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## Reliability and validity of the multidimensional scale of perceived social support in cancer patients

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Social Support (SS) is considered as an important component in improving quality of life of cancer patients. In Sri Lankan context how SS can be measured and evaluated in cancer patients is not well understood. This study examined the Sinhala version of the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) for its psychometric properties. The scale has 3 dimensions; Family (FA), Friends (FR) and Significant Others (SO) support. The research was approved by the Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, Galle. A total of 40 cancer patients at the radiotherapy unit, oncology ward, Teaching Hospital, Karapitiya in southern Sri Lanka were enrolled in the study. Participants were asked to complete three scales; the MSPSS, the Centre for Epidemiological Studies- Depression scale (CES-D) and the World Health Organization-Quality of Life-Brief scale (WHOQOL-BREF). Test-retest reliability of the scale was assessed. Results were regarded as statistically significant if $p<0.05$. Mean ($\pm$SD) age of the sample was $61\pm12$ years. Mean score ($\pm$SD) for overall SS was $65\pm7$. Factor analysis produced three-factor solutions with total variance of 96%. The internal consistency of the overall scale was good (Cronbach's alpha-0.75). FA and SO showed high Cronbach's alpha (0.983 and 0.996). The test-retest reliability was found to be 0.86. The Sinhala-MSPSS was found to have a negative correlation with the CES-D, but was positively correlated with the WHOQOL-BREF. The Sinhala version of MSPSS is a reliable and valid tool to assess SS of cancer patients.

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