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QUALITY OF LIFE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS AMONG CHRONIC MENTAL ILLNESS PATIENTS IN KAOHSIUNG

F.H.-C. Chou¹, R.-R. Huang¹, C.-Y. Su²

¹Kai-Suan Psychiatric Hospital, ²I-Shiou University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan R.O.C.

Objective: The purpose of this study was to predict quality of life (QoL) and associated factors in patients with chronic mental illness (CMI) in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

Methods: Patients (N= 2,023; 52.9% male, 47.1% female) were recruited using cross-sectional and convenience sampling. Structured questionnaires, including a living conditions questionnaire, a psychotic symptom assessment scale, the Caregiver Burden Scale, the 5-item Brief Symptom Rating Scale (BSRS-5), and the Medical Outcomes Study Short Form-12 (MOS SF-12) were used to collect data.

Results: Single-factor analyses showed that those who were single, employed, and younger had better QoL. Additionally, patients who had fewer psychological problems and lower levels of psychological distress reported better QoL. Current psychotic symptoms, especially positive symptoms, were negatively correlated with QoL. For disease factors, schizophrenic patients and hospitalized patients reported better QoL than both bipolar patients and community patients. For family factors, caregiver's attitude and caregiver's burden were negatively correlated with QoL. For social factors, unstable housing and community social dysfunction were negatively correlated with QoL. The results showed that all four dimensions (social, family, disease and personal factors) were significant predictors of the mental component summary (MCS) and physical component summary (PCS) dimensions of QoL.

Conclusions: Personal factors and disease factors were the most important predictors of QoL in CMI patients of this sample. Family factors were more important than social factors in the MCS dimension, but social factors were more important than family factors in the PCS dimension.