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Peruvians Living With Diabetes Mellitus: Social Support and Spirituality Strategies to Improve Nursing Care

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Introduction: People living with diabetes mellitus (PLDM) represent about 7% of the adult population in Peru. Each person is estimated to have a \$54,000 lifetime cost for health services. Nurse-led diabetes management programs are effective in increasing medication adherence as well as engagement in recommended dietary habits and physical activity. In particular, programs offered in community settings, such as Churches and social organizations, are more effective than other settings. For Latinos, these are important settings due to the importance of social networks, especially families and friends, and spirituality. In particular, spirituality provides meaning and purpose of life while social support impacts behavioral choices and adherence decisions for Latinos. In the context of diabetes management, nurses might be able to intervene with spirituality and social support strategies to motivate PLDM to change their behaviors to effectively manage their disease.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between social support, spiritual beliefs, spiritual actions, and length of program engagement for PLDM enrolled in a nurse-led diabetes management program in Lima, Peru. The program provides holistic education and social support services to PLDM to promote lifestyle and behavior modifications to achieve metabolic control and to improve quality of life.

Methods: This cross-sectional pilot study included adult PLDM (N=56) enrolled in a nurse-led diabetes management program in Peru. The 21-item study instrument included two sections: Demographic (4-items) and measurement (17-items). The demographic items were age, sex, time from diagnosis of diabetes, and time of participation in the program. The measurement section included two variables, social support and spirituality. The Social/Vocational Concern dimension of the Diabetes Quality of Life Questionnaire (10-items) and the Reed's Scale of Spirituality Perspective (7-items) were applied to PLDM participating in the program over one month. The data from the instruments was organized into a database with Excel for analysis in the statistical program STATA 12.0.

Results: The mean sample (N=56) age was 62.8 years, mostly female (75%), all with diabetes type II and insulin dependent, with less than 10 years following diagnosis and in the program for more than 5 years. There was an inverse relation between low social support and low spiritual practices ($p = 0.020$) with high spiritual beliefs ($p = 0.005$). With more than five years of participation in the program, there was a strong relationship between social support and spiritual beliefs (0.003), including significantly higher scores individually for social support ($p = 0.020$) and spiritual practices ($p = 0.010$).

Conclusions: Although previous research focused on information delivery to reinforce healthy

behaviors, few studies report how the nurse-patient relationship impacts behavioral change. This study indicates spirituality and social support are important variables to strengthen the relationship. Nurse-led diabetes management programs with Latino participants should consider targeted spiritual and social support strategies to expand the holistic aspect of nursing management. Future studies need to explore the impact and effectiveness of spirituality and social support interventions on psycho-social and clinical outcomes.

Title:

Peruvians Living With Diabetes Mellitus: Social Support and Spirituality Strategies to Improve Nursing Care

Keywords:

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Abstract Summary:

People living with diabetes mellitus represent 7% of the adult Peruvian population. For Latinos, spirituality provides meaning and purpose of life while social support impacts behavioral choices and adherence decisions. In the context of diabetes management, nurses can intervene with targeted strategies to improve attitudes, change behaviors, and improve outcomes.

Content Outline:

Content Outline

I. Introduction

- A. Describe the current situation in Peru for people living with diabetes mellitus (PLDM)
- B. Describe the nurse-led diabetes management program
- C. Provide a brief overview of the study

II. Body

- A. Discuss spiritual beliefs in the context of diabetes management for PLDM in Peru

- B. Discuss spiritual practices in the context of diabetes management for PLDM in Peru
- C. Discuss social support in the context of diabetes management for PLDM in Peru

III. Conclusion

- A. Discuss the reason spirituality and social support are important variables to strengthen the relationship between the nurse and the PLDM in Peru
- B. Explain why nurse-led diabetes programs with Latino participants might consider targeted spiritual and social support strategies to expand the holistic nursing management.
- C. Recommend future studies to explore the impact and effectiveness of spiritual and social support interventions on psycho-social and clinical outcomes.

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