Review of: "Quality of Life and Its Predictor Factors Among Iranian Gastrointestinal Cancer Survivors"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This article comprehensively discusses the study on the quality of life (QoL) among gastrointestinal (GI) cancer survivors at Tabriz Shahid Ghazi Hospital, highlighting its methodology, results, and interpretation.

Strengths:

Comprehensive Background and Rationale:

- The introduction effectively contextualizes the significance of GI cancers and the importance of QoL in cancer survivors, citing relevant statistics from 2020.
- It acknowledges the global and local burden of GI cancers and references various studies to highlight the need for the current research.

Detailed Methodology:

- The study design, sample size, and data collection methods are clearly described.
- The inclusion and exclusion criteria are well-defined, ensuring a specific patient population.
- The use of a validated QoL questionnaire (QLQ-C30) is appropriate for assessing the multiple dimensions of QoL in cancer patients.

Ethical Considerations:

- The study received ethical approval and obtained informed consent from participants, which is crucial for research integrity and participant safety.

Thorough Data Analysis:

- Statistical methods used to analyze the data are detailed, including the use of regression models to identify predictors of QoL.
- The results section provides specific data on participant demographics, health status, and QoL scores, which supports the findings.

Identification of Predictors:

- The study identifies several key predictors of QoL, such as anemia, marital status, BUN/Cr ratio, hypertension, and

physical activity.

- It provides a nuanced understanding of how these factors impact various dimensions of QoL.

Weaknesses:

Generalizability:

- Exclusion of patients treated in private offices could introduce selection bias and limit the representativeness of the findings.

Cross-Sectional Design:

- The cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to infer causality between identified predictors and QoL outcomes.
- Longitudinal studies would be more effective in understanding the changes in QoL over time and the long-term impact of various predictors.

Reliance on Self-Reported Data:

- The QoL data was collected through self-reported questionnaires, which can introduce response bias and may not accurately capture the patients' true QoL.
- Illiteracy among 55.4% of participants necessitated the use of interviews, which might affect the consistency of responses.

Missing Data on Treatment Variables:

- The study does not provide detailed information on the types and duration of cancer treatments the patients underwent, which could significantly influence QoL outcomes.
- A more detailed analysis of treatment variables would enhance the understanding of their impact on QoL.

Limited Discussion on Psychosocial Factors:

- While the study identifies marital status as a predictor, it does not delve deeply into other psychosocial factors such as mental health, social support, or economic stability, which are critical for comprehensive QoL assessment.

Clinical Interpretation:

Low QoL Among GI Cancer Survivors:

- The study highlights that the QoL among GI cancer survivors is generally low, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to improve their QoL.

Importance of Predictive Factors:

- Identifying anemia, marital status, physical activity, and hypertension as significant predictors provides actionable insights for clinicians to tailor supportive care programs.
- Addressing these factors through clinical and supportive interventions can potentially enhance the overall QoL of GI cancer survivors.

Need for Holistic Care:

- The findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach to cancer care, integrating physical, emotional, and social support to address the multifaceted needs of survivors.

Conclusion:

The study provides valuable insights into the QoL of GI cancer survivors and identifies key predictive factors. However, the limitations regarding generalizability, study design, and the scope of examined variables should be addressed in future research. Longitudinal studies with diverse populations and comprehensive assessments of psychosocial and treatment-related factors would provide a more robust understanding of QoL in cancer survivors.