Thesis Title   Relationships Among Selected Factors, Uncertainty in Illness, Social Support and Adaptation in Breast Cancer Women receiving Chemotherapy

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine, within Mishel's Uncertainty in Illness theoretical framework, the relationships among selected factors of duration of formal education, number of courses of chemotherapy, uncertainty in illness, social support and adaptation in breast cancer women receiving chemotherapy . The purposive sample consisted of 130 breast cancer patients receiving chemotherapy from out patient surgical department, Ramathibodi Hospital and out patient clinic, National Cancer Institute. Uncertainty was assessed by the Mishel Uncertainty in Illness Scale (Mishel 1990). Social support was assessed by Social Support Question-naire, developed by Somchit Hanucharurnkul(1988) and adaptation was assessed by the modified Psychosocial Adjustment to Illness Scale, developed by Derogatis et al., (1986) and Symptom Distress Scale, developed by Weisman, Worden & Sobel (1980).

Results of the study indicated that uncertainty in illness was correlated with adaptation in negative direction (r=-.53,p<.001). Social support was negatively correlated

with uncertainty in illness (r=-.37, p<.001) and positively correlated with adaptation (r=.28, p<.001). Duration of formal education was negatively correlated with uncertainty in ill ness (r=-.45, p<.001). In addition, economic problem was positively correlated with uncertainty in illness (r=.49, p<.001) and negatively correlated with adaptation (r=-.50, p<.001). Multiple regression analysis to predict adaptation revealed that uncertainty in illness and economic problem were significant preditors of adaptation and accounted for 36 % of variance. Social support, duration of formal education and economic problem seemed to predict adaptation indirectly through uncertainty in illness, all variables were accounted for 36% of variance in uncertainty in illness.

The finding seemed to support the validity of Mishel's theory of Uncertainty in Illness which postulated the relationships of uncertainty and adaptation and factors which influenced uncertainty in illness. Limitation of study, application of the findings in practice, education and further research are recommended.