

UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL NEEDS AND PRACTICES IN CANCER PATIENTS: KEY FACTORS SHAPING INTERVENTIOINS

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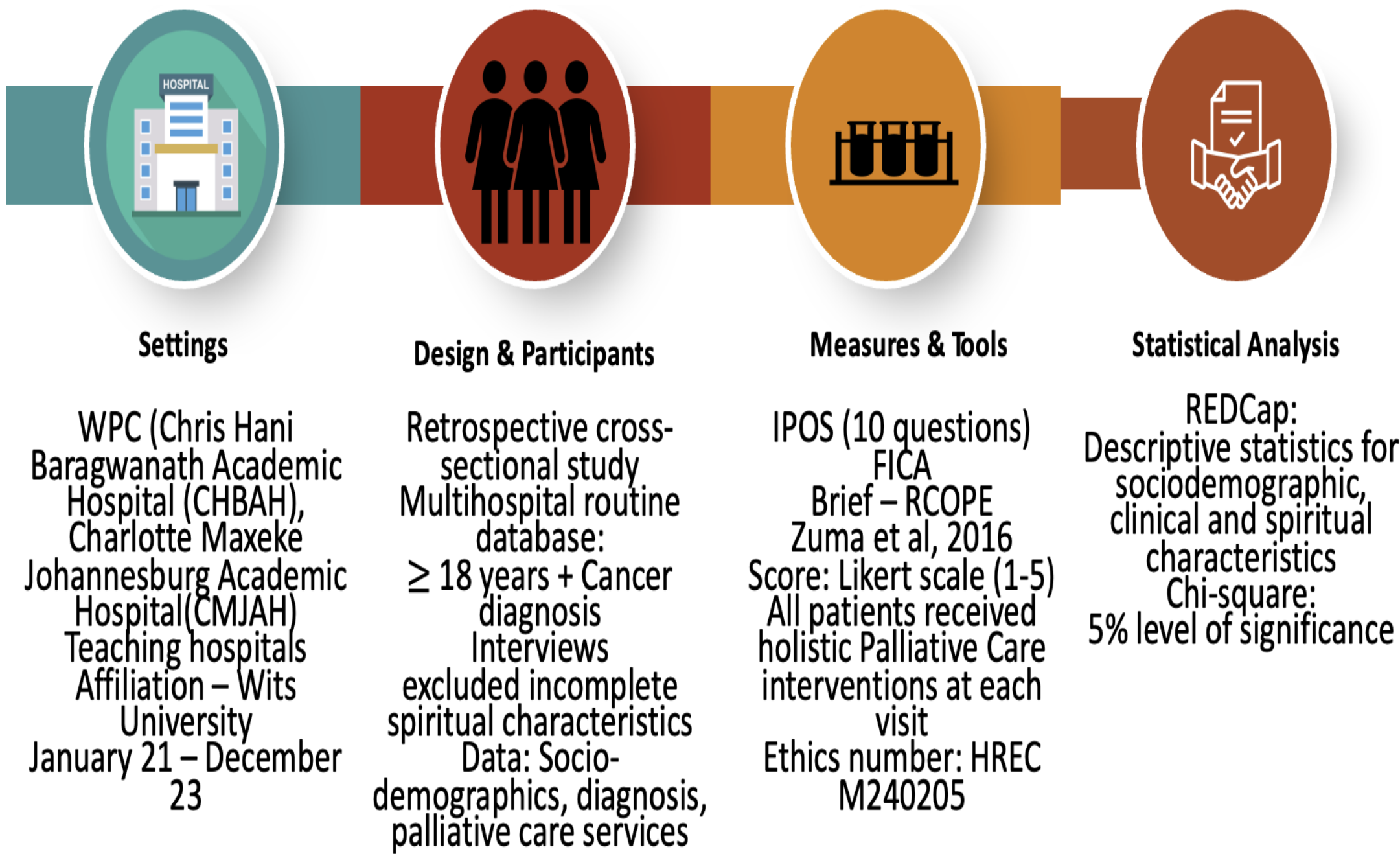
Background

A diagnosis of cancer elicits spiritual needs and distress that require interventions. Spiritual care is associated with better treatment outcomes, but access is limited.

Aim

To describe the spiritual needs, practices, and association between spirituality, using Traditional Healers (THs), ancestral beliefs, with socio-demographic and clinical characteristics, and examine the association between spiritual interventions and spiritual characteristics.

Methods



Results

Table 1: Socio-demographics & Clinical characteristics (n=2465)

Demographic characteristics	Mean (SD)	Clinical characteristics	Number (%)
Age	53.4 (22.7)	Type of cancer	
Demographic characteristics	Number (%)	Breast	664 (26.9)
Sex		Cervix	546 (22.2)
Female	1,739 (70.5)	GIT/Hepatobiliary	499 (20.2)
Race		Lung	169 (6.9)
Black	2,017 (81.8)	Prostrate	140 (5.7)
Marital status		Other cancer	447 (18.1)
Widowed/single/divorced	1,477 (59.9)	HIV Status	
Employment Status		Positive	1,340 (54.4)
Employed	577 (23.4)		
Highest level of education			
High School/Technical/graduate	1,928 (78.2)		

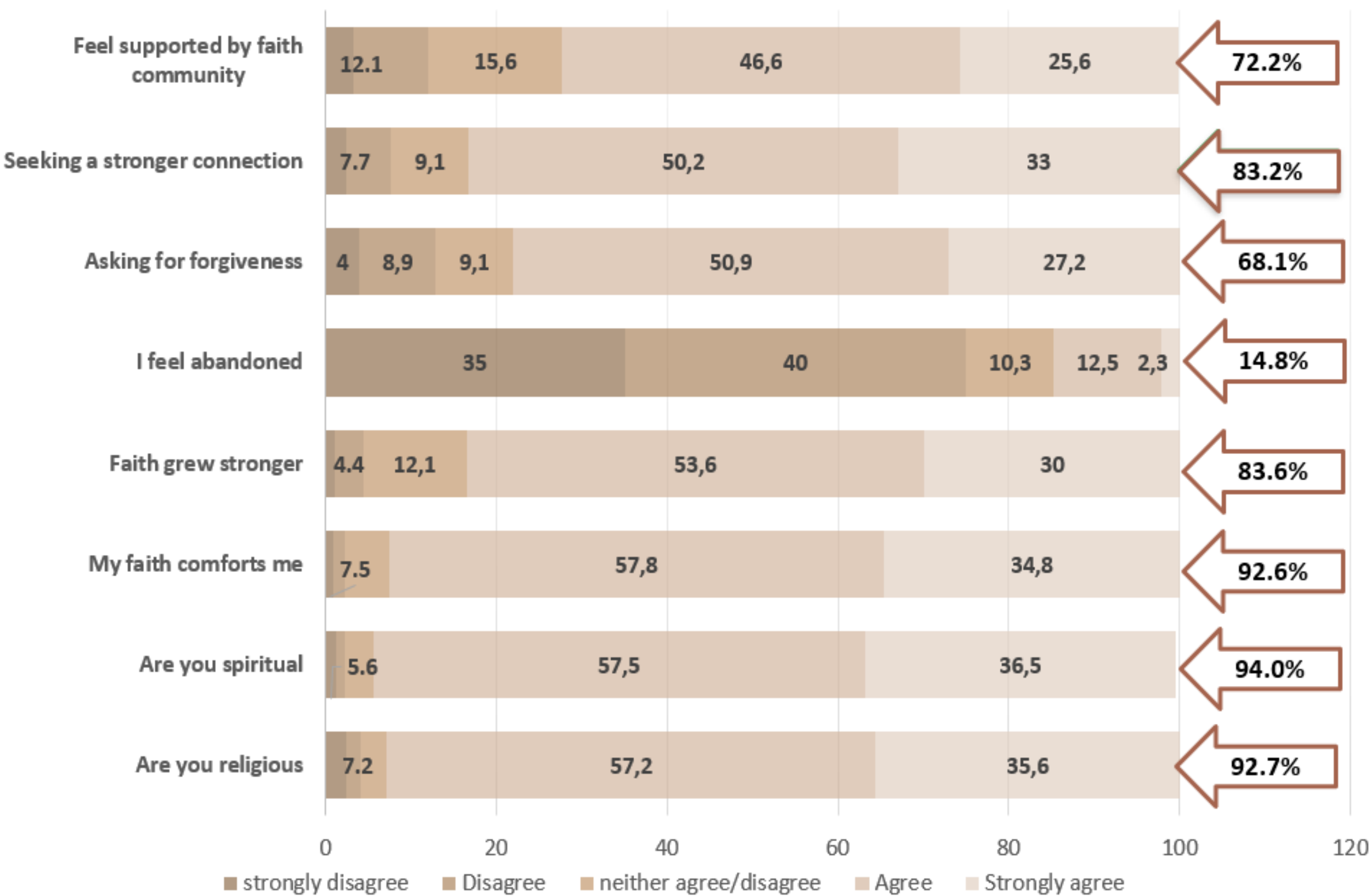


Figure 1: Spiritual needs of cancer patients

Conclusions

The study confirms that patients with cancer are spiritual and religious, some have ancestral beliefs, need forgiveness, and rely on their faith and faith communities to cope.

The study further highlights the need for culturally relevant tools and interventions to address these needs. Integration of spiritual care into oncology care to ensure holistic care is recommended.

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