

## The Relationship between Religious Beliefs and Hope in Cancer Patients

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### Abstract

**Background and objectives:** Cancer causes permanent changes in an individual's life style and their way of adapting to changes. Hope might be used as an important adaptation mechanism in cancer. Patients need social and individual support like beliefs to boost their hope. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between religious beliefs and hope in cancer cases.

**Material and Methods:** This is an analytical study. 220 cancer patients in chemo and radiotherapy centers were assessed with convenience sampling. Standard Allport religious beliefs and Herth Hope Index questionnaires were used to collect data. Data were analyzed using SPSS13 with descriptive, inferential and regression tests.

**Results:** The mean of hope score was  $37.6 \pm 3.74$ . There was significant relationship between hope and diagnosis period of time, cancer type ( $p < 0/0001$ ), religious beliefs ( $p < 0/01$ ) and external religious beliefs ( $p < 0/05$ ). General religious beliefs and external religious beliefs explained 12% and 4% of hope variance respectively.

**Conclusion:** Religious beliefs play an important role in boosting patients' hope. Facilitating ritual atmosphere, decorating setting with religious posters and holding religious classes are suggested according to the results.

**Key Words:** Neoplasm, Hope, Religion

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