A Study to Assess the Level of Patients' Satisfaction among Out- Patients at Saveetha Medical College Hospital in Chennai, India

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Abstract: *An out-patient department of any hospital is enormously sensitive. It is an important component of a hospital which is often referred to as the "shop window" of the hospital. Patients' satisfaction is of paramount importance in every health care system in this modern age. Patients encounter oodles of problems like delay in consultations, overcrowding, inattention, lack of guidance, poor services, over waiting time, inadequate facilities, ill-mannered services, poor logistic arrangements etc. all of which leads to their dissatisfaction. This study was conducted to assess the level of satisfaction of out-patients through their feedback about the services provided in the outpatients department (OPD). <u>Aim</u>: The aim of this study is to determine the satisfaction level of out-patients in Saveetha Medical College Hospital. <u>Objectives</u>: To assess the level of patients' satisfaction among out-patients and to associates the level of satisfaction among patients with selected demographic variables. <u>Methodology</u>: Descriptive research design was chosen for the study. <u>Result</u>: Out of 50 patients, 41 were highly satisfied, 9 were just satisfied and none was dissatisfied. Some suggested the need for improvement in some aspects like staff nurses' friendliness and waiting time.*

Keywords: Hospital, Outpatient department, Satisfaction.

1. Introduction

Patient's evaluation of care has become a prominent method of assessing the quality of health care services. With growing emphasis on consumerism and competition in the health care system, patients' assessments of care have been advocated as an essential component of quality assessment.

2. Statement of the Problem

A descriptive study to assess the level of patients' satisfaction among Outpatients in Saveetha Medical College and hospital in Chennai.

3. Objectives

1. To assess the level of patients' satisfaction among outpatients in Saveetha Medical College Hospital.
2. To associate the level of satisfaction among out patients with selected demographic variables.

4. Methodology

The research approach used in the study was quantitative approach by using descriptive research design. The study was conducted at the out-patient department of SMCH hospital with 50 samples selected by convenient sampling technique including both males and females attending OPD services, out of 200 to 220 out-patients who visit the hospital per day as per the most recent census. Demographic variables was collected by using self-structured questionnaire and modified client satisfaction questionnaire by C.C Attkissiion et al., [1991] at the university of California, san Francisco department of psychiatry was used to assess the patients' level of satisfaction in OPD. The researcher explained the study to the samples and got their consent. The demographic variables and the modified client satisfaction questionnaire were distributed to those who met the inclusion criteria to tick, based on their level of satisfaction. The data was analysed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

5. Result

The result showed that out of 50 patients attending SMCH OPD who met the inclusion criteria and was chosen for this study, 41(82%) were highly satisfied and 9(18%) were just satisfied. They also recommended some areas that need improvement like waiting time and nursing staff friendliness.

6. Conclusion

Patients attending each hospital are responsible for spreading the image of the hospital and therefore satisfaction of patients attending the hospital is equally important for rapid growth and proper management of the hospital. Various studies about Out Patient Services have elicited problems like overcrowding, delay in consultation, in proper behaviour of staff etc. In this study, it is found that majority of the patients are satisfied with the services provided like guidance, logistic arrangements, support services, nursing care, Doctors' consultation etc. However, few out-patients in SMCH complained of delay in consultation which needs to be explored to elicit the lacunae. It is worthwhile to note that there is scope for improvement of the Out-Patient Department Services worldwide. Therefore it can be concluded that the OPD services form an important component of Hospital services and feedback of patients are vital in quality improvement.

7. Criteria for Sample Selection

Inclusion Criteria
- Patients who were willing to participate in the study
- Both male and female patients within the age group of 20-60 years.
- Patients who were attending out-patient at saveetha Medical College and Hospital.
- Patients who understands Tamil or English.

Exclusion Criteria
- Patients who were seriously ill and admitted to special care units like ICU and emergency.
- Patients who have sensory deficits.

8. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data analysis encompasses; the frequency and percentage distribution of selected Demographic Variables, the Frequency and percentage distribution of level of patients' satisfaction, the Mean and standard deviation of level of patients' satisfaction and the association of selected demographic variables with the level of patients' satisfaction among out-patients.

Table1: Frequency and percentage distribution of level of patients' satisfaction among outpatients (n=50)

S. No	Level of Patients' satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
1	Dissatisfied	-	0
2	Satisfied	9	18
3	Highly satisfied	41	82
4	Total	50	100

Table 1: reveals the frequency and percentage distribution of level of patients' satisfaction among out-patients, 9 (18%) of them were satisfied and 41 (82%) of them were highly satisfied.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of selected demographic variables among out-patients. (n= 50)

S.No	Selected demographic variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Age		
	20 – 29 years	16	32
	30 – 39 years	10	20
	40 – 49 years	17	34
	50 years and above	7	14
2	Sex		
	Male	19	38
	Female	31	62
3	Religion		
	Hindu	36	72
	Christian	11	22
	Muslim	3	6
	Others	-	-
4	Educational status		
	Primary school	19	38
	High school	19	38
	Higher secondary	6	12
	Graduate	6	12
5	Occupation		
	Government employee	11	22
	Private employee	-	-
	Business	34	68
	Unemployed	5	10
6	Total number of visits to the hospital	13	26
	First time	37	74
	More than two times		
7	Total number of family members		
	two	2	4
	three	9	18
	four	16	32
	>four	23	46
8	Source of information about the hospital		
	Family members	20	40
	Neighbours	23	46
	From students	2	4
	Advertisement	5	10

Table 2: reveals the frequency and percentage distribution of selected demographic variable among out-patients. With regards of age, 34% of person falls on the age group of 41–50yrs and 14% of person falls on the age group of 51–60 yrs. In occupation 68% of patients were unemployed and 10% of patients are doing business. With respect to number of visit to the hospital, 74% of patients visited hospital more than two times, 26% of patients visited first time. Related to source of information about the hospital, 46% of them received information from their neighbours and 4% of them received information from the students.

Table 3: association between selected demographic variables with the level of patients' satisfaction among out-patients (n = 50)

S. No	Selected demographic variables	Dissatisfied		Satisfied		Highly Satisfied		Chi square
		N	%	N	%	N	%	X^2
1	Age							X^2=7.072
	21 – 30 years	0	0	3	6	13	26	df =3
	31 – 40 years	0	0	2	4	8	16	(NS)
	41 – 50 years	0	0	2	4	15	30	
	Above 50 years	0	0	2	4	5	10	
2	Sex							X^2=0.680
	Male	0	0	4	8	15	30	df = 1
	Female	0	0	4	8	27	54	(NS)
3	Religion							
	Hindu	0	0	5	10	31	62	X^2=5.23
	Christian	0	0	2	4	9	18	df = 3
	Muslim	0	0	2	4	1	2	(NS)
	Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	
4	Educational status							
	Primary school	0	0	3	6	16	32	X^2=3.81
	High school	0	0	2	4	17	34	df = 3
	Higher secondary	0	0	2	4	4	8	(NS)
	Graduate	0	0	0	0	6	12	
5	Occupation							
	Employed (government / Private)	0	0	2	4	9	18	X^2=1.889 df = 2 (NS)
	Unemployed	0	0	5	10	29	58	
	Business	0	0	2	4	3	6	
6	Total number of visits to the hospital							X^2=1.941
	First time							df= 1
	More than two times	0	0	4	8	9	18	(NS)
		0	0	5	10	32	64	
7	Total number of family members							
	2							X^2=1.493
	3	0	0	0	0	2	4	df = 3(NS)
	4	0	0	2	4	7	14	
	>5	0	0	4	8	12	24	
		0	0	3	6	20	40	
8	Source of information about the hospital							
	Family members	0	0	1	2	19	38	X^2=5. 257
	Neighbours	0	0	6	12	17	34	df = 3
	From students	0	0	0	0	2	4	(NS)
	Advertisement	0	0	0	0	5	10	

Note : NA – not Significant

Table 3: reveals the association of selected demographic variables with the level of patients' satisfaction among out-patients. The association of age, sex, religion, educational status, occupation, total number of visit to the hospital, total number of family members and source of information about the hospital with the level of patients' satisfaction among out-patient was not statistically significant at the level of p<0.05.

Table 4: Frequency and percentage distribution of level of patients' satisfaction among out-patients (n= 50)

S. No	Level of patient satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
1	Dissatisfied	-	-
2	Satisfied	9	18
3	Highly satisfied	41	82
4	Total	50	100

Table 4: reveals the frequency and percentage distribution of level of patients' satisfaction among out-patient. 9 (18%) of them were satisfied and 41 (82%) of them were highly satisfied.

Nursing Recommendations

- The findings strongly recommend the need to develop a standard protocol to assess the level of patients' satisfaction among out-patient.
- The same study may be done in long term basis to assess the level of patients' satisfaction.
- The study can be done in larger settings with more number of samples.
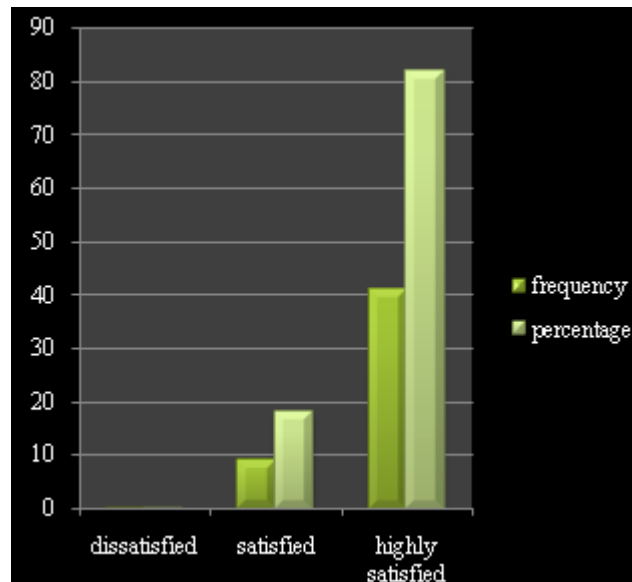
Figure 1: The frequency and percentage distribution of level of satisfaction
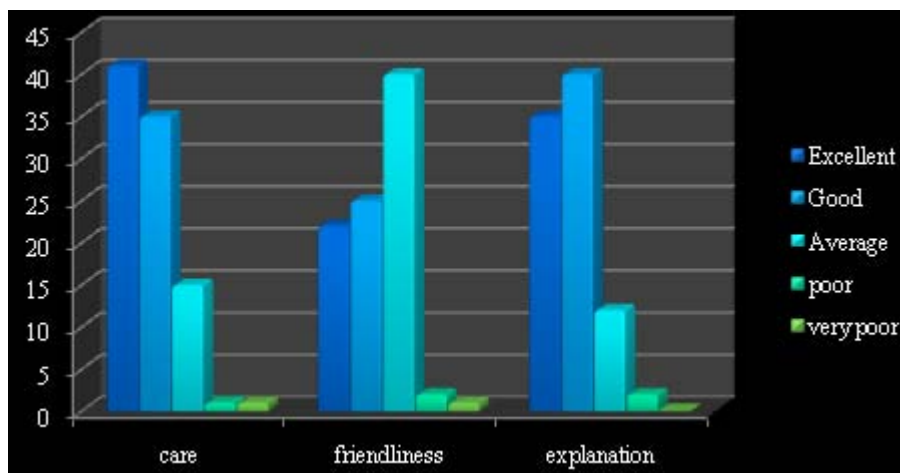

Figure 2: Patients' feedback about the level of services provided by nursing staff

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