

ABSTRACT

Sweet Sorrow: Diabetes Distress, Depression and Self-Care Adherence in Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus

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Patients diagnosed with type 2 diabetes (T2DM) are required to make several unique psychological and behavioral adjustments to achieve lower morbidity. Consequently, discerning influential psychosocial components are pertinent in promoting competent management. Thus, the major goals of this study were to investigate, in a Caribbean setting, the challenges posed by the psychological phenomenon, Diabetes Distress (DD) in good diabetes control and how this is related to other psychosocial management factors. Employing stratified proportional sampling, quantitative data was collected from 509 adults ages 20 to 80 years, with type 2 diabetes, utilizing a self-report questionnaire, with a subset of 14 persons interviewed for qualitative data collection. The questionnaire comprised of, a profile section, and standardized questionnaires including the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), Brief Illness Perception Questionnaire (BIPQ), Summary of Diabetes Self-care Activities Questionnaire (SDSCA) and the Diabetes Distress Scale (DDS). The sample comprised 30.8% males and 69.2% females. On average, participants had been living with diabetes for 13 years. The average DD score of 2 indicated little distress. Moderate distress was more frequent in unmarried persons; while younger persons had high DD. 65.2% of the participants had minimal depression. Unmarried patients had highest levels of moderate and severe depression. DD and depression increased when self-care decreased. Two main themes were identified from the qualitative findings; Illness proficiency and Emotional perspective. Patients' illness management behaviors reflected what they understood and felt about their illness. The patient's self-management of diabetes is an emotionally, physically and socially demanding endeavours, the consequence of which greatly influences the individual's motivation and capacity to pursue and continue them. The study revealed the relevancy of contextual psychosocial variables as part of patients' daily experiences living with this chronic illness and highlights the significance of the individual's mental well-being in the processes of diagnosis, management and care in T2DM.

Keywords: type 2 diabetes mellitus; diabetes distress; depression; self-care adherence; Allison Sugrim