

Health Locus of Control Beliefs and Psychological Distress In Spinal Cord Injured Patients and Their Family Caregivers

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify the effect of health locus of control beliefs on psychological distress of Spinal cord injured Patients as well as to compare psychological distress between Spinal cord injured patients and their Family caregivers. To achieve this aim, multi-dimensional health locus of control scale and general health questionnaire-28 were administered on 100 Spinal cord injured patients and their 100 family caregivers who were selected from PGIMS, Rohtak and Safdarjang Hospital, Delhi. Sixty eight percent SCI patients and fifty seven percent family caregivers reported significant level of psychological distress. Analysis of variance revealed that SCI Patients reported significant higher psychological distress as compared to their Family caregivers. In correlation analysis, it was found that patients who scored higher in internal health locus of control were less distressed, whereas, patients who believed higher in chance and powerful others were found to be highly distressed. Stepwise linear regression analysis revealed that psychological distress was best predicted by high level of chance externality. Internal health locus of control and powerful others also contributed significantly to psychological distress. ANOVA test also revealed that patients who believed in chance scored significantly higher on psychological distress as compare to those who believed in powerful others and those who believed in self.

Key words: health locus of control, psychological distress, spinal cord injury and family caregivers