

Original Research Article

A study on patient satisfaction in out patient department of secondary care hospital of Bhopal

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ABSTRACT

Background: Patient satisfaction is as important as other clinical health measures and is a primary means of measuring the effectiveness of health care delivery. Patient-centered outcomes have taken central stage as the primary means of measuring the effectiveness of health care delivery. To evaluate the level of patient satisfaction with OPD services in terms of describing the experience of patients about medicine OPD services and accessibility to services among the patients who attended the medicine OPD of Jaiprakash hospital.

Methods: As a cross-sectional descriptive study, we have taken patients who were registered in Medicine outpatient department of Jaiprakash Hospital of Bhopal over a period of two months. The research instrument for a data collection was a structured questionnaire for assessing the patient satisfaction. The experience and accessibility were categorized into good and poor while satisfaction into high and low using best criteria. Statistical analysis: Convenience sampling done for selection of patients registered in Medicine OPD. The data was analysed on statistical software SPSS VS.20.

Results: The patients had the highest level of experience from medicine department OPD about helpfulness of nurses, about light and ventilation inside the OPD and about the good communication from the pharmacist. The poor experience was from the number of doctors in OPD and about the diagnostic place. As far as accessibility is concerned, 66% of patients had good accessibility towards medicine OPD while remaining 34% had poor accessibility towards Medicine OPD.

Conclusions: Maximum number of respondents had very good experience while just small number of respondents had poor experience and majority of the patients had good accessibility regarding waiting time, service process and working hours.

Keywords: Patient satisfaction, Accessibility, Experience, Outpatient department

INTRODUCTION

Patients' satisfaction constitutes a significant indicator of the health care quality as the final quality confirmation is not only defined by the effectiveness of medical care, that is the desirable health level, but from the patient's satisfaction as well, which consists an integral part and

recognizable indicator of the quality of health care provided.¹

Patient satisfaction is as important as other clinical health measures and is a primary means of measuring the effectiveness of health care delivery. The current competitive environment has forced health care

organizations to focus on patient satisfaction as a way to gain and maintain market share. If you don't know what your strengths and weaknesses are, you can't compete effectively. Patient satisfaction surveys can be tools for learning; they can give proportion to problem areas and a reference point for making management decisions. They can also serve as a means of holding physicians accountable – physicians can be compelled to show they have acceptable levels of patient satisfaction. 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.²

A patient is the ultimate consumer of the hospital. He is the person in distress. He expects from hospital comfort, care and cure. Patient forms certain expectations prior to visit. Once the patient come to the hospital and experience the facilities, they may become either satisfied or dissatisfied.³

A critical challenge for health service providers in developing countries is to find ways to make them more client-oriented. Indifferent treatment of patients, unofficial payments to providers, lack of patient privacy, and inadequate provision of medicines and supplies are common, yet are rarely acknowledged by traditional quality assessment methods.⁴

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 central stage as the primary means of measuring the effectiveness of health care delivery.⁵ A research on patient satisfaction can be an important tool to improve the quality of services. With this intention we have evaluated the patient satisfaction level in Jaiprakash hospital of Bhopal.

To evaluate the level of patient satisfaction with OPD services in terms of describing the experience of patients about medicine OPD services and accessibility to services among the patients who attended the medicine OPD of Jaiprakash hospital.

METHODS

As a cross – sectional descriptive study, we have taken patients who were registered in Medicine outpatient department of Jaiprakash Hospital of Bhopal (JPH) over a period of two months i.e. February and March 2014, available at the time of data collection and are willing to participate in the study. Convenience sampling done for selection of patients registered in Medicine OPD. Total 200 patients were included in the study. The research instrument for a data collection was a structured questionnaire which was used as a measurement tool for assessing the patient satisfaction towards Jaiprakash hospital Medicine outpatient department. Questions in the questionnaire are close ended. The questions are divided

into sections according to the requirement of the research. This was face to face interview questionnaire. The experience and accessibility were categorized into good and poor while satisfaction into high and low using best criteria.

In best criteria, the maximum minus minimum was divided from total number of the responses the questionnaire had. In the following study there was three point likert's scale used so the maximum minus minimum was divided by three. The score that was used for categorising the experience and accessibility is given in the Table 1.

Table 1: Scoring using Best's criteria.

Variable	Low/Poor	High/Good
Experience	24-56	57-72
Physical facilities	7-17	18-21
Doctor's services	6-14	15-18
Nurse service	4-10	11-12
Pharmacy service	4-10	11-12
Registration service	3-7	8-9
Accessibility	7-17	18-21
Waiting time	3-7	8-9
Service process	2-4	5-6
Working hours of OPD	2-4	5-6

The questionnaire is divided into following sections:

- Experience of the patients with the OPD services: It included experience of the patient about physical facilities, doctor's services, nurse service, pharmacy service, registration staff service. It contains 24 questions. The questionnaire had three rating scales of agree, not sure and disagree. The label for agree was 3; for not sure was 2 and for disagree was 1. The experience was categorising into good and poor experience using best criteria.
- The second part of the questionnaire consists of accessibility to the services of JPH. The questions were consisting of waiting time, service process and working hours of OPD. There were seven questions in this section and the questionnaire has the three rating scale in previous section of agree, not sure and disagree and level same as in experience (i.e. for agree was 3; for not sure was 2 and for disagree was 1). The accessibility was categorising into good and poor experience using best criteria.

The interview was held at the hospital outpatient department where the patients receive medical care after taking permission from the superintendent of the hospital. After completing process of data collection the questionnaire was sorted out for defects or missing. To simplify the data entry and analysis, a code sheet was prepared.

RESULTS

The two hundred patients were interviewed at JPH hospital for evaluating their experience on Medicine OPD services. The number and percentage distribution of patients concerning their experience is shown in Table 2. Every question in experience section was studied against three different responses as agree, disagree and not sure. The experience was classified into good or bad using best's criteria. In item analysis there were 24 statements. The components related with physical facility consist of 7 items. According to the Table 2, more than three quarters of the patients (88%) said that ventilation inside the OPD was good and there was enough light inside the OPD (86%) so the experience of patients for ventilation and

light was good. Out of 200, 78% patients said that there was enough sitting facility in waiting area and waiting area of the OPD was clean. When the patients were asked about the space in diagnosis room for patients, 66% said that there was enough space in diagnostic room. About the items on drinking water in waiting area of Medicine OPD 68% of patients were agree that there was enough drinking water in waiting area of Medicine OPD. With regards to clean toilets in waiting area 70% of patients said that there were clean toilets in waiting area. On the basis of results produced in Table 2, all the above statements produced shows the good experience of the patients from the Medicine OPD except about the space in the diagnosis room from which patient have poor experience.

Table 2: Number and percentage of experience of patient about medicine OPD services.

S. No.	Experience of patient about medicine OPD services and physical facility	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Comment
1.	The ventilation inside OPD was good for patients.	176(88%)	20(10%)	4(2%)	Good
2.	There was enough light for the patients.	172(86%)	16 (8%)	12 (6%)	Good
3.	There was enough sitting facility in waiting area.	156(78%)	24(12%)	20(10%)	Good
4.	The diagnostic room having enough space.	132(66%)	28(14%)	40 (20%)	Poor
5.	There was enough drinking water in waiting area.	136(68%)	20(10%)	44 (22%)	Good
6.	Waiting area was clean.	156(78%)	8 (4%)	36(18%)	Good
7.	Toilets were clean	140(70%)	24(12%)	36(18%)	Good
Doctors Services					
8.	The doctor did the examination with respect.	180(90%)	12 (6%)	8 (4%)	Good
9.	The doctor spent enough time while examine you	164(82%)	20(10%)	16 (8%)	Good
10.	Doctor listened carefully to what you said to him and understands your concern.	140(70%)	20(10%)	40(20%)	Good
11.	Doctor gave you the opportunity to discuss your treatment with him.	140(70%)	28(14%)	32(16%)	Good
12.	Doctor asked about your illness in detail.	136(68%)	40(20%)	24 (12%)	Good
13.	There are enough doctors in OPD.	128(64%)	36(18%)	36(18%)	Poor
Nurse services					
14.	Nurse listened to health problem and explains to you any treatment you required.	148(74%)	24(12%)	28(14%)	Good
15.	Medicine OPD is having enough nursing facility.	144(72%)	28(14%)	28(14%)	Good
16.	Nurses were helpful to you.	136(68%)	32(16%)	32(16%)	Good
17.	Nurses showed good communication skills with patients.	148(74%)	24(12%)	28(14%)	Good
Pharmacy Services					
18.	The waiting time for receiving drugs is adequate.	60 (30%)	92(46%)	48 (24%)	Poor
19.	Pharmacist explained the use of medicine in detail.	156(78%)	4 (8%)	7 (14%)	Good
20.	There were enough pharmacists in OPD.	140(70%)	32(16%)	28(14%)	Good
21.	Pharmacist showed good enough communication skill.	148(74%)	20(10%)	32(16%)	Good
Registration Services					
22.	There was enough registration staff in OPD.	160(80%)	24(12%)	16(8%)	Good
23.	Registration staffs were cooperative with you.	144(72%)	20(10%)	36 (18%)	Good
24.	Registration staffs showed good enough communication skill	168(84%)	16(8%)	16 (8%)	Good

Percentage: $\geq 66.67\%$ = Good, $<66.67\%$ = Poor

The components related to doctor's services consisted of six items. Out of 200 patients the majority (90%) of

patients agreed that the doctor did the examination with great respect and this statement has the highest

percentage in this section. About the time spent by the doctor in the examination, 82% agreed that doctor spent enough time during examining them, 70% of the patients were agreed on that doctor listened carefully to what they said and understand their concern. According to large majority of patients (70%) the doctor gave them opportunity to discuss their treatment with them. 68% of the patients said that doctor asked about their illness in detail, and when the patient asked about the number of doctors in the medicine OPD, 64% patients were agreed that there were enough doctors in the OPD for the patient so the doctor services was good except that the number of doctors was not enough according to the result.

About the nurses services, majority (74%) of patients said that nurse listen to their problem and explained to them about the treatment they need, 72% of the patients were agreed with the statement that Medicine OPD had enough nursing facility. 68% patients were agreed that the nurses were helpful to them, and the last statement about the nurses services that nurses show good communication skill with them, majority (74%) were agreed with the statement. So on the basis of the result it was concluded that majority of the patients had good experience about the nurses' services.

The pharmacy services comprise of the four items, when we asked about the waiting time for taking drugs is adequate, 30% of patients were agreed while 24% were disagreed with the statement. About the statement on explanation of pharmacist on the use of medicine maximum (78%) patients were agreed that the pharmacist explained the use of Medicine clearly. More than two third (70%) of patients said that there is enough pharmacist in Medicine OPD. About 74% of patients agreed that the pharmacist showed good communication skill with them. On the basis of the result about pharmacy services from Table 2 it was clear that the patients had good experience from all the items of pharmacy except about their experience on the waiting time for taking drugs from pharmacy was poor.

Table 3: Number and percentage of respondents by overall experience to medicine OPD.

Experience to medicine OPD	Level of Experience (n=50)	
	Good	Poor
Physical facilities	148 (74%)	52 (26%)
Doctor's services	152 (76%)	48 (24%)
Nurse service	88 (44%)	112 (56%)
Pharmacy service	72 (36%)	128 (64%)
Registration staff service	160 (80%)	40 (20%)

About 80% of the patients said that there was enough registration staff in Medicine OPD. Most of the patients (72%) agreed that the registration staffs were cooperative. When they were asked about communication skill of

registration staff, 84% of the patients were agreed that the registration staff had good communication skill with the patients. From the registration section the patients had good experience from all the statements asked from them regarding pharmacy services.

Table 3 shows number and percentage distribution of patients by overall experience in Medicine OPD. About physical facility 74% of the patients showed good experience. It was noted that more than three quarters (76%) of the patients showed good experience about doctor service. As far as nurse services and pharmacy services are concerned, 44% patients in nurse services and 36% patients in pharmacy services showed good experience. The highest level of good experience was about Doctor's services while the lowest about pharmacy services.

Table 4: Number and percentage of respondents by level of total experience concerning medicine OPD.

Level of experience	Number of respondent	Percentage of respondents
Good experience	188	94%
Poor experience	12	06%

Table 4 shows the number and percentage of patients by level of total experience in Medicine OPD. The experience was divided into two groups of good experience and poor experience using best's criteria. It was noted that maximum patients (94%) had good experience.

To know about their attitude towards accessibility to Medicine OPD we interviewed two hundred patients in JP Hospital of Bhopal city. The best's criterion was used to categorise the patients into good and poor accessibility.

This section comprised of three components- waiting time, service process and working hours of OPD. In items analysis wise, there were seven items in this part of analysis and the questionnaire has three rating scale as in previous section, agree, not sure and disagree. Table-5 shows the descriptive data related to the accessibility of the patients. The section of waiting time comprise of three questions. During data analysis it was found that more than half (62%) of patients agreed that waiting time for getting treatment from the doctor is appropriate to them so the accessibility for getting treatment card was poor. About 58% of patients declared that the waiting time for getting prescribed drugs from pharmacy are appropriate for them so using the best's criterion there was poor accessibility to the drugs from pharmacy section of Medicine OPD. About 70% of the patients agreed that the waiting time for getting out patient appointment was appropriate for them so the accessibility for getting the outpatient appointment was good for patients.

The section on service process comprise of two questions. Responding to the service process for registration 60% of the patients considered the registration process fast, simple and trouble free for patients. When

the patients were asked about the coordination in different sections of Medicine OPD, about three quarters (74%) of the patients agreed there was good coordination between different sections of medicine OPD.

Table 5: Number and percentage of accessibility of patients to medicine OPD Services.

S.No.	Waiting time	Agree	Not sure	disagree	Comment
25.	The waiting time for getting treatment from the doctor is appropriate for you.	124(62%)	28(14%)	48 (24%)	Poor
26.	The waiting time for getting prescribed drugs from pharmacy is appropriate for you.	116 (58%)	36(18%)	48 (24%)	Poor
27.	The waiting time for getting outpatient appointment is appropriate for you.	140 (70%)	16 (8%)	44 (22%)	Good
Service process					
28.	The service process for OPD registration is fast, simple & trouble free for the patient.	120 (60%)	36(18%)	44 (22%)	Poor
29.	There is good coordination in different section of the OPD.	148 (74%)	32(16%)	20 (10%)	Good
Working hours of OPD					
30.	Required medical staffs were available during working hours of OPD.	136 (68%)	28(14%)	36 (18%)	Good
31.	Working hour schedule of OPD is appropriate for you.	172 (86%)	20(14%)	8 (4%)	Good

The section on working hours of OPD contained two items. About the statement on the availability of required medical staff during working hours of Medicine OPD, 68% of patients agreed that the required Medical staff were available during working hours of OPD. Majority of (86%) patients agreed that schedule of working hours of OPD was adequate for them. On the basis of the above results it was clear that the patients were having good experience except from diagnostic space, number of doctors and the waiting time for receiving the drugs.

Table 6: Number and percentage of respondents by overall accessibility to medicine OPD.

Accessibility towards medicine OPD	Level of Accessibility Good	Poor
Waiting time	104 (52%)	96 (48%)
Service process	156 (78%)	44 (22%)
Working hours	164 (82%)	36 (18%)

Table 6 shows that 53% of the patients had good accessibility in terms of waiting time. For service process about three quarter (78%) of the patients had good accessibility. Regarding working hours of OPD, majority (82%) of the patients had good accessibility.

Table 7 shows the total accessibility towards the Medicine OPD services. During data analysis, it was found that 66% of patients had good accessibility towards Medicine OPD while remaining 34% had poor accessibility towards Medicine OPD.

Table 7: Number and percentage of respondents by level of total accessibility concerning medicine OPD.

Level of accessibility	Number of respondent	Percentage of respondents
Good Accessibility	132	66%
Poor Accessibility	68	34%

DISCUSSION

Total experiences of two hundred patients were computed to determine their experiences regarding different services provided by the OPD of Medicine department. The patient with good experience showed high level of satisfaction as compared to those who had poor experience with satisfaction. The patients had the highest level of experience from Medicine department OPD about helpfulness of nurses, about light and ventilation inside the OPD and about the good communication from the pharmacist. Similar findings were observed in the study conducted by Galhotra in which the respondents were satisfied with the basic amenities.⁶ The poor experience was from the waiting time for taking drugs, number of doctors in OPD and about the diagnostic place.

Component wise patients had good experience from all the components but for doctors services the patients had the highest level of good satisfaction while highest level of poor satisfaction was from pharmacy services. This is in contrast to the study conducted by a Bamidele AR, Hoque ME & Van der Heever H in which overall, participants were quite satisfied with the services

provided by the different service providers but the pharmacy received the highest satisfaction level.⁷

Regarding registration services majority of the patients were agreed that there was enough registration staff in Medicine outpatient department, registration staff was cooperative and that the registration staff had good communication skill.

According to the result of the study, 66% of patients had good accessibility towards Medicine OPD while remaining 34% had poor accessibility towards Medicine OPD.

The higher the accessibility higher will be the satisfaction level of the patients. After analysis it was found that more than half (62%) of patients agreed that waiting time for getting treatment from the doctor is appropriate to them so the accessibility for getting treatment card was poor i.e. 38% of the patients were not agreed with the statement that the waiting time for receiving the OPD card was appropriate for them. So this area needs attention from the hospital authority. Similar findings were observed in study conducted by Andrabi Syed Arshad to measure the satisfaction of patients attending the OPD in a tertiary care hospital namely SKIMS, Soura, Srinagar.⁸ About 42% of patients declared that the waiting time for getting prescribed drugs from pharmacy was not appropriate for them and they said that sometime the pharmacy staffs do injustice with the patients waiting for getting the prescribed drugs. Administrator may consider the ways to reduce the waiting time for receiving the drugs from the pharmacy section.

Responding to the service process for registration majority of the patients considered the registration process fast, simple and trouble free for patients. When the patients were asked about the coordination in different sections of medicine OPD, about three quarters of the patients agreed there was good coordination between different sections of medicine OPD.

Majority of the patients agreed that the required Medical staff were available during working hours of OPD and schedule of working hours of OPD was adequate for them.

Similarly in Amin Khan, Mandokhai Boonyong Keiwkarnka & Pantyp Ramasoota study to describe patient satisfaction towards outpatient health care services provided by medicine department in Banphaeo autonomous hospital, Samutsakhon province, Thailand in which 225 respondents were interviewed.⁹ Maximum numbers of patients (87.56) had good experience from medicine OPD except drugs expense, space in diagnostic place and number of doctors in OPD. About accessibility, 64.89 percent of respondents had good accessibility. The result showed that the overall satisfaction was 86.67 percent.

Another study conducted by Qureshi et al at the Lal Ded Hospital Srinagar.¹⁰ After thorough analysis the aggregate score of the questionnaire regarding patient satisfaction was; 72% patients considered the services at Lal Ded Hospital as good while as 8.3% average and 19.7% were poorly satisfied or not satisfied with the hospital services.

CONCLUSION

The study on the patient satisfaction is an effective mean of evaluating the performance of the hospital from the view of the patient. The information obtained through this type of study is valuable to overcome the discrepancies so as to make this hospital and Medicine department OPD more attractive for patients.

About the experience of the patients the study indicated that patients had good satisfaction from all the items like light, ventilation, cleanliness and tidiness, about examination by the doctors, helpfulness of nurses, and communication skill of the pharmacists. Item wise the poor satisfaction was from the diagnostic space and number of doctors. Highest satisfaction was from the doctor's service while lowest satisfaction was from the pharmacy services. Maximum number of respondents had very good experience while just small number of respondents had poor experience.

In accessibility, the highest proportion of respondents agreed that the required medical staff was available during working hours of OPD, schedule of working hours of OPD was adequate while comparatively less number of respondents were agreed on the waiting time for getting treatment from doctors and waiting time for getting prescribed drugs. So the waiting time was the main concern of the patient. Majority of the patients had good accessibility regarding waiting time, service process and working hours.

The hospital administration should made continuous efforts to improve certain areas in the service based on satisfaction level of the dimensions in this patient satisfaction study.

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