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CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND MATERNITY CARE

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Psychology
at Massey University**

Tony Peter Christensen

1993

ABSTRACT

The present study investigated women's satisfaction with maternity care using a self-administered questionnaire. The purpose of the present study was twofold: first, to address a series of specific questions posed by the health provider and to provide feedback on the findings. Secondly, to examine the nature of consumer satisfaction with maternity care as a psychological construct from both a multidimensional and global perspective. The measure of global satisfaction was derived from items of the frequently used Consumer Satisfaction Questionnaire - 8, whilst, the discrete (multidimensional) aspects of the questionnaire were derived from a pilot study, literature search and suggestions from the nursing personnel of the six maternity units assessed. Careful consideration was given to predispositional factors (e.g., life satisfaction) and the effects of demand characteristics, particularly reactivity, sampling error and response bias. Two hundred and forty-seven of the five hundred and thirty-eight women surveyed returned the questionnaire. The results showed high levels of global satisfaction with antenatal services, labour and delivery care, post-partum care and global satisfaction with maternity care in general. Multiple regression analysis showed satisfaction with maternity care to be a multidimensional construct with several discrete aspects of care significantly associated with the mother's global impression of each stage of their maternity care and their global satisfaction. The results also showed discrete aspects of the service with which mothers were especially dissatisfied. The methodological approach used in the present study and the statistical methods used to analyse the data were found to be especially useful in identifying areas in which the service could be improved, in addition to facilitating meaningful comparisons between similar facilities in the future.

For Johnathan Peter Christensen who inspired and ensured my continuing interest in the Psychology of Obstetric and Paediatric care, and Dr.Geof Aitken whose gentle ways and devotion to his tiny patients diminishes the pain of the bewildered parents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank my supervisor Dr. Frank Deane for sharing his knowledge; for his invaluable assistance and encouragement; for his open door policy, and most of all for impressing upon me the importance of good research practice.

I also wish to thank my co-supervisor Dr. Ron Henderson for his friendship, sense of humour, guidance, encouragement and assistance throughout this project.

Thankyou to Jeanette Wylie (Manager of Women's and Rural Health Services, Midcentral Health) for providing me with the opportunity and financial resources to undertake this project.

A special thanks to my mother for her emotional and practical support throughout my graduate studies.

Last but not least a very special thankyou to my partner Ryl who in the face of her own adversity graciously tolerated the occasional emotional outburst. Also to my children who, in their wisdom, accepted my often neglect of their needs as an exercise in creative parenting.

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