A STUDY ON PATIENT SATISFCTION IN OUTPATIENT DEPARTMENT, IN ONE OF THE LEADING HOSPITALS IN MADURAI

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Abstract - Patient satisfaction is recognized as an important parameter for assessing the quality of patient care services being delivered by healthcare organization. Measuring patients satisfaction has many purposes, with such interviews helping to evaluate healthcare services from the patient's point of view, facilitate the identification of problem areas and help generate ideas towards resolving those problems. Consultation time spent with doctor is an important attribute to determine satisfaction level among patients. This paper explores the patient satisfaction in outpatient department and the procedures in the workplace within the selected hospital. A questionnaire was framed and circulated to the patients of that hospital in order to study their extent of satisfaction in outpatient department. The expected outcome of this paper is speeding up waiting times for checkup and allowing patients to receive faster service, diagnosis, treatments and spotting ways for patient satisfaction .The findings are also expected to pave the way for future research work.

*Key Words***:** Patient satisfaction, Waiting time , Quality of patient care services.

1.INTRODUCTION
A.DEFINITION:

OPD is defined as a part of the hospital with allotted physical facilities and medical and other staffs, with regularly scheduled hours, to provide care for patients who are not registered as inpatients. A hospital department where patients receive diagnosis and/ or treatment but do not stay overnight.

B. LOCATION:
An OPD is typically located in the ground floor of each hospital and split into several parts such as Department of Neurology, Department of Gynecology, Department of Orthopedics, Department of Oncology, Department of General Medicine and so on. The patient is finishing all the paperwork over here and going to the relevant department.

C. FUNCTIONS:
- Control disease by early diagnosis and treatment
- Investigate and screen cases whether hospitalisation is required or not
- Provide follow up care to discharged patients and their rehabilitation
- Provide a facility for training of medical, para medical and nursing staff
- It may also provide avenue for epidemiological and social research**.**

D.TYPES OF OPD:
- Centralised outpatient services - All services are provided in a compact area which includes all diagnostic and therapeutic facilities provided in the same place
- Decentralised outpatient services- Services are provided in the respective departments.

E.BASED ON TYPE OF PATIENTS:
- General outpatient - All the patient other than emergencies who report directly to the OPD
- Emergency outpatient - A patient given emergency medical care for condition which is real or perceived emergency
- Referred outpatient- A person referred to an OPD by his attending medical\dental practitioner for specific diagnostic\treatment procedure.

F.TYPES OF OPD SERVICES:
- Ambulatory care centre
- Polyclinic
- Health Centre
- Walk in clinic
- Day hospital
- Dispensary

G.REQUIREMENTS FOR OPD:
- 60% of area should be for waiting and corridors
- Seats for 1/3 of daily attendance at 8sq feet/patient
- Consultation room - 150sq feet
- Attached examination room - 80 square feet

The objective of the study includes,

- To analyse the outpatient satisfaction rate.
- To find out the important factors contributing to increased patient waiting time.
- To advocate measures to improve patient satisfaction rate in outpatient department.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Weijuan Gong (2020), The outpatients showed the highest satisfaction with the doctors and nurses and the lowest satisfaction with the hospital hygiene and outpatient procedures, especially with the long waiting time. The socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., age, marital status, income and education levels), professional skills and service attitudes of medical staff were reported to be associated with outpatient satisfaction.

According to Xiang Kong(2020), the attitude of medical service providers, especially the pre-diagnosis nurses, registration officers, and pharmaceutical counters should be improved. Furthermore, to shorten the waiting time, policies should be developed to guide patients with common diseases and slight discomforts to community health systems to alleviate the overload in tertiary hospitals.

According to Spurgeon Raj Jalem (2020), The Out Patient Department (OPD) Services is one of the most important aspects of Hospital Administration. Enhancing contact between patients and healthcare providers is the main factor impacting the overall satisfaction of patients. Reducing the time needed to complete services, improving the overall cleanliness of facilities, improving nursing services and increasing the availability of medicines at the pharmacy, reduction of waiting time for laboratory reports etc. are important factors to consider and collectively, these can significantly increase the loyalty of patients.

III. METHODOLOGY

This is an exploratory research that aims on the patient satisfaction in outpatient department in their hospital. The simple random sampling is used in order to collect data. About 35422 patient were present in the hospital and by considering the Morgan's table with 95% confidence and 5% error, 378 data was collected. For this purpose, a questionnaire has been designed, making sure that the research questions do justice to what the researcher is trying to find and to provide the direction and shape of the research. Accordingly the survey tool is a structured questionnaire. It composed of twenty questions that test the patient satisfaction.

IV. ANALYSIS

Chart-I showing the percentage of patient satisfaction in outpatient department


PATIENT SATISFACTION IN OUTPATIENT DEPARTMENT
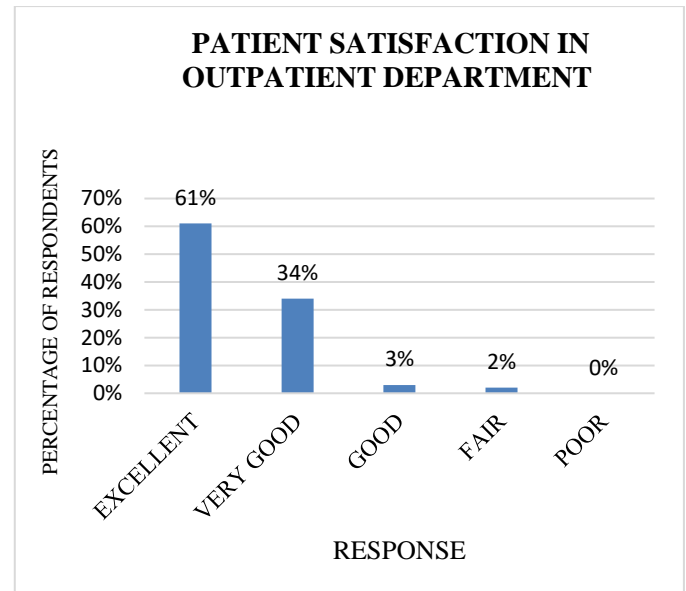
From the above chart-I shows that 61% of the respondents gave excellent to the statement "Patient satisfaction in outpatient department", 34 % of the respondents as very good, 3% of the respondents as good and 2% of the respondents gave fair to the statement "Patient satisfaction in outpatient department".

Chart- II showing the percentage of patient overall service experience in outpatient department

PATIENT OVERALL SERVICE EXPERIENCE AT THE HOSPITAL
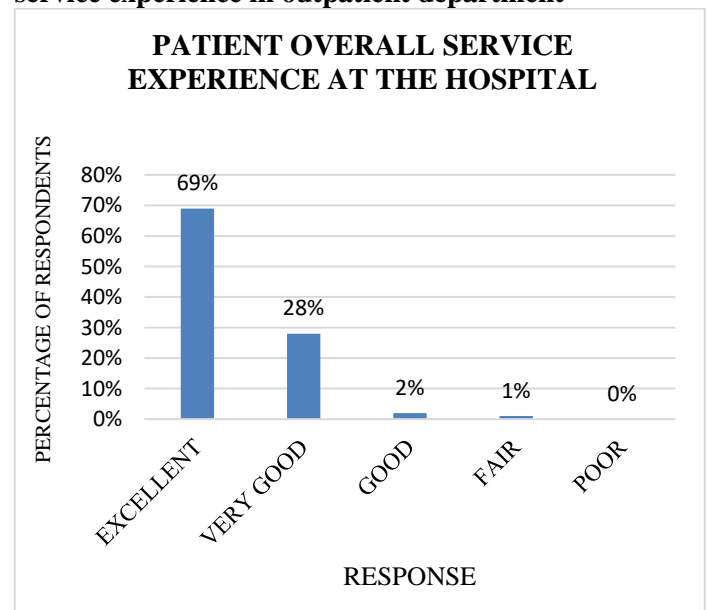
From the above chart-II shows that 69% of the respondents gave excellent to the statement "Patient overall service experience at the hospital" , 28 % of the respondents as very good, 2% of the respondents as good and 1% of the respondents gave fair to the statement "Patient overall service experience at the hospital" .

Chart- III showing the percentage of patient experience with consultant doctor
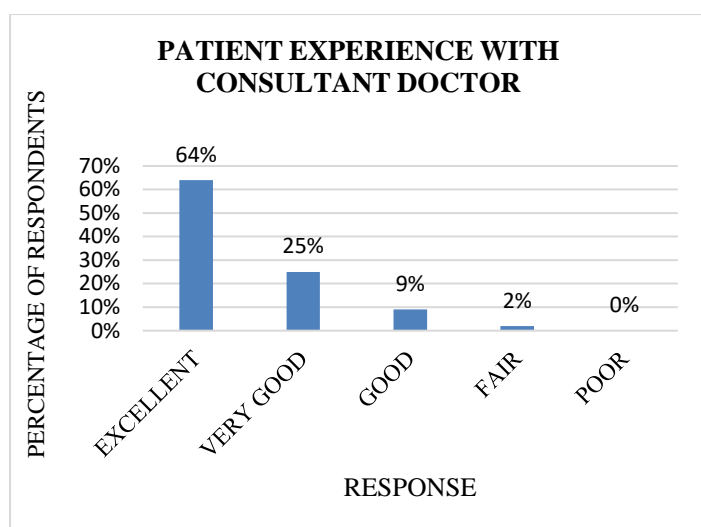
From the above chart-III shows that 64% of the respondents gave excellent to the statement "Patient experience with consultant doctor", 25 % of the respondents as very good, 9% of the respondents as good and 2% of the respondents gave fair to the statement "Patient experience with consultant doctor" as the patient waiting long time for consultant doctor when doctor in on inpatient rounds, emergency surgery and if doctors meeting scheduled during outpatient hours.

Table-I showing the correlation between patient experience with consultant doctor and outpatient waiting time .

CORRELATION

		patient experience with consultant doctor	outpatient waiting time
Patient experience with consultant doctor	Pearson correlation	1	8.65**
	sig. (2 - tailed)		.000
	N	378	378

outpatient waiting time	Pearson correlation	8.65**	1
	sig. (2 - tailed)	.000	
	N	378	378

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Null Hypothesis H0: There is no relationship between patient experience with consultant doctor and outpatient waiting time.

Alternative Hypothesis H1: There is relationship between patient experience with consultant doctor and outpatient waiting time.

Significant value is .000, accept H1 (Alternative Hypothesis)

H1: There is relationship between patient experience with consultant doctor and outpatient waiting time.

From the above table- I interprets the correlation between patient experience with consultant doctor and outpatient waiting time. As the significant value less than 0.05, alternative hypothesis is accepted. And hence, it can be proved that there is correlation between patient experience with consultant doctor and outpatient waiting time.

Table- II showing the correlation between patient satisfaction and patient overall service experience

CORRELATION

		Patient satisfaction	Patient overall service experience
Patient satisfaction	Pearson correlation	1	8.90**
	sig. (2 - tailed)		.000
	N	378	378
Patient overall service experience	Pearson correlation	8.90**	1
	sig. (2 - tailed)	.000	
	N	378	378

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Null Hypothesis H0: There is no relationship between patient satisfaction and patient overall service experience

Alternative Hypothesis H1: There is relationship between patient satisfaction and patient overall service experience

Significant value is .000, accept H1 (Alternative Hypothesis)

H1: There is relationship between patient satisfaction and patient overall service experience

From the above table- II interprets the correlation between patient satisfaction at the hospital and patient overall service experience at the hospital. As the significant value less than 0.05, alternative hypothesis is accepted. And hence, it can be proved that there is correlation between patient satisfaction at the hospital and patient overall service experience at the hospital.

V. MAJOR FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- In hospital, 61% of the respondents gave excellent to the statement "Patient satisfaction in outpatient department", 34 % of the respondents as very good, 3% of the respondents as good and 2% of the respondents gave fair to the statement "Patient satisfaction in outpatient department"
- In hospital, 68% of the respondents gave excellent to the statement "Cleanliness of the hospital premises", 30 % of the respondents as very good and 15% of the respondents gave good to the statement "Cleanliness of the hospital premises".
- In hospital, 74% of the respondents gave excellent to the statement "Outpatient waiting time at the hospital" 21 % of the respondents as very good, 4% of the respondents as good and 1% of the respondents gave fair to the statement "Outpatient waiting time at the hospital".

The recommendations include,

- Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) can be recruited in outpatient department.
- Scheduling system, which must cater to emergency room patients, inpatients, and outpatients; while examination for inpatients are usually flexible and can be delayed if necessary.
- Scheduling all the longer procedures at the start of the day would increase the overall waiting time for all patients throughout the day.
- Increase the number of on duty staff during peak hours.

VI. CONCLUSION

Patient visiting the hospital if satisfied will help in developing the good image of the institute and waiting time is one of the important indicator of patient satisfaction. Enhancing contact between patients and healthcare providers is the main factor impacting the overall satisfaction of patients. The quality of the service has to keep improving to maintain or increase the level of satisfaction. Healthcare providers are encouraged to measure the patient satisfaction of their services. Periodical professional development training programs for doctors and staff at hospital are recommended to boost medical professionalism.

VII. REFERENCE

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