-altering illness, at times, it gives cancer a negative portrayal and may contribute to cancer stigmatisation.

Criticism on *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* (2018)

The promotional poster of *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* gives a negative portrayal of cancer primarily due to the bald portrayal of the patient. The poster might emphasise the physical and emotional suffering of the cancer patient, potentially creating a bleak and distressing image. Such images may suggest that cancer patients are depicted as weak, helpless, or as a burden to their families, reinforcing stigmas around the disease.

The opening scene of *Hingga Jumpa lagi* portrays a cancer patient who is bald and wearing a patient robe. The background music is a slow violin note with a gloomy connotation in minor key that evokes sadness to the audience. Perhaps, the aim of this scene was to evoke powerful emotions and to shed light on the harsh realities of the disease. These portrayals can be impactful but may also contribute to the stigmatisation or fear of cancer. Increasing awareness about cancer is vital, including the fact that not all types of cancer and the resulting treatments lead to hair loss. In the context of this telefilm, the lack of clear information might leave viewers unaware of the character’s stage 4 cancer diagnosis, the specific type of cancer she’s battling, and her progress in terms of treatment. This highlights the importance of accurate and informative portrayals of cancer in media to ensure that the audience gains a better understanding of the diverse experiences and challenges associated with the disease.

In one scene, the husband of the patient mentioned briefly that there will be only 5 more rounds of treatments, but failed to mention explicitly what the treatment is. Since cancer treatments can be complex and intimidating, with various therapies, medications, and procedures, it is crucial that the treatment process is explained properly. Perhaps only real-life cancer patients, care-givers, and medical health professionals will grasp the reality of the treatment given. Relevant and sufficient explanations of these processes (which may not have to be in detail) in films can demystify cancer, thus reducing fear and misconceptions about it. On the other hand, vague mentions of treatments can further contribute to cancer stigmatisation.

In terms of cancer treatment, the telefilm tends to generalise chemotherapy as the only option. A scene during chemotherapy depicts the protagonist wearing an all-black attire – possibly highlighting her mood as being very sad, weak, and sick of the whole session. However, to compensate for the darkness in the overall set design and wardrobe, the film tries to show brightness through the presence of her family members giving her moral support during the chemotherapy session. The telefilm also tries to highlight the burden of going through chemotherapy by showing how the couple arrived home at night-time and how tired the protagonist is by slumping on a chair. The scene that follows afterwards depicts the protagonist vomiting upon trying to get up from the chair, depicting one of the side effects of chemotherapy.

Table 1. List of selected scenes for text analysis with corresponding times and description of the scenes.

Time	Scene
20 minutes	Eva is still unaware of the stage of her cancer. Viewers are only informed that she is going for chemotherapy, but not the progress of her treatment.
24 minutes	Eva meets an old beggar that grants her wish to turn back time prior to meeting her now-husband.

1:09 hours	The mentioning of Eva's cancer type and stage.
1:17 hours	Future-Eva mentions to past-Eva that she (past-Eva) is possibly at stage 2 of her cancer.

Twenty minutes into the telefilm (Table 1), viewers remain in the dark about the protagonist's cancer type and stage as well as the progress of her treatment. There is also no information as to why chemotherapy is the only option for her. Her cancer type and stage are only mentioned at 1:09 hours (Table 1).

In minute 24 of the movie (Table 1), the protagonist meets an old man at the laundromat – a beggar who we presume is asking for donations. Only the protagonist takes notice of him and gives him a huge sum of money for food. He offers what he could do in return. She jokingly asks the beggar if he could turn back time to the moment she met her husband (in hopes that she can undo their meeting so that he would not have to care for her). The beggar agrees, but reminds her to not amend other peoples' history or to meet her past self.

At 1:17 hour of the film (Table 1), the future Eva meets her past self. Future-Eva tells her past self that she will be diagnosed with uterine cancer and that she will be bald in 5 years. Future-Eva mentions to past-Eva that she probably has stage 2 cancer, which is a misleading concept in cancer pathology. This lack of understanding of cancer pathogenesis may have led to the negative outlook on her cancer. Notably, in this scene, both the future and past Eva questioned the development of the cancer. Guessing the stage of the cancer based on a crude timeline is deemed an oversimplification of cancer pathogenesis. Notably, when a patient gets diagnosed with cancer, the classification of stage and severity ultimately determines the type of treatments available. More importantly, cancer screening at an earlier stage presents much better outcomes.

When the protagonist's past-self asks if they can fight the cancer, the current-day protagonist answers: "Macam mana kita rawat sekalipun, kau dan aku akan tetap sakit," which translates to, "No matter what we do, you and I will still be sick". This is a very negative generalisation of cancer treatment options, hinting of no hope at all. The telefilm seems intent on depicting all the negative sides of cancer in terms of emotional distress and sense of burden to the patient and their families. These portrayals of fear could create a false understanding of cancer, thus creating unnecessary distress and hindering the public from seeking help. The use of fear in public health campaigns or media to increase cancer awareness has been both supported and contradicted by several studies. Some showed that fear evokes positive influence in the audience and encourages them to seek help in terms of cancer screening or treatment. However, other studies found that fear and embarrassment could lead to cancer stigmatisation and deter patients from seeking health support. One study showed that for Asian women, the fear of cancer hinders them from seeking health support (Taib et al., 2011). Rajaram et al. (2023) suggest that positive reinforcements may be more effective in increasing cancer awareness and literacy among Asian women. The same study found that women in Malaysia have poor breast cancer knowledge and awareness due to complex socioeconomic factors. Public health approaches that aim to minimise delays in seeking medical assistance and to detect breast cancer at an earlier stage in Malaysia should integrate emotionally tailored communication with positive reinforcements which is best represented through media.

DISCUSSION

The intention of *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* with regards to cancer awareness is unclear. Although the telefilm portrays some forms of perspective as cancer patients and offers insights for the caretakers, the ambiguity and generalisation of cancer management may lead to the oversimplification of cancer and the creation of stigma. Cancer stigmatisation stems from gaps in health literacy which could be elevated through media and films. Cancer stigmatisation, if not addressed, could discourage individuals from seeking timely medical attention or disclosing their symptoms. Psychologically, cancer stigmatisation is associated with increased rates of anxiety and depression (Yilmaz et al., 2020). It could also lead to strained relationships between family and friends, particularly the caregivers (Kebede et al., 2020). Caregivers who experience stigma may find it more challenging to provide the necessary support. Such behaviours are portrayed in *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* particularly when Eva feels the sense of burden for her husband. Her decision to turn back time and not marry her husband portrays her belief that her cancer is burdening her husband, which also shows the lack of will to live.

One of the mainstays of cancer stigmatisation comes from the gaps in health literacy. Particularly for cancer, there is a huge gap in cancer literacy. In a recent study by Jaafar et al. (2021), a health literacy survey involving 9478 individuals aged 18 and above revealed that a majority of the Malaysian population has sufficient health literacy level in all three domains—healthcare, disease prevention, and health promotion (49.1%, 44.2%, and 47.5%, respectively)—albeit leaning towards the lower end of the category with an average score of 35.5. Particularly for cancer patients, a number of treatment options are available depending on their prognosis. Thus, individuals with limited health literacy often face challenges. The demand for patient engagement in healthcare decisions can compound the difficulties that cancer patients already encounter following a life-altering diagnosis. To involve cancer patients in making informed medical decisions, it is essential that they possess a thorough comprehension of their condition and the available treatment choices. Restricted health literacy presents an obstacle to patients' active participation in their healthcare, thereby contributing to health disparities and suboptimal outcomes in cancer care.

A number of factors can contribute to the lack of cancer literacy. Firstly, the complex medical terms used in cancer management may be difficult for the average person to comprehend. This can create a gap in understanding and deter individuals from seeking proper care or taking preventive measures. There is also limited cultural sensitivity in the provision of health literacy materials. For example, treatment options may sometimes overlook cultural taboos or privacy concerns such as the discussion of intimate aspects of cancer care or prognosis, which can create discomfort and hinder open communication. Malaysia has many cultural beliefs and thus holds high regards for cultural sensitivity. The typical Malaysian culture places a strong emphasis on family dynamics, and not addressing the impact of cancer on family relationships can lead to misunderstandings and inadequate support systems (Kazak et al., 2015). Health literacy materials sometimes lack cultural sensitivity and may not adequately address the specific beliefs, practices, and traditions of different cultural and ethnic groups. This can hinder the effective dissemination of information about cancer prevention and treatment in diverse communities.

A critical aspect of enhancing cancer literacy involves expanding the availability of materials focused on cancer prevention. Many health literacy resources tend to prioritise information about cancer treatment while overlooking the significance of cancer prevention through lifestyle choices, screenings, and early detection. Although cancer treatment is

undeniably vital, there exists a notable gap in educating individuals about the paramount importance of actively engaging in cancer prevention strategies.

Amongst the many reasons for the lack of cancer literacy is the limited accessibility to health literacy materials. Economic and geographical factors can create disparities in accessing information about cancer, resulting in gaps in understanding and awareness. In Malaysia, several studies show that the gap for cancer literacy is wider in rural and marginalised communities and those with lower income and education levels (Halverson J et al., 2013). Additionally, Abdullah L. et al. (2020) also highlighted the lack of research on understanding health literacy amongst Malaysians.

In *Hingga Jumpa Lagi*, one of the prevailing themes is Eva's deliberate effort to avoid her husband in order to alleviate the emotional and physical burdens associated with her cancer diagnosis. However, it is worth considering an alternative perspective that Eva could have embraced. By reframing her situation, Eva might have opted to journey back in time to make healthier lifestyle choices, including dietary and physical activity improvements. She could have also proactively pursued early cancer screenings, such as mammography or Pap smears, which are instrumental in identifying and treating cancer at its earliest, most manageable stages. It is essential to recognise that cancer treatment administered during the early stages of the disease offers significantly improved chances of survival and reduced financial burdens. In another angle, Eva embracing her cancer diagnosis and being in the present can also offer herself as a cancer advocate. Schnipper et al. (2012) underscore the importance of early intervention in not only enhancing quality of life, but also mitigating the overall costs associated with cancer treatment. By disseminating this knowledge and fostering a culture of proactive cancer prevention, individuals can take control of their health, ultimately reducing the prevalence of cancer and its associated challenges.

Negative portrayal of cancer in *Hingga Jumpa Lagi*

Our examination of cinematic representations of cancer revealed several noteworthy health literacy gaps and challenges that are prevalent in this unique medium. These gaps are manifested in various ways, influencing how health information is conveyed and, consequently, how it is understood by the audience.

Firstly, cinematic portrayals tend to frequently oversimplify complex medical concepts and procedures (Domaradzki, 2022; Domaradzki, 2023). Cancer, a multifaceted disease with numerous subtypes and treatment modalities, often gets distilled into a one-size-fits-all narrative, obscuring the diversity of the cancer experience. For instance, chemotherapy is frequently depicted as a generic, universally distressing treatment, failing to capture the variations in patient experiences and responses. Secondly, the timeline of cancer diagnosis, treatment, and recovery is often compressed for dramatic effect. While this serves storytelling purposes, it can create unrealistic expectations or perceptions regarding the pace of recovery or the efficacy of treatment. Such temporal distortions may inadvertently influence audience perceptions of the disease's progression. Thirdly, cinematic representations occasionally perpetuate misconceptions about the role of healthcare professionals, emphasising individual heroic acts rather than collaborative, evidence-based care. This can inadvertently undermine trust in medical institutions and healthcare providers, impacting patient-provider relationships in real-life settings (Domaradzki, 2022).

The implications of these health literacy gaps and challenges in cinematic portrayals of cancer are far-reaching. Viewers often internalise the messages and images presented on-screen, potentially leading to a range of consequences:

- **Misconceptions:** Inaccuracies and oversimplifications can foster misconceptions about cancer, its treatments, and the patient experience. These misconceptions may lead to misguided health-related decisions or unnecessary fears.
- **Stigmatisation:** Cinematic representations that emphasise the physical deterioration of cancer patients can contribute to the stigmatisation of individuals with cancer. This stigmatisation can hinder social support and contribute to isolation among patients.
- **Emotional Impact:** Inaccurate portrayals of cancer experiences can evoke strong emotional reactions in viewers. These reactions can be both beneficial, in terms of empathy and understanding, or detrimental, in terms of anxiety and fear.
- **Treatment Decisions:** The way treatments are depicted can influence viewers' perceptions of treatment efficacy and side effects. This, in turn, may impact their willingness to pursue recommended treatments or participate in clinical trials.

The cancer factor in *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* looms as the malevolent force throughout the telefilm, casting a dark shadow over the narrative. The presence of cancer spawns a multitude of conflicts, each one meticulously engineered to amplify the inherent negativity associated with this disease. Eva and her husband's relationship bears the brunt of cancer's malevolence, with a barrage of arguments stemming from the emotional and physical toll it exacts on Eva. She grapples with a profound sense of self-loathing, triggered by her baldness and a pervasive feeling of unattractiveness, further perpetuating the grim atmosphere.

As the story unfolds, we witness Eva's chemotherapy journey, leaving her physically drained and depleted. Nuh, ever the devoted partner, tries to mitigate the suffering with traditional remedies. Yet, Eva's remorse over burdening her husband becomes a recurring theme, a testament to the corrosive effects of cancer on her self-esteem. Nuh, in stark contrast, insists that caring for Eva brings him pleasure, dismissing any notion of being burdened. However, the story takes a darker turn when Nuh receives a tempting job offer in Japan. Eva inadvertently overhears the conversation and is overwhelmed by the realisation that her illness has become an insurmountable obstacle in her husband's career path. The weight of this knowledge burdens her even more, intensifying her despair. Their subsequent meeting takes a distressing turn as Eva's physical condition deteriorates, leading to an incident of vomiting and a desperate attempt to clean up her own mess. She issues another apologetic confession, further straining their relationship. This disintegration in their relationship aligns with studies that reveal the profound psychological distress experienced by cancer patients undergoing extensive chemotherapy treatments, manifesting as anxiety and depression (El Kheir et al., 2019).

Eva and Nuh, a childless couple, confront the harsh realities of cancer for partners with no children, which compounds Eva's already fragile self-image. The weight of her illness, coupled with the knowledge that it hampers her chances of conceiving, burdens her. She apologises to Nuh for her inability to bear children. Frustration sets in as she perceives herself as a double burden, a cancer patient and a barren wife. Nuh, in stark contrast, remains resolute in his support, taking pride and finding genuine joy in caring for Eva. His steadfast commitment serves as a poignant counterpoint to the prevailing negativity.

In another scene, Eva confides in a friend, lamenting her cancer diagnosis and its implications on her relationship with Nuh. It becomes evident that Eva's outlook on her own recovery is bleak, further exacerbating the emotional turmoil. Research underscores that adverse psychological states in cancer patients can lead to poorer outcomes, impacting even post-treatment cancer recurrence – which is in line with Eva's story line (Seiler and Jenewein, 2019). However, the telefilm fails to divulge specifics about the stage or type of cancer afflicting Eva, contributing to the overarching portrayal of cancer in a one-dimensional, negative light. Conversely, a study on cancer in married couples by Syse and Lyngstad (2016) highlights that couples with resources, sound socio-demographic backgrounds, including education and wealth, have improved chances of surviving cancer. *Hingga Jumpa Lagi* portrays Eva and Nuh as financially stable, further hinting at a positive foundation for cancer management. Additionally, Eva's insecurity about her health extends to a troubling belief that Nuh should have married his ex-fiancée, Dr. Laila, who enjoys better health. She is convinced that this choice could have provided him with a more fulfilling life. This underlines the profound impact of her cancer diagnosis on her self-esteem and the dynamics of their relationship.

Hingga Jumpa Lagi vividly illustrates the challenges of being a cancer patient. But more importantly, it depicts cancer as a malevolent force that disrupts relationships. Ultimately, while shedding light on the challenges faced by cancer patients and their caregivers, the oversimplification, timeline compression, and the occasional perpetuation of misconceptions of cancer can increase literacy gaps on the disease. These issues can impose wide-ranging implications, leading to misunderstandings, stigmatisation, emotional effects, and potential impacts on viewers' treatment decisions.

Challenges Faced by Filmmakers

Filmmakers, while crafting cinematic representations of cancer, confront a delicate and multifaceted challenge namely the accurate portrayal of cancer-related health information. The intricacies of this challenge stem from the need to balance the artistic elements of storytelling with the imperative of health education. One primary challenge faced by filmmakers is the translation of complex medical terminology and procedures into a format accessible to a diverse audience. Medical jargon, while authentic, can be alienating and incomprehensible to the average viewer. This necessitates a delicate process of simplification and contextualisation, which, if not executed judiciously, may lead to oversimplifications or inaccuracies (Brylla C, 2018).

Balancing the emotional resonance of storytelling with the factual accuracy of health information is another formidable obstacle. Filmmakers often strive to elicit deep emotional responses from audiences to engage them with the narrative. However, in pursuit of emotional impact, there may be a tendency to exaggerate or oversimplify the cancer experience, potentially sacrificing the nuances that characterise real-life situations. Furthermore, the imperative to condense complex timelines of diagnosis, treatment, and recovery into a two-hour narrative necessitates selective storytelling. This compression of timeframes may inadvertently lead to unrealistic expectations regarding the pace of recovery or the efficacy of treatments.

Filmmakers must tread a fine line between artistic storytelling and health education. The tension between these two objectives is palpable, as they often appear to be at odds. The very essence of cinema lies in its ability to evoke emotion, provoke thought, and captivate

audiences through narrative arcs, character development, and visual aesthetics. However, it is essential to recognise that cinema has a unique role as a tool for health communication. Filmmakers can wield their craft to impart valuable health education while respecting the storytelling art form. Striking this balance requires collaboration between filmmakers and health experts as well as active engagements with the community (Cockle-Hearne et al., 2016; Magasi et. al., 2019), fostering a synergy between the worlds of creativity and science.

In essence, the challenges faced by filmmakers in accurately portraying cancer-related health information are substantial. While artistic storytelling is a central component of cinematic representations, the imperative of health education and accurate depictions of cancer experiences cannot be overlooked. Collaborative efforts, guided by a commitment to both artistic integrity and health literacy, hold the potential to bridge these challenges, yielding films that are both emotionally resonant and educationally valuable in the context of cancer awareness and education.

Implications for Cancer Education and Public Health

The health literacy gaps and challenges identified within cinematic representations of cancer have far-reaching implications for both cancer education and public health. These implications centre on the potential impact of these gaps on individuals' health decisions and the subsequent strategies required to address them. The cinematic medium, with its broad reach and emotional resonance, has the power to significantly influence individuals' health perceptions and behaviours. Health literacy gaps in movies can inadvertently lead to the reinforcement of misconceptions, the propagation of stereotypes, and the distortion of cancer-related information (Domaradzki, 2022). As viewers internalise these cinematic narratives, there is a risk that their understanding of cancer and their subsequent health decisions may be misguided or misinformed. For example, if movies consistently depict chemotherapy as uniformly painful and ineffective, viewers may develop unwarranted fears of this treatment option, potentially leading to reluctance to pursue evidence-based cancer therapies. Similarly, if survivorship experiences are consistently oversimplified, viewers may harbour unrealistic expectations about life after cancer treatment, impacting their psychosocial well-being and post-treatment decisions.

Addressing health literacy gaps in cinematic representations of cancer is a multifaceted endeavour that requires a collaborative effort involving filmmakers, healthcare professionals, educators, and public health advocates. Several strategies can be employed to mitigate the impact of these gaps:

- **Collaboration with Healthcare Experts:** Filmmakers can collaborate with healthcare experts, oncologists, and cancer educators to ensure that medical information is accurately portrayed. Such partnerships can provide valuable insights and guidance to enhance the authenticity of cinematic depictions.
- **Sensitivity Training:** Film industry professionals can undergo sensitivity training to better understand the physical and emotional challenges faced by cancer patients. This can help in crafting more empathetic and realistic portrayals.
- **Public Health Campaigns:** Public health organisations can leverage cinematic representations to launch educational campaigns. These campaigns can provide

accurate information, dispel myths, and encourage viewers to seek reliable sources for cancer-related information.

- **Audience Education:** Initiatives to improve health literacy among audiences can be developed, empowering viewers to critically evaluate health information presented in movies and to seek accurate information from trusted sources.
- **Film Festivals and Awards:** Recognition and awards for films that excel in accurate health communication can incentivise filmmakers to prioritise authenticity in their depictions.

In summary, the health literacy gaps in cinematic representations of cancer underscore the need for proactive strategies to ensure that movies serve as vehicles for accurate health information and empowerment rather than sources of misconceptions. By collaborating across disciplines and promoting accurate portrayals, we can harness the unique power of cinema to improve public health outcomes and promote informed health decisions regarding cancer.

CONCLUSION

Overall, we have explored the lack of comprehensive cancer development in *Hingga Jumpa Lagi*, particularly elaborating on the portrayals of oversimplification and the perpetuation of cancer stigma through specific scenes in this movie. We note that for *Hingga Jumpa Lagi*, the sense of burdening imposed by cancer, and how it affects the relationship of a husband and wife can be detrimental. More importantly, we emphasised how the negative portrayal of relationship strains caused by cancer, its oversimplification, cancer-ambiguity, and time-compression may increase cancer stigmatisation in audiences. Cancer stigma is one of the factors contributing to lack of cancer literacy particularly in Asian populations. Thus, addressing health literacy gaps is pivotal in dispelling misconceptions and fostering a more informed and empathetic society. Furthermore, understanding how healthy individuals perceive and engage with the subject of cancer is crucial. By recognising the impact of cinematic portrayals on public perceptions, we can better guide individuals toward informed and compassionate responses to those affected by cancer. Our work underscores the importance of fostering interdisciplinary collaboration between researchers, healthcare professionals, and filmmakers. By combining their expertise and knowledge, these stakeholders can work together to bridge the health literacy gaps in cinematic representations of cancer. Such collaboration can contribute to more accurate and empathetic depictions of cancer, ultimately promoting a more informed and compassionate society, and ideally, alleviating the stigma that still surrounds this devastating disease.

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