

Abstract

Background and Objective: Despite of increasing concerns on effects of low health literacy, the influence of health literacy on health status and utilization of health services is not clear. The objective of this research is to assess health literacy and find out the relationship between health literacy and health services utilization.

Methodology: this study is a cross-sectional study (descriptive – analytical) and applications that conducted in Kerman. One thousand of literates urban population aged 18- up were questioned. In order to gather information from standard questionnaires to measure functional health literacy in adult is that localization and health services that were taking advantage of its validity and reliability with Cronbach's alpha was 0.88 with a form to collect demographic data and socio was used. Data were described using descriptive statistics, to study variables relationships statistical tests such as chi square, T test, one way ANOVA and linear regression were applied.

Findings: The level of health literacy of 60 percent of the population was low (inadequate, boarder line). Education ($p=0.001$) and Insurance coverage status ($p=0.002$) had the most correlation with health literacy. Health Literacy had influence on health Services Utilization. The groups with high score of health literacy walk on one health center ($p=0.006$). It was reported the people with low level of health literacy had more hospitalization ($p=0.003$). The effect of health literacy was confirmed on health Services Utilization factors after removing effect of confounding factors.

Conclusion: Health literacy was assessed low in Kerman. Enhancing health literacy may be an effective strategy for health improvement and health services utilization. Health literacy assessment for feedback of health literacy levels and appropriate demand from modern health care system should be measured by health care plans and policy making. It is suggested the necessity of cultural and educational preparedness for promoting individual health literacy, improvement of blueprint in health services utilization, and the close cooperation and coordination among health system, education system and media.

Key words: Health Literacy, Health Services Utilization, Kerman

**The relationship between health literacy and utilization of health
services in the city of Kerman, 2011**

A Thesis
Presented to
The Graduate Studies

By

Sahar Parva

To get a Masters Degree
in

Health services management

**Kerman University of Medical Sciences
2011**