

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A descriptive study was conducted to describe body image among postoperative hand injured patients. Sixty-one injured patients attended hand surgery clinic and admitted in surgical wards of Huashan Hospital of Shanghai Medical University, China, were included in this study. Demographic data record form, medical record, and body image scale were used to collect data of demographic and injured hand information and study variables. This chapter presents conclusions of the findings, implications, and recommendations for further nursing research.

Conclusions

The conclusions based on the findings of this study were as follows:

The postoperative hand injured patients rated their body image scale at low to higher level. More than half of subjects (54.06%) had a low level of body image comparing the mean of this sample group. There were 45.94 percent

subjects at high level comparing the mean of sample group. The score of perception of hand function shows the lowest among three domains, while perception of others' reaction shows the highest.

Implications of findings

Implication for nursing practice

Implications for nursing practice are considered. Patients suffered hand injury may experience body image alteration. The findings of this study suggest that nurse should assess the perception of hand injury patients' feeling towards their hand appearance, hand function, and other's reaction. The nursing intervention needs to be developed and aimed to help hand injured patients to face with their injured hand positively.

Nurse can be a direct source of informational support to help patients identify strategies to use their assets to become involved in activities of daily living. Nurses used to make a routine file in delivering caring. Nursing intervention to enhance patients' perception of self-worth reassurance should also be provided.

Implication for nursing education

Findings of this study provide implication for nursing students to emphasize the role of psychological aspect in concerning about the hand injury patients' feeling and attitude toward their injured hand. It can also assists nurse instructors and students to consider if hand injured patients experienced some degrees of body image alteration, while developing course content of hand surgical nursing. This study may also suggest the instructors to use the research findings in their teaching that they should aware of perception of hand injured patients toward appearance and function.

Implication for nursing research

Findings of the present study provide basic information for further to seeking factors influencing perceived body image, and also it can provide reference for study body image in further research.

Limitation of the study

1. Since this study was conducted in a purposively selected sample of 61 postoperative hand injured patients in Huashan Hospital of Shanghai Medical University in Shanghai,

China, the sample size of this study was small, absence of female sample, these subjects could not represent all Chinese postoperative patients with hand injuries.

2. The study subjects were obtained through a purposive sampling technique, and only patients who agreed to participate and met the study criteria were included into this study. Therefore, generalizability of the findings was relatively limited.

3. Particularly absent in this study is a formal medical file which could not identify the disfigurement and dysfunction of hand appearance and function in daily living. Therefore, the study's results do not provide more explanation for these aspects.

Recommendations for further study

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations need to be considered for further study as follows:

1. Replication of this study with a larger sample size including female subjects in relatively longer period and randomly selected sample of postoperative patients with hand injuries from various hospitals in China is needed to advocate the generalizability of the study.

2. A longitudinal research to determine if hand appearance and function change during the treatment and rehabilitation process or while hospitalized as compared to being out of the hospital.

3. Developing formal rehabilitation program is needed to be considered and studied for these groups of patients.