

Patient Satisfaction on Quality of Outpatient Services Provided

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijhsr.20241214>

ABSTRACT

Background and objectives: Out Patient Department (OPD) is a very important department of any hospital because it is the first point of contact between the patient and the hospital staff. OPD is visited by large section of community, so it reflects the functioning of the hospital. The objectives of this study were to assess the level of patient satisfaction with quality of outpatient services provided at OPD, and to find out the association between the patient's satisfaction with their selected demographic variables.

Methodology: Non experimental, descriptive study was conducted among 265 out patients attending Medicine OPD. Convenience sampling technique was used in this study. The data related to demographic variables and level of patient satisfaction on quality of outpatient services was collected.

Results: Majority of the study participants 178 (68%) were fairly satisfied, 57 (21%) of them were completely satisfied and 30 (11%) of them were dissatisfied with the quality of patient services provided at OPD. Fisher's Exact Test was used to find out the association between the level of patient satisfaction on quality of outpatient services provided at OPD with their selected demographic variables. The demographic variables were not associated with the Level of Satisfaction with regard to the quality of services provided at OPD.

Conclusion: The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the patients were fairly satisfied with the quality of the services received at OPD. So there is a need for improvement in the services provided at the OPD.

Keywords: Outpatient department, patient satisfaction, outpatient services

INTRODUCTION

Patient satisfaction with the health care service is according to the satisfaction with various other aspects of the institution. Patient's satisfaction is based on the balance between the Patient's expectation and the care received. Communication and behavior of health care personnel and interaction of

physician with the patient, hospital administration in giving health care to the patient, environment of the hospital are the important areas of health care organization. The quality of patient care is measured by patient satisfaction on the treatment received and adherence of the health care professionals to the protocol. ¹ Discrepancy

between patient expectation and the care received is associated with lower satisfaction. One of the important departments of hospital is out Patient Department (OPD). In OPD the patient will go home after the treatment and will not stay in the hospital.²

Patients are the good origin of advice on both quantity and quality of well-being care provision. The difficulties faced by the patients in the outpatient department are overcrowding, more delay in getting treatment and so on.³ Waiting for more time in the OPD can influence the patient utilization of health services, as it affects the patient's interest to come back for the follow up.⁴ OPD is the entry point of contact between the patient and health team members. Large number of people visits the outpatient department. The OPD nurses need to guide and help the patients in managing the situation properly.⁵ Improving the level of satisfaction with the care received from the OPD is an important aspect to be considered, as it can affect the follow up care, and overall satisfaction of patient on the care they received from the OPD.⁶ Patient satisfactions is a subjective data. The satisfaction is related to the health condition and expectation of the patient, and infra structure facilities available in the hospital. Patients with higher satisfaction on the hospital services had less number of inpatient admission and visits to healthcare systems. So the hospitals should improve their infra structure and other facilities to meet the needs of the patients, so that the patient will choose them and the hospitals also can survive.⁷

Health care personnel in growing countries appear to neglect the patients' level of satisfaction and their view on health care services. Practitioners also have lack of training and awareness to address the patient's expectation.⁸ The objectives of this study were to assess the level of patient satisfaction with quality of Outpatient services provided at OPD and to find out the association between the patient's

satisfaction with the selected demographic variables.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Non-experimental- Descriptive research design was used in this study. This study was conducted in a tertiary care teaching hospital at Pondicherry. The research study was conducted among 265 outpatients attending Medicine OPD. Convenient sampling technique was used to select the participants. Inclusion criteria include both male and female outpatients from 18 years and above and new and old patients attending medicine OPD. Out Patients who are not able to understand and speak English or local language and also patients who are very sick and disoriented were excluded. After getting the written consent from the participants the demographic variables and self -prepared patient satisfaction scale to assess the level of satisfaction on quality of Outpatient services were collected using interview method. The patients satisfaction scale consists of 25 items, it includes satisfaction with registration services (3 items), Nursing services (6 items), medical services (4 items), General services (11 items) and overall (1 item). The possible answers to the patient satisfaction scale items were dissatisfied, fairly satisfied, and completely satisfied which were scored from 0 to 2 respectively. Minimum score is 0 and maximum score is 50. The score was interpreted as follows: 34 – 50 score (67 – 100%) as completely satisfied, 17 – 33 (33-66%) as fairly satisfied and 0 – 16 (0 – 32%) as dissatisfied. The reliability of the patient satisfaction scale to assess the level of satisfaction on quality of Outpatient services was assessed using split half method. The r-value was 0.75. The study was conducted for a period of two months in 2022. Study protocol was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

SPSS 29.0 was used to analyse the data. Descriptive Statistics: Frequency and percentage were used to analyze the

demographic variables and patient satisfaction level towards quality of Outpatient services provided. Inferential Statistics: Fisher exact test was used to find out the association between the patient satisfaction level with their demographic variables.

RESULTS

Section A: Distribution of study participants according to demographic variables.

Out of 265 participants, 74 (27.9%) participants belong to the age group of 18 to 34 years, 141 of them (53.2%) were females, 94 of them (35.5%) had completed Diploma/Degree course, 134(50.6%) of them were unemployed (as many are housewives and students), 139 (52.5%) of them were staying in urban area and 183 (69.1%) of the participants previously visited medicine OPD for consultation. (Table.1)

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage distribution of Demographic Variables of study participants. n=265

Sl. No.	Demographic variables	Categories	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Age	18 - 34 yrs	74	27.9
		35 - 44 yrs	60	22.6
		45 - 54 yrs	71	26.8
		≥ 55 yrs	60	22.6
2.	Gender	Male	124	46.8
		Female	141	53.2
3.	Educational Qualification	Illiterate	49	18.5
		Primary	21	7.9
		High school	72	27.2
		Higher secondary	29	10.9
		Diploma/ Degree	94	35.5
4.	Occupation	Employed	131	49.4
		Unemployed	134	50.6
5.	Residence	Rural	126	47.5
		Urban	139	52.5
6.	Previously to visited medicine OPD at PIMS	Yes	183	69.1
		No	82	30.9

Section B: Distribution of study participants according to the satisfaction of services received at outpatient department.

Analysis of patients' satisfaction scale score with regard to registration services revealed that 150(57%) of study participants were fairly satisfied about the information received regarding the consultant area and 78(29%) of study participants were dissatisfied about the queue system for their registration. Around 167 (63%) study participants were fairly satisfied with the nurses manner and 125(47%) of study participants were fairly satisfied about

nurses explanation regarding procedure & treatment. With regard to the medical services, 163(62%) of study participants were fairly satisfied with time taken to meet the physician, 159(59%) of study participants were fairly satisfied with the physician treating the patient with dignity and providing privacy to the patient during treatment and consultation. With regard to the general services 163(62%) of study participants were fairly satisfied with the clean environment around the OPD 130(49%) of study participants were fairly satisfied regarding the items of "availability of the stretcher". (Table 2)

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage distribution of satisfaction on quality of services received at OPD. n= 265

Sl. No.	Item	Completely Satisfied		Fairly Satisfied		Dissatisfied	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
I	Registration services						
1	Time taken for your registration	66	24.9	127	47.9	72	27.2
2	Queue system	51	19.2	136	51.3	78	29.4
3	Informed about the consultant area/Direction from registration counter to OPD area.	52	19.6	150	56.6	63	23.8
II	Nursing services						
4	Nurses listen to your problems	67	25.3	154	58.1	44	16.6
5	Nurses are respectful/Nurses manner	85	32.1	167	63.0	13	4.9
6	Nurses are helpful/ accessible whenever there is need	74	27.9	149	56.2	42	15.8
7	Nurses gave adequate explanation about procedure /treatment and provide patient education.	64	24.2	125	47.2	76	28.7
8	Nurses clarify your doubts	66	24.9	135	50.9	64	24.2
9	OPD is having enough nursing personnel.	79	29.8	121	45.7	65	24.5
III	Medical services						
10	Time taken for patient to meet the doctor	81	30.6	163	61.5	21	7.9
11	The physician spent enough time while examining you	91	34.3	156	58.9	18	6.8
12	Physician treats you with dignity & provides privacy during consultation.	75	28.3	156	58.9	34	12.8
13	Listen to patients questions and provides information about disease and treatment.	84	31.7	155	58.5	26	9.8
IV	General services						
14	Accessibility to OPD	56	21.1	143	54.0	66	24.9
15	Parking facility	46	17.4	155	58.5	64	24.2
16	Waiting area in OPD	48	18.1	155	58.5	62	23.4
17	Seating facility in OPD	56	21.1	155	58.5	54	20.4
18	Availability of drinking water	79	29.8	144	54.3	42	15.8
19	Ventilation	77	29.1	136	51.3	52	19.6
20	Toilet facility	83	31.3	151	57.0	31	11.7
21	The environment around the OPD is clean	76	28.7	163	61.5	26	9.8
22	Availability of wheel chair	41	15.5	145	54.7	79	29.8
23	Availability of stretcher	39	14.7	130	49.1	96	36.2
24	Received adequate information regarding treatment / procedure.	75	28.3	129	48.7	61	23.0

Section-C: Assessment of the level of patient satisfaction on quality of outpatient services provided at OPD.

Among 265 participants majority 178(68%) of the participants were fairly satisfied, 57

(21%) completely satisfied and 30 (11%) were dissatisfied with the services received in the Medicine OPD. (Figure. 1)

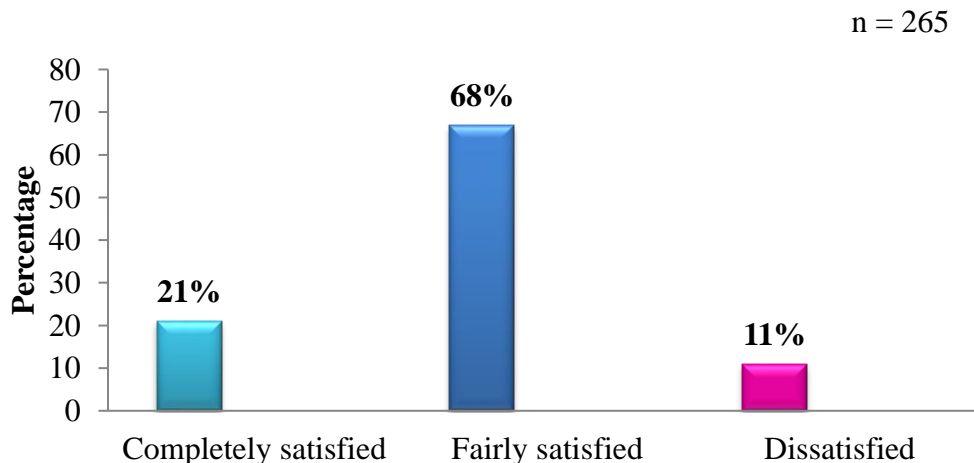


Figure .1: Level of Patient satisfaction on quality of services provided at Medicine OPD.

Figure 2 reveals the frequency and percentage distribution of patient satisfaction on Registration, Nursing, Medical and General Services provided at OPD. With regard to Registration services majority 148 (56%) of the participants were fairly satisfied, 67 (24%) of them were dissatisfied and 50 (18%) of them were completely satisfied with the quality of services. With regard to Nursing services majority 115 (43%) of the participants were fairly satisfied, 72(27%) of them were

dissatisfied and 78 (29%) of them were completely satisfied with the quality of services. With regard to Medical services majority 140 (52%) of the participants were completely satisfied, 24 (9%) of them were dissatisfied and 101 (38%) of them were fairly satisfied with the quality of services. With regard to General services majority 162 (61%) of the participants were fairly satisfied, 51 (19%) of them were dissatisfied and 52 (19%) of them were completely satisfied with the quality of services.

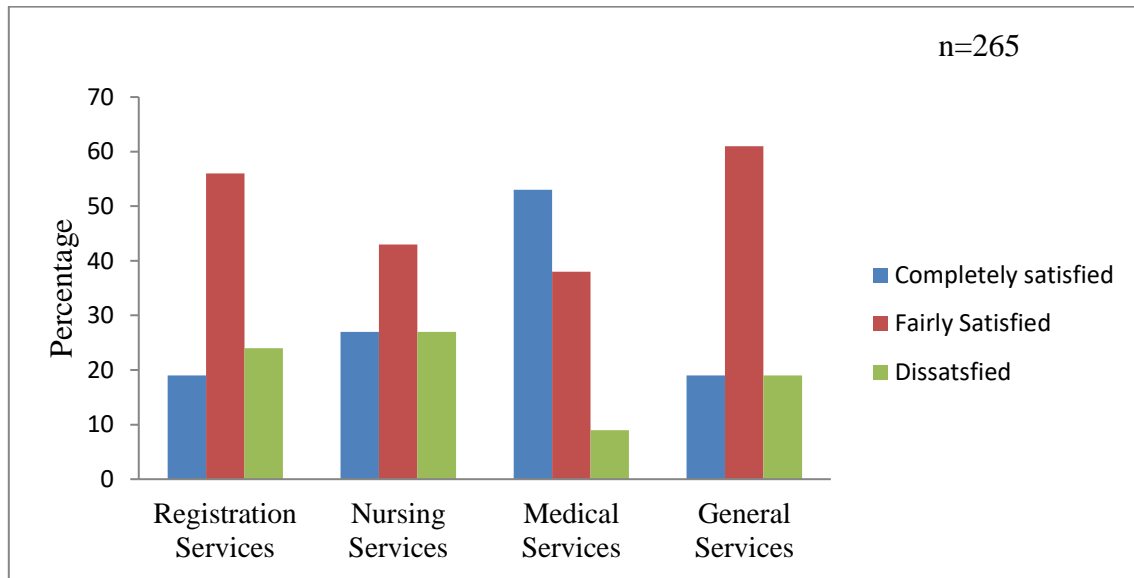


Figure 2: Level of patient satisfaction on Registration, Nursing, Medical & General services provided at OPD.

Section D: Association between the levels of patient satisfaction on quality of outpatient services with their selected demographic variables.

The demographic variable such as age, gender, education, residence and previous

visit to medicine OPD for consultation were not having any association with the level of satisfaction on quality of patient services provided at OPD. Fisher's Exact Test was used to find out the association. (Table 3)

Table 3: Association between the Level of Patient Satisfaction on Quality of Out Patient Services with their selected demographic variables. n=265

Sl. No.	Demographic variables		Level of Patient Satisfaction			p- Value
			Completely satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Dissatisfied	
1.	Age	18 - 34 yrs	16	48	10	5.771
		35 - 44 yrs	12	40	8	
		45- 54 yrs	15	46	10	NS
		≥ 55 yrs	14	44	2	
2.	Gender	Male	26	82	16	0.771
		Female	31	96	14	NS
3.	Educational Qualification	Primary	4	17	0	0.422
		High school	17	46	9	
		Higher secondary	10	16	3	
		Degree/diploma	19	64	11	

4.	Occupation	Employed	19	85	27	0.146
		Unemployed	11	93	30	NS
5.	Residence	Rural	18	87	21	0.103
		Urban	12	91	36	N S
6.	Previously to visited medicine OPD at PIMS	Yes	22	123	38	0.823
		No	8	55	19	N S

N S – Not Significant, S – Significant

DISCUSSION

In the present study among 265 participants 178 (68%) of the study participants were fairly satisfied, 57 (21%) completely satisfied and 30 (11%) were dissatisfied on the outpatient services. A descriptive study was done to assess the patient satisfaction in outpatient clinic of newly created department of Geriatric Medicine at tertiary hospital, Uttar Pradesh. The result reveals that the Medium satisfaction level was found in 56% and low and high satisfaction was found in 23% and 21% patients respectively. The study concludes that there is a need to strengthen the manpower in outdoor clinic with better environment.⁹ In developed countries, patients are highly satisfied with the available services at outpatient departments. In Nigeria 84% are satisfied while in Ethiopia 77% is satisfied with the health services rendered at the OPD.¹⁰

In the present study according to time taken for registration 66 (25%) were completely satisfied and 127 (48%) were fairly satisfied and 72 (27%) were dissatisfied. The study concluded that many patients were satisfied on waiting time in the reception. The same findings were given by a descriptive study done to assess patient satisfaction in outpatient department of a private hospital in Chennai. The study was conducted among 50 patients attending OPD by using convenient sampling method. Result reveals that 40% of the patients are satisfied, 34% of the patients are dissatisfied, 14% are very satisfied, 6% are very dissatisfied, 4% are extremely satisfied about the waiting time in reception.¹¹

In the present study according to explanation about nursing procedure and patient education by nurses 64 (24%) are completely satisfied and 125 (47%) were

fairly satisfied and 76 (29%) were dissatisfied. So many patients were satisfied with the service provided by nurses. A descriptive study was done to assess the level of satisfaction on nursing care received by patients at a tertiary care teaching hospital in Pondicherry showed that 86% had good satisfaction, 7% had moderate satisfaction and 3% had poor satisfaction.¹² According to nurses manner and respectful towards the patient, in this study 167 (63%) were fairly satisfied, 85 (32%) were completely satisfied. A quantitative cross sectional descriptive study was conducted on Assessing Experience and Perception of Patients about OPD Services in Ghana. The sample consists of 100 Patients. The result reveals that majority (61%) of the patients had good satisfaction with respect given by staff nurses and good lighting at the hospital (66%).¹³ So the study concludes that the maximum number of respondents had very good experience in relation to the nurses' respectful towards the patient.

In the present study satisfaction of participants on the time taken to meet the doctor 81 (31%) were completely satisfied and 163 (62%) were fairly satisfied and 21 (8%) were dissatisfied. A cross sectional study was conducted in Saudi Arabia on association between waiting time and patient satisfaction in outpatient clinics. The sample consists of 406 Patients. The result showed that the patients treated at the family medicine clinic were more likely to be satisfied than those seen in other specialized clinics.⁷ According to the study conducted in Saudi Arabia, the patient who is waiting in the OPD for more than 30 minutes has reported as unsatisfied towards the hospital service. So the waiting time is also a factor that makes the patient dissatisfied.⁴

Regarding physician listening to patients questions and providing information about the disease and treatment 155 (58%) were fairly satisfied and 84 (32%) were completely satisfied in this study. In a multi-disciplinary study conducted among 151 patients attending outpatient department to assess their satisfaction level towards the hospital services at tertiary care hospital, Gujarat. The result shows that 70% of patients were satisfied with the care provided by the physician.¹⁴

According to seating facilities in OPD in the present study 155 (59%) were fairly satisfied and 56 (21%) were completely satisfied. In a health centre based observational cross-sectional study conducted to identify the patient satisfaction toward health care services at primary health sector in the district of west Bengal, 422 samples were selected by using purposive sampling technique. The result reveals that the mean satisfaction score was 2.97 ± 0.37 . The patients had dissatisfaction in waiting time and inadequacy of seating arrangements in waiting area.¹⁵ About 163 (62%) participants were fairly satisfied and 76 (28%) were completely satisfied with the cleanliness of the environment around the OPD in the present study. An observational study was done at West Bengal, among 500 study participants regarding patient satisfaction in outpatient department. Result showed that 78% of the study population were satisfied with the services received and 81% expressed that clean environment was effectively maintained in the hospital premises and different outpatient departments.¹⁶ So seating arrangement and cleanliness of the hospital also needs to be taken care to improve the patient satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The present study assessed the level of patient satisfaction on quality of outpatient services provided at OPD. The study concludes that majority of the patients attending OPD were fairly satisfied with the

services received at OPD. So, the hospitals need to take action to reduce the waiting time and improve the general services provided such as parking facilities, availability of wheel chair and stretcher to improve the patient satisfaction on quality of services provided at outpatient department.

Declaration by Authors

Ethical Approval: Approved by Institution Ethics Committee

Acknowledgement: We thank all the participants for their valuable participation in this study.

Source of Funding: Self

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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How to cite this article: Sudha. G, Malarvizhi. S, Amirtha Santhi. S, Ravichandran. K. Patient satisfaction on quality of outpatient services provided. *Int J Health Sci Res.* 2024; 14(12):119-126. DOI: [10.52403/ijhsr.20241214](https://doi.org/10.52403/ijhsr.20241214)
