

SHORT ARTICLE

Patient Satisfaction Survey: Qualitative Evaluation Tool for Health Care Services

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ABSTRACT

Background: A paradigm shift has been noticed by employing patient satisfaction survey as a tool for improvement of quality of patient care services in the hospital and more recently the same has been utilized as a market-driven approach to enhance the overall organizational performance of various health care establishments across the countries all over the world. Present study is aimed to study the satisfaction level of patients, various factors associated with such satisfactory outcome as well as to examine the root causes of dissatisfaction among patients availing the health care services. This in turn will enable us to improve the quality of health care delivery services in a tertiary care health facility owned by the government in Northern India. **Material & Methods:** Data was captured from admitted patients as well as from the clientele visiting various OPDs of the hospital with necessary randomization & with the aid of utilizing patient's satisfaction survey questionnaire in the time period from July to the month of December of the year of 2023. A total of 102 patients visiting the hospital for OPD services or for admission were included in the present study. Analysis of the study findings were done using SPSS software version 20. **Results:** A total of 37 patients visiting various OPDs were interviewed and various parameters were captured using the questionnaire survey feedback forms. It was found that mean score of overall satisfaction rate of visitors of hospital was 4.6 as found by the users towards satisfaction score of communication by doctors. Mean score towards hospital cleanliness, amenities of waiting area, availability of prescribed medicines, waiting period in registration desk and behavior of hospital staffs were also found to be above 'Very Good' ratings. **Conclusion:** Good practices towards patient satisfaction are needed to be adhered on long run to ensure the delivery of quality health care to clientele.

KEYWORDS

Patient Satisfaction Survey; Health Care; Quality Measurement.

INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, since 1990, movement towards continuous improvement by the health care industries has gained momentum. Mention about Donabedian's declaration must be addressed here which clearly outlined the importance of patients into the context of quality assessment of health care facility & it has indeed opened up the new challenges & facet at the managerial level engaged

in the this domain to include patient centered services as major component of quality health care services to clientele in various establishments(1,2). The health care managers in recent years, have displayed commuted effort to consider patient's perception into account into the very planning stage while incorporating quality in the services offered by health care facilities(2,3,4). Hence, a paradigm shift has been noticed of utilizing the

findings of patient satisfaction surveys as a quality improvement tool as well as market-driven approach for enhancing performance of the organizations of various health care establishments across the world(3,5).

In 1986, the incorporation of patient satisfaction survey was made mandatory in French hospitals and similarly in Germany it was also practiced as an obligatory measure since 2005(5,6,7). The Department of Health in England has not also left behind and since the year of 2002, they implemented a national survey program in which all the trusts of NHS were entrusted with the responsibility of measuring findings of patient's satisfaction survey every year and the same has been turned into a basement for continuous improvement of health care delivery system in the country(8,9). Therefore, consensus across the globe has been built up to delineate the findings of such surveys as an valid indicator and effort has been made to incorporate the same into the planning and strategy building for the health care organizations for continuous improvement(3,5,8,10).

Evaluation of care of patients in the health care establishments is considered a realistic tool for continuous improvement of facilities by boosting the decision making processes & minimizing the cost & most importantly by enhancing the satisfaction of clientele(3,7). Strategic planning for effective delivery of health care services by benchmarking standards in the health care establishments & continuous monitoring of performance standards is indeed a phenomenal improvement of quality services in recent times(2,10).

In this context, patients, the ultimate user, is considered to play a vital role in the present-day standards of health care delivery and they can either continue or terminate the service procurement or charge the market image by extending review to potential patients(1,5,10,11,12). This study has been conducted with the aim to study the patient's level of satisfaction as well as to find out various factors associated with satisfaction levels and to examine the cause of dissatisfaction, which in turn enables to improve the health care delivery facilities in a

tertiary level government owned hospital in Northern India.

MATERIAL & METHODS

Since, various parameters of patient's satisfaction are not directly observable, hence qualitative analysis is been utilised in this study. Self-administered pre-tested patient satisfaction survey is been used as a tool of measurement and attempt was made to translate the subjective data provided by clientele into measurable quantifiable findings which may aid in remedial action measures.

Data was captured from random admitted patients as well as from the clientele visiting various out-patient departments of the hospital employing due randomization technique on the patient's satisfaction survey questionnaire in the time frame from Jul to Dec 2023. A total of 102 in-patient (65) and out-patient (37) survey feedback were used to the analyse findings of the study using SPSS software ver 20.

Various qualitative parameters of patient's satisfaction were captured using a Likert scale in the questionnaire-based survey and scoring system was devised to measure the central tendency of the findings. Data was collected in a random manner from the patients visiting the OPD as well as from the admitted in the hospital during the study period of the present study by the trained data collector in setting of a tertiary level government owned hospital in Northern India.

RESULTS

A total of 37 random patients visiting various OPDs were interviewed and various parameters were captured using the questionnaire survey feedback from. It was found that average score of overall satisfaction rate of visitor of hospital was 4.6 as found by the users towards satisfaction score for communication by doctors. Average feedback score towards hospital cleanliness, amenities of waiting area, prescribed medicines waiting period in availability of prescribed medicine waiting period in registration desk and behaviour by hospital staff were also found to be above 'Very Good' Rating. (Table 1)

Table 1- Feedback Score Findings from OPD patients in the present study

Table 1: Feedback Score Findings from OPD patients in the present study						
Attribute	Total Participant (n) = 37, Scoring System Poor : 1, Fair : 2, Good :3 Very Good : 4 , Excellent : 5					Mean Rating
	No of participants stated experience score as					
	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	
Availability of Sufficient Information	0	0	7	7	23	4.4

Waiting time in registration desk	0	0	6	18	24	4.2
Behaviour of Hospital Staff	0	0	1	13	23	4.6
Amenities of waiting area	0	0	1	15	20	4.4
Communication by Doctor	0	0	2	11	24	4.6
Time spent on consultation examination and counselling	0	0	4	7	27	4.7
Laboratory & radiological facilities in hospital	0	0	3	11	23	4.5
Promptness at Medical stores	0	0	2	13	22	4.5
Availability of prescribed drug in the hospital	0	0	5	8	23	4.4
Overall remark in visiting the health facility	0	0	1	10	26	4.6

Similarly, data was also captured from 65 in-patients and findings are shown in Table-2. Overall mean satisfaction rating/scores of in patients were 4.7 and various parameters like waiting in

registration desk admission counter doctors and nurse ward boys care towards patients, facility of laboratory and imaging facility and diet quality were also found to be above 'Very Good' rating.

Table-2: Feedback Score Findings from in-patients in the present study

Attribute	Total Participant (n) = 65 Scoring System Poor : 1, Fair : 2, Good :3 Very Good : 4 , Excellent : 5					Mean Rating
	No of participants stated experience score as					
	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	
Availability of sufficient information	0	0	4	24	37	4.5
Waiting time in registration dest admission counter	0	0	3	25	37	4.5
Behaviour of Hospital staff	0	2	2	17	44	4.6
Cleanliness of ward	0	0	1	21	43	4.5
Cleanliness of toilet/ bathroom	0	0	7	20	38	4.4
Cleanliness of bedding	0	0	7	23	35	4.4
Cleanliness of surrounding /campus	0	0	1	21	43	4.6
Regulatory of doctors	0	1	2	18	44	4.6
Attitude & communication by doctors	0	0	2	19	44	4.6
Time spent in examination counselling the patients	0	0	3	21	41	4.6
Response by nurse ward boy	0	0	1	19	45	4.7
Round the clock availability of nurse/ward boy	0	0	4	14	47	4.6
Attitude and communication by nurse/ward boy	0	0	1	23	41	4.6
Availability of prescribed medicines in hospital	0	2	4	17	41	4.4
Availability of diagnostic	0	0	0	19	44	4.5
Diet quality	0	0	3	15	47	4.7
Discharge Process	0	0	6	22	37	4.4
Overall satisfaction during stay in the hospital	0	0	2	13	50	4.7

DISCUSSION

Patient's satisfaction is not a meticulously defined idea but it is identified as an important outcome indicator of quality to measure the impact of the health care delivery service(2,8,10). Importance of

patient as an evaluator of health care services as end user is important measure to provide scope for continuous improvement by incorporating the result and findings the gap in strategic planning of health care services which may exceed patients' expectations from the establishments and

benchmarking standards of such services (3,5,7,12). Meta-analysis has been reviewed across various studies on the subject for comparative analysis on various parameters and variables related to the subject.

Present study tries to bring out the various parameters of patient's satisfaction level in a government owned tertiary care hospital in the Northern India. Questionnaires were prepared separately for in patients and out patients for the present study and domain of cleanliness, waiting time, doctor and other health care staff behaviour, promptness in delivery quality care diet facilities amenities in the waiting area availability of prescribed medicines at the health care facilities were captured and independent unbiased response as self-administered pretested questionnaire. Mean rating for satisfaction rates on various parameters as well as overall satisfactions of 102 random visitors of hospitals and admitted patients were found above the rating of "very good" with confidence interval of $4.4 - 4.6 \pm 2.0$. This confirms the central tendency of the overall sentiments towards the quality of indoor and outdoor patient services catered by the health care institution with allowance to standardisation of responses. However, the concerns about potential bias in horizontal Likert items remain as one of the limitation of this qualitative study.

CONCLUSION

Strategic approach to enhancing performance in health care services delivery cannot be completed unless the true picture revealed by ongoing patient satisfaction surveys, which genuinely serves as quality improvement tool to any health care institution.

RECOMMENDATION

Evaluation of care of patients in the health care establishments plays a pivotal and dynamic role in the organizational decision making. Thus, good practices towards patient satisfaction are needed to be adhered on long run to ensure the delivery of quality health care to clientele.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

All authors have contributed equally.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There are no conflicts of interest.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

The authors haven't used any generative AI/AI assisted technologies in the writing process.

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