

Psychological Factors Predicting Mental Wellness and Coping in A Sample of Adolescents Suffering from Sickle-Cell Anaemia

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ABSTRACT This study investigated self-esteem (SE), social support, and locus of control (LOC) on the mental wellness and coping behavior of adolescents suffering from sickle-cell anemia. This was predicated on the assumption that because of the nature of sickle-cell disease (SCD), patients with high SE, good SS, and has internal LOC would evidence less psychological disturbances and consequently cope better than those with low SE, poor SS and have external LOC. Instruments used include SE scale, SS scale, Awaritefe psychological index, LOC scale and coping (revised) with two dimensions of coping – problem-focused and emotion – emotion focused, using the mean as cut off point. One hundred and fifteen clinically diagnosed sickle-cell patients with an average age of 23.1 years (SD = 2.70), and average hospital attendance of 5.4 years were randomly sampled among sickle-cell patients attending University College Hospital (UCH), Ibadan, Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) and General Hospital, Lagos all in the South-western part of Nigeria. Using a 2×2×2 factorial analysis, results obtained showed a significant relationship between SE (F 1.47-108.948, P<.001) and SS (F 1.47-10504.825, P<.01) on mental health status of sickle-cell patients and also a significant main effect of SE (F 1.47=67.646, P<.001) and SS (F 1.47=3.55, P<.05) on coping behavior. A significant interaction effect of SE, SS and LOC was sustained (F 1.47=25.552, P<.001) and (F 1.47=67.646, P<.001) on mental wellness and coping respectively. A post-hoc analysis of the means further showed that sickle-cell anemia patients with low SE, good SS and have internal LOC evidence more psychological disturbances and poorer adjustment than those with high SE, poor SS and have external LOC. On SS, sickle-cell patients reportedly preferred sources of support like friends, spouses and government but were most dissatisfied with the nature of support from the government.