

Impact of Mastectomy on the Social Well-being and Family Dynamics of Breast Cancer Female Patients in the Gaza-Strip

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Introduction:

The impact of mastectomy on social well-being (SWB) and family dynamics (FD) may involve the individual, social role and perception of the usefulness of social and family support affects [1]. The purpose of the current study is to identify that impact and its related implications on SWB and FD.

Objectives:

The participants shall be able to determine the various impacts of mastectomy on SWB and FD among breast cancer (BC) female survivors in the Gaza-Strip (GS).

Methods:

This was a cross-sectional study in which a total of 173 female patients who had mastectomy in GS hospitals completed a face-to-face questionnaire designed by the researchers; which contains 3 sections including: socio-demographic data, SWB and FD. All measures utilized a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (worst outcome) to 5 (best outcome). The data was analyzed using SPSS software.

Results :

Among 173 female patients, the mean age was 51 years \pm 10. About 91% were unemployed, 52% had low income and 73% were of low educational level. The overall SWB score was negatively affected by 44.2% (mean score= 2.21 \pm 1.33). Seventy percent of patients had a financial impact and decreased home activities. Interestingly, 57.8% claimed that involvement in family activities was not affected after mastectomy. Shockingly, 95.4% of women worried of getting divorced due to their illness. The overall impact on FD is estimated to be by 49.2% (mean score= 2.46 \pm 1.64). Surprisingly, the diagnosis of BC had an impact on sexual performance in 27.1% compared to 19.1% after mastectomy.

Discussion:

A study by Toum et al [2] showed that there was no concern about getting divorced from women who had mastectomy which is discordant with this study. Another study [3] reported a higher impact of BC on sexual performance than that of mastectomy in similar to our study. The great fear of divorce found in this study, demonstrates the insecurity of women within the society of Gaza and is possibly an expression of the lack of security in the Gaza-Strip. Assessing and addressing the SWB and FD among BC patients may enhance providing a holistic medical care and further research in the future can help in implementing this.

References:

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