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Quality Of Life and Lifestyle Choices of Breast Cancer Patients Presenting at a Cancer Treatment Centre in Ghana

Background
Breast cancer and its treatment can affect patients' quality of life (QoL) and lifestyle choices. Although several studies have examined these impacts globally, limited data exist on the QoL and lifestyle choices of breast cancer patients in Ghana.

Objective
This study assessed the QoL and lifestyle choices of breast cancer patients at the Sweden Ghana Medical Centre (SGMC).

Methods
A cross-sectional study was conducted involving 80 breast cancer patients receiving treatment at SGMC. The Functional Assessment Cancer Therapy-Breast (FACT-B) version 4 and a researcher-developed questionnaire were used to evaluate QoL and lifestyle choices over a one month period. Data was analyzed with STATA version 16. Associations between QoL domains, treatment options and lifestyle variables were assessed.

Results
The overall QoL score of 43% suggested moderate to low QoL across functional domains. Statistically significant relationships were established between QoL domains and treatment options (p=0.000). Patients who received curative radiotherapy and surgery recorded the highest emotional wellbeing (EWB) (62.4±5.4%, p=0.000) and functional wellbeing (FWB) (62.5±5.7%, p=0.006) scores. FWB was significantly higher among patients who underwent lumpectomy, partial mastectomy and complete mastectomy (p=0.027). Median scores for healthy lifestyles were generally high (⩾60.0%) across most variables, except among patients who underwent partial mastectomy (52.5%). No significant relationships were found between healthy lifestyles choices and the independent variables (p=± 0.05). However, diet-related lifestyle scores differed significantly across age groups (p=0.001). Personal appearance and social lifestyle scores were generally low, except among patients who received curative radiotherapy and surgery(p <0.001). Mastectomy adversely impacted their marital relationships (p=0.136).

Conclusion
Functional well-being was the most enjoyed QoL across the independent variables. Significant relationships were established between the QoL domains and treatment options (p=0.000), highlighting the need for comprehensive supportive care for breast cancer patients in Ghana.

Keywords: Breast cancer, quality of life, lifestyle choices, chemotherapy, mastectomy

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Biography

Anna Maria Anim-Sampong is a Global Health PhD student at University College London with several years of clinical experience as a radiotherapist and public health researcher. Her PhD research focuses on developing an integrated psychosocial support framework for breast cancer patients in low-and middle-income countries. Anna Maria has a BSc in Therapy Radiography and a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree both from the University of Ghana. Her research interests focus on the psychosocial aspects of cancer care with a broader commitment to strengthening health systems and translating research into clinical and professional practice.

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