

Original Article

PATIENT SATISFACTION ABOUT HOSPITAL SERVICES: A STUDY FROM THE OUTPATIENT DEPARTMENT OF TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL, JABALPUR, MADHYA PRADESH, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Background: Patient satisfaction is an important means of measuring the effectiveness of health care delivery and quality of medical care. It denotes the extent to which general health care needs of the patient are met to their requirements. The most important reason to conduct patient satisfaction surveys is that they provide the ability to identify and resolve potential problems before they become serious. This study was designed to assess the patient satisfaction regarding the services provided in outpatient department.

Material and Methods: A cross-sectional study was carried out in 100 randomly selected patients. They were interviewed at the exit point of outpatient department during the period from 21/09/2013 to 25/09/13. The data were collected on predesigned and pretested questionnaire.

Results: Most of the respondents were satisfied with availability of services, professional care, waiting time, behavior of consultant, nurses, paramedical staff and other staff. The overall satisfaction level was 73% excellent to good, 22% average and 94% respondents answered 'yes' to the question - 'would you recommend this hospital to friends and family'. Out of total 68% respondents were unsatisfied with toilet facility and 56% were unsatisfied with drinking water facility.

Conclusion: OPD services in a hospital need to be improved by developing patient feedback system.

Keywords: Patient Satisfaction; Health Care Services; Outpatient Department; Professional Care

INTRODUCTION

Outpatient Department in any hospital is considered to be shop window of the hospital.^{1,2} Patient satisfaction is as important as other clinical health measures and is a primary means of measuring the effectiveness of health care delivery.³ Patient satisfaction denotes the extent to which general health care needs of the clients are met to their requirements. Patients carry certain expectations before their visit and the resultant satisfaction or dissatisfaction is the outcome of their actual experience.^{4,5,6,7} The purpose of health care services is to improve the health status of the population. There is now broad agreement that health services should be comprehensive, accessible and acceptable, provide scope for community participation and available at a cost the community and country can afford.⁸ The data gathered by measuring patient satisfaction reflects care delivered by staff and physicians and can serve as a tool in decision-making. Patient satisfaction surveys can be tools for learning. They can also serve

as a means of holding physicians accountable. Patient satisfaction data can also be used to document health care quality to accrediting organizations and consumer groups and can provide leverage in negotiating contracts. Probably the most important reason to conduct patient satisfaction surveys is that they provide the ability to identify and resolve potential problems before they become serious. They can also be used to assess and measure specific initiatives or changes in service delivery. Most importantly, they can increase patient loyalty by demonstrating you care about their perceptions and are looking for ways to improve.³

The present study made an attempt to focus on various aspects of health care provided by Tertiary Care centre in relation with patient's satisfaction.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design: A cross-sectional study was carried out among patients attending outpatient department of

tertiary care hospital, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, India during the period from 18/02/2013 to 23/02/13.

Sample size: The sample size was calculated by using the formula $n = Z^2pq/d^2$ (where $Z=1.96$ at 95% confidence; p = prevalence of patient satisfactions; $q=1-p$; d = absolute allowable error. For this study we presumed maximum variability, therefore $p=0.5$; $q=0.5$; $d=20\%$ of p . Sample size thus yielded is 96 which is rounded off to a figure as 100. Simple random sampling technique was used to select patients attending different speciality department of hospital.

Inclusion criteria: New patients in a hospital OPD.

Exclusion criteria: Patients not willing to participate and follow up patients were excluded from the study.

The patients and accompanying persons either parents or relatives for pediatric age less than 15 years were interviewed at the exit point of hospital after taking informed consent with the help of predesigned and pretested questionnaire. The questions included registration process, seating arrangements, cleanliness, approach to the doctor, pharmacist and investigation site, services provided by the doctor and other Paramedical staff & their behavior with patients, depth of relationship with patient, time required for locating the consultant, consults by the doctor, investigations and taking medicines from pharmacist. The respondents could answer in this study as satisfactory/ unsatisfactory, yes/no, excellent/ good/ average/ poor. The patients were told that the purpose of the study was to assess the patient satisfaction of services provided by hospital so as to bring further improvement in services. The patients were also told that the investigator was not part of treatment team and they were free to give their responses.

RESULT

Out of 100 respondents 52 male, 48 female, a majority of patients belonged to age group 15- 45 years with mean age of $42.9(\pm 19.53)$. The 94% of respondents were patient themselves and 6% of respondents were accompanying persons either parents or relatives for pediatric age less than 15 year of age. The participants were asked about concerned department (Table1).

Regarding availability of services (Table 2) it was found that, most of the respondents were satisfied with sitting arrangement, cleanliness, convenience to reach appropriate OPD, finding of consultant in OPD, convenience to reach investigation site, appropriate signage, symbol, arrows in respective departments, consultants chamber, lab and pharmacy counters present in hospital OPD, but only 50% respondents were satisfied regarding convenience to reach pharmacist. Respondents were mostly unsatisfied with toilet and drinking water facility in OPD.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables and concerned departments

Variables	Respondent (n=100)
Age	
<15 year	6
15-45 year	58
46-60 year	16
>60 year	20
Sex	
Male	52
Female	48
Education	
Illiterate	14
Primary school	26
Middle school	18
Higher secondary	20
Graduate and above	22
Occupation	
Service	8
Business	28
Laborer	26
House wife	26
Student	12
Department	
Medicine	41
Surgery	10
Obstetrics and gynecology	11
Pediatric	6
Orthopedic	15
Dermatology	4
ENT	6
Ophthalmology	7

Table 2: Distribution of responses from the respondents according to availability of services

Availability of service	Respondent (n=100)
Seating arrangement in OPD	
Satisfactory	82
Unsatisfactory	18
Cleanliness in OPD	
Satisfactory	70
Unsatisfactory	30
Toilet facility	
Satisfactory	32
Unsatisfactory	68
Drinking water facility in OPD	
Satisfactory	44
Unsatisfactory	56
Convenience to reach appropriate OPD	
Satisfactory	72
Unsatisfactory	28
Finding of consultant in OPD	
Satisfactory	80
Unsatisfactory	20
Convenience to reach investigation site	
Satisfactory	56
Unsatisfactory	44
Convenience to reach pharmacist	
Satisfactory	50
Unsatisfactory	50
Appropriate signage, symbol, arrows in OPD	
Present	64
Not present	36

Regarding professional care and depth of relationship (Table 3) it was observed that, most of respondents were satisfied with examination by doctors, doctor's explanation about treatment, following doctor's advice, doctor tried to know everything about patient and doctor really knew what patient was thinking about. Regarding difficulty to telling doctor about some private thing 68% patient felt it was difficult and 50% satisfied with understanding illness after consultation with doctor.

With regard to waiting time (Table 4) most of the respondents were satisfied with time taken to get OPD slip, time to reach consultation room. Only 52% respondents were satisfied with the time taken in getting medicine from pharmacy and 56% were satisfied with time taken in getting investigation slip from OPD. Respondents told that 56% of consultants take less than 5 min. for examination and 34% take 5- 15 min.

Table 3: Distribution of responses from the respondents according to Professional care and depth of relationship

Professional care and depth of relationship	Respondent (n=100)
Examination by doctors	
Satisfactory	68
Unsatisfactory	32
Doctor's explanation about treatment	
Satisfactory	62
Unsatisfactory	38
Following doctor's advise	
Satisfactory	74
Unsatisfactory	26
Understanding illness after consultation with doctor	
Satisfactory	50
Unsatisfactory	50
Doctor tried to know everything about patient	
Yes	62
No	39
Difficulty in telling doctor about private thing	
Yes	68
No	32
Doctor really knew what patient was thinking about	
Yes	64
No	36

Regarding general satisfaction (Table 5) most of the respondents were satisfied with behavior of consultant, nurses and paramedical staff, and behavior of clerical and other staff. In present study 94% respondents answered 'yes' to the question -'would you recommend this hospital to friends and family'. The overall satisfaction level was excellent to good in 73% respondents, average in 22% and poor in only 5%.

DISCUSSION

NSCB Medical College Hospital Jabalpur is tertiary health care centre of the Mahakaushal region of central India, which is a centre of interest for large num-

ber of patients in its OPDs. In the present study majority of patients belonged to age group of 15-45 year age, which is productive age group. Factors impact on the patient's satisfaction may include the cleanliness of the environment, the appearance of the facility, the ease of access to specific locations, the concern expressed from various staff and providers for the patient's well-being, the amount of time they had to wait before getting care, the quality of the interaction with providers, the clarity of the communication from providers, the outcome from the care provided, the perceived efficiency in which care was delivered, etc.³ In the present study outdoor patient satisfaction assessment was made by respondents on the basis of availability of services, professional care and depth of relationship, waiting time and general satisfaction.

Table 4: Distribution of responses from the respondents according to waiting time

Waiting time	Respondent (n=100)
Time taken for OPD slip	
Satisfactory	92
Unsatisfactory	8
Time taken to reach consultant in OPD	
Satisfactory	80
Unsatisfactory	20
Time taken for examination	
Less than 5 min	56
5-15 min	34
15-30 min	4
More than 30 min	6
Time taken in getting medicine from pharmacy	
Satisfactory	52
Unsatisfactory	48
Time taken in getting investigation slip from OPD	
Satisfactory	56
Unsatisfactory	44

A study conducted by Jadhav SB et al in Out-patient department of Government Medical College, Miraj, Dist. Sangli reported that 70.57% seating arrangement in OPD & 78.22% cleanliness of OPD found to be good, which was almost similar to our study.⁹ Jawaharsk, out patient satisfaction at a super specialty hospital in India, had reported that, 50% of the patients were satisfied with regard to the cleanliness of the hospital.¹⁰ Prasanna K S. et al, had reported in study consumer satisfaction about hospital services: a study from the outpatient department of a private medical college hospital at Mangalore, that patients were fully satisfied in respect to seating arrangement, cleanliness in the OPD, which was almost similar to our study.¹¹ Patavegar Bilkishet al reported, 55.55% patients replied that they were satisfied with cleanliness of waiting area.¹² In another study done by Pralhad Rai et al also found 65% satisfied patients with respect to cleanliness.¹³ Jadhavsb et al had reported 68.41% respondents satisfied with drinking water facility, 83.71% respondents could easily find the concerned department while 77.71% could find easily pharmacy or laboratory while 46.54% of total participants were

not satisfied with available toilet facility in the hospital.⁹

Table 5: Distribution of responses from the respondents according to general satisfaction

General satisfaction	Respondent(n=100)
Satisfaction regarding consultant's behavior	
Satisfactory	78
Average	18
Poor	4
Satisfaction regarding behavior of Nurse's and paramedical staff's	
Satisfactory	64
Average	35
Poor	1
Satisfaction regarding behavior of class 3 and class 4 worker	
Satisfactory	84
Average	12
Poor	4
General remark over experience in hospital	
Excellent	26
Good	47
Average	22
Poor	5
Recommendation of this hospital to your friends & family.	
Yes	94
No	6

In our study 72% respondents were satisfied with convenient to reach appropriate OPD, 80% of respondents said that finding of consultant easy and were satisfied, 56% satisfied with convenient to reach investigation site, while 68% respondent unsatisfied with toilet facility in hospital, 56% respondent unsatisfied with drinking water facility and 50% respondent said there was inconvenient to reach pharmacist and were unsatisfied.

In the present study regarding professional care and depth of relationship with doctor, 68% respondents were satisfied with doctor check everything, 62% said doctor explain everything about treatment and were satisfied, 50% respond that they understand their illness after consultation with doctor and 74% of respondents follow doctors advise. Krupal Joshi et al, explanation of the disease by the doctor was satisfactory in about 91% of patients,¹⁴ which was 81.6% in a study of Acharya & Acharya.¹⁵ Soleimanpour H. et al, on emergency department patient satisfaction survey in Imam Reza Hospital, Tabriz, Iran reported that the satisfaction level of patients in regard to the information given by care provider about medication was very good in 49.4% of patients.¹⁶

In the present study it was also found 62% of respondents said that doctor tried to know everything about illness but 68% also felt difficulty to tell doctor about some private thing.

In the present study 92% of respondents were satisfied with time require to get OPD slip, 80% satisfied with time to reach consultation room. Jadhav SB et al, 54.8%

participants found that the time required for registration was inconvenient for them, 31.4% participants reported inconvenience in finding concerned department.⁹ In our study 52% respondents satisfied with the time getting medicine from pharmacy and 56% with time getting investigation slip from OPD. Jadhav SB. et al, 38.95% of total respondents were unsatisfied with time required for investigations while 48.7% were unsatisfied with time spent in pharmacy.⁹ In the present study respondents tell that 56% of consultant take time less than 5 min. and 34% take 5- 15 min. Jadhav SB. et al time taken for consultation & examination by doctor was found to be satisfactory in case of 68.82% participants.⁹

Regarding general satisfaction in the present study 78% respondents were satisfied with behavior of consultant, 64% of respondents satisfied with behavior of nurses and paramedical staff, 84% satisfied with behavior of clerical and other workers. In a study by Acharya & Acharya, 82.8 % of the respondents showed that the approach of the doctor is personal, 93.2% of the subjects were satisfied with the examination by the doctor, and it was simple and easy to understand in 60% of the cases.¹⁵ Apria Bhattacharya et al reported 98.2% patients were satisfied with behavior of doctors.¹⁷ M V Kulkarni et al, 87.8% patients were satisfied with behavior of doctors.¹⁸ Patavegar Bilkish et al, a cross-sectional study of patient's satisfaction towards services received at tertiary care hospital on OPD basis reported 94% patients were satisfied with friendliness and helpfulness of registration staff.¹² This finding is in contrast to study conducted by Md. Ziaul Islam and Md. Abdul Jabbar. They found only 25 % patients were satisfied with friendliness and helpfulness of registration staff.¹⁹

In the present study the over all satisfaction level was in 73% respondent excellent to good while in 22% average. Jadhav SB. et al reported overall rate of availability of services during their visit, it was excellent for 22.15%, good for 29.26%, average for 30%, poor for 8.79% & very Poor for 9.8% respondents.⁹ The study conducted by Chetwynd S.J. reported total satisfaction was 49%.²⁰ Ranjeeta Kumari et al. in their study total satisfaction was 73 %.²¹ Asma Ibrahim et al showed 10% overall satisfaction in their study.²²

CONCLUSION

Most of the respondents were satisfied with the availability of services, waiting time, professional care provided by consultant in OPD, behavior of consultant, nurse's and paramedical staff's. They were unsatisfied with toilet and drinking water facility present in OPD, approach to pharmacist, understanding illness after consultation with doctor and difficulty in telling private thing with doctor. So it is recommended that as OPD services are an important part of health care services in hospital, they need to be improve with special emphasis on improving toilet facility, drinking water facility and approach to the pharmacist and therefore

hospital should develop patient feedback system which is vital for quality of services.

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