

Exploratory Study on Psychosocial Influences of Spinal Cord Injury to Patients: Basis for Medical Social Work Intervention Plan

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Abstract

This study investigates the psychosocial influences of Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) on patients at the Philippine Orthopedic Center Hospital, analyzing their social functioning and proposing targeted interventions for reintegration. Employing a concurrent triangulation research design, quantitative data were collected through surveys, and qualitative insights were derived from interviews. The findings illuminate significant psychosocial challenges faced by SCI patients, affecting various aspects of their lives, including relationships, family dynamics, work, friendships, parenting, education, and self-care. Demographic profiles revealed nuanced variations in psychosocial functioning, emphasizing the necessity of tailored interventions based on age, marital status, gender, education, and occupation. The triangulation of data led to the identification of four prominent themes: "Resilient Navigation of Intimacy and Connection," "Family Dynamics and Care Challenges," "Occupational Hurdles and Work Engagement," and "Social and Community Integration Obstacles." The study proposes a holistic intervention plan, encompassing emotional support, the establishment of support networks, vocational rehabilitation, the promotion of community engagement, and sustained collaboration with healthcare professionals.

Keywords: Spinal Cord Injury, Psychosocial Influences, Social Functioning, Concurrent Triangulation, Intervention Plan.

I. INTRODUCTION

Spinal cord injury (SCI) results from diverse causes such as violence, accidents, and degenerative conditions, leading to functional loss, fractures, or vertebrae dislocation. This debilitating condition profoundly impacts various aspects of life, including social, familial, educational, and economic spheres. In the Philippines, patients with SCI face significant psychosocial challenges, manifesting in depression and impaired social skills. Despite rehabilitation efforts, there's a lack of focus on addressing these psychosocial issues. This study bridges the research gap, exploring the psychosocial influences of SCI and proposing interventions. The Philippines, through the Department of Health, aligns with WHO standards, implementing measures for prevention, improved healthcare access, and specialized skills among caregivers. The findings aim to inform a comprehensive social work intervention plan for medical professionals to support patients' reintegration into the community.

II. METHODS

Concurrent triangulation, a mixed-method design, integrates quantitative and qualitative data collection

simultaneously, ensuring a comprehensive understanding. By prioritizing equal emphasis on both methods, this approach validates findings through evidence produced by both, ensuring robust conclusions. Statistical analyses of demographic profiles, using surveys and interviews, revealed nuanced insights into the challenges faced by SCI patients.

III. RESULT

The demographic analysis of spinal cord injury (SCI) patients aged 26 to 30 underscores their adaptability and resilience, while marital status reveals the pivotal role of spousal support. The predominance of male respondents and varied educational levels highlight the diversity within the cohort, and occupation status, particularly among the unemployed and skilled labor groups, suggests implications for injury prevalence. The examination of social functioning emphasizes the vital role of counseling services, family dynamics, proactive work engagement, and active social participation, showcasing adaptive strategies.

Demographic factors significantly impact psychosocial functioning, with younger patients relying on social networks, married individuals experiencing emotional stability, and gender disparities affecting coping mechanisms. Educational attainment correlates with positive outcomes, while lower education links to economic challenges, and employed individuals benefit from stability. Tailored interventions, considering age, marital status, gender, education, and occupation, are proposed. Triangulation reveals key themes, guiding emotional support, vocational rehabilitation, community engagement, and collaboration for effective reintegration. In conclusion, the study unveils the multifaceted nature of challenges faced by SCI patients, stressing the necessity for personalized interventions. These insights offer a foundation for targeted strategies, advancing understanding and support for individuals navigating life with spinal cord injuries.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study unveils crucial insights into the multifaceted challenges faced by individuals contending with Spinal Cord Injuries (SCI). Key findings encompass a diverse age range, emphasizing the impact of marital status, gender, education, and occupation on coping mechanisms. The analysis underscores the vital role of relationships, family ties, work engagement, and social interactions in SCI patients' lives, showcasing resilience despite challenges. The study recommends targeted interventions based on demographic profiles, recognizing the significance of social functioning in setting realistic goals, addressing mental health issues, and advocating for inclusive environments. Fostering a supportive environment, including emotional support groups and personalized vocational rehabilitation, emerges as crucial for successful community reintegration. Ultimately, this research informs holistic approaches to enhance the well-being of SCI individuals.

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