QUALITY OF LIFE, SOCIAL SUPPORT, AND SEVERITY OF PSYCHIATRIC SYMPTOMS IN JORDANAIN PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIS

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Introduction: Quality of life (QOL) has recently been recognized as an important goal of psychiatric and mental health care and has been increasingly used to evaluate health care outcomes in patients with schizophrenia.

Objectives: The major objectives of this study were to examine levels and correlations of QOL, social support, and severity of psychiatric symptoms as well as to identify the variables that predict QOL among Jordanian patients with schizophrenia.

Methods: Descriptive cross-sectional design was used employing structured interview method from 160 patients selected through systematic random sampling from two psychiatric outpatient clinics.

Results: Results showed that the highest QOL domain was social relationship and the highest source of social support was from significant others. Severity of affective symptoms was the highest and the severity of positive symptoms was the lowest. QOL correlated positively with social support, patients' educational and income level, and employment; and negatively with severity of psychiatric symptoms, duration of untreated illness, and duration of treatment. Support from friends, duration of untreated illness, income level, and severity of affective symptoms predicted QOL and accounting for 47.3 % of the variance.

Conclusions: This study confirms poor QOL in schizophrenia despite significant improvement in various methods of treatment. Enhancing social support, decreasing the duration of untreated illness, encouraging working and employment, and controlling affective symptoms will improve QOL of patients with schizophrenia.