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The Roles of Social Support and Spiritual Aspect in Predicting the Association Between Oral Functioning and Psychosocial Well-being among Oral Cancer Patients

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Abstract

Introduction: There is increasing awareness regarding the psychosocial needs of oral cancer (OC) patients with constraints in oral function due to cancer and its treatment. The current management strategies focus mainly on providing clinical care; with little emphasis given to other aspects of care. The objective of this study is to examine the role of social support (SS) and spiritual aspect (SA) in predicting psychosocial well-being (PSWB) among Malaysian OC patients with restricted oral-functioning (OF). **Materials and methods:** A secondary data analysis was performed on health-related quality of life (HRQoL) dataset among 317 OC patients, collected from the Functional Assessment of Cancer Therapy-Head and Neck (FACT-H&N) Version 4.0 instrument between 2008 till 2015. Descriptive analysis, including correlation were undertaken using SPSS Version-20.0, followed by hierarchical multiple regression to examine the roles of SS and SA in predicting the association between OF and PSWB across three different visits namely; at baseline (pre-treatment), 1 month; and 3 months-post treatment. **Results:** Multivariate analyses indicated that there were moderate-strong relationships between mean scores for OF, SS, SA and PSWB among a cohort of patients (n=96) attending the three visits. However, only OF and SS were found to be significant predictors of patients' PSWB; in which SS was the strongest. **Conclusion:** The findings provided insight on how both SS and SA can contribute to an improved PSWB among patients presenting with compromised oral function, which could help clinicians make informed-decisions on the best holistic model of care for Malaysian OC patients. © 2024 Universiti Putra Malaysia Press. All rights reserved.

Author Keywords

Oral cancer; Oral function; Psychosocial well-being; Social support; Spiritual well-being

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