



Cancer and Emotional Well-Being: Examining the Role of Family Support

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Abstract

A cancer diagnosis is a drastically different life experience that has significant emotional ramifications. In order to better understand the emotional health of people traversing the complex terrain of cancer, this research explores the important but little-studied area of family support. Investigating the complex link between family support and cancer patients' psychological resilience in-depth is the main goal of this study. Through the synthesis of extant research, this study clarifies the many aspects of family support, which include emotional support, caring, and the existence of a strong support system. The study results highlight the important role of family support in helping cancer patients cope with anxiety, improve their quality of life, and strengthen their coping skills. It also addresses issues that can come up considering the emotional complexity of cancer by examining the intricate interactions within family relations. The study's findings highlight the vital role that family support plays in fostering cancer patients' mental health. It emphasizes the necessity for specialized support networks that serve patients' family as well as themselves, providing priceless insights for healthcare professionals, careers, and legislators. Ultimately, all cancer patients benefit from this comprehensive approach by experiencing better emotional and quality of life outcomes.

Keywords: Cancer; Emotional Well-being; Family Support; Role of Family

Introduction

Emotional and psychological well-being are profoundly affected by cancer, which is an equally formidable foe to physical health. Even the most stoic individuals may be put to the test of their resilience on the intricate path from diagnosis to treatment and survivorship, which is rife with emotional obstacles. In the face of this upheaval, family support stands as an enduring source of encouragement and fortitude. Fear and apprehension are juxtaposed with optimism and resolve in the face of the complex web of uncertainties that is cancer. The presence and support of family members become of the utmost importance amidst this delicate

emotional terrain. Additionally, an extended network of friends and careers frequently joins the immediate family, transforming into a sanctuary of compassion and comfort. The present study undertakes an extensive investigation into the mutually beneficial correlation that exists between cancer and emotional well-being, placing specific emphasis on the critical significance of familial support [1]. This subject explores a frequently neglected element of the cancer journey: the dynamic relationship between an individual's emotional fortitude and the support obtained from familial connections.

Recognizing the intricate intricacies of familial support with regard to emotional well-being becomes progressively

critical as the worldwide incidence of cancer diagnoses continues to escalate. To elucidate the multiple aspects through which family support influences the emotional state of cancer patients, the purpose of this study was to analyse this complex relationship. To do this, a thorough review of the available literature will be undertaken, in which different perspectives, findings and approaches are synthesized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject. This study seeks to make a significant contribution to the field of psycho-oncology by investigating the multifaceted aspects of family support, including nurturance, emotional encouragement, and the complex dynamics that exist within the system. family system. Moving forward, the subsequent chapters shall undertake an investigation and revelation aimed at clarifying the significant and frequently life-altering influence of familial assistance on the psychological welfare of those confronted with the formidable obstacle of cancer [2]. Our investigation aims to shed light on potential avenues for increased emotional resilience, enhanced quality of life, and a more comprehensive approach to cancer care that considers the crucial support networks that encircle patients.

Review of Literature

A cancer diagnosis is a significant event that is always accompanied by a deep emotional reaction. The psychological odyssey of those afflicted with cancer is a multifaceted terrain, replete with apprehension, ambiguity, and anguish. This literature review investigates the critical significance of familial support in influencing the psychological welfare of individuals diagnosed with cancer. By conducting a comprehensive analysis of prior studies, our aim is to clarify the complex correlation between familial assistance and the psychological fortitude of those enduring cancer. Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated the importance of emotional support, especially from family members, during cancer treatment. A critical buffer against distress can be formed in the form of a supportive and empathetic family network, considering the emotionally charged nature of a cancer diagnosis. The significant impact of family support on the mental health of individuals diagnosed with cancer is highlighted in a study by Northouse LL, et al. [3]. This study examines the correlation between familial support and decreased emotional distress, underscoring the significance of a supportive and empathetic family environment.

Family support comprises an array of facets, each making a distinct and valuable contribution to the emotional welfare of individuals diagnosed with cancer. An instance of such solace that has been recognized for its effectiveness is emotional encouragement. According to a study conducted by Loke and Li (2014), the provision of emotional support by family members to cancer patients cultivates feelings of optimism and resolve, ultimately resulting in enhanced psychological

outcomes. In addition, caregiving, an additional aspect of familial assistance, has been the subject of extensive research. Based on the findings of Kim Y, et al. [4], when family members provide care for patients and are positively perceived by them, anxiety levels are substantially reduced and the quality of life is improved. Although family support is unquestionably advantageous, it is not devoid of intricacies. A cancer diagnosis can profoundly affect a family's dynamics, potentially causing difficulty and discord. Manne, et al. (2016) examine the complexities of familial dynamics within the framework of cancer. The text highlights situations in which family dynamics can contribute to increased stress levels among patients, emphasizing the criticality of comprehending and resolving these difficulties within the familial structure [5].

In summary, this literature review reaffirms the critical significance of familial support in influencing the psychological welfare of individuals diagnosed with cancer. Supportive emotional expression, caregiving responsibilities, and the wider support system of familial connections play crucial roles in mitigating anxiety, improving overall well-being, and strengthening adaptive strategies. Nevertheless, it is critical to acknowledge the intricate interrelation that exists within family dynamics and to confront possible obstacles [6]. The findings of this research have significant ramifications for comprehensive cancer care, underscoring the importance of customized support systems that incorporate not only the patient but also the vital familial support system.

Methodology

The following review will be mostly focused on the literature which was published after the year 2008 although some papers which are important for our review may go till 2000 as well based on the significance of it. The research papers which will include will be found through Google Scholar, Scinapse, The Lancet Psychiatry, and Academia. Articles will be selected based on research goals, objectives, age groups, and outcomes. The search will be started by searching with relevant keywords such as Cancer, emotional well-being, family support, role of family member post treatment [7].

Aim of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the impact of familial support on the psychological welfare of those who have received a cancer diagnosis. Through an investigation into the various forms of assistance rendered by families, the influence on the psychological resilience of patients, and the obstacles inherent in family dynamics, this research endeavor seeks to augment knowledge regarding the ways in which family support can bolster the emotional welfare and overall standard of living of individuals afflicted with cancer.

Objective

To analyze and investigate different research papers to examine the role of family support.

Ethical Consideration

All the reporting research papers are registered studies in which the consent and approval of the participant were taken. All the necessary citations are given for the respective studies.

Results and Findings

- Cancer patients' desire for social support from family, friends, and health professionals varied based on the distinct emotional and instrumental functions of support, with family being the preferred source for tangible aid, friends for modeling, and health professionals for open communication and clarification [8].
- Paying attention to family support and family members' ability to share feelings and manage conflicts may serve as an important tool to improve psychosocial function in families affected by cancer.
- The findings increase our understanding about burden and emotional well-being in family caring for relatives with cancer and other chronic illnesses [9].
- Further developing evidence-based interventions that target coping and well-being in cancer patients and extending them to family members is necessary and holds great promise for providers who care for patients with familial cancers.
- Social support from family members is the mainstay of coping with stress by women with gynecologic cancer.
- Research shows that emotional support is positively related to cancer patients' quality of life, and that patients with reduced quality of life perceive a greater decrease in emotional support than with patients with positive outcomes, but causality of these relationships is not possible is determined [10].
- The article concludes that the accommodation of gender dynamics in families coping with childhood cancer is necessary to ensure that both mothers and fathers are able to provide emotional support to their child.
- Interventions focusing on emotional support, parents' wellbeing, and how families perceive the health of their child with cancer might benefit the family as a whole.
- Therefore, support systems need to be more family-oriented and child-centered in their approaches to cancer psychosocial care [11].
- Our findings led to the conclusion that family functioning and the appraisal of the cancer diagnosis are important for the individual adjustment of patients, parents and siblings when facing a diagnosis of cancer in the child.
- Living with cancer is a complex experience, varying

depending on the roles of family members, the stage of the disease and the length of time since diagnosis [12]. Although coping strategies vary, families can achieve similar results.

- While the income of the families with cancer cannot be adjusted in the short-term, their experience of social support can be managed by a proper support system.

Discussion

The study examined the extent to which cancer patients relied on health care professionals, family members, acquaintances and friends for social support. The findings suggested that the instrumental and emotional functions of support were discrete and necessitated individual investigation. Patients' general preference for tangible assistance from family members, inspiration from peers who had been diagnosed with cancer, and transparent communication and elucidation from healthcare personnel represented the distinctiveness of primary sources. Both family and acquaintances were highly regarded as support systems for managing emotional responses to the distressing nature of cancer. The three sources were all sought after for the same reasons: to elevate self-esteem and to alleviate the burden of decision-making and problem-solving obligations. A greater demand for support, particularly instrumental support functions, was found to be associated with patients' perceived prognosis rather than the objective severity of their illness [13].

Supporting a family member who has advanced cancer places a hardship on family careers. Research has demonstrated that the categorization of family categories can effectively identify individuals who are susceptible to experiencing compromised psychosocial functioning. However, little is known about the psychosocial functions of occupations as they relate to family relationships. Family types classified as supportive, low-expressive, and detached were identified in the study of careers of patients with advanced cancer [14]. A detached family was associated with unfavorable outcomes, while a supportive family was associated with favorable ones. The results of this study show that the psychosocial functioning of patients with advanced disease is related to family functioning. Hence, prioritizing family support and enhancing the capacity of family members to communicate emotions and resolve disputes could potentially be a significant means of enhancing the psychosocial functioning of cancer-affected families. As a result of their caregiving responsibilities, family members of patients with chronic illnesses experience distress that can manifest as melancholy and burden. However, there are few cross-disease studies on how caring is experienced. The results refine our comprehension of the emotional toll and burden experienced by family members who provide care for loved ones afflicted with cancer and other chronic

diseases. Application Implications: Health professionals may find the results beneficial in devising intervention strategies that target individual domains of burden. By applying the insights gained from the caregiving responsibilities of family careers for individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or schizophrenia, it is possible to enhance the caregiving process for cancer patients.

Implications of this study's findings include a better comprehension of how families integrate problem-focused and emotion-based coping mechanisms in response to a CRC diagnosis [15]. Providing care for patients with familial malignancies requires expanding evidence-based interventions that target cancer patients' resilience and well-being to include all members of their family. This expansion holds great promise for those who provide such care. Family members' social support is the cornerstone of coping mechanisms for women diagnosed with gynecologic cancer. Application Implications: Nurses play a critical role in enhancing the social support that women diagnosed with gynecologic cancer require. Experienced clinical nurses, who have received adequate training through in-service programmers, should recognize and assist women with gynecologic cancer who require social support while in the hospital. One year ago, the total number of physical complaints decreased and patients' functional functioning improved. Nevertheless, psychological grievances and the overall assessment of existence remained largely unchanged throughout the years [16]. The patients were primarily assisted by their family members in concentrated, tiny networks. There was a gradual decline observed in both the magnitude of emotional support and the size of the networks. Emotional support and quality of life were found to be correlated in a positive way. Furthermore, some data suggest that people who experience a decline in quality of life see a more pronounced decline in their emotional support than those who follow a positive trajectory. The degree of perceived instrumental support remained largely unchanged. A propensity exists for patients with diminished functioning to require a larger degree of instrumental support.

Although the results of this study show an association between different forms of support and quality of life, it is not possible to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between these variables. The gendered ways in which fathers and mothers respond differently to the emotional requirements and emotions of a child with illness are analyzed [17]. There is an argument that the emergence of gender dynamics is due to an intricate interplay of internal tendencies and external constraints. The study identified significant similarities between the approaches taken by males and women in relation to juvenile cancer. The inclination of fathers to emotionally detach from the illness led to hesitancy to engage in conversation, a tendency to minimize the gravity

of the diagnosis, and an impractical and excessively positive outlook. On the contrary, coping strategies employed by women entailed a significantly more intimate emotional involvement with cancer [18]. Certain women became so engrossed in the plight of their child's illness that they experienced a sense of being submerged. It is imperative that families dealing with pediatric cancer accommodate gender dynamics so that both fathers and mothers can offer their children emotional support. These results emphasize the enduring consequences that childhood cancer has on the families involved. Family-wide benefits could result from interventions that emphasize emotional support, parental well-being, and how families perceive the health status of their child with cancer.

Family dysfunction was most significantly correlated with the depressive state of the ailing parent. It is possible that cancer patients and their partners should undergo depression screening, active diagnostics and appropriate treatment in order to safeguard their children against mental disorders. Therefore, it is imperative that support systems adopt a child-centered and family-centered approach when providing psychosocial care to cancer patients. A correlation was found between family functioning and the assessment of the cancer diagnosis and the post-diagnosis quality of life and cancer-related emotions of patients, parents, and siblings. Furthermore, variations were observed among family members with regard to their assessments of certain aspects of family functioning, the positive emotions experienced, and the overall quality of life [19]. Comparative Analysis Family functioning and the evaluation of the cancer diagnosis are crucial for the individual adjustment of patients, parents, and siblings when confronted with a child cancer diagnosis, according to our findings. The presence of variations among family members and between families underscores the importance of assessing every member and intervening at both the individual and family levels.

The provision of precise information, assistance from fellow community members, and encouragement of physical activity and sports regimens among cancer careers could potentially mitigate symptoms of anxiety and melancholy during the initial months following a partner's cancer diagnosis. To prevent anxiety and depression, clinicians must attend to the social support requirements and physical activity levels of careers in the initial days following a diagnosis. From the family's perspective, this document attempts to describe what it means to be sick. Recent research shows that family members' concerns vary depending on their role in the family and whether they are patient or not. Furthermore, concerns exhibit variability contingent upon the stage of the ailment and the duration elapsed since the diagnosis. Diverse concerns may exist among members of the same family. The individual with cancer's adjustment is impacted

by their family. Family members exhibit diverse coping mechanisms, which are influenced by factors such as the disease's stage and an individual's position within the family. Although families may manage in various methods, they are still capable of attaining comparable results.

Depression was associated with age in the initial round of analysis, whereas anxiety was associated with income. The melancholy of careers, however, was not correlated with the health status or living situation of the patients. Patient income and social support were associated with anxiety and depression in the second set of analyzes examining the moderating effects of social support; however, the interaction between income and social support was only observed in the context of anxiety. No observed interaction effects pertained to careers. As a result of social support, the adverse effects of poor income on the patients were mitigated. An appropriate support system can manage the social support experience of families afflicted with cancer, despite the fact that their incomes are temporarily adjustable. A range of ramifications within medical environments are examined.

Conclusion

Cancer patients seek social support from family, friends, and health professionals based on emotional and instrumental functions. Family support is important for mental health and stress management. Emotional support positively impacts quality of life in cancer patients, with patients experiencing a decrease in support. Accommodation of gender dynamics in families coping with childhood cancer is necessary for both mothers and fathers to provide emotional support. Support systems should be more family-oriented and child-centered in cancer psychosocial care. Family functioning and cancer diagnosis appraisal are important for individual adjustment. Living with cancer is complex, but families can achieve similar outcomes. A proper support system can manage their experience of social support.

Limitation

Examining the Role of Family Support has several limitations, including small sample size, participant bias, cross-sectional design, self-reported data, ethical restrictions, cultural specificities, external factors, limited longitudinal data, recall bias, resource limitations, selection bias, data collection methods, and generalizability. These limitations may affect impact the generalizability of the findings to a large population of cancer patients, as well as the ability to establish a cause-and-effect relationship or track changes in emotional health over time. It may not capture the long-term effects of family support on mental health, which may be especially relevant for cancer survivors. The study's scope may also be limited by available resources, selection bias, and

the method of data collection, which may have limitations in capturing the complexity of emotional experiences.

Implication

The study on "Cancer and Emotional Well-Being: Examining the Role of Family Support" have significant implications for psycho-oncology and healthcare. It can enhance cancer care services by highlighting the importance of family support in improving emotional well-being. It can also lead to tailored support programs, caregiver training, improved patient outcomes, and a more comprehensive care experience. The findings can also encourage healthcare providers to involve family members in treatment planning, expanding psychosocial support services to include counseling, support groups, and educational resources. This research can increase public awareness of the importance of family support for cancer patients, and policymakers can consider its implications when developing policies. Medical Future research directions include exploring the long-term effects of family support on cancer survivors and updating ethical guidelines to emphasize family involvement and support.

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