Influence of Coping Styles on Social Support Seeking Among Cancer Patient Family Caregivers

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Abstract
Family caregivers of cancer patients may enter a predeath grief cycle when their loved one is diagnosed with cancer. The emotional upheaval and accompanying stress that define predeath grief may lead to health problems for the caregiver, and also interfere with their ability to provide care for their loved one. The purpose of the present research was to examine the relationship between coping styles of family caregivers and the tendency of those caregivers to seek social support during active caregiving. This study employed a quantitative approach based on the revised coping theory and the process of bereavement, which is grounded in the transactional theory of stress and coping, to examine coping styles of family members who care for cancer patients. Family caregivers of current cancer patients (n=103) were recruited through e-mails, flyers, the Walden Participant Pool, public social networking sites, and websites to complete the Ways of Coping Questionnaire. A preliminary analysis indicated a normal data distribution and confirmed homoscedasticity and linearity. Through the use of multiple regression, correlations, and t tests, relationships between 7 coping styles and the tendency to seek support were explored. Results indicated that coping styles of confrontive coping, problem solving, and positive reappraisal were positive and significant predictors of the tendency to seek social support during active caregiving. However, coping styles of distancing, self-control, escape/avoidance, and taking responsibility were not significant predictors of seeking social support. Findings from this study can influence social change by promoting appropriate support interventions that appeal to family caregivers, regardless of their coping styles, in order to effectively support the physical and mental health of the caregiver population.
affected person than the partner. Influence of social support, depression, and self esteem on the burden of care among 278 informal caregivers of oncology survivors, Nigeria