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The role of gender and dyadic coping on quality of life among cancer patients and their spouses

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Cancer Survivors (SVRs) and spouses experience significantly higher depressive symptoms and anxiety than age-matched controls with evidence suggesting depression plays an important role in SVR quality of life and mortality and the spouse caregiver's ability to effectively provide needed support and care. The Developmental Contextual Model of Couples Coping with Illness proposes that couples with high levels of dyadic coping (e.g., more collaboration and communication) will have lower levels of depression and anxiety. Additionally, gender is seen as an important contextual factor. This cross-sectional study is the first known to examine the role of gender on psychological quality of life in young and middle-aged couples (age 21-57). A mail survey was used to gather data from 48 SVRs and their spouses/partners. SVRs age were on average 42 (SD=0.48), had been diagnosed on average 6 years (SD=2.3) years, knew their spouse on average 18.7 (SD=16.5) years and were predominantly women. SVRs were significantly more likely to experience more depressive symptoms when they reported higher levels of protective buffering; male SVRs were significantly more likely to report less depressive symptoms when they reported higher levels of protective buffering ($p<0.05$). Discussion will focus on the important roles of gender and dyadic coping within couples in the context of cancer.

Biography

Mashaal Dewan is currently a PhD Nursing student at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), Portland, Oregon. She is working as Oncology Chemotherapy certified RN at KFSH-Jeddah and Nursing American Board certified in State of Florida and Oregon. She has an MSN as Clinical Nurse Leader from Florida Atlantic University, practiced at Boca Raton Regional Hospital and Baptist Hospital-Miami, Florida. She is also a Member at honor international nurse's organization-Sigma Theta Tau. Her current research project is to examine the impact of cancer on Arab couples' relationship and also assists her chair, Dr. Lyons with her ongoing research.

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