

# THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND COPING STRATEGIES OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE PATIENTS VERSUS THAT OF DIABETIC AND HYPERTENSIVE PATIENTS.

Anuradha Bahall

Project Supervisor: Dr.Selby Nichols

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**Background:** Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is used to describe a number of conditions that can affect the heart or blood vessels. Some of these diseases include, heart attack, angina, cerebrovascular disease e.g. stroke, hypertension and any other heart or blood vessel diseases. CVD is mainly cause due to the blockage be it partially or entirely or the arteries by fatty or fibrous materials.

**Objective:** To determine the quality of life and coping strategies of cardiovascular disease patients compared to that of non-cardiovascular diseases patients, e.g. diabetic and hypertensive patients.

**Design:** Convenience sampling of one hundred and forty five (145) patients at the Couva District Health Facility were interviewed. These patients attended the chronic disease clinic during the period 8<sup>th</sup> February 2008 to the 4<sup>th</sup> April 2008. These patients were categorized into 2 groups, cardiovascular disease patients and non-cardiovascular disease patients. Some of the questionnaires were self administered and the other questionnaires needed the assistance of the researcher because of the inability of these patients to read or write. The questionnaire consisted of different sections, demographics, dietary intakes, quality of life and coping strategies of these chronic disease patients.

**Results:** Polypharmacy showed a positive effect on both active (0.50) and passive (0.73) coping strategies. However, there was an inverse relationship when it came to their satisfaction with the healthcare system (-0.44) and in the quality of life (MCS = -0.53 & PCS = -0.46). The results also indicate that dietary intake is reflective of the type of chronic disease one is suffering from.

**Conclusion:** it can clearly be seen that cardiovascular disease patients differ from hypertensive and diabetic patients in their quality of life, coping strategies and in their dietary intake.

