INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ON QUALITY OF LIFE AND ILLNESS ACCEPTANCE AMONG PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE

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Socio-economic status is considered to be an independent risk factor in Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), but up to now, only a few studies on this issue have been conducted in Poland. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between socio-economic status and quality of life (QoL), as well as the acceptance of illness in COPD patients. Education, marital status and place of residence were all used as socio-economic status indicators. The sample included 264 adult COPD patients of general practitioners. COPD symptoms were mild in 53.4% of these patients, and moderate in 36.4%. There was a positive correlation between the QoL and acceptance of illness levels (r = 0.69, p < 0.0001). The QoL and acceptance of illness levels were most strongly influenced by education, followed by gender, age, and place of residence. Marital status had no effects on the QoL and acceptance of illness levels. Programs improving the QoL and acceptance of illness are recommended for patients with low educational attainment, male patients and those over 65 years of age. Future studies are needed to discover potential cause-and-effect relationships between the level of education level and QoL, and acceptance of illness levels.