



## Original Article

## Levels of Satisfaction among Oncology Patients Regarding their Treatment

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## ABSTRACT

Patient satisfaction is the vital element of the health care system. As it helps to examine the quality of care delivered by the health care providers in accordance to their patient demands.

**Objective:** To assess the level of satisfaction among oncology patient regarding their treatment. **Methods:** The descriptive cross-sectional study design was used to assess the level of satisfaction by using the adopted and modified "patient satisfaction questionnaire short-form" (PSQ-18). The population was targeted by the purposive sampling technique and 200 population size was used which was deliberated from Slovin's formula. The data were analyzed through (SPSS) version-21. **Results:** Descriptive statistics were applied, frequency were checked data validity and reliability ensured, percentile test were applied to identify the percentage. The descriptive statistics, and the percentile showed the oncology patients were less satisfied 56(42.1%) patients with average satisfaction were 44 (33.1%), and highly satisfied were 33(24.8%) with physician supportive, satisfying behavior and their prescribed treatment. **Conclusions:** Chronic diseases affects the patients greatly in their regular activities as well as their psychological conditions, which contributed to unsatisfied behavior regarding to their treatment. Therefore, it's important to satisfy the patient completely with counselling and identify the causes which affect patient's satisfaction.

## INTRODUCTION

Patient satisfaction is an essential substitute to explore the quality of services providing by the any health care setting [1]. As to measure the patient satisfaction helps the provider to get vision related to the medical services available in their health care set up [2]. Patient satisfaction remains as the most appropriate tool to calculate and feedback of the system to evaluate the quality of care providing to the patients [3]. Cancer is a group of more than 100 diseases that can begin anywhere in the body from the abnormal cell growth, which invade nearby any tissue in the body. The latter process of cancer is called metastasis, which is the primary cause of death from cancer. The most common cancers that lead toward deaths are lung cancer

and the breast cancer including in Pakistan with maximum cases reported [4]. The occurrence of cancer arises with the age, as the person grow older his body build-up the risks for the specific cancers with the aging process. The mechanism to repair cells is become less effective with the growing age. Using of tobacco, alcohol, taking unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, air pollution and other non-communicable diseases are the contributing factors for cancer. Thus, the fact that named cancer is one of the major causes of death around the globe with the 8.8 million deaths in 2015 results that 1 in every 6 deaths with cancer [5]. The people who diagnosed with cancer become concentrate and stressed regarding their disease. Which

has the significant effects on patient's physical, mental, social, emotional and financial consequences. And become the cause of great stress, depression and a level of anxiety in the people with cancer. Studies shows that the patients with this disease has the different perception regarding the treatment of cancer. In 100 only 90% patients accept that they had cancer, 80% properly recognize the tumor type, 70 % knows that they have localized or regional type of tumor, about 50% thought they will be cure completely and near to 40% belief that they receive palliative treatment by the doctor, who work for their cure [6]. Patient satisfaction regarding his or her treatment is playing a significant role in the outcome of the treatment of the disease. Satisfaction of the patient is related to enough information provide to patient about their disease and treatment [7]. Patients think that their treatment may increase their life span, due to inadequate knowledge most of the time they underestimate the seriousness of their condition. Therefore, in this study we assess the level of satisfaction among oncology patients to identify how patient understand and perceive the knowledge about their illness and the treatment they receive, relation with the doctor and other health care provider, are they satisfy with treatment or not. Because all these factors influence the outcome of the patient and have the psychological effect on patient mental status. Due to the inappropriate understanding or perception most of the time patient refuse to take or continue their treatment (chemotherapy, radiotherapy) [8]. Thus, here the responsibility of the health care provider to recognize the concept of the patient and help them to understand that with their disease condition the treatment is curative might be in the early stages or palliative in the late stage [9]. As the patient satisfy with the doctor, with their treatment, their psychological status encourage him to follow the directions given by their doctors which will produce the sound effects on the outcome of the patient treatment as the patient is properly satisfy with their treatment and health care provider and completely aware about the condition of their illness or appropriately corporate with their care provider for the effective outcome. If the patient is not understanding properly the procedure of the treatment and about the status of their illness (early or late stage) or the heath care provider fails to satisfy their patient, it might cause the refusal of the patient for the treatment and leads to severity of the disease [10]. In cancer patient therapeutic relation between the patient and the health care provider is really very important if you have the effective therapeutic relation with your patient you will be able to satisfy your patient in all aspect of their treatment and disease with the significant health condition [11]. The studies recognized that the patient's satisfaction

regarding their treatment is one of the major contributors in disease conditions. Because doctors often failed to assess the level satisfaction among their patients, in only one of few cases of patient who received the palliative treatment thought that, it's curative treatment as it prolongs their life [6, 12]. The aim of the study was to assess the level of satisfaction among oncology patient regarding their treatment, as the satisfaction of the patient directly influence the outcome of their health condition. Patient's good understanding leads to sound mental status in the process of their treatment, therapies and complete participation from the patient with the health care provider in the complex situation of the treatment. Because misconception risen the great stress and aggression in the patient especially in cancer patient as they already facing the fatal disease in their lives. The current study we assessed the level of satisfaction of the patient regarding their treatment, how they satisfy with their treatment, the care they received and its outcome for the improvement of their health.

## METHODS

Descriptive cross-sectional research study design was used. The study settings were the outpatient department of Jinnah Hospital Lahore. This study takes approximately 9 months. The level of satisfaction assess by using the adopted and modified "patient satisfaction questionnaire short-form" (PSQ-18). The population was targeted by the purposive sampling technique and 200 population size was used which was deliberated from Slovin's formula. The data were analyzed through (SPSS) version 21.0. The study targeted population was the cancer patient of public hospital (Jinnah Hospital Lahore). The cancer patients were included in the study. The patients those were receiving the medical treatment of cancer were included in this study. The patients with chronic illness other than cancer were excluding from the study. The patients with cancer but not attending the outpatient department were not the part of this study.

## RESULTS

The table 1 presented that from total number of respondents who answering the study. Those with the age group 15-25 were 32 (24.1%), those with age group 25-35 were 34 (25.6%), those with age group of 35-45 were 22 (16.5%), and those of above 45 were only 45 (33.8%). Males were 55 (41.4%), and females were 78 (58.6%). The married participants were 87 (65.4%), unmarried participants were 36 (27.1%), widow participants were 8 (6.0%), and the divorced participants were 2 (1.5%). The participants with primary education were 57 (42.9%), with matric were 32 (24.1%), with intermediate were 15 (11.3%), with graduation were 29 (21.8%). Those had private jobs were 45 (33.8%),

had government jobs were 11(8.3%), had their own business were 7 (5.3%), and jobless participants were 70 (52.6%). Those monthly income (15000-25000) were 56 (42.1%), those monthly income (25000-35000) were 34 (25.6%), similarly those monthly income (35000-45000) were 34 (25.6%) and those income above 45000 were only 9(6.8%).

**Table 1:** Demographic Variables

Variable	Frequency (%)
<b>Age</b>	
15-25	32(24.1)
25-35	34(25.6)
35-45	22(16.5)
45above	45(33.8)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	55(41.4)3
Female	78(58.6)
<b>Marital Status</b>	
Married	87(65.4)
Unmarried	36(27.1)
Widow	8(6.0)
Divorced	2(1.5)
<b>Education</b>	
Primary	57(42.9)
Matric	32(24.1)
Intermediate	15(11.3)
Graduation	29(21.8)
<b>Employment</b>	
Private	44(33.8)
Government	11(8.3)
Business	7(5.3)
Jobless	70(52.6)
<b>Monthly income</b>	
15000-25000	56(42.1)
25000-35000	34(25.6)
35000-45000	34(25.6)
45000 above	9(6.8)

The table 2 presented that from the total number of respondents who answering the question “Doctor are good about explaining the reason for medical test”, those who strongly agree were 5 (3.8%), those who agree were 97 (72.9%), those who uncertain about the question were 2 (1.5%), those who disagree were 25 (18.8%), and those who strongly disagree with the given statement were 4 (3.0%). Question “The medical care I have been receiving is just about perfect.” those who strongly agree were 9 (6.8%), those who agree were 102 (76.7%), those who uncertain about the question were 3 (2.3%), and those who disagree were only 19 (14.3%). Question “When I go for medical care, they are careful to check everything when treating and examining me”, those who strongly agree were 6 (4.5%), those who agree were 101 (75.9%), those who uncertain about the question were 1 (.8%), those who disagree were

22 (16.5%), and those who strongly disagree with the given statement were 3 (2.3%). Question “I have to pay for more of my medical care than I can afford”, those who strongly agree were 3 (2.3%), those who agree were 41 (30.8%), those who uncertain about the question were 7 (5.3%), those who disagree were 66 (49.6%), and those who strongly disagree with the given statement were 16 (12.0%). Question “Doctors act too business-like and impersonal to me”, those who strongly agree were 6 (4.5%), those who agree were 104 (78.2%), those who uncertain about the question were 6 (4.5%), those who disagree were 10 (7.5%), and those who strongly disagree with the given statement were 7 (5.3%)

**Table 2:** Response by the patients those receiving the medical care of cancer

Questions	Frequency (%)
<b>Doctors are good about explaining the reason for medical tests</b>	
Strongly Agree	5(3.8)
Agree	97(72.9)
Uncertain	2(1.5)
Disagree	25(18.8)
Strongly Disagree	4(3.0)
<b>The medical care I have been receiving is just about perfect</b>	
Strongly Agree	9(6.8)
Agree	102(76.7)
Uncertain	3(2.3)
Disagree	19(14.3)
<b>When I go for medical care, they are careful to check everything when treating and examining me</b>	
Strongly Agree	6(4.5)
Agree	101(75.9)
Uncertain	1(.8)
Disagree	22(16.5)
Strongly Disagree	3(2.3)
<b>I have to pay for more of my medical care than I can afford</b>	
Strongly Agree	3(2.3)
Agree	41(30.8)
Uncertain	7(5.3)
Disagree	66(49.6)
Strongly Disagree	16(12.0)
<b>Doctors act too business like and impersonal toward me</b>	
Strongly Agree	6(4.5)
Agree	104(78.2)
Uncertain	6(4.5)
Disagree	10(7.5)
Strongly Disagree	7(5.3)

The table 3 presented that from the total number of respondents who answering the question “Those who provide my medical care sometimes hurry too much when they treat me”, those who agree were 73 (54.9%), those who uncertain about the question were 8 (6.0%), those who disagree were 46 (34.6%), and those who strongly disagree

with the given statement were 6 (4.5%). Question "Doctors sometimes ignore what I tell them", those who strongly agree were 3 (2.3%), those who agree were 46 (34.6%), those who uncertain about the question were 2 (1.5%), those who disagree were 76 (57.1%), and those who strongly disagree with the given statement were 6 (4.5%). Question "I find it hard to get an appointment for medical care right away", those who strongly agree were 16 (12.0%), those who agree were 74 (55.6%), those who uncertain about the question were 8 (6.0%), those who disagree were 33 (24.8%), and those who strongly disagree with the given statement were 2 (1.5%). Question "I am dissatisfied with some things about the medical care I receive", those who strongly agree were 11 (8.3%), those who agree were 35 (26.3%), those who uncertain about the question were 5 (3.8%), those who disagree were 81 (60.9%), and those who strongly disagree with the given statement were 1 (.8%).

**Table 3:** Response from the patients regarding the physician manners and about the treatment they received for their disease

Questions	Frequency (%)
<b>Those who provide my medical care sometimes hurry too much when they treat me</b>	
Agree	73(54.9)
Uncertain	8(6.0)
Disagree	46(34.6)
Strongly Disagree	6(4.6)
<b>Doctors sometimes ignore what I tell them.</b>	
Strongly Agree	3(2.3)
Agree	46(34.6)
Uncertain	2(1.5)
Disagree	76(57.1)
Strongly Disagree	6(4.5)
<b>I am dissatisfied with some things about the medical care I receive</b>	
Strongly Agree	11(8.3)
Agree	35(26.3)
Uncertain	5(3.8)
Disagree	81(60.9)
Strongly Disagree	1(.8)

Table 4 shows the percentile score of the patient's satisfaction regarding their treatment. Where the patients with low satisfaction were 56 (42.1%) for the reason that they were too late to get appointment by the physician for their check-up and were not satisfied with the hospital services as it is difficult to get the required medicines from the hospital pharmacy, sometime they had to go the outcast laboratories for the expensive and urgent lab reports. The patients with average satisfaction were 44 (33.1%), whereas patients with high satisfaction were 33 (24.8%) as they reported their physician relation with them is friendly, understanding, warmth, supportive and satisfying.

**Table 4:** Percentile score to particulate the satisfaction level of patients

Percentile	Frequency (%)
low satisfaction	56(42.1)
average satisfaction	44(33.1)
high satisfaction	33(24.8)

## DISCUSSION

The current study assesses the level of satisfaction among oncology patient regarding their treatment. The study results show that from the total number of participants who responded immensely were with age of above 45 (33.8%), in which females were 78 (58.6%) more than males and with earning 15000-25000 were 56 (42.1%). Patient's satisfaction is identical aspect which greatly influence on the health outcomes, ready to get the treatment, and participation of the patient in the treatment processes. According to previous study satisfaction among oncology patients is evaluated by the in-depth interviews [13]. Focus-discussions, consultations, all that things emphasis on healthy interpersonal relation of the patients and their physicians [14]. Comparatively to the current study 101 (75.9%) cancer patients were agree with that, their physician is responsive and courteous for them whereas 76 (57.1%) patients were disagree with the statement that "their physician ignore what they tell them" all these results show that the physician have healthy therapeutic relation with their patients for satisfaction. According to Bourque and Loiselle concept 60.3% patients are interesting to participate in their treatment choice and effort to get proper information about their disease [15]. As it related to all the procedureds done for their treatments, which increase their satisfaction related to the treatment [15, 16]. Conferring the current study 97 (72.9%) patients are agree that their physicians are virtuous to clarifying all the complications related to the disease, their treatments about all the lab procedureds, knowledge about all the drugs and their way to administer, as the result 81 (60.9%) patients are disagree with the declaration that they are dissatisfied with care they receive from their physician, which also upgrade the satisfaction level of the patient regarding their treatment. Liljas et al., presented according to the five-point scale "Likert" patient are satisfied with the services of health care staff, with the healthy therapeutic relation between physician and patient [17]. Some elements discussed that affect the satisfaction the patients were waiting a long to get appointment for check up from the physician [18]. According to current study 74 (55.6%) patients are agree with that they hard to get an appointment to check up to the physician, and 73 (54.9%) patients are agree with the reported that sometime medical care provider is in hurry to treat the patient, which can affect the satisfaction of the patient. Cancer



overgrown as the chief cause of death worldwide, as it estimates by WHO in 2019 cancer is the first and second prominent source of death afore the age of 70 years in 112 to 183 countries [19]. Patients with cancer disease were already very stressed, depressed and irritable with the ongoing medical procedures, regular medicines, and routine follow ups [20]. Thus, it's difficult for them to wait too long in the hospital environment, which disturb their mental status therefore sometime they become anguish, or dissatisfy with the hospital services and feel deprived for themselves and losing their hope for treatment to live the healthy life. At this point the management have to upgrade measures especially for the cancer patients those are struggling in this threatening period of their life.

## CONCLUSIONS

Patient satisfaction is the significant key feature for the remarkable outcomes of the treatment from the health care unit particularly in cancer patients. The patients especially with this chronic disease (cancer) were already facing so many crises physical as well as financial. Which makes their mind sick and full of worries overall? Therefore, in this critical era for the cancer patients' hospital management should provide a whole, accurate care and exceptional opportunities to provide relief to cancer patients, to limit the time span in the hospital and increase the level of satisfaction.

## Authors Contribution

Conceptualization: SK

Methodology: SK, HS, KU

Formal analysis: KU

Writing-review and editing: SK, HS, RJ, STK

All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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