

## ABSTRACT

**Title of Thesis** : Psychological Characteristics Related to Drug Use Behavior of Cancer Patients at the Cancer Control and Prevention Center in Ubonratchathani Province

**Author** : Mr.Mengkonchai Ungsaichua

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The study was conducted for 3 main objectives : 1) to find out the cancer patients' drugs use behavior , 2) to identify the relationship between the bio-social variables -- i.e., sex, age, education, income, occupation, and marital status- with the cancer patients' drug use behavior , and 3) to point out the relationship between the three psychological characteristics— namely, belief in internal locus of control , future orientation and self-control , and life and health value— and the cancer patients' drug use behavior. The data were collected from 107 cancer patients admitted in the In-patient Department of the Cancer Control and Prevention Center in Ubonratchathani Province. The data were collected during September1-10 ,2001. A questionnaire used for data collection was composed of 5 parts : 1) background information (bio-social variables), 2) the patients' drug use behavior scale, 3) life and health value scale, 4) belief in internal locus of control scale , and 5) future orientation and self-control scale . In collecting the data, the researcher interviewed the patients whose education was poor and distributed copies of the questionnaire to fill out for educated patients.

The statistics used for testing the hypotheses were t-test , One - Way Analysis of Variance or F-test , and Pearson' Product – Moment Correlation .

The findings were summarized as follows :

1) Most of the cancer patients in the sample group were found to have an appropriate drug use behavior. That is, 77.6 percent had appropriate to the most appropriate behavior in drug use . However, some might have to adjust their drug use behavior . For example, they had to take the medicine half an hour before a meal if that medicine was prescribed so. They had to strictly follow the doctor's order when taking analgesic drug . Before taking medicines, they always had to notice their color and others

2) The bio-social factors found to be significantly related to the patients' drug use behavior were occupation, education and income. In fact, farmers were found to have the least appropriate drug use behavior . The patients who had no education or who finished primary education had a less appropriate drug use behavior than those who had higher education. The patients whose income was lower than 5,000 baht a month had a less appropriate drug use behavior than those whose income was higher. Other factors, i.e., age, sex and marital status were found to have no relationship with the patients' drug behavior

3) The life and health value was found to have a positive relationship with the patients' drug use behavior. That is , the patients who gave a higher value to health will use drug more appropriately than those who gave a low value to health . The other two psychological characteristics as--that is , belief in internal locus of control and future orientation and self-control - were found to have no relationship with the patients' drug use behavior.

The findings revealed the psychological factors related to the cancer patients' drug use behavior . The following recommendations were made to build the patients' correct drug use habit.

1) The pharmacist must give detailed instructions about taking medicine to the patients so that they can use medicines appropriately .

2) The hospitals should clearly inform cancer patients the correct way of taking medicines. Particularly, the farmer whose education was poor and those whose income was lower than 5,000 baht a month.

3) The hospitals should setup a project that help the patients build the correct life and health value so that they will realize the benefit and value of good health.