

The Effect Of Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT) On The Blood Pressure Of Elderly People With Hypertension

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Abstract. Hypertension is a disease often referred to as a silent killer because it doesn't cause symptoms in its early stages. It can lead to serious complications if it is not managed. Hypertension is usually suffered by elderly people. Aging decreases blood vessel elasticity, increasing the risk of hypertension. Hypertension management, in addition to pharmacological therapy, also requires non-pharmacological therapies such as complementary therapies to help control blood pressure. SEFT is a therapy that combines a spiritual approach with tapping techniques to produce relaxation and emotional balance. The objective of this study was to analyze the effect of SEFT on the blood pressure of elderly people with hypertension in Mijen Village, RT 06/RW 04, Kaliwungu District, Kudus Regency. The research method was a pre-experimental study with a one-group pretest-posttest design. Twenty-one elderly people with hypertension were selected using purposive sampling. Blood pressure was measured before and after the SEFT intervention. The Data were analyzed using the Shapiro-Wilk normality test and the paired sample t-test with a significance level of 0.05. The blood pressure mean score before the intervention was 158.76/89.76 mmHg and decreased to 140.62/79.81 mmHg after the SEFT intervention. The paired sample t-test showed a statistically significant difference between pre- and post-intervention blood pressure measurements ($p < 0.001$).

The result shows that SEFT therapy is effective in decreasing blood pressure among elderly people with hypertension and may be considered a complementary non-pharmacological therapy to support hypertension management in the community.

Keywords: hypertension, elderly people, blood pressure, Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT).

INTRODUCTION

Hypertension is a non-communicable disease that is a major health problem worldwide, particularly among the elderly. The aging decreases blood vessel elasticity, increasing the risk of hypertension. This disease is often referred to as a silent killer because it generally does not cause symptoms in its early stages. It can lead to serious complications such as stroke, heart failure, myocardial infarction, and kidney failure if not treated properly Aryatika *et al.*, (2021) In addition to increasing morbidity and mortality rates, hypertension also impacts the quality of the elderly's lives (Susanti & Rondonuwu, 2024)

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2023) stated that globally, the number of people with hypertension continues to increase. The Report of Basic Health Research (RISKESDAS, 2018) wrote that in Indonesia, people with hypertension become a public health problem with a prevalence of 34.1%, while in Central Java Province, the prevalence reached 37.57%. According to the `Kudus

Regency Health Office Data Rahmawati *et al.*, (2023), Kudus Regency is one of the areas with a high number of people with hypertension. Based on data from the Kaliwungu Community Health Center UPTD in 2025, Kaliwungu District has the highest number of hypertension cases in Kudus Regency. Mijen Village has the highest cases. This condition indicates the need for effective hypertension control efforts, especially in the elderly group.

Hypertension can be controlled through pharmacological therapy with antihypertensive drugs and non-pharmacological therapy with complementary treatments such as acupuncture, medical hypnotherapy, and the Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT) (Damanti, 2021). Currently, in addition to the use of antihypertensive drugs, complementary therapies are increasingly being used to help control blood pressure. One emerging therapy is the Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT), a method that combines a spiritual approach with tapping techniques on the body's meridian points. It is easy, safe, non-invasive, and can be practiced independently by the elderly Ruswadi *et al.*, (2024) This therapy is believed to provide a relaxing effect, reduce stress, and help lower blood pressure by reducing stress hormones (Fatmasari *et al.*, 2019).

Several previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of SEFT therapy. Simangunsong *et al.*, (2025) reported that SEFT significantly reduced blood pressure among elderly people with hypertension ($p = 0.001$). Kurnia *et al.*, (2023) found significant reductions in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure following SEFT therapy ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, a systematic review by Jumain *et al.*, (2024) concluded that SEFT is consistently effective as a complementary therapy for reducing blood pressure in patients with hypertension. However, no previous study has investigated the implementation of SEFT therapy on elderly people with hypertension in Mijen Village, RT 06/RW 04, Kaliwungu District, Kudus Regency. The differences in community characteristics and the high prevalence of hypertension in this area provide a strong rationale for conducting research to generate scientific evidence regarding the effectiveness of SEFT therapy in the local community.

Therefore, this study aimed to analyze the effect of the Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT) on the blood pressure of elderly people with hypertension in Mijen Village, RT 06/RW 04, Kaliwungu District, Kudus Regency. The findings are expected to provide scientific evidence supporting the effectiveness of SEFT as a complementary therapy, serve as a reference for healthcare professionals in implementing non-pharmacological interventions, and educate the community on self-management.

METHODS

This study used a pre-experimental design with a one-group pretest-posttest approach. The study was conducted on 9 to 11 June 2026, in Mijen Village, RT 06/RW 04, Kaliwungu District, Kudus Regency. The population of this study consisted of elderly people diagnosed with hypertension. A total of 21 respondents were recruited using purposive sampling based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The independent variable was the Spiritual Emotional Freedom

Technique (SEFT), while the dependent variable was the blood pressure of elderly people with hypertension. Blood pressure was measured using a digital sphygmomanometer before the intervention (pre-test) and after the intervention (post-test). The SEFT intervention was administered according to the established standard operating procedure. Then, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to describe respondents' characteristics and the mean score of blood pressure before and after the intervention. The Shapiro–Wilk test was used to assess data normality, followed by the paired sample t-test to determine the effect of SEFT therapy on blood pressure changes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All respondents in this research received SEFT therapy for approximately 5–25 minutes per session over three consecutive days. The respondents had a mean age of 64.10 years (range 60–70 years). Most of them were female (85.7%) and housewives (85.7%).

Table 1. The Characteristics of the Respondent

CHARACTERISTICS	RESULTS
Mean age	64,10 years
Age range	60-70 years
Female	18 (85,7%)
Male	3 (14,3%)
Housewives	18 (85,7%)
Traders	3 (14,3%)

The respondent characteristics indicate that the majority were elderly women. This condition aligns with risk factors for hypertension in the elderly, which include decreased blood vessel elasticity due to aging and decreased estrogen levels in women after menopause. These physiological changes contribute to increased peripheral resistance, and the blood pressure increases (Manungkalit et al., 2024; Susilo et al., 2024)

Before SEFT therapy, most respondents were in the grade I hypertension category (57.3%), after the intervention, most of them experienced improvements in their blood pressure category to high normal (33.2%) and normal (23.9%). Furthermore, the average systolic blood pressure decreased from 158.76 mmHg to 140.62 mmHg, while the diastolic blood pressure decreased from 89.76 mmHg to 79.81 mmHg.

Table 2. The Mean of Blood Pressure (before & after SEFT therapy)

Variabel	Before (mmHg)	After (mmHg)	Mean Difference (mmHg)
Systolic Blood Pressure	158,76	140,62	18,14
Diastolic Blood Pressure	89,76	79,81	9,95

The decreasing average level of blood pressure indicates that SEFT therapy has a positive effect on controlling the hypertension of the elderly. This therapy combines a spiritual approach through prayer and positive affirmations with stimulation of the body's meridian points (tapping). This combination produces a relaxation response that decreases sympathetic nervous system activity, reduces the secretion of stress hormones such as cortisol, adrenaline, and noradrenaline, and increases parasympathetic nervous system activity. This mechanism causes vasodilation of blood vessels, a decrease in heart rate, and a decrease in peripheral resistance, thus lowering blood pressure (Rachmanto & Pohan, 2021).

Before hypothesis testing, the data were analyzed using the Shapiro–Wilk normality test, which indicated that all variables were normally distributed ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, a paired sample t-test was performed to examine the effect of SEFT therapy on the blood pressure. The analysis demonstrated statistically significant reductions in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure ($p < 0.001$).

Table 3. The Results of the Paired Sample t-Test

Variabel	Mean Difference	t	P-value
Systolic Blood Pressure	18,143	6,725	<0,001
Diastolic Blood Pressure	9,952	5,930	<0,001

The findings indicate that SEFT therapy had a statistically significant effect on decreasing the blood pressure of elderly people with hypertension. The decrease of 18.14 mmHg in systolic blood pressure and 9.95 mmHg in diastolic blood pressure demonstrates the clinical benefits of SEFT as a complementary intervention for hypertension management. These findings are in line with previous studies by Rismayanti *et al.*, (2023) Zaenal & Mustamin, (2022), Kurnia *et al.*, (2023), and Rachmanto & Pohan, (2021) all of which reported significant reductions in blood pressure following SEFT therapy. Furthermore, the systematic review by Jumain *et al.*, (2024) concluded that SEFT consistently demonstrates effectiveness in reducing blood pressure among patients with hypertension.

The significant reduction in blood pressure in this study is influenced by several factors, including respondents' adherence to all therapy sessions for three consecutive days, the implementation of interventions in accordance with standard operating procedures, and their participation in affirmations and prayers during therapy. In addition to its physiological effects, SEFT therapy helps reduce anxiety, increase inner peace, and strengthen spiritual aspects, thus improving the psychological well-being of the respondents. This improvement in psychological well-being contributes to reduced blood pressure by decreasing sympathetic nervous system activity.

The novelty of this research is shown in the structure of SEFT application therapy, which was done for three consecutive days for elderly people with hypertension at the community level. This research demonstrated that the integration of spiritual, psychological, and meridian point stimulation approaches was able to reduce systolic blood pressure by 18.14 mmHg and diastolic blood pressure by 9.95 mmHg. These findings strengthen the evidence that SEFT therapy

can be implemented as an effective, easy-to-implement, safe, and low-cost community nursing intervention.

This research contributes to the development of nursing science, particularly in strengthening scientific evidence regarding the effectiveness of complementary therapies in the management of hypertension in the elderly. The research findings can serve as a basis for nurses in community health centers and primary health care settings to integrate SEFT therapy as a non-pharmacological intervention alongside drug therapy. For the community, SEFT therapy can be implemented independently to help control blood pressure, reduce stress, increase psychological well-being, and improve the quality of life for elderly people with hypertension.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT) was proven to significantly reduce the blood pressure of elderly people with hypertension. The findings demonstrated significant reductions in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure. The paired sample t-test showed a statistically significant difference between pre- and post-intervention measurements ($p < 0.001$). It indicates that SEFT is an effective complementary non-pharmacological therapy for supporting blood pressure control of elderly people with hypertension. The reductions of systolic blood pressure (18.14 mmHg) and diastolic blood pressure (9.95 mmHg) showed that SEFT may provide meaningful clinical benefits. Therefore, SEFT can be considered an alternative complementary nursing intervention because it is simple, safe, and easy to implement independently by elderly people within community settings.

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