



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**CANCER PATIENTS' SATISFACTION WITH NURSING CARE  
PROVIDED IN TEACHING HOSPITALS IN TEHRAN, IRAN**

**MEHRNOOSH AKHTARI ZAVARE**

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**BY**

**MEHRNOOSH AKHTARI ZAVARE**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Science**

**November 2008**



## **DEDICATION**

**To**

**Dedicated especially to my parents, my sisters and all those individuals behind the  
sense who make me possible to complete my study successfully**



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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**Chairman: Professor. Mohd Yunus Abdullah, MD, MPH**

**Faculty: Medicine and Health Sciences**

A cross-sectional study was conducted to determine cancer patients' satisfaction level and factors that contribute to patients' satisfaction towards the nursing care services provided at the selected teaching hospitals in Tehran, Iran. A proportional stratified sampling method was adopted and data were collected via face-to-face interviews from November 2007 through January 2008, based on a validated Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire (PSQ). A total of 384 cancer patients aged 14 years old and above was selected. The majority of respondents were males (52.4%), married (66.4%) with age group 45-54 year (26.4%); secondary education level (44.8%). The majority of respondents was working adults (52.6%), with family monthly income of US\$200-500 (60.9%), and hospitalized between 2 to 5 days (81.8%), and treated for chemotherapy (67.4 %). The findings revealed that a vast majority of these respondents (82.8%) was satisfied with the nursing care provided to them, while the others (17.2%) were not. Generally, most of the respondents were satisfied with the amount of information given



by the nurses (76.6%), technical quality (76.8%), interpersonal relationship (96.6%) and physical environment (69.5%) they were admitted. From the bivariate analysis, only two factors were found to be significantly related to the level of satisfaction, i.e. the types of hospital ( $\chi^2=4.985$ ;  $df=1$ ;  $p=0.025$ ;  $n=384$ ) and the types of treatment ( $\chi^2=8.128$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $p=0.017$ ;  $n=384$ ). In term of the type of hospital, the multiple logistic regression test indicated that the patients, who were hospitalized in the teaching-hospitals of Shahis Beheshti University, were ( $1/0.523=1.912$ ) times more likely to be satisfied with the nursing care ( $p= 0.037$ ) as compared to those were hospitalized in the teaching-hospitals of Iran University. Similarly, the respondents who were married were 5.5 times more likely to be dissatisfied with the nursing care ( $p= 0.033$ ) as compared to those who were divorced and widowed. The Nagelkerke  $R^2$  showed that about 14% of the variation in the level of the patients' satisfaction could be explained by this logistic model. This study found that most of the respondents were satisfied with the services which they received. However, the respondents suggested that several factors such as improving socio-environment in term of privacy and interpersonal manner in the care, and improving the facilities of the teaching-hospitals, should be taken into consideration in order to improve the overall satisfaction. At the same time, further research is still needed to study on the socio-cultural and environment pertaining to the issues of patient care in the teaching-hospitals. On the other hand the patients, admitted to Teaching-hospitals of SHUMS, were more satisfied as compared to those admitted in the IUMS. Nevertheless, further research is also needed to find the reasons why those patients admitted to Teaching-hospitals of SHUMS had higher level of satisfaction, which also indicated the need to improve the interpersonal manners and socio-cultural aspects of patients' care.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**TAHAP KEPUASAN PESAKIT KANSER TERHADAP PERKHIDMATAN  
JAGARAWATAN YANG DISEDIAKAN DI HOSPITAL-HOSPITAL  
PENGAJAR DI TEHRAN, IRAN**

Oleh

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**November 2008**

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Satu kajian irisan lintang telah dijalankan bagi menentukan tahap kepuasan pesakit terhadap perkhidmatan jagarawatan yang disediakan dan mengenalpasti faktor-faktor yang berkaitan, di beberapa hospital pengajar terpilih dalam bandaraya Tehran, Republik Islam Iran. Persampelan strata berproposisi telah diguna untuk pengumpulan data yang diperolehi melalui interviu berpandukan satu set Soal Selidik Kepuasan Pesakit yang telah divalidasi, bermula dari November 2007 sehingga Januari 2008. Seramai 384 orang pesakit kanser berumur 14 tahun ke atas telah dipilih. Majoriti responden adalah lelaki (52.4%) dan telah berkahwin (66.4%). Kumpulan umur dari 45 sehingga 54 tahun mencatatkan peratusan tertinggi (26.4%) dan sebilangan besar daripada responden mendapat pendidikan menengah (44.8%). Majoriti responden juga adalah orang dewasa dan bekerja (52.6%) yang mempunyai pendapatan bulanan di antara US\$ 200-500 yang dianggarkan sekitar sebulan (60.9%). Pesakit yang menerima rawatan dan tinggal di

hospital selama dua hingga lima hari mencatatkan peratus tertinggi (81.8%), di mana 67.4% peratus dari jumlah ini merupakan pesakit yang diberi rawatan kimoterapi. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan majoriti responden (82.8%) berpuas hati terhadap perkhidmatan penjagaan perubatan yang diterima manakala 17.2% pula sebaliknya. Secara umumnya, sebahagian besar responden berpuas hati dengan maklumat yang diberi oleh jururawat (76.6%), kualiti teknikal (76.8%), hubungan interpersonal (96.6%) dan keadaan persekitaran di hospital (69.5%). Dapatan kajian melalui 'bivariate analysis' menunjukkan terdapat dua faktor lain yang juga signifikan terhadap tahap kepuasan responden iaitu, jenis hospital ( $\chi^2=4.985$ ;  $df=1$ ;  $p=0.025$ ;  $n=384$ ) dan jenis rawatan yang diterima ( $\chi^2=8.128$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $p=0.017$ ;  $n=384$ ). Ujian regresi logistik berganda (*multiple logistic regression test*) menunjukkan bahawa pesakit yang menerima rawatan di hospital pengajar Shahis Beheshti adalah 1.9 kali lebih berpuas hati dengan perkhidmatan jagarawatan yang diberikan ( $p<0.05$ ) berbanding dengan pesakit yang menerima rawatan di hospital pengajaran Universiti Iran yang lain. Hasil kajian juga mendapati responden yang telah berkahwin adalah 5.5 kali lebih berpuas hati terhadap perkhidmatan penjagaan perubatan ( $p=0.033$ ) yang diterima berbanding dengan pesakit yang telah bercerai atau kematian pasangan. Ujian Nagelkerke  $R^2$  menunjukkan kira-kira 14% dari variasi dalam tahap kepuasan pesakit dapat dijelaskan melalui model logistik tersebut. Kajian ini juga mendapati sebahagian besar responden berpuas hati dengan perkhidmatan yang diterima. Walau bagaimanapun, responden mencadangkan beberapa faktor lain yang perlu diambilkira di dalam meningkatkan tahap kepuasan pesakit secara menyeluruh. Faktor-faktor tersebut merangkumi penambahan jumlah atau bilangan doktor, peningkatan persekitaran sosial dari aspek privasi dan hubungan interpersonal semasa khidmat jagarawatan diberi, serta meningkatkan kemudahan-

kemudahan asas di hospital. Kajian ini juga mencadangkan agar satu kajian terperinci dijalankan bagi mengkaji hubungan di antara sosio-budaya dan keadaan yang berkaitan dengan isu-isu jagarawatan pesakit di hospital-hospital universiti tersebut. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa pesakit yang menerima rawatan di hospital pengajar Universiti Shahis Beheshti lebih berpuas hati berbanding pesakit yang dimasukkan ke hospital pengajar Universiti Iran yang lain Oleh itu kajian yang mendalam perlu bagi mengenalpasti sebab-sebab yang membawa kepada keadaan tersebut di mana gaya hubungan interpersonal dan aspek sosio-budaya dalam khidmat penjagaan pesakit juga perlu dipertimbangkan.



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I certify that an Examination Committee has met 6<sup>th</sup> November 2008 to conduct the final examination of Mehrnoosh Akhtar Zavare on her Master of Science "Cancer Patients' Satisfaction with Nursing Care Provided in Teaching Hospitals in Tehran, Iran" in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that student be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee were as follows:

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledge. I also declare that it has not been previously and is not concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or at any other institution.

---

**MEHRNOOSH AKHTARI ZAVARE**

Date: 2 FEBUARY 2009



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BMI	Body Mass Index
CCU	Cardio Care Unit
CAM	Complementary and Alternative Medicine
ENT	Ear, Nose, and Throat
ICBC	Iranian Centre for Breast cancer
IQR	Inter Quarter Range
IUMS	Iran University of Medical Science
ICU	Intensive Care Unit
N/A	Not Acceptable
NICU	Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
PCCU	Post Cardio Care Unit
PICU	Post Intensive Care Unit
PHCC	Primary Health Care Centers
PSQ	Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire
RC	Reference Group
RL	Rial
MICU	Medical Intensive Care Unit
SHUMS	Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Science
SICU	Surgical Intensive Care Unit
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
US	United States of America



UK United Kingdom  
UPM Universiti Putra Malaysia  
WHO The World Health Organization



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

The first attempt to evaluate patients' satisfaction with the nursing services began in 1956 in the United States of America (Abdellah & Levine, 1957). Today, in developed countries such as the USA and UK, its measurement is legally safeguarded, and in many cases, a prerequisite for hospital license is required (JCAHO 1991; Bond & Thomas, 1992).

Patients' satisfaction has been viewed as a result of patients' experience in using health care, and this is considered as a valid indicator for the effectiveness and quality of care worldwide (JCAHO, 1991; Bond & Thomas, 1992). In fact, a number of experts in standard-setting organizations and consumer groups have begun to use patients' satisfaction as a key indicator for quality improvement in the health care services (JCAHO, 1991). A quality assurance program is considered inadequate if it does not include patient's satisfaction on the health care they receive.

Patients' dissatisfaction with nursing care may cause a major impact on the health services, hence affecting health and illness behaviour. Some evidences indicated that patients who were dissatisfied with the nursing care they received, were less likely to adhere to the recommended course of treatment or return for the needed follow-up visits (Thomas & Penchansky, 1984). Therefore, dissatisfaction with the nursing care services may further lead to lower utilization of the nursing care services by the patients (Yunus

*et al.*, 2004). For this reason, many researchers have acknowledged that patients' satisfaction is not simply a measure of quality, but the goal of health care delivery (Merkouris *et al.*, 1999).

The nursing care provided by nurses is regarded as the most important factor in patients' assessments of their satisfaction with the health care. This is due to the fact that nursing care is the major service provided to hospitalized patients, and that nursing personnel comprises the largest proportion of the health service community. In this respect, it can be said that the nurse is at the forefront of the hospital. If a nurse is unable to fulfil this role, a high level of patients' satisfaction will not be achieved. Nursing in Iran includes professionals with specific scientific knowledge and practical skills. They also work in a field where knowledge and practice intermingle with the cultural images and values which mirror the society.

Cancer is a growing health problem in Iran, and it is the third most common known cause of death. The increasing number of cancer relates to the marked changes in the lifestyle and distribution of risk factors in the population in the last 30 years. On the other hand, cancer patients suffer from psychological stress because they have to face a life-threatening disease; their psychological needs are met when the nurses are able to understand their frustrations and provide emotional support. Similarly, in oncology ward, nurses' attitudes have important impact on the patients' feelings of depression. The attitude of the nurses, their facial expressions, and their verbal messages, are among the important elements in the communication of caring. For this reason, patients'

satisfaction with the nursing care is one of the most important factors which affects the recovery or the treatment of cancer patients.

Thus, this study was carried out to investigate cancer patients' satisfaction with the nursing care, in terms of the information given by the nurses, the interpersonal relationship between the nurse and patient, the technical quality of the nurse and the physical environment. The findings could be used for program planning as well as for monitoring and improving the nursing care services at the Teaching-hospitals of Tehran City, Islamic Republic of Iran.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

The constantly increasing cost of health services and the need for better use of available resources is a concern of all the developing and developed countries (Scardina, 1994). Consequently, it becomes evident that there is a need to measure the efficiency of health care to determine if proper use of available resources is being made. One way to assess the performance and service quality of a hospital would be to measure the level of satisfaction on the nursing care given to hospitalized patients. This is because nursing staff comprises the majority of the health staff, and are constantly found at the side of the patient to satisfy their needs (McDonnel and Nash, 1990). If the nurse is unable to fulfil their roles, a high level of patients' satisfaction will not be achieved (Johansson *et al.*, 2002).

On the other hand, low patient satisfaction is associated with lower trust in caregivers and greater chance of a change of health providers, resulting in less continuity of care



(Liu *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore, low patient satisfaction is also correlated with a greater number of patient complaints and malpractice lawsuits (Stelfox *et al.*, 2005). Similarly, specific costs, incurred by the loss of customers who are dissatisfied with the health care given to them, have been examined, along with the costs of trying to regain those customers.

Surveys typically report high levels of overall satisfaction, but often there is some disparity between the overall satisfaction ratings, and the same patients' opinions of specific aspects of their care process (Draper and Hill, 1995). One of the most important problems in health system in the Islamic Republic of Iran is patient satisfaction. Despite high expenditure and adequate facilities, patients are often not satisfied with specific aspects of their care process.

Also, Most of the Iranian surveys assess level of patients' satisfaction with physician (Hajifatahi *et al.*, 2008; Bahrapour *et al.*, 2005). There are a few studies about nursing care, and lack of studies about patient satisfaction with nursing care among cancer patients admitted in teaching hospitals in Tehran. On the other hand, all of the surveys conducted in teaching hospitals related to one of the three main Government University of Medical Sciences. There is a lack of studies of patients' satisfaction conducted in teaching hospitals of two main Government University of Medical Sciences.

Therefore, the aim of this study was to find out cancer patients' satisfaction with nursing care in 10 teaching hospitals of SHUMS and IUMS in Tehran and explore the associated factors. In the attempt, the following questions are addressed: