
Abstract

Examining the cancer survivors' psychological process of balancing work and cancer treatment

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The purpose of this study is to identify the psychological factors—and the processes of those factors—that influence the decision-making of cancer survivors regarding employment. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine individuals who returned to work after taking leave for cancer treatment, and the data were analyzed using Trajectory Equifinality Modeling (TEM). The results showed that difficulties in anticipating the future at the time of diagnosis and the inability to envision continued employment upon returning to work were linked to negative feelings about reemployment. Furthermore, despite experiencing uncertainty or a lack of career perspective after returning to work, participants went through a process of searching for “ways to work with uncertain career perspectives.” Factors that supported continued employment after returning to work included [a feeling of regaining one's previous skills], [deepening one's understanding of oneself and others], and [discovering fulfillment in new jobs]. Based on these findings, the paper discusses possible psychological support strategies from the time of diagnosis through post-reemployment.

Keywords: balancing work and cancer treatment, Trajectory Equifinality Modeling (TEM), reemployment support, decision-making, career perspective
