



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Management

STUDY ON PATIENT SATISFACTION OF OUTPATIENT DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY CARE HOSPITAL

KEY WORDS: Patient satisfaction, Outpatient department, Experience

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Patients' satisfaction is a useful measure to provide an indicator of quality in healthcare and thus needs to be measured frequently.

Aim: 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.

Methods: In this cross-sectional descriptive study, we have taken patients who were registered in Medicine outpatient department over a period of two months. The research instrument for a data collection was a structured questionnaire for assessing the patient satisfaction.

Results: It was noted that (96%) of the patients showed good experience about doctor service, (29%) showed poor experience in physical facilities. As far as accessibility is concerned, 67% of patients had good accessibility towards medicine OPD while remaining 33% had poor accessibility towards Medicine OPD.

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

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. Measuring the quality of intangible service products has become a great challenge for managers and administrators in the health services industry.¹ Patient satisfaction or dissatisfaction is a complicated phenomenon that is linked to patient expectations, health status, personal characteristics as well as health system characteristics.² However, patient satisfaction as an indicator of quality of healthcare has evolved as an outcome measure and patient satisfaction surveys are being increasingly identified to be established yardsticks to measure success of the service delivery system functional at hospitals.³ In general, patient satisfaction has been defined as an evaluation that reflects the perceived differences between expectations of the patient to what is actually received during the process of care. Outpatient department (OPD) is the first point of contact of the hospital with patients and serves as the shop window to any healthcare service provided to the community. The care in the OPD is believed to indicate the quality of services of a hospital and is reflected by patients' satisfaction with the services being provided.⁴

AIM

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.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As a cross-sectional descriptive study, we have taken patients who were registered in Medicine outpatient department over a period of two months, available at the time of data collection and are willing to participate in the study. Convenience sampling done for selection of patients registered in OPD. Total 100 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 outpatient department. Questions in the questionnaire are close ended 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.

RESULTS

Figure 1 Overall experience in Outpatient department

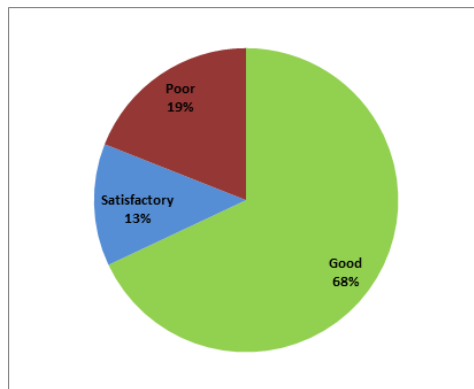


Table 1 Overall experience various facilities in medicine OPD.

Experience to OPD	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Physical facilities	49	22	29
Doctor's services	96	4	0
Nurse service	78	12	10
Pharmacy service	84	6	10
Registration staff service	56	28	16

Table 2 Overall accessibility to medicine OPD

Accessibility towards OPD	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Waiting time	42	12	54
Service process	68	22	10
Working hours	92	8	0

Total experiences of one 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. 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. 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. 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.

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.

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