

❖ RESEARCH PAPER ❖

Quality of life among Malaysian mothers with a child with Down syndrome

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The purpose of this paper is to examine the quality of life (QOL) among mothers with a child with Down syndrome using The World Health Organization Quality of Life scale instrument. A convenience sample of 161 mothers was accessed through the various institutions which provide interventional or educational programmes to children with disabilities within two of the regions of the Borneo State of Malaysia (Sarawak). Nearly half of the group of mothers perceived their QOL as neither poor nor good ($n = 73$). An overall QOL score of 14.0 ± 1.84 was obtained. The highest and lowest domain scores were found for social relationship domain (Mean = 14.9 ± 2.1) and environmental support domain (Mean = 13.3 ± 2.1) respectively. Correlation analysis of selected background variables (i.e. locality, education, income and marital status) and overall QOL indicated $\rho(161) = 0.22-0.28$ ($P < 0.01$). Inverse correlation between maternal age and overall QOL score was indicated, with $\rho(161) = -0.17$ ($P < 0.05$). Linear regression analysis indicated that the combination of these few variables together accounted for 14.5% of the QOL variability in the sample. Findings point to implications for priorities of care provisions by policy-makers and care professionals in their practice.

Key words: child, Down syndrome, mothers, nursing, quality of life.