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## Assessing health related quality of life of breast cancer patients for chemotherapy in Nigeria: Adding life to years

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Health-related quality of life (HRQOL) has become an important outcome measure in cancer therapy. In Nigeria, most of the patients are diagnosed at advanced stages, when therapy may only be for palliation. There is need to find out if the quality of life is significantly improved among the breast cancer patients receiving chemotherapy. The European Organization for Research and Treatment of Cancer Quality of Life Questionnaires were administered to 104 consenting women with breast cancer attending oncology clinic in south-eastern Nigeria. Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 10, was used to analyze the data. A total of 104 consenting women completed the questionnaires, 31 pre-chemotherapy, 37 on-chemotherapy and 36 post-chemotherapy treatments. 81.6% had advanced disease. With the exception of cognitive functioning which reported better quality in the pre-chemotherapy than the follow-up, all the other functional items showed better QOL among the follow-up group and it reached statistically significant difference with role functioning ( $p=0.007$ ) and global health/QOL ( $p=0.008$ ). Symptom scales and single item scales recorded better HRQOL for the follow-up except with diarrhea and financial difficulty which showed better HRQOL for the pre-chemotherapy group. Respondents in the follow-up group reported better HRQOL in the body image, sexual functioning, arm symptoms, breast symptoms and systemic side effects and a significant statistical mean difference in future perspective ( $p=0.037$ ). For QLQ – BR 23 breast symptom and systemic side effect showed the significant difference (0.000) each, particularly when comparing the chemotherapy group against the follow-up. Chemotherapy improves HRQOL among the breast cancer patients with symptoms. With the poorer HRQOL scores among the patients on chemotherapy clinicians are encouraged to improve the preparation of these patients to reduce the toxicities of chemotherapy.

### Biography

Benjamin Chukwuma Ozumba studied medicine at the University of Lagos and obtained the MD. He later got his Fellowship American College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists. He became a lecturer and researcher with University of Nigeria and consultant with University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital. In 2002 he became the Dean, Faculty of Medical Sciences and Dentistry and between 2004-2008 he became the Provost College of Medicine University of Nigeria. He became the Vice Chancellor of the University of Nigeria in 2014. He is a researcher of international repute with numerous publications and books as well as an editorial member of several journals.

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