

Personal Resource Questionnaire: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Background: Social support is a key nursing variable. No review has yet systematically assessed the effectiveness of the personal resource questionnaire (PRQ) as a measure of perceived social support.

Purpose: This article reviewed nine previous studies that used the PRQ (Brandt & Weinert, 1981).

Methods: Completed studies were identified through searches of indexes that included PubMed, the Cumulative Index for Nursing and EBSCO host, and Ovid. Studies that reported PRQ scores, sample descriptions, and sample sizes and that tested the relationship between the PRQ and study variables were included in the present review. Three other studies were included that did not report on PRQ correlations with other health variables. The included studies addressed a variety of health problems and different population in different settings.

Results: Cronbach's alphas for the included studies ranged from .87 to .93, supporting the internal consistency of the PRQ. Hypothesized relationships between the PRQ and study variables including health promotion behavior, self-care behavior, self-efficacy, self-esteem, stress, depression, loneliness, pain, and disability were supported, providing positive evidence for PRQ construct validity. Included studies used the PRQ to address disparate populations in terms of age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and educational background.

Conclusion: This review found the PRQ to be a reliable and valid tool for measuring perceived social support across a wide range of populations. Further studies are necessary to examine the relationship between social support and selected demographics among populations with different cultural backgrounds.

KEY WORDS:

personal resource questionnaire, social support, review, measurement.

Structural support refers to social ties and their interconnections. Measures of structural support usually include marital status, number of household family members, and number of social contacts. Functional support refers to the utility of one's social contacts in terms of providing specific functions such as emotional support, tangible or instrumental assistance, feelings of belonging, and informational support (Cohen et al., 2000).

A large and reliable body of evidence addressing both community and patient populations has confirmed the beneficial effects of social relationships on health. Many studies have addressed the beneficial effects of social support on health outcomes in patients with coronary artery diseases. The mortality rate in patients with myocardial infarction who reported both social isolation and high levels of stress was four times higher than in those who reported high social support and low level of stress (Burg et al., 2005). Although social support has been shown to positively impact physical health, mental well-being, and social functioning (Wortman, 1984), a comprehensive review found lack of consensus among scholars regarding the meaning and measurement of social support. Most researchers measure social support using established tools such as the Social Support Scale, Interpersonal Support Evaluation List, and Interview Schedule for Social Interaction. The purpose of this article is to review nine completed studies that used the personal resource questionnaire (PRQ) in a variety of settings with diverse samples. The authors chose to review the PRQ because of its good reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .90; Weinert, 2003). Construct validity was established by comparing PRQ with comparable mental measures. The PRQ is self-administered and requires approximately 15 minutes to be completed (Weinert, 2003). It is a multi-dimensional instrument used to measure social support. Although the PRQ has been translated into six languages,

Introduction

Social support refers to the range of social links that is accessible as a resource for one's personal benefit (Cohen, Underwood, & Gottlieb, 2000). Social support may be categorized into two types, namely, structural and functional.

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