

Patients Satisfaction Levels in Out Patient Department of a Teaching Hospital

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Abstract

Objective: To evaluate patient satisfaction and its relation with different demographic factors of respondents in the outpatient department of a teaching hospital.

Methodology: A cross sectional study was performed between February 2011 and June 2011. A total sample size of 150 participants was collected by consecutive sampling technique. Participants were interviewed privately face to face in the hospital in Outpatient department of PESSI hospital Rawalpindi. Interviews were conducted by trained interviewers using pre tested questionnaires. Data was entered and analyzed by using SPSS v 15. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data. Percent mean score technique was used to show the satisfaction score of the participants.

Results: In this sample of 150 participants 89 (59.30%) were males. Mean age of the sample was 38.15 ± 10.919 years. Majority of the participants [105 (70%)] were married. Most of the participants [72 (48%)] were under matric and 66 (44%) were illiterate. Maximum patients [72 (48%)] belonged to low income class (< 7000 Rs.). The overall patient's satisfaction in terms of mean percent satisfaction score was 61.39 ± 9.8793 ranging from 33.5 to 84. The highest mean percent satisfaction score (64.15 ± 11.61) was observed in age interval of 25-35 years and the higher satisfaction was noted in females (62.10 ± 8.95). The highest satisfaction with respect to marital status was seen in widowed category and minimum in single patients. The highest mean percent satisfaction score (67.75 ± 5.08) was in patients who had intermediate level education but the patients who were in under matric category of education had lowest mean percent satisfaction level of 58.63 ± 9.56 . Similarly the highest satisfaction was observed in low income class (63.33 ± 10.09).

Conclusions: In general, patients were satisfied with their hospital care; overall satisfaction level was 61%. Patients' level of satisfaction showed a relation with age, gender, education and income level.

Key Words: Patients Satisfaction, Mean Percent

satisfaction Score, PESSI,

Introduction

It is easier to evaluate the patient's satisfaction towards the service than evaluate the quality of medical services that they receive. Therefore, a probe into patient satisfaction can be an important tool to improve the quality of services.¹ Patient satisfaction is a multi-dimensional healthcare issue affected by many factors. Healthcare quality affects patient satisfaction, and in result it influences on positive patient behaviour such as confidence in hospital care. Patient satisfaction and healthcare service quality can be increased by using a multi-disciplinary approach that combines patient inputs as well as expert judgment.²

In a study, it was concluded that paramedical staff need to know the factors influencing the patient satisfaction in order to improve the quality of health care.³ Measurement of patient satisfaction is expected to play an increasingly important role in the growing push toward accountability among health care providers overshadowed by measures of clinical processes and outcomes in the quality of care equation. Patient satisfaction finding regarding inpatient and ambulatory care play a significant role in hospitals' strategies and tactics in delivering patient services.⁴

Every human being carries a particular set of thoughts, feelings and needs. By getting to know the patients a little more to get their views on the care, one ought to come closer to what the patients consider as good care.⁵ Patient compliance is very important for successful treatment outcome and since clinical outcome is always attributed to the provider and never to the patient, the patient compliance with treatment becomes all the more crucial.⁶

Working over a long period of time in hospitals, the staff may become insensitive to the pains and anxiety of the patients. There is not much emphasis on the behavioral aspects in the training programs in our medical colleges.⁷

Different demographic aspects of patients can affect the patient's satisfaction level but some studies showed that age, gender, income or formal education have shown no clear connection with the patient satisfaction.⁴ But many studies have pointed out the importance of certain variables

including age which consistently shows that elderly patients are more satisfied as compared with other age groups.⁸ In a study it was noted that efficient delivery of Primary Health Care through the existing health system will lead to improved health conditions and improved patients' satisfaction.⁹ Some studies elaborated that supporting staff and paramedical staff of hospital should be the factors influencing the patient satisfaction in order to improve the quality of health care.¹⁰

Health care consumers today, are more sophisticated than in the past and now demand increasingly more accurate and valid evidence of health plan quality. Patient-centered outcomes have taken center stage as the primary means of measuring the effectiveness of health care delivery.^{1,9}

It is being accepted that the patient's feedback is very important indicator for quality of healthcare. Patient's feedback is very valuable for the hospital management as a predicted for their planning as well as a guideline to improve quality of services.¹¹

Patient satisfaction is a domain not given much importance in our part of the world, especially if we talk about tertiary care public hospitals. This study was planned to measure the patient satisfaction in OPD of a tertiary care teaching hospital to assess the quality of care provided in terms of patients' satisfaction.

Methodology

A cross sectional study was performed between February 2011 and June 2011. A total sample size of 150 participants was collected by consecutive sampling technique. Informed written consent was taken from all the participants and approval of the study was taken from the hospital ethical committee. Participants were interviewed privately face to face in the hospital in outpatient department of PESSI hospital Rawalpindi. Interviews were conducted by trained interviewers using pre tested questionnaires. Information regarding demographic characteristics like age, gender, educational status, marital status and monthly income was recorded. Different characteristics of hospital like behavior of doctor, paramedical staff, waiting time, etc which can affect the patient satisfaction were measured on five point scale of Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Uncertain (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1). The percent score was calculated for each patient and patient satisfaction was measured in terms of mean percent score with respect to different demographic characteristics. Data were entered and analyzed by using SPSS v 15. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data and results were presented by mean \pm SD and frequencies with percentages in tabular form. Percent mean score technique was used to show the satisfaction score of the participants.

Results

A total of 150 patients coming to Outpatient Department of PESSI hospital irrespective of their age, gender and ailment

were included in the study by consecutive sampling technique. The detailed demographic characteristics of the participants are given in (table 1). In this study sample 61 (40.70%) were females and 89 (59.30%) were males. Mean age of study participants was found to be 38.15 ± 10.919 years ranging from 22 to 75 years. Majority of the participants 105 (70%) were married. As regards educational level of the participants, most of the participants [72 (48%)] were under matric, and 66 (44%) were illiterate. Maximum patients [72(48%)] belonged to low income class (< 7000 Rs. Per month) and 61 (41%) to middle income class (7000-15000 Rs. Per month) as given in table 1.

The overall patients' satisfaction score is given in table 2, which shows that mean of total mean score was 122.7 ± 19.759 and the range was 67 to 168 and the mean of mean score was 3.07 ± 0.4940 ranging from 1.68 to 4.20. Similarly the mean of percent score was 61.39 ± 9.8793 ranging from 33.5 to 84.

Age of Respondent (years)		
Mean \pm SD	38.15 \pm 10.919	
Median	35	
Range	22 – 57	
Sex of Respondent		
Male	89	59.30 %
Female	61	40.70 %
Marital status of Respondent		
Single	33	22 %
Married	105	70 %
Divorced	3	2 %
Widow	9	6 %
Education level of Respondent		
Illiterate	66	44 %
Under Matric	72	48 %
Matric	6	4 %
Intermediate	6	4 %
Income of Respondent		
< 7000 Rs.	72	48 %
7000 to 15000 Rs.	61	41 %
> 15000 Rs.	17	11 %

Patients Satisfacti on Scores	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total Score *	150	67	168	122.78	19.759
Mean Score **	150	1.68	4.20	3.07	0.4940
Percent Score ***	150	33.5	84.0	61.39	9.8793

*Total Score Range: 40 to 200;** Mean Score Range:1-5

*** Percent Score Range: 20-100

The highest mean percent satisfaction score (64.15±11.61) was seen in age interval of 25-35 years and the minimum percent satisfaction score (54.86±10.81) was seen in older age (>55) years patients. The higher satisfaction was seen in females with mean percent satisfaction score of 62.10±8.95. The highest satisfaction with respect to marital status was seen in widowed category and minimum satisfaction in single patients whose mean percent score was 60.44±11.63. The patient satisfaction depends upon educational status of the patients the results show that the rate of satisfaction increased as the educational level increased and mean percent satisfaction score (67.75±5.08) was in patients who had educational level of intermediate but the patients who had were in under matric category of education had lowest mean percent satisfaction level of 58.63±9.56. Similarly highest satisfaction was seen in low income class who had mean percent satisfaction score of 63.33±10.09 and it decreased as income level increased and become minimum in highest income level of > 15000 as given in table 3.

Table 3: Patient Satisfaction Score with respect to Different Demographic Characteristics			
Characteristics	N	Mean Satisfaction Score (%)*	Std. Deviation (%)*
Age of Respondent (years)			
< 25	21	60.57	11.61
25 - 35	56	64.15	8.94
35 - 45	39	60.81	8.58
45 - 55	27	58.83	10.78
> 55	7	54.86	10.81
Sex of Respondent			
Male	89	60.90	10.49
Female	61	62.10	8.95
Marital status of respondent			
Single	33	60.44	11.63
Married	105	61.18	9.63
Divorced	3	62.33	8.75
Widow	9	67.00	3.46
Education level of respondent			
Illiterate	66	63.33	10.09
Under Matric	72	58.63	9.56
Matric	6	66.83	4.14
Intermediate	6	67.75	5.08
Income of respondent			
< 7000 Rs.	72	63.34	10.39
7000 to 15000 Rs.	61	61.37	7.84
> 15000 Rs.	17	53.21	10.53

• Mean and Std. Deviation are Percent scores in Percentages

Discussion

The outcome of any disease is influenced by the decisions to seek care, timely arrival at appropriate diagnostic and treatment services and the receipt of adequate care from

service providers. Satisfaction in service provision is increasingly being used as a measure of health system performance. Satisfaction is observable itself in the distribution, access and utilization of health services. Researchers have proved that satisfaction level is related to a range of factors like ethnic group, patient education, waiting times and attitudes of providers as well as patients' perception of a relationship of trust, providers' answering of questions and provision of adequate information, patients' feeling of being involved in decisions about their care.¹²

Age is a well known determinant of patient satisfaction index with older patients scoring more highly and being more satisfied than young and middle aged patients.¹³

According to the results of the study the overall patient's satisfaction in terms of mean percent satisfaction score was 61.39±9.8793 ranging from 33.5 to 84. There was no considerable relationship between age and patient satisfaction, it was seen that elder age patients were comparatively more satisfied than other groups. The highest mean percent satisfaction score (64.15±11.61) was seen in age interval of 25-35 years and the higher satisfaction was seen in females (62.10±8.95). This fact was also seen in some other studies which concluded that some demographic variable are important including age which consistently shows that elderly patients are more satisfied.⁶ The effect of the age variable on satisfaction was not significant in Japipaul study, but it showed interesting results. The greatest level of satisfaction was in the group 15-24 years old, and then it decreased gradually and increased again in the group who were over 60 years old.¹⁴ Some studies showed that age, gender, income and formal education have shown no clear connection with the patient satisfaction.⁴

In this study it was noted that the higher satisfaction was seen in females with mean percent satisfaction score of 62.10±8.95 as compared with male patients. In a Study, contrary to present study it was noted that female patients with short duration of hospitalization were less satisfied with staff's care than men.¹⁵

Age is a well known determinant of patient satisfaction score with older patients scoring more highly and being more satisfied than young and middle aged patients. The most consistent finding has been related to age, older patients tend to be more satisfied with their health care.¹⁶ Studies on the effect of gender are contradictory, with some studies showing that women tend to be less satisfied and other studies showing the opposite.¹⁷

The results of this present study showed that the rate of satisfaction increased as the educational level increased and mean percent satisfaction score (67.75±5.08) was in patients who had educational level of intermediate but the patients who were in under matric category of education had lowest mean percent satisfaction level of 58.63±9.56. Similarly highest satisfaction was seen in low income class who had mean percent satisfaction score of 63.33±10.09 and it decreased as income level increased and become minimum

in highest income level of > 15000. As some studies showed that age, education level, marital status, sex, work status and length of stays affected the scores of satisfaction.¹⁸

From different studies it was noted that usually, those married or cohabitating tended to have higher satisfaction scores, but in some studies those who were single or divorced had higher satisfaction scores 14 which is also supported by the results of this present study.¹⁹ Some studies reported that low income patients were more satisfied as compared with high income patients as revealed by results of this present study.²⁰

The goal of the health care team is to provide the best quality of health care and service to the patient. It is now a worldwide trend in the healthcare system to include subjective user satisfaction into the evaluation of quality of medical service provided.^{21,22}

Conclusion

As in previous studies, there is evidence that patient socio demographic characteristics affect patient satisfaction levels. Similarly it was noted in this present study that age, gender, marital status, education level and income level of patients have effect on their satisfaction score. Patients with elder age, female patients, middle level of education and low income patients showed higher satisfaction.

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