

Patient Satisfaction with Service of Outpatient Departments of Selected Hospitals in Theni

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Dr. J. Mohamed Ali

*Assistant Professor & Ph.D. Research Advisor, Department of Commerce
Khadir Mohideen College, Adirampattinam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu, India*

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Mrs.N.Thahira

*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Commerce,
Khadir Mohideen College, Adirampattinam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu, India*

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Abstract

Health scenario is changing world wide. Human satisfaction is the complex psychological concept and it depends on many factors. Interaction between the health service provider(health care centers, clinics and Hospitals) and its patient customer is the primary core of health service business, and the influence of trust on service quality of hospitals and patient satisfaction could not be ignored in social base services encounters. The Outpatient (OP) department of the hospitals, patients come for their health needs either for treatment or for diagnosis. The main objective of the study was to measure the satisfaction level of the patients attending in Outpatient (OP) Department of selected hospitals in Theni. This descriptive study was performed to determine patient satisfaction with its Sociodemographic predictors in outpatient (OP) departments of hospitals in Theni. Data's were collected in the form of semi structured questionnaires and face to face interview conducted to them and it consists of two parts. The first part related to the sociodemographic profile of the patients. The second part focused on questions related to patient care.

Keywords: Patient's Satisfaction, Outpatient (OP) department, Hospital Services

Introduction

Patient Satisfaction is an important tool to measure success of the quality health service provided by the health care providers/Hospitals. Human satisfaction is a complex concept. In recent years Patient satisfaction has been given a lot of importance but still a lot more should be done in this field as whole in world wide. In general, patient satisfaction has been defined as an assessment that reflects the real difference between the expectations of the patients and their relatives and what is actually received during the period of care.

Health Care providers need to know the required information and actual needs of the patients and their relatives in every aspect satisfaction depends mostly on the expectations. Therefore, Patient's opinion/ feedback / suggestions are very important to identify problems. Particularly dissatisfaction levels are the key indicator and suggest the great opportunities for health care providers/ Hospitals to improve the health service and health facilities provided by them. Satisfaction is the psychological concept and it depends on many factors such as: quality of clinical services provided, availability of medicines, availability of specialities, treatment delivered by the physicians, nursing care, Lab facilities for Diagnosis, new improved technologies in equipment's, cost of services, cleanliness, emotional support, respect and other facilities. Simultaneously, increase the competition between hospitals.

Outpatient (OP) Departments is the first contact point of patients and their relatives with hospitals and it has a significant influence on satisfaction level. Care in the outpatient (OP) department is believed to indicate the quality of service of the hospitals and it is reflected on patients' satisfaction with the services being provided. The Outpatient (OP) Department in the hospitals where patients who do not require hospitalization but come to their treatments/ health needs, either for treatment or for diagnosis.

Satisfied patients are more likely to develop deeper and long standing relationship with their health service providers. Comply with given treatment and advice from physicians, also more likely to come for additional care when needed, also refer to the family and friends for taking medical care. They may be willing to pay for services, thereby increasing revenue and ultimately better outcomes.

Review of Literature

The Literature review highlights many factors that can affect patients satisfaction. These determinants can be either health care provider related or patient related.

Perhaps to appreciate what satisfaction could mean to medical care consumers. One could refer to some theories on consumer health care satisfaction. These theories can be summarized as follows:

Fox & Storms (1981): satisfaction is derivable where there is alignment between patients perspective on what constitutes satisfaction in health care and the providers

Linder-Pelz (1982): argued that satisfaction is a function of the patients previous expectation, personal belief and values towards health care delivery.

Donabedian (1980) theory stipulates that interpersonal aspects of care plays very important role in determining the satisfaction patients derives from health care. For a patient to be satisfied with health care delivery he should have a positive judgement towards every aspects of the quality of care delivered especially as it concerns interpersonal side of health care.

Fitzpatrick & Hopkins (1983): argue that patients satisfaction in health care services is influenced by their social environment. Patients

measure the satisfaction they derive from health care services against the perceived comfort or discomfort they feel with respect to the services.

Linder-Pelz, S. (1982). suggested that patient health care satisfaction is a function of their personal preferences and expectations as far as health care is concerned.

Objective of the Study

1. To determine socio-demographic profile among the Outpatient (OP) Department patients.
2. To measure the overall satisfaction level of the patients utilizing the Outpatient (OP) Department in Theni.

Research Methodology

Study Design

This descriptive study was performed to determine patient satisfaction with its Sociodemographic predictors in outpatient (OP) departments of hospitals in Theni. Study designed a structured and semi structured questionnaires and face to face interview conducted to obtain data. It consisting of two parts. The first part related to the sociodemographic profile of the patients. The second part focused on the questions related to patient care. Patients' loyalty was assessed by asking whether they would return to the hospital for any other treatment if they feel necessary and whether they would recommend this hospital to their friends and family. The questionnaire was translated into local language for consistency and translated back again. Each patient was visited in the outpatient department and after obtaining verbal informed consent, the researcher conducted the interviews maintaining strict confidentiality.

Study Area

In Theni District/Town is a rural place situated in the southern part of Tamilnadu.

Sample Size

Sample size was universal coverage of all patients fulfilling the inclusion criteria. 136 randomly selected outpatients.

Study Period

Data was collected from November 2017 to December 2017 among Patients attended in Outpatient (OP) Departments of various hospitals in Theni.

Inclusion Criteria

All the patients reporting for treatment at outpatient (OP) department.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Patients not willing to participate.
2. Patients unable to give informed consent.
3. Follow up patients were excluded from the study.

Limitations

The present study has a few limitations. The sample size was small and collected within a short duration. Study was conducted only few hospitals in theni. It involved recall bias associated with questionnaire-based study. Study population included the patient group where they took the care from outpatient (OP) Department only.

Statistical Tools

Collected data were entered into Microsoft Excel and data cleansing was performed. Data were analysed using SPSS IBM Statistics version 22. Descriptive statistics were generated using mean, standard deviation (SD), percentages, percentiles, and proportions. Analytical statistics like Chi-square test was used to see for correlation. The value of $P < 0.05\%$ was considered statistically significant.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 Distribution of the Respondents by Socio-Demographic Characteristics (N=136)

Variables		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	62	59.6
	Female	74	54.4

Age (In Years)	20	26	19.1	
	21-30	45	33.1	
	31-40	38	28.0	
	41-50	10	7.3	
	51-60	12	8.8	
	60	5	3.7	
Education	Illiterate	29	21.3	
	Primary	49	36.0	
	Secondary	39	28.7	
	Hr. Sec and Above	19	14.0	
	Occupation	Agriculture	17	12.5
		House Wife	57	42.0
Labour		16	11.7	
Service Holder		17	12.5	
	Others	29	21.3	
	Family Income	10,000	28	20.6
		10,000-20,000	81	59.6
		20,000	27	19.8
Self-Income	5,000	49	36.0	
	5000-10,000	51	37.5	
	15,000	36	26.5	

Total of 136 patients attended in Outpatient (OP) Departments were included in this study. Most (54.4%) of the respondents were female and 33.1% respondents were within 21-30 years of age. Mean age was 33.30 ± 13.61 years. Majority of the respondents (42.0%) were house wife, educated up to primary level (36%), and per capita income was between 5000-10,000 (37.5%) (Table I).

Table General Basic Facilities in the Hospital (N=136)

Basic Facilities in Hospitals	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Toilets	99(72.9)	37(27.1)
Drinking water	75(55.2)	61(44.8)
Cleanliness	93(68.6)	43(31.4)
Canteen / food facilities	102(75.3)	34(24.7)
Lighting arrangement	119(87.2)	17(12.8)

Waiting room / sitting facilities	75(55.5)	61(44.5)
Ventilation	92(67.4)	44(38.6)
Signboards locating departments	118(86.6)	18(13.4)

Majority of the patients stated that the general basic facilities at the hospital were adequate.

Most(87.2%) of the respondents were satisfied with lighting arrangement, signboards locating department (86.6%), availability of food (75.3%) and toilet facilities (72.9%). More than 50% respondents reported that the hospital was cleaned (68.6%), Ventilation were adequate (67.4%), sufficient seats were available in waiting room (55.5%) and drinking water facility was good enough (55.2%) (Table II).

Table Respondent’s Satisfaction towards OPD Services Regarding Courtesy (N=136)

Parameter	Strongly Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Moderate (%)	Unsatisfied (%)	Strongly Dissatisfied (%)
Behaviours of Doctors	27 (19.8)	104(76.8)	3(2.4)	1 (0.9)	0(0.0)
Nurses	12 (9.1)	102(75.3)	16(11.9)	4 (2.7)	1(0.9)
Pharmacist	13 (9.8)	85(62.2)	30(22.0)	6 (4.6)	2(1.5)
Registration Desk	6 (4.3)	102(75.3)	19(13.7)	9 (6.7)	0(0.0)
Supporting Staffs	4 (3.0)	109(80.5)	14(10.4)	8 (5.8)	0(0.3)

Most (96.6%) of the patients were satisfied with the behaviour of doctors, nurses (84.4%),pharmacists (72%), registration clerk (79.6%) andof supporting staff (83.5%). Very few respondentswere dissatisfied

with doctors, nurses,pharmacists, registration staff and other staff’sbehaviour (Table III).

Table Respondent’s Satisfaction towards OP Services Regarding quality of Care (N=136)

Parameter	Strongly Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Moderate (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Strongly Dissatisfied (%)
Doctors were competent and well trained	26 (18.9)	105(77.4)	5(3.4)	0 (0.3)	0(0.0)
Doctors are good about explaining the reason for medical test	17 (12.5)	87(63.7)	26(19.2)	6 (4.6)	0(0.0)
Nurses skill in using medical equipment and very co operative	19 (13.7)	88(64.9)	23(16.8)	6 (4.3)	2(0.3)
Pharmacists explaining clearly and accurately on drug description	15 (10.7)	95(69.8)	13(9.9)	9 (6.4)	5(3.4)
Registration service staffs are trained and systematic	7 (5.2)	97(71.0)	28(20.4)	5 (3.4)	0(0.0)

Most(96.3%)oftherespondentswerequitesatisfied with the quality of professional servicesby doctor. Majority (76.2%) of the respondentsstated that doctors were cooperative aboutexplaining the reason for medical test and (78.6%) respondents noted that nurses were skilled in usingmedical equipment’s and

were very friendly tothe patient. About 81% patients were also satisfiedwith pharmacists regarding explanation ofmedicines written in prescriptions and 76.2% weresatisfied with skilfulness and carefulness of the staffin registration services (Table IV).

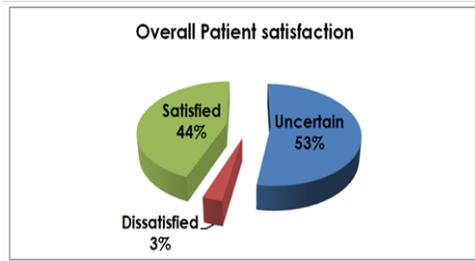


Figure 1

Figure 1 shows that 72 (52.7%) patients were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with health care services, 160 (44.2%) patients were satisfied and only 4 (3.0%) patients were dissatisfied with health services obtained from the primary health care centre. A statistically significant relation was found between educational level ($p=0.001$), occupation ($p=0.001$) and religion ($p=0.003$) with satisfaction level of the respondents (Table V).

Table 5 Association of Socio-Demographic Factors with Satisfaction

Independent Variable	Satisfaction Level			P-value
	Satisfied (n=60)	Uncertain (n=72)	Dissatisfied (n=4)	
Age (Years)				
Mean±SD	33.8±13.2	33.0±13.9	29.6±12.1	0.584##
Gender				
Male	30(49.7)	30(42.2)	2.4(60)	0.276#
Female	30(50.3)	42(57.8)	1.6(40)	
Education				
Illiterate	11(18.6)	17(24.3)	0.4(10)	
Primary	25(41.4)	24(33.5)	0(0)	
Secondary	19(31.7)	18(24.9)	1.6(40)	0.001#
Hr. Sec and Above	5(8.3)	12(17.3)	2(50)	
Occupation				
Agriculture	10(16.6)	7(9.2)	0.4(10)	
House Wife	24(40.7)	33(45.7)	0.4(0)	
Labour	10(16.6)	6(8.1)	0(0)	0.001#
Service Holder	7(11)	9(12.7)	1.6(40)	
Others	9(15.2)	17(24.3)	2(50)	
Family Income/month				
Mean±SD	16098±9682	16861±10799	19055±11091	0.015##

Figures in Parenthesis indicate Percentage (%)
#Chi-square test was done to measure the level of significance.
##ANOVA was done to measure the level of significance.

Discussions

The purpose of this study was to assess the satisfaction of patients attending in outpatient department of selected hospitals in Theni. The study

shows that majority of the respondents were satisfied with the basic amenities such as lighting arrangement and fans, sign boards etc. Overall, patients (44.2%) satisfied and (53%) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with health care outpatient services.

In the present study 31.4% were dissatisfied with cleanliness of the hospital. Majority of the respondents were female (54%) and 42.1% were house wives. A large number of female patients may be explained due to the fact that OPD hours are in

the morning when most of the men are at work. In present study 68.6% patients were satisfied with cleanliness of the hospital.

In our study, 44.8% reported about unavailability of safe drinking water. The present study observed that majority of the patients expressed satisfaction towards OPD services regarding courtesy and quality of care.

The patients were more satisfied with the behaviour of doctors as compared to the behaviour of nurses, pharmacists and other staff. The study showed that 96.6% patients were satisfied with the behaviour of doctors. In the present study, overall level of patient's satisfaction regarding healthcare services was found 44% in average. The present study showed a significant relation between educational level of the patient ($p = 0.001$) and satisfaction level of the respondents.

This study reflects the satisfaction level of a small segment of hospitals of the country, Detail study with large sample size could not be conducted and it was confined to a limited number of samples. It is recommended that further study to be conducted in both urban and rural area hospitals outpatient department services to assess the situation for proper planning, implementation and monitoring, so that patient satisfaction level are further improved and ensured by a hospital authority and other concerned.

Conclusions

Evaluating Patients satisfaction is a simple and cost effective way for evaluation of hospital outpatient Department services. The conclusion of the present study is carried out for measuring satisfaction of patients getting Outpatient services in the hospital. Most of the patients are satisfied with the services rendered in the Outpatient department of the hospital. Some patients are need an improvement in cleanliness, drinking water and waiting room/ sitting facilities. Some patients expect Canteen / food facilities in the hospital for outpatients. Most of the patients expecting toilet to be clean and maintain at regular intervals during the outpatient consulting time. 4.6% of the patients were dissatisfied the pharmacist changing the medicines' of same combinations by different companies without consulting the doctors. 6.7% of patients were unsatisfied with the

registration desk for not responding the waiting time. 5.8% of the patients were dissatisfied with the supporting staffs. The hospital should be take initiatives to correct the above dissatisfaction aspects to improve the satisfaction level of the outpatient department services.

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