

Assessment of Satisfaction Level Among Indoor Patients Admitted to a Tertiary Care Teaching Hospital: A Cross Sectional Study in South India

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Abstract

Introduction: Patient satisfaction is one of the important goals of any health care institution. While the health care industry is going through a rapid transformation to meet the needs of its clientele, it is not always easy to measure their satisfaction level, as it depends on many factors such as behaviour of doctor and other health staff, cost and quality of clinical and laboratory services, hospital infrastructure, physical comfort, emotional support and respect for the patient and their attenders etc. Present study was undertaken to study the level of patient satisfaction and its determinants, with a view to improve quality of patient care, in a tertiary care teaching hospital.

Methods: A cross sectional study was conducted over a period of three months i.e. from 01 January 2019 to 31 March 2019. Using purposive sampling method, a total of 90 patients were randomly selected by lottery method from different Indoor Clinical departments, except Paediatric ward. A semi-structured questionnaire was used comprising of 30 items to measure core dimension of patient satisfactions. Scoring was done using five-point Likert scale, with 1 and 5 indicating the lowest and highest levels of satisfaction, respectively.

Results: The overall satisfaction level of patients in present study was found to be 73.5%. Majority (82.2%) of the patients expressed satisfaction over the assistance given at registration desk while three fourth (88.8%) of the patients were happy with time devoted by the doctor to attend them in the wards.

Patients were also satisfied with the behaviour of the doctors and other staff. However, 71.1% of the patients were dissatisfied with the taste and Quality of food and its available canteen facilities.

Conclusion: Present study brings out that patients were satisfied with the quality of professional services in the hospital and behaviour of doctors, nursing and paramedical staff.

Keywords: Patient; Satisfaction; Hospital services; Behaviour.

Introduction

Patient satisfaction has been defined as the degree of congruency between a patient's expectations of ideal care and his/her perception of the real care he/she receives in a health care facility.¹ Patient satisfaction is one of the most important goals of any health system, but at the same time, it is difficult to measure as not only the clinical but also the non-clinical outcomes of health care influence patient satisfaction. However, various dimensions of patient satisfaction have been identified, which include responsiveness, communication, quality of services, behaviour of doctor and nurses including other auxiliary staff, cost of services, hospital infrastructure, physical comfort, housekeeping, emotional support and respect for the patient, comforting skills, amenities, food services etc.²

Therefore, patient satisfaction is important, both for evaluation as well as improvement of quality of services and can play a vital role in several other areas of the healthcare, including improving patient retention rates, securing a good local reputation, and preventing possible law suits.³

Patient satisfaction, while always an important factor when delivering health care, has recently gained notoriety as patients are demanding a bigger claim in their healthcare, and expects a certain level of quality services from their health care providers, as they have assumed the role of a consumer in the hospitals today.⁴ Studies reveal that despite the technical quality of care delivered, provider empathy is the main predictor of patient satisfaction. In modern times when expectation from healthcare institutions are increasing, a better understanding of the determinants of client satisfaction will help the decision makers to implement measures which are tailor made to patient's "needs".⁵

In the backdrop of above, present study was undertaken in a tertiary care teaching hospital in Mangaluru (Karnataka) to find out various factors which determine patient satisfaction, with a view to improve quality of care and patient satisfaction.

Materials and Methods

Present study was a cross sectional study was conducted in a tertiary care teaching hospital Mangaluru, Karnataka (India). The study was carried out over a period of three months i.e. from 01 January 2019 to 31 March 2019.

The method of sampling was purposive. A total of 90 patients were randomly selected by lottery method from different Indoor Clinical departments (except Paediatric ward), while critically ill patients and those unwilling to participate were excluded from the study. Each patient was explained the purpose of the study and their written informed consent was taken.

Method of data collection: A semi-structured questionnaire was designed after thorough review of literature and was pilot tested on 15 participants. The questionnaire comprised of 30 items to measure core dimension of patient satisfaction, which were:

- Admission procedure and Perception of waiting time,
- Availability of basic amenities,
- Satisfaction with cost of services,
- Relationship between patient and health providers,

- Availability of laboratory, and pharmacy facilities,
- Information and communication.

Scoring

The questionnaire comprised of five-point Likert scale, with 1 and 5 indicating the lowest and highest levels of satisfaction, respectively. Patients indicated their level of satisfaction by selecting responses ranging from poor = 1, fair = 2, good = 3, very good = 4 and excellent = 5. Those who chose 1 & 2 were considered dissatisfied while those who selected 3 & above were considered satisfied. In order to maintain complete confidentiality no names were recorded on the questionnaire. Collected data was entered in MS EXCEL and analysed using SPSS V 16.

Results

The study brings out that most of the respondents (68.8%), were males, majority of them (50%) belonged to the age group of 30–39 years and three-fourth of them (74.4%) were married. Further, majority of the subjects, 39 (43.3%) were metric and below, while 67.7% of them were skilled workers, small time business men or shop keepers. It was found that 42.2% of the study subjects belonged to Social class IV according to Modified B.G Prasad Socio-economic classification (Table 1 and Figure 1).

Table 2 shows that most of the patients (82.2%) were satisfied with the help provided at the registration desk as they came to the hospital. Nearly three-fourth (75.5) of the patients expressed satisfaction regarding waiting time in the Out Door Patient (OPD) department for consultation of the doctor and found it completely acceptable as it was less than 10 minutes and also felt very satisfied with time given in the wards for subsequent care after admission. However, a large number of patients (65.5%) were dissatisfied with poor assistance given for taking patient from OPD to the wards while 65.0% of them were unhappy with the undue long time taken for initiation of treatment after admission in the wards.

Table 3, brings out that majority of the patients enrolled in the study, were satisfied with the basic amenities provided in the hospital. Looking at the breakdown of main amenities and patient satisfaction levels, it was observed that 83.3% of the patients were satisfied with provision of drinking water, 73.3% were satisfied with cleanliness of toilets, 93.3% were satisfied with cleanliness of

wards, 76.6% were satisfied with waiting/seating arrangements. However, one area which needed improvement was the quality of the food and

canteen services; as 71.1% of the patients expressed dissatisfaction with these services.

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of the respondents (n = 90)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Age group</i>		
< 20 years	11	12.2
20-29 years	20	22.2
30-39 years	45	50
40-49 years	14	15.5
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	62	68.8
Female	38	31.2
<i>Marital status</i>		
Married	67	74.4
Single	15	16.6
Separated/Divorced	0	0
Widowed	8	8.8
Class V	5	5.56
<i>Educational Status</i>		
Graduate and above	5	5.6
Diploma and equivalent	11	12.2
Higher Secondary	35	38.9
Metric below	39	43.3
Illiterate	—	—
<i>Socio-economic class</i>		
Class I	—	—
Class II	20	22.2
Class III	27	30.0
Class IV	38	42.2
Class V	5	5.56

Table 2: Patients Satisfaction with admission procedure and reception (n = 90)

S. No	Parameter	Satisfied		Dissatisfied	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Help at registration desk	74	82.2	16	17.7
2.	Time taken to attend by the doctor	68	75.5	22	24.4
3.	Assistance from OPD to the ward	59	65.5	31	34.4
4.	Time taken from admission to initiation of treatment	54	60.0	36	40
5.	Time devoted by the doctor in the ward	80	88.8	10	11.1

Table 3: Satisfaction level with Basic facilities in the Hospital (n = 90)

Basic Amenities	Satisfied No. (%)	Unsatisfied No. (%)
Drinking water	75 (83.3)	15 (16.6)
Availability of Toilets	90 (100)	0
Cleanliness of toilets	66 (73.3)	24 (26.6)
Cleanliness of wards	84 (93.3)	06 (6.6)
Taste, quality and availability of food facilities	26 (28.8)	64 (71.1)
Waiting area/Seating	69 (76.6)	21 (23.3)
Availability of information on display boards	81 (90)	09 (10)

Table 4: Overall Patient satisfaction with hospital services (n = 90)

Aspect of Care	Satisfied		Unsatisfied	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Admission procedure and perception of waiting time	64	71.1	26	28.8
Availability of basic amenities	74	82.2	16	17.7
Satisfaction with cost of services	81	90	9	10
Relationship between patient and healthcare providers	77	85.5	13	14.4
Availability of laboratory, and pharmacy facilities	84	93.3	06	6.6
Communication about the disease and cost of treatment	79	87.7	11	12.2

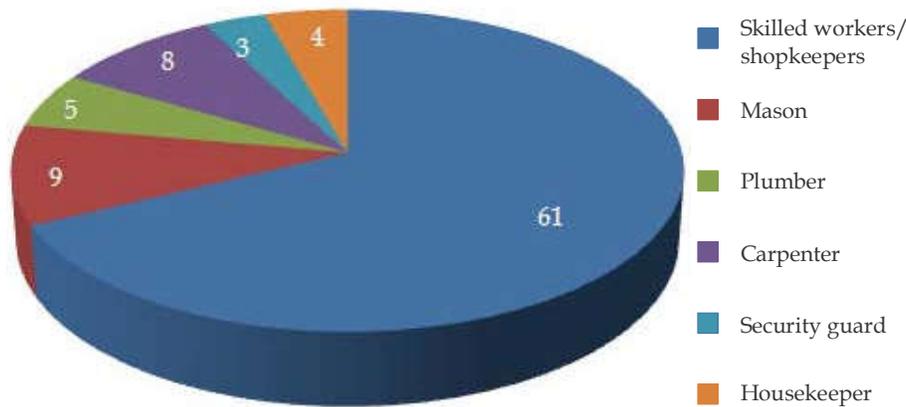


Fig. 1: Occupational profile of Study Subjects (n = 90)



Fig. 2: Satisfaction with behaviour of the healthcare providers (n = 90)

Figure 2, depicts the satisfaction levels of respondents with the behaviour of the healthcare providers in the hospital. The study brings out that 78.8% of the patients were satisfied with the behaviour of the staff of laboratory 67.7%, with pharmacy, 81.1% with registration desk, 75.5% with housekeeping staff, 86.6% with nursing staff while the behaviour of doctors as appreciated by 91.1 of the patients.

Table 4, represents overall satisfaction levels among the respondents with various hospital services and its staff and, it was found to be ranging from 71.1% for “admission procedure and perception of waiting time” to 93.3% for “availability of laboratory, and pharmacy facilities”. Further, 87.7% of the respondents expressed satisfaction over the timely information that was provided to them regarding the disease status, cost of treatment and the prognosis of the disease.

Discussion

The present study attempted to assess the satisfaction of the patients with various aspects of health care in a tertiary care teaching hospital in Mangaluru, Karnataka. Assessing patient satisfaction is an important part of the healthcare system. It helps in identifying problems from patients view point and find out solutions to address them. The results of the present study indicate that most of the respondents interviewed were satisfied with the services they received.⁶ However, a small number of people expressed their dissatisfaction towards some services received which brings attention towards the fact that the hospital administration needs to do more work in improving them in order to achieve better overall patient satisfaction.⁷

Present study brings out that most of our study subjects belonged to the age group 30–39 years (50%). Majority of them were males (68.8%). Similar findings were also reported by Syed Shuja Qadri, et al., in their study conducted in Ambala where 66.4% of the study population comprised of males and Goel Sonu, et al., in their study in Chandigarh, where 78.3 % of the respondents were males.⁸⁻⁹

Literacy rate of majority (43.3%) of our study subjects was below high school while 67.7% of them were skilled workers/shop keepers. However, Syed Shuja Qadri, et al., in their study reported a relatively high percentage of illiterates (44%). Further, Nirmal Verma, et al., in their study at Government Medical College Hospital,

Rajnandgaon (C.G.), observed 19.0% illiteracy rate while 42.0% of the respondents were found to be unskilled labourers. In another study, Rao, M.V., et al., in their study in Narketpally, AP, reported a low percentage (16%) of illiterates while 24% of them were public sector employees.^{8,10,11}

The present study found that 88.8% of the respondents were satisfied with time devoted by the doctor in the ward while 82.2% were happy with the help at registration desk. However, 71.1% patients were not satisfied with the taste and quality of food and canteen facilities. Similar findings were reported by Sathish Raju N, et al., in their study at Mysuru, who observed that 26% of in patients found the quality of food as excellent, 52% felt it was good while 17% rated it as it was average. Four percent of them said it to be poor. Overall, 78% of patients were satisfied with the quality of food served in the hospital while 21% were dissatisfied. In another study, Nirmal Verma, et al., in Chhattisgarh, observed 71.0% of the patients were satisfied with the quality of food.^{10,12}

The overall satisfaction level of patients in present study with services received from the hospital was (73.5%) which is similar to the findings reported by JP Singh, et al., in Bareilly (71.6%) and Kumari, et al., in Lucknow, (81.6%). Further, Abida Sultana, et al., in our neighbouring country, reported that 82.53% of the admitted patients were satisfied with health facilities. In another study by Bishwalata Rajkumari and Polly Nula on “Patient’s satisfaction in a government health facility in North East India, observed 32.5% of the patients were highly satisfied with the overall care received while patients admitted to surgery and allied departments showed a significantly higher satisfaction level ($p < 0.001$) with care received than those admitted in other departments.¹³⁻¹⁶

Conclusion

The present study shows assessing satisfaction of patients is simple, easy and cost-effective way in order to evaluate hospital services. The study has helped in finding the fact that patients admitted were satisfied with behaviour of healthcare givers but reflects small but significant dissatisfaction with the availability of basic amenities more regarding with respect to the taste of food and availability of other food facilities in the hospital, Patients also expressed concern about lack of waiting area facilities for the attender. Appropriate and on-going data collection and analysis could guide more efficient utilization of outpatient services to

achieve better outcomes. However, assessment of patient satisfaction levels are required to improve hospital services.

Limitations: Patient satisfaction is a subjective healthcare measure wherein two patients receiving the same services care, may have different satisfaction levels because they perhaps had different expectations from the health care providers. The present study had the limitation of most of the respondents belonging to urban areas and middle or low socioeconomic class. Further, present study had a small sample size and conducted over a short span of time, hence its findings may not be generalised.

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Conflict of Interest: None declared.

Ethical Approval: The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee.

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