

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A correlation descriptive study was conducted to describe family support and self-concept and to ascertain the relationship between the two concepts among Chinese COPD patients. One hundred and eight COPD patients attending at the Outpatient Department in Xiangya Hospital of Hunan Medical University, China were recruited in this study. The MPRQ-85 part 2, the Modified Self-Concept Scale, and Demographic Data Recording Form were used to collect data of demographic 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 following:

1. The COPD patients perceived moderate to high levels of family support.
2. The COPD patients perceived self-concept ranging from moderately negative to highly positive level, and most of them perceived moderately positive self-concept.
3. There was a moderately positive relationship between family support and self-concept of COPD patients. Furthermore, family support was significantly positively

associated with overall self-concept and with each dimension of self-concept except body image.

4. There was a moderately negative relationship between frequency of hospitalization and self-concept of COPD patients, as well as between duration of being diagnosed and their self-concept.

5. There were no significant relationships both between frequency of hospitalization and family support, and between duration of being diagnosed and family support of COPD patients.

Implications of findings

Implications for nursing practice

The findings of this study are helpful to nursing practice because they give credibility to plan intervention strategies such as providing informational education to both the patients and their family members, helping patients to get more family support they needed, instructing family members to pay attention to the psychosocial needs of the patients. To deal effectively with the impact of COPD on patients, it suggested that nurse should assess the self-concept of COPD patient and the degree to which support is perceived. Following implication according to the findings were:

1. Since family support was positively associated with self-concept of COPD patients, the nurse should plan appropriate intervention to enhance family support. Nurse can be supportive to both patients and their family members

to maintain or strengthen their family relationship by assisting them to know COPD better and making referrals to additional resources as necessary. Nurse also need to help patients identify strategies to get more support when they perceived themselves as not receiving this kind of support they need.

2. Since family support was significantly and positively related to self-concept of COPD patients, the effective interventions to enhance family support should be implemented, thereby positive self-concept should be developed. Nursing interventions for the family members should emphasize on psychosocial care need of the patient. Informational education for the family should include counseling or teaching, empathy, encouragement and actively listening.

Implications for nursing education

Findings of this study is useful for nursing instructors and students to utilize family factors such as family support in enhancing self-concept of COPD patients. Content in nursing education should not only address the nursing care to the patient, but also the appropriate nursing care to their family members to improve their support for the COPD patients in the community.

Implications for nursing administration

The nursing administrator should be supportive to both COPD patients and their family members in strengthening the family relationship and enhancing family support by setting up some in service program for the nurses including

psychoeducational program, long-term counseling, and so on.

Implications for nursing knowledge development

Findings of this study can be used as a database to broaden the body of knowledge for nursing. The results from this study add more knowledge and information of caring for COPD patients and their family members. The credible information about family support and self-concept of COPD patients from this study fills in the gaps of nursing knowledge in China since the information about the two variables was not addressed before, as well as the information about the relationships between frequency of hospitalization, duration of being diagnosed and self-concept, respectively.

Limitation of the study

Since this study was conducted in a conveniently selected sample of 108 COPD patients at the Outpatient Department in Xiangya Hospital of Hunan Medical University, China, these subjects could not represent all Chinese COPD patients well. The generalization of the study results was limited.

Recommendations for further study

For future research, the following recommendations need to be considered:

1. Since this study was undertaken by convenient sampling, replication of this study with randomly selected

sample of COPD patients should be conducted to assure unbias sample selection.

2. The study should be conducted in other hospitals or from various communities in China, so that the findings can be generalized to the whole population.

3. Studies of nursing interventions to enhance the family support and self-concept of COPD patient should be further investigated.