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A longitudinal cohort in breast cancer patients: a case-control study

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Objective: To statistically evaluate the possible changes in the sexual and psychological behavior of the participants in the control and surgical group (submitted to radical mastectomy), comparing five moments of diagnosis, according to the methodology of the Brazilian version of the Watts Sexual Function Questionnaire (BSWSFQ), considering the qualitative issues of the study. **Methods:** This is a longitudinal cohort, with one year of follow-up, including women between 50 and 60 years of age, with basic education (minimum), and a history of early sexual affective functioning, with benign or malignant breast nodules (submitted to radical mastectomy with or without breast reconstruction as a form of treatment), from the Institute of Gynecology of the Hospital de Clínicas of the University of São Paulo (Mastology Sector) and the Institute of Social Responsibility of the Mastology Sector at the Hospital Sírio-Libanês. The participants filled out the BSWSFQ and five qualitative questions were added to assess how they faced issues related to breast cancer and its treatment. Exploratory statistical analysis, case study, coding of qualitative variables for dummies 0/1, panel data analysis, bootstrap method, and hypothesis tests for comparison between groups were used. **Results:** Considering $p=0.10$, it can be stated that statistically significant differences were found between the moments of collection in the arousal phase for the surgical group, which may have impacted the differences observed between the moments for the Total BSWSFQ indicator. Other significant differences were also found. **Conclusion:** Five years later, the analysis of the panel data confirmed and deepened the results identified throughout the master's project. The comparative condition between the groups was satisfied. Tests revealed differences in the timing of data collection between the groups and the comparison between the groups. The qualitative evaluation showed the richness of variations in feelings/attitudes (resilience).

Keywords: breast cancer; cohort study; radical mastectomy; resilience.