

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RATE OF MEETING THE EXPECTATIONS OF MOTHERS OF CHILDREN WITH LEUKEMIA BY NURSES AT SHEIKH HOSPITAL IN MASHHAD

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Meeting the expectations of mothers of children with leukemia and their increased level of satisfaction with the provided care are one of the most important indicators of nurse's assessment in children's hospitals. The aim of this study was to evaluate the rate of meeting the expectations of mothers of children with leukemia by nurses at Sheikh Hospital.

Method: This descriptive cross-sectional study was performed on 154 mothers of children with leukemia who were selected using a non-random sampling method at Sheikh Hospital of Mashhad. The researcher utilized a researcher made questionnaire in 5-point scale. Data were analyzed using SPSS software.

Results: In both groups of boys and girls, the lowest difference was associated with the ethical expectations and the highest difference was related to the communication and ward status expectations and the highest level of dissatisfaction was also observed in the information, communication and ward status dimensions. There was no significant difference between the two groups in all aspects of mother's expectations ($p > 0.05$).

Conclusion: The results of the research emphasize the importance of more nursing support from mothers of these children and meeting their expectations.

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Introduction

Epidemiologically, cancer diagnosed before the age of 15 years is classified as childhood cancer and is the most common childhood cancers, accounting for about 30% of all cancers in children. In fact, Leukemia is a cancer that starts in the blood-forming cells of the bone marrow. Based on the type of cell (lymphoid or myeloid) and the disease (acute and severe), there are four main types of leukemia [acute lymphoblastic leukemia](#) (ALL), [acute myeloid leukemia](#) (AML), [chronic lymphocytic leukemia](#) (CLL) and [chronic myeloid leukemia](#) (CML) as well as a number of less common types [1]. Due to its high mortality rate and high treatment cost, long hospitalization and psychological problems and distress in the patient and his family, Leukemia produces heavy economic burdens and has a profound impact on the lives of households and health of family members (especially the child's parents) as well as influences all aspects of their life including mental, psychological, and social [2]. The crisis caused by illness and the child hospitalization is one of the main sources of stress and anxiety for the family. Infertility, feelings of guilty, irritability and disappointment are among the feelings that parents experience during these periods. Even though the needs of the child during hospitalization are very important, attention also should be paid to the needs of mothers [3]. In fact, customer expectations are beliefs about service delivery that serve as standards or reference points against which performance are judged. Because customers compare their perceptions expectations are beliefs about service delivery that serve as standards or reference of performance with these reference points when evaluating service quality,

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thorough knowledge about customer expectations is critical to services marketers. In other words, being wrong can also mean expending money, time and other resources on things that do not count to the customer [4]. Generally, assessment of patients' satisfaction and expectations about the care provided is one of the methods for measuring and assessing the quality of health services [5]. In hospitalized children who are not able to express their viewpoints directly on the quality of health care offered, evaluating and paying attention to the views of childcarers (parents) are of great importance, because the evolutionary capability of children to sufficiently perceive things is not complete and therefore, they not able to express their experiences and opinions [6]. The significance of the effect of nurse's services as the largest group working in the care team on the quality of health cares and, consequently, achieving the desired goals of health systems and patient satisfaction, are widely known for everyone. Medical authorities become increasingly more sensitive to the quality and efficiency of the cares provided by nursing staff to clients; therefore, it is necessary for nurses to be able to manage their performance, emotions and excitements during their work. According to the studies, there are 5 categories of mother's expectations with children with leukemia who are identified in this research. These expectations include care expectations, information expectations, ethical expectations, emotional expectations and communication expectations. In this research, the researcher seeks to evaluate these expectations in mothers of children with leukemia from the nurses of the department at Sheikh Hospital in Mashhad.

Method

This was a descriptive cross-sectional study. The statistical population of this study composed of 154 mothers of children with leukemia at Shaikh Hospital in Mashhad in 2014. This study used convenient sampling method. Research instruments included demographic information questionnaire and mothers' expectations questionnaire. To determine the validity of the instrument, the quantitative and qualitative face validity from the target group's viewpoint (10 mothers) was used and then the quantitative and qualitative content validity was determined from the viewpoint of the experts (10 professors). Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine the scientific reliability of the questionnaire. The questionnaire for assessing the expectations of mothers used was confirmed with a reliability coefficient ($r = 0.90$). To begin the study, the questionnaires were firstly completed by obtaining a license from the faculty and coordinating with Dr. Sheikh Hospital in Mashhad. Before completing the questionnaire, the necessary trainings on how to communicate, the interview principles the and how to complete the questionnaire were given. Mothers were asked not to use the views of their relatives, family members or other mothers present in the room, and only use their own information. After receiving the consent from the mothers, the questionnaires were completed by direct interview. One of the most important points in the interview was that mothers felt uncertain about the disclosure of their information and their impact on the continued treatment of their children. In order to reduce the bias, mothers were assured of the confidentiality of their information and then they completed the questionnaires. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software.

Findings

The demographic characteristics of the mothers showed that the highest frequency was found as those aged over 30, diploma and lower, and housekeeper. In addition, the results of demographic characteristics of children with leukemia showed that the highest frequency was related to the male gender, age below 7 years, duration of illness less than one year, no education and admission for one week.

Table 1. The average expectations rate of mothers by child's gender

Variable	Maximum score	Boy			Girl		
		Mean	Standard deviation	Mean difference	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean difference
Care expectations	35	26.21	4.79	8.79	25.48	6.98	9.52
Information expectations	30	19.47	5.45	10.53	18.69	4.78	11.31
Ethical expectations	25	19.40	2.96	5.6	18.96	3.71	6.04
Emotional expectations	30	22.06	4.45	7.94	21.46	3.50	8.54
Ward status expectations	40	27.59	6.32	12.41	27.32	4.84	12.68

Table 1 indicates that in both groups of boys and girls regarding the mother's expectations, the lowest difference is related to ethical expectations and the highest difference is related to the communication and ward status expectations.

Table 2. Comparison the level of satisfaction of mother's expectations (boy and girl)

Mother's expectations	Test value	Test probability value
Care expectations	35	26.21
Information expectations	30	19.47
Ethical expectations	25	19.40

Emotional expectations	30	22.06
Ward status expectations	40	27.59

Table 2 showed that there is a significant difference between two groups of mothers in terms of expectations. Studying the relationship between demographic variables and maternal expectations suggested that gender variable had negative correlation with all expectations of mothers, but it was not meaningful. The maternal age variable had a positive and significant correlation with emotional expectations and also a positive correlation with ward status expectations, and had a negative correlation with information expectations but it was not significant. In addition, there was a positive and significant correlation between the time course of disease variable and care, information, emotional, and ward status expectations; and a positive and non-significant correlation with ethical expectations. There was no significant correlation between the variable of mother's education level and expectations. The mother's occupational variable had a positive and significant correlation with information expectations and had a positive correlation with other expectations, but it was not significant; length of hospital stay variable was not significantly associated with any expectations.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the demographic characteristics of mothers and children with cancer are similar to the demographic characteristics of most researches in Iran [7,3,8,9]. Regarding the care expectations dimension, mothers do not have complete satisfaction with nursing care and this complete dissatisfaction was observed higher in girls than boys. Schaffer et al., suggested that the hospital management should avoid unnecessary and frequent child checkups or tagging them by multiple people. In terms of information expectations, the results revealed that the information expectations of mothers in both groups were not met and the level of satisfaction was low. It was noteworthy that the majority of mothers did not have the satisfaction of being informed and aware of treatment process and care in nursing and medical cares. They also believe that parents may have a tendency to be aware of their child's disease condition (progress in the treatment, tests and treatment process). Additionally, Arnetz et al., have emphasized this issue. In fact, paying attention to the needs and desires of the patient and parents increases their level of satisfaction with the services provided by the hospital. It should be noted that the importance role of training for patients should be taken into consideration more seriously [10]. In terms of ethical expectations, results showed that the ethical expectations of mothers have been met in both groups. Regarding the emotional expectations dimension, the results demonstrated that the emotional expectations of mothers have been partly met and a sense of relative satisfaction has been achieved. The findings of a study by Polkki [11], Simon and Roberson [12] also showed that the communication gap between nurses and patient's parents has led to the unprotected communication and informal support of parents from each other as a way of meeting their needs. Moreover, Mills et al., (1996) suggest that mothers have always been the most important source of emotional support for their sick children. Also, the findings of a study by Rhein et al [13] regarding the parent's experiences from emotional communication with nurses in the hospital revealed that parents are more likely to seek information from nurses for themselves, but they were very cautiously in communicating with nurses in order to avoid nurses' inappropriate treatment and moral conflict and distress and avoided seeking more information. Findings of the study by Abedi et al. [14] also indicated that patients and relatives felt that they needed more information about their patient's condition, and sometimes patients did not have access to relevant information to provide them with the necessary information. As a result, parent's perception, their emotional communication with nurses, the lack of feelings, reveal the existence of an open and meaningful relationship between parents and nurses and thus, some parents experience feelings of loneliness and isolation in the process of treatment and care for their sick children. The reported results were demonstrated high regarding the communication expectations dimension and ward conditions in both groups. The mean difference was found 12.41 in the boys group and 12.68 in the girls group. Hospital welfare services are of paramount importance to gaining satisfaction and acceptance of parents. In a previous study, Shaffer found that parent's perspectives have a significance contribution in their satisfaction, including physical space, effective respect, respect and care. They have demonstrated that the safe and comfortable hospital environment, including cleanliness, proper space, good food and a feeling of comfort, have a great impact on them and their children. The results of this study are in line with the study of Pourmovvahed [10] based on the fact that the most important expectations of mothers which have been reported to correlate with poor satisfaction level included information expectations, care expectations, and welfare services. Furthermore, the results of a study by Sanjari in [15] revealed that ineffective nursing care is considered a major problem and ignoring the needs of mothers and an establishment of ineffective and poor communication are mentioned among the reasons for mothers' dissatisfaction, which are in line with the results of this research. Regarding the care and information expectations dimensions, the results of this study are also consistent with the studies of Aslanabadi [7] and Amini [3]. In terms of welfare expectations, the results are in agreement with the study of Aslanabadi [7] and are consistent with the study of Sepehr Nia [9] in communication expectations dimension. Additionally, regarding the emotional expectations dimension, the results are consistent with the study by Rahimi et al., [8]. The results presented in this study are inconsistent with the results of the Peterson study in Canada using the NSNS instrument, which showed that none of the demographic characteristics of mothers and their hospitalized children including maternal age, education, place of residence, occupation, frequency of hospitalization and child's gender had no significant relationship with the mother's satisfaction of nursing cares. Also, in a study by Akinn in Turkey, there was no meaningful

statistical relationship between the satisfaction of nursing care and the level of education, occupation, number of hospitalization and length of stay in the hospital [7].

Final conclusion

These results can be served for nursing managers and pediatric nurses as an alert and a practical guide to improve services and increase the satisfaction of their clients. Also, by benefitting from the results of these studies along with other evaluation criteria, nursing performance assessment authorities can design and implement programs to improve the quality of nursing care in the pediatric ward. According to the results, it seems that health care professionals and authorities should increasingly evaluate the quality of service and by using in-service training and providing nurses with incentive strategies help the achievement of the main goal of health services providers, namely, customer satisfaction.

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