



Factors Influencing Health Information-Seeking Behavior of Jordanian Patients With Cancer

Laila M. Akhu-Zaheya
RN, MSN, CNS, PhD (c)

University at Buffalo, The State University of New York



BACKGROUND

Significance

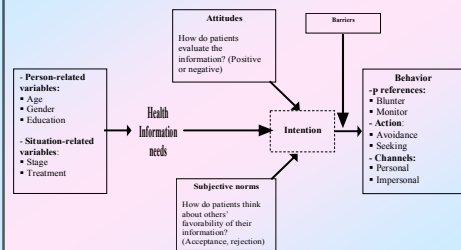
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Jordan
- Many patients have limited knowledge about cancer, a disease with many challenges
- Patients with cancer engage in health information-seeking behavior to meet their needs
- A pilot study evaluating Internet use among Jordanian patients with cancer showed that many are not seeking health information from any sources (Akhu-Zaheya, 2004)

PURPOSE

To assess the factors that influence the health information-seeking behavior of Jordanian Muslim patients with cancer

Theoretical Framework

Jordanian patient health information-seeking behavior based on an extended model of the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980)



METHODS

Design

Descriptive, correlation design

Setting

Inpatient & outpatient cancer treatment settings (Al-Bashir, Islamic, Jordan, Jordan University, King Abdullah, & King Hussein cancer hospitals, & clinics) in Jordan

Sample

Convenience sample of adult (18 years and older) Jordanian males and females, Muslim, with various types of cancer, in different disease stages and undergoing different treatments. Inclusion criteria included being able to read and understand English and being mentally and physically able & willing to participate

Instruments

Survey questionnaire included:

- Person-related variables (gender, age, & education) and situation-related variables (type of cancer, stage, & treatment)
- Scale developed by the researcher measuring attitude (10 items) and subjective norms (10 items)
- A modified questionnaire (22 items) from the Information Style Questionnaire (Cassileth, Zupkis, Sutton-Smith, & March, 1980) to assess cancer patients' health information needs
- A modified form of Miller Behavior Style Scale (Miller, 1987) to assess cancer patients' health information preference (5 scenarios)
- A modified form of Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS) (Nelson et al., 2004) to identify seekers & avoiders, channels used & barriers

Analysis

Descriptive & Multiple regression analyses

RESULTS

Participants (N = 150)

Table 1. Personal-Related Variables

	F (%)
Setting	
Inpatient	67 (44.7)
Outpatient	63 (42.0)
Home	20 (13.3)
Gender	
Female	77 (51.3)
Male	73 (48.7)
Marital Status	
Single	26 (17.3)
Married	123 (82.0)
Widow	1 (7)
Education Level	
High school or less	33 (22.0)
Undergraduate	111 (74.0)
Graduate	6 (4.0)
Education level (Yrs) M (SD)	14.6 (1.88)
Age M (SD)	41.58 (12.99)

Table 2. Situational-Related Variables

	F (%)
Cancer type	
Hematology	53 (35.3)
Breast	40 (26.7)
Gastrointestinal	29 (19.3)
Respiratory	10 (6.7)
Genitourinary	7 (4.7)
Gynecological	4 (2.7)
Head & Neck	4 (2.7)
Bone Cancer	3 (2.0)
Stage of Cancer	
Local	97 (64.7)
Metastasis	53 (35.3)
Treatment	
Chemotherapy	140 (93.3)
Surgery	38 (25.3)
Radiotherapy	85 (56.7)

Health Information Needs

- Health information needs were related to disease, diagnostic procedures, treatment, side effects, and daily living
- 89 participants (59.3%) perceived their health information needs as high, while 61 (40.7%) perceived their needs as low
- Participants rated the three highest health information needs "strong agreement" as likelihood of a cure ($n = 114, 76.0\%$); treatment duration ($n = 112, 74.7\%$); treatment side effects and their management ($n = 105, 70.0\%$)
- 29 participants (19.3%) rated the lowest "strong agreement" need as health information about survival rate
- Younger patients, patients who underwent surgery, and male patients reported more need for health information, $R^2 = .18$; $F(7, 142) = 4.39$; $p < .05$

Attitude Towards Health Information-Seeking Behavior

- 82 participants (54.7%) positively perceived that health information-seeking behavior was valuable
- 83 participants (55.3%) negatively perceived that health information-seeking behavior helped them control their new situations
- 82 participants (54.7%) positively perceived that health information-seeking behavior evoked anxiety

Subjective Norms Regarding Health Information-Seeking Behavior

- 92 participants (61.3%) perceived that health care providers accepted their health information-seeking behavior
- 95 participants (63.3%) perceived that their religious beliefs encouraged health information-seeking behavior

Barriers to Seeking Health Information

- 102 participants (68%) had concerns about the quality of the health information
- 22 participants (14.7%) made an effort to seek health information, but they could not find health information needed
- 19 participants (12.7%) reported difficulty understanding medical language

Health Information Preferences

- 101 participants (67.3%) preferred to know health information "High monitors"
- When in need, participants preferred to seek health information even when they perceived barriers to seeking that information, $R^2 = .17$; $F(7, 135) = 4.51$; $p < .05$

Health Information-Seeking Behavior

- 65 participants (43.3%) were high seekers; 83 (55.3%) were seeking to a limited degree; 2 (1.4%) were avoiders
- Participants sought health information when they were in need, faced fewer barriers, and perceived rejection of their behavior from their health care providers, $R^2 = .13$; $F(7, 135) = 3.91$; $p < .05$

Channels Used

- 95 participants (63.3%) cited health care providers as their source for health information
- Participants' other sources for health information included: television ($n = 138, 92.0\%$), magazines/newspaper ($n = 98, 65.3\%$), family ($n = 92, 60.7\%$), and Internet ($n = 57, 38.0\%$)

CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS

- There are several factors that influence health information-seeking behavior of Jordanian Muslim patients with cancer, including their needs and preferences, as well as barriers, acceptance of health care providers and sources used. Attitude and religious beliefs were not found to be significantly related to health information seeking-behavior
- Further research is needed to refine the attitude and subjective norms scale in order to better understand health information-seeking behavior of Jordanian Muslim patients with cancer
- Future studies should address the outcomes of health information-seeking behavior

