Title: Perceived Severity and Susceptibility of Diabetes Complications and its Relation to Self-care Behaviors among Diabetic Patients

Abstract: Background: Diabetes is a disease with long cardiovascular, renal, eye and neural complications. It is prevalent all around the world including Iran and especially in Yazd province and its prevalence is increasing. Higher perceived severity and susceptibility of its complications may cause a higher level of self care behaviors in these patients. The aim of this study was to determine the constructs' status and their related factors in diabetic patients.

Materials & Methods: This analytical study was carried out on 120 diabetic patients referred to Yazd Diabetes Research Center which were recruited with a sampling method. A questionnaire was used for data collection which measured the perceived severity and susceptibility and self care behaviors. Subjects' demographic variables such as age, sex, education level, occupation, history of diabetes duration and type of diabetes were also recorded.

Results: The subjects reported 86.72, 55.72 and 62.79% of receivable scores of perceived severity, perceive susceptibility and self care score, respectively. Deteriorating eyesight was perceived at the highest level of severity and circulatory problems in the feet were at the lowest level. Deteriorating eyesight and aching legs and blurred vision was at the highest level of perceived susceptibility while high and low sugar coma was at the lowest level. Men had a higher level of perceived severity than women. There was a significant correlation between history of diabetes duration and perceived susceptibility and severity \times susceptibility. Perceived susceptibility and severity, and severity \times susceptibility and self care behaviors had a significant correlation with each other at 0.01 level. Perceived susceptibility and severity predicted 12.1% of variances in self care behaviors while severity \times susceptibility predicted 12% of variances in self care behaviors.

Discussion and Conclusion: Despite the fact that perceived severity of diabetes complications among subjects was at favorable level, their perceived susceptibility was low. Diabetic foot complications are more important and in general, increasing perceived susceptibility and severity may induce an increase in self care behaviors among diabetic patients.

Keywords: Perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, Diabetes Self-Care

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