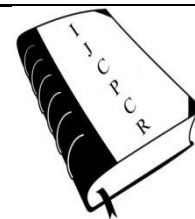




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ASSESSMENT OF PATIENT SATISFACTION IN SURGICAL DEPARTMENT OF A TERTIARY HEALTH CARE HOSPITAL

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Patient satisfaction is pertinent for measuring the performance of health-care service delivery, which is a multidimensional construct that depends on many factors. The main objective of this study was to assess the satisfaction of patients visiting a tertiary care hospital. In any public sector despite of private or government, public satisfaction is the major factor that reflects the quality of service of a particular sector. While coming to hospitals which are dealt with public safety and healthy life measures, patient satisfaction is major tool for assessing the quality of service provided by the particular health care sector. In this mean, patient satisfaction refers to the result of overall situations faced by the patient in the hospital. **Aims and Objectives:** Present study is aimed to assess the patient satisfaction in a tertiary care hospital especially in surgical department. By this study, the management can be aided for making better interventions for improving patient care. **Materials and Methods:** Study was designed to be prospective cross sectional study which was processed by direct interaction with individual patient who visited the hospital during the study period. Prior to start-up of the study, a questionnaire was adopted by collected various patient satisfaction questionnaires from various sites online. A well designed protocol of the study was submitted to Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC) and approval was obtained. The patient satisfaction was assessed based on four domains, namely registration process and experience before meeting the doctor, interaction with the doctor, hospital infrastructure, and medicine availability. The responses were captured on a Likert scale from one to five, and the scores were used to calculate the overall satisfaction. **Results and Discussion:** About 117 patients have been distributed and collected with the patient satisfaction questionnaire. It was noted from the analysis that about more than 80% of the patients were very satisfied by the hospital service, in various parameters like nurse service and response, doctor's availability, doctor's politeness, overall treatment given, explaining of medications, explaining the patient about surgical procedure and discharge counselling. About 81.19% were very satisfied with nurse service. **Conclusion:** It can be reported from the study conducted in RVS Multi-specialty Hospital that more than 75% of patient population visiting the surgical department of the hospital were very satisfied by the hospital's service. However, regular assessment of patient satisfaction should be done in all the departments of the hospital for better interventional buildup of the health care service.

Key words:

INTRODUCTION

Patient satisfaction is considered to be a performance measure for the quality of health care services. The three domains of patient satisfaction are delivery of essential medical care, treatments sought by

patients and their families, and the provider activities and behaviors.

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In any public sector despite of private or government, public satisfaction is the major factor that reflects the quality of service of a particular sector [1, 2]. While coming to hospitals which are dealt with public safety and healthy life measures, patient satisfaction is major tool for assessing the quality of service provided by the particular health care sector [3-4]. In this mean, patient satisfaction refers to the result of overall situations faced by the patient in the hospital [5]. Patient satisfaction is required as this result in continuity of visit by the patient to hospital, which in turn results in it is a multidimensional construct that relies on technical, infrastructural, functional, environmental, and interpersonal components of health services. Because health services are jointly produced by providers and patients, assessment of patient satisfaction becomes crucial in addition to the assessment of health-care providers' practices. Research in patients' satisfaction facilitates the incorporation of patients' views in the organization of health-care services. An assessment of patient satisfaction gives the opportunity to identify the gaps in the existing services and to rectify these to ensure quality care to the patients. These findings help in prioritizing resource allocation, transformation of health-care staff, and better management of health services. Additionally, a satisfied patient intends to choose the health service and becomes more compliant to treatment and follow-up advice. This in turn leads to better health outcomes and recommendation of services to others. Factors that influence patients' satisfaction can be categorized as provider- and patient-related factors. Providers' competence, interpersonal skills, and facility characteristics (such as infrastructure, type, and level of the facility) were reported to be strongly associated with patients' satisfaction, and patient-related characteristics (such as gender, age, race, socioeconomic status, health

status, and expectation) were reported to be weakly associated with patients' satisfaction [6, 7]. The present study was designed to evaluate the patient satisfaction in a tertiary care hospital [9]. Feedback from patients on satisfaction levels with respect to hospital service is essential and should be done in specific time intervals and the feedback of the patient satisfaction should be discussed with the staff and the hospital management for making better interventions on requirement [10, 11].

Tertiary care institutes in the public sector are the referral centres for specialized services, and assessment of patients' satisfaction becomes crucial for improving the quality of health care at this level. With this background, a study was conducted among outpatients and inpatients at a tertiary care institute in Haryana with the following objectives: to assess the client satisfaction regarding health-care services among patients visiting the tertiary-care center and to study the factors associated with client satisfaction among patients visiting the tertiary care center. It was reported in a study that in many developed countries patients are often unable to correctly name the physician from whom they got treatment [12].

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Study was designed to be prospective cross sectional study which was processed by direct interaction with individual patient who visited the hospital during the study period. Prior to startup of the study, a questionnaire was adopted by collected various patient satisfaction questionnaires from various sites online. A well designed protocol of the study was submitted to Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC) and approval was obtained. All the data collected from both in-patient and out-patient departments were incorporated into statistical tool and analysed.

Table 1. Variables of Questionnaire with Respect to the Patient Response.

Variables of questionnaire	Unsatisfied n(%)	Satisfied n(%)	Very satisfied n(%)
Nurse service	15(12.8)	7(5.98)	95(81.19)
Doctor's availability	9(7.69)	19(16.23)	89(76.06)
Doctor's politeness	5(4.27)	17(14.52)	95(81.19)
Overall treatment satisfaction	8(6.83)	19(16.23)	90(76.92)
Explaining you regarding medication	3(2.56)	12(10.25)	102(87.17)
Counseling you about surgical procedure	11(9.4)	21(17.94)	85(72.64)
Discharge counseling	10(8.54)	18(15.38)	89(76.06)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

About 117 patients have been distributed and collected with the patient satisfaction questionnaire. It was noted from the analysis that about more than 80% of the patients were very satisfied by the hospital service, in various parameters like nurse service and response, doctor's availability, doctor's politeness, overall treatment given, explaining of medications, explaining the patient about surgical procedure and discharge counselling. About

81.19% were very satisfied with nurse service, 76.06% of overall population were very satisfied by doctors availability, the way of doctor's response and politeness was very satisfied by 81.19% patients, more than 76.92% were established with high satisfaction towards overall treatment provided, over 87.17% have established high satisfaction towards explanation given on medication use, 72.64% of patients were very satisfied by the counselling given on surgical procedure, and about 76.06% were

reported with very satisfied score on discharge counselling provided by the hospital professionals, which are given in the TABLE 1.

Client satisfaction is one core domain of the health system research and often follows process evaluation and cost analysis and precedes the outcome and economic evaluations. When the concern is with the extent to which the patients are satisfied with the context, processes, and costs of treatment, then the relevant measures of satisfaction can be viewed as process measures. However, when the concern is with the extent to which the patients view the program as having been helpful in resolving their problems, then client satisfaction becomes a proxy outcome measure. All these mentioned standards could be controlled from the provider's side. In our study, the overall satisfaction from OPD and IPD services was 84% and 77%, respectively.

This can lead to results being clustered around the middle or at each end of the scale, making it hard to distinguish between strong and weakly held opinions, implying the space between each possibility is equidistant,

which is not true in real life. The higher scores in certain domains are likely due to acquiescence bias and gratitude bias.

CONCLUSION:

It can be reported from the study conducted in RVS Multi-specialty Hospital that more than 75% of patient population visiting the surgical department of the hospital were very satisfied by the hospital's service. However, regular assessment of patient satisfaction should be done in all the departments of the hospital for better interventional buildup of the health care service. The satisfaction also shows the effectiveness of the health system by pointing toward the deficient service areas, thereby aiding the improvement of the health system. Hence, the assessment of client satisfaction levels should be done at continuous intervals so as to continuously improve the hospital services. Also, a patient health education and counseling cell should be developed near the registration counters where the patients and attendants can solve their queries.

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