DETERMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QUALITY OF LIFE AND DEMOGRAPHIC AND MEDICAL CHARACTERISTICS IN CHILDREN WITH CANCER DURING TREATMENT

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Introduction:
As the survival rates of children with cancer increased, it has been increasing attention on health-related quality of life (HRQOL). We aimed to investigate relationship between HRQOL and demographic and medical characteristics in children with cancer between the age of 2 to 7 years.

Materials and Methods:
- We recruited children with cancer and their parents from Hacettepe University Ihsan Dogramaci Children Hospital.
- While 60 % of the children with leukemia, others had different diagnosis (lymphoma, brain tumors, rhabdomyosarcoma, Wilms tumor, osteosarcoma and Ewings sarcoma).
- Children's demographic characteristics, total duration after diagnosis, body mass index, their parents' age, and educational level were recorded.
- The quality of life level of the children were assessed with Pediatric Quality of Life Inventory (PedsQL) - Cancer Module.

Results:
- Seventy four children with cancer (girl= 35 (47.2 %), boy= 39 (52.7 %), who continue their treatments were included in this study.
- The mean age of the children was 4.51±1.69.
- Strong correlation was found between parent-report and children-report of PedsQL.
- Total duration after diagnosis was moderately correlated with parent-report and children-report of PedsQL.
- Body mass index was moderately correlated with parent-report and children-report of PedsQL.
- There were no association between other variables.

Table 1 Associations Between Quality of Life and Demographic Variables of the Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>PedsQL Parent report</th>
<th>PedsQL Child report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration after diagnosis</td>
<td>0.471**</td>
<td>0.660**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body mass index</td>
<td>0.491**</td>
<td>0.597*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ educational level</td>
<td>0.259*</td>
<td>0.111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spearman Correlation test, *p<0.05, **p<0.001

Conclusion:
Body mass index and total duration after diagnosis are one of the predictors associated with HRQOL in children with cancer. Interventions aiming to maintain body weight may positively affects HRQOL and especially children receiving treatments for long period should be carefully followed.

References:

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