

Quality of life and the relationship with family income in patients with rheumatoid arthritis

Santos-Moreno P., Buitrago-Garcia D., Villarreal Peralta L., Alvis-Zakzuk N. J., Alvis-Guzmán N.

Abstract

Objectives: To evaluate the quality of life (QoL) of patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) using the Quality of life in Rheumatoid Arthritis (RAQoL) questionnaire. Also, to explore its relationship with income in patients attended at a specialized RA center in Bogotá, Colombia, 2018. **Methods:** We performed a descriptive study. The RAQoL version in Spanish was applied to RA patients. The scale of the RAQoL has a score from 1-10, where 10 is associated with better QoL. We excluded patients with psychological or psychiatric disorders. We asked about the monthly family income according to the Colombian minimum wage. Descriptive epidemiology was performed for each variable. A comparison of means regarding age and RAQoL score was carried out. Therefore, we performed a bivariate analysis in order to explore the relationship between income and QoL, reporting Odds Ratios (OR) and confidence intervals 95% (CI95%). Results related to family income were reported in US\$ with the average exchange rate for 2018. **Results:** We interviewed 310 patients, 92% were female. Mean age was 60 years [standard deviation (SD)10.5]. Mean score for the scale was 6.8 (SD1.7). When we evaluated each domain for the RAQoL, the one with higher score was the support from family and friends (7.8, SD2.0). According to income, 41% of patients reported a monthly income of less than US\$265, 47% between US\$266- US\$530, 9% between US\$531-US\$795 and 3% more than US\$1300. Patients with an income greater than US\$531 per/month had a higher average score in the RAQoL scale (7.1, SD5.5). The relationship of having a score lower than 6 in the RAQoL and a monthly income lower than US\$530 showed an OR of 2.48 IC95% (0.99-6.22) (P=0.03). **Conclusions:** Our study showed that patient with a low income reports a lower QoL. Further research is needed to evaluate the alternatives that can improve QoL in patients with RA.