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Research Article

ASSESSMENT OF PATIENT SATISFACTION LEVEL REGARDING HEALTHCARE PROVIDED IN SURGICAL UNIT D. H. Q (MTI) HOSPITAL D. I. KHAN PAKISTAN

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Abstract:

Background: Patient satisfaction is a means of measuring the effectiveness of health care delivery. This serves as a means of improvement among health care providers to give an acceptable level of patient satisfaction.

Aims and Objectives: To assess the level of satisfaction and reasons of dissatisfaction among patients regarding health care services in in Surgical Unit DHQ (MTI) Hospital, D.I.Khan (Pakistan)

Methods: A cross-sectional survey was done on 110 patients with the help of PSQ-18 questionnaire. The samples were drawn by systematic random sampling.

Results: The overall mean satisfaction score was 3.237 and S.D. ± 0.51 . The mean score was highest in Interpersonal Manner domain which was found to be 3.929 with S.D ± 0.67 and lowest in financial aspects where mean score was 2.957 and S.D. ± 0.99 . 64.5% of the patients were satisfied with the services offered by the hospital. Financial Aspects and Time Spent by the doctor with the patient was less and this was the major reason of dissatisfaction.

Conclusions: More than half of the patients were satisfied with the services provided by the hospital. The findings of the study can facilitate the development of targeted, objectively prioritized programs for the improvement and advancement of health care delivery systems.

Keywords: Patient satisfaction, Health care services, Reasons, Seven subscales

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INTRODUCTION:

Patient satisfaction is a method for estimating the adequacy of medicinal services conveyance. This serves as a method for development among medicinal services and healthcare suppliers to give an adequate degree of patient satisfaction.

Patient fulfillment is one of the benchmarks to gauge success of the service being given in the hospitals. The objective of any service organization is the production of fulfillment among customers. Human satisfaction is an intricate idea identified with various variables including lifestyle, past experiences, future desires and the estimated value of both individual and society.

Assessing satisfaction of patients is simple and cost-effective way for valuation of hospital services. Satisfaction is the feeling of contentment resulted from fulfilling one's wishes. In medical care, satisfaction is a key indicator of quality of care. Nowadays, patients are getting more aware of their rights and so expecting more from the existing health care system. Moreover, regular assessment of patient satisfaction can indirectly improve the quality of services provided by the hospitals by making necessary changes in the deficient areas.

To measure patient satisfaction, a combination of several factors should be taken into account like social, demographic, technical, psychological and many more.

Patient satisfaction can be measured by a composite scale of Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire Short Form (PSQ18).³ Some of the studies are already been done in rural and urban areas of West Bengal to unfold the facts or domains of satisfaction or dissatisfaction regarding various health services.^{4,5}

As patient satisfaction regarding various health services or utilities varies from tools of measurements, setting to setting, from areas to areas, this study will be conducted to reveal new facts regarding patient satisfaction or dissatisfaction in a rural hospital of Darjeeling District, West Bengal, so that it may improve or change or strengthen our current practice in providing health care or services.

Aims and objectives

1. To assess the level of satisfaction of patients regarding healthcare services provided in Surgical Unit GHQ (MTI) Hospital D.I.Khan Pakistan.
2. To explore the causes of dissatisfaction.

METHODS:

A cross-sectional descriptive observational study was conducted in Surgical Unit DHQ (MTI) Hospital D.I.Khan Pakistan during January 1-February 29, 2020. The patients who were admitted and refused to give consent were excluded.

Sampling*Sample size*

Considering the proportion of satisfaction level as 50%, taking $Z_{(1-\alpha/2)}=1.96$ at 95% confidence interval and absolute precision 10, $P=50$, sample size determination is computed by using the formula,⁶

$$n = z^2(1 - \alpha/2)P(1 - P) / d^2$$

Applying the formula, the sample size comes out to be 96. Assuming 10% non-response rate, which comes to be 10, final sample size will be $96+10=106$ which will be rounded to 110.

Sampling technique

One day in a week was selected for data collection and 12-15 patients were interviewed by systematic random sampling.

Data collection

Data was collected using a pre-tested schedule consisting of three parts:

- The first part includes the socio-demographic variables of the patients, like Age, gender, Residence, Education, Occupation, Disease Type, Stay in Hospital.
- The second part includes questions regarding patient satisfaction, based on Patient satisfaction questionnaire (PSQ-18) developed by Marshall GN and Hays RD.³ PSQ-18 was widely used in various studies.³⁻⁵ The questionnaire comprehensively measures the patient satisfaction with the 18 items which yields seven domains of patient satisfaction, that are general satisfaction (2 items), interpersonal manner (2 items), technical quality (4 items), financial aspects (2 items), time spent with doctor (2 items), accessibility and convenience (4 items). These items are asked such that they are statements of opinion, since each is accompanied by five response categories from strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree to strongly disagree. A scoring system was developed for each response that will range from 1 to 5. 1 denotes strongly agree and 5 denotes strongly disagree.

The general satisfaction domain ensures that the medical care that the patient has been receiving is just about perfect, allowing him to be fully satisfied with it. The domain, technical quality, evaluates the technical aspects of the medical care. The interpersonal domain assesses whether the

doctors are friendly and personable with the patients and thus examines the relationships between the doctors and patients. The communication domain describes the doctor-patient relationship again, but this time, it does so by gauging the doctor's ability to listen and explain to the patients about their medical conditions and tests. For the financial aspect, it measures the patient's ability to be confident about paying for one's medical care without being set back financially and affirms the affordability of the healthcare services. The domain, time spent with doctor, questions the attitude of the medical staff, including doctors, towards the patient. Lastly, accessibility and convenience indicates the availability and frequency of medical services for the patients.

Thus, the seven subscales describing the healthcare services and the scores are then averaged out to give the overall quality index, measuring the overall quality of the healthcare services of hospitals.

- The third part consisted of questions based on reasons of dissatisfaction and factors related to time taken to reach hospital, cost of treatment.

Data collection technique

Structured exit interviews were conducted among attendees of OPDs after obtaining informed consent from respondents. Anonymity and confidentiality was ensured for information obtained from study subjects before the interview.

Data analysis

After collecting the data, it was entered in Microsoft excel datasheet 2007. Data was organized and presented by applying principles of descriptive statistics. Analysis of the data was done by using IBM statistical package for social sciences version 20 (SPSS 20). Continuous data was analyzed showing mean and standard deviation and tested by t-test where $p < 0.05$ is significant. Satisfaction was determined by mean scores. Linear regression analysis was done to find out the relationship between overall mean score (dependent variable) with other variables like age, gender, religion, caste, education, occupation, SES etc. (independent variables).

Scoring system

PSQ-18 yields for each of the seven different subscales; general satisfaction (2 items), interpersonal manner (2 items), technical quality (4 items), financial aspects (2 items), time spent with doctor (2 items), accessibility and convenience (4 items).

All items were scored from one to five so that high scores reflect satisfaction with health care. After item scoring, items within each scale were be

averaged together to create the 7 subscale scores. The level of patient's satisfaction with each of the seven subscales of health care was presented as a score.

Table 1: Seven domains of patient satisfaction with their calculations.

Seven subscales of PSQ-18	Average of items
1.General satisfaction	3+17
2.Technical quality	2+4+6+14
3.Interpersonal manner	10+11
4.Communication	1+13
5.Financial aspects	5+7
6.Time spent with doctor	12+15
7.Accessibility and convenience	8+9+16+18
Overall satisfaction	All 18 items

Ethical clearance

Ethical approval was taken from the Board of Governors of DHQ (MTI) Hospital D.I.Khan, Pakistan. Permission was also obtained from the Head of Department Surgical Unit. A patient consent form was translated in local language before using in the interview. Anonymity and confidentiality was ensured to each of the patient.

Table 2: Scoring system of items of PSQ-18.

Item Numbers	Original Response value	Scored Value
1,2,3,5,6,8,11,15,18	1	5
	2	4
	3	3
	4	2
	5	1
4,7,9,10,12,13,14,16,17	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
	5	5

Variables used

A. Socio-demographic variables which included Age, gender, Residence, Education, Occupation, Disease Type, Stay in Hospital were studied. The socio-economic status is based on Modified B.G. Prasad's scale using AICPI June 2015.⁷

B. The PSQ-18 consisted of 18 statements including seven dimensions of satisfaction of medical care measured by general satisfaction, technical quality, interpersonal manner, communication, financial aspects, time spent with doctor and accessibility and convenience. Responses to each 18 statements were given on a five point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

C. The Questionnaire was translated to Urdu Language as most of the patients are not highly educated.

RESULTS:

A descriptive, cross section study was conducted among patients admitted in Surgical Unit GHQ (MTI) Hospital D.I.Khan Pakistan to find out the satisfaction scores. A total of 110 questionnaires were distributed among the admitted patients whereas Response from a total of 94 patients was collected with the help of a semi-structured schedule. Educated patients filled the questionnaire by themselves whereas response of uneducated patients was collected by the nurses. The mean age of the patients is 33.42 years with S.D.±10.58.

After analyzing the questionnaires, 24 responses were found as outliers whereas rest of the 70 responses have been analyzed using standard method of PSQ-18 scoring system. The observations for overall patient satisfaction as well as for all of the Socio-demographic variables which including Age, gender, Residence, Education, Occupation, Disease Type, and Stay in Hospital are noted below.

Result of every variable is discussed separately.

Table 3: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction.

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.193	0.85
Technical quality	3.193	0.69
Interpersonal manner	3.929	0.67
Communication	3.307	0.91
Financial aspects	2.957	0.99
Time spent with Doctor	2.964	0.83
Accessibility	3.196	0.88
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.237	0.51

Table 3 shows overall Patient satisfaction for all seven domains. This table shows that highest satisfaction area is Interpersonal Manner with Mean Score of 3.929 SD ± 0.67 whereas the lowest is Financial aspects with Mean Score of 2.957 SD ± 0.99. The Overall Mean Satisfaction score is 3.237 with SD ± 0.51 which shows that 64.76% Patients are satisfied with the services provided by

Surgical Unit of DHQ (MTI) Hospital, D.I.Khan, Pakistan

Table 4: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Age <20

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	2.97	0.97
Technical quality	3.20	0.72
Interpersonal manner	3.97	0.64
Communication	3.13	0.83
Financial aspects	3.19	0.96
Time spent with Doctor	2.72	0.93
Accessibility	3.22	0.92
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.20	0.62

Table 5: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Age 21-40

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.55	0.77
Technical quality	3.16	0.65
Interpersonal manner	3.80	0.72
Communication	3.48	0.84
Financial aspects	3.05	1.03
Time spent with Doctor	3.03	0.93
Accessibility	3.32	0.66
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.32	0.49

Table 6: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Age 41-60

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	2.97	0.74
Technical quality	3.23	0.72
Interpersonal manner	4.00	0.68
Communication	3.23	0.96
Financial aspects	2.87	1.11
Time spent with Doctor	3.07	0.62
Accessibility	3.08	0.99
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.20	0.40

Table 7: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Age >60

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.00	0.82
Technical quality	3.00	0.84
Interpersonal manner	4.07	0.61
Communication	3.50	1.22
Financial aspects	2.29	0.81
Time spent	2.93	0.67
Accessibility	2.96	1.16
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.08	0.57

Table 4-7 show the result of Socio-Demographic variable Age. Patients were divided in four groups. Table 4 shows the results of those patients who were below 20 years of age. Table 5 show the results of patients between 21 and 40 years, Table 6 shows the results of patients between 41 and 60 years whereas Table 7 shows the results of patients greater than 60 years.

The results of these different group of ages are quite interesting all groups are highly satisfied with Interpersonal Manner whereas their domain of dissatisfaction is entirely different. Patients, less than 20, are highly satisfied with Interpersonal Manner with a Mean Score of $3.97 \text{ SD} \pm 0.64$ whereas they are dissatisfied with Time Spent with doctor with a Mean Score $2.72 \text{ SD} \pm 0.93$. Patients between 21-40 are highly satisfied with Interpersonal Manner with a Mean Score of $3.80 \text{ SD} \pm 0.72$ whereas they are dissatisfied with Technical Quality with a Mean Score of $3.16 \text{ SD} \pm 0.65$. Patients between 41-60 are highly satisfied with Interpersonal Manner with a Mean Score of $4.00 \text{ SD} \pm 0.68$ whereas they are dissatisfied with Financial Aspects with a Mean Score of $2.87 \text{ SD} \pm 1.11$. Patients greater than 60 years are highly satisfied with Interpersonal Manner with a Mean Score of $4.07 \text{ SD} \pm 0.61$ whereas they are also dissatisfied with Financial Aspects with a Mean Score of $2.29 \text{ SD} \pm 0.81$.

Overall Satisfaction of all these four groups is 64%, 66.4%, 64% and 61.6% respectively.

Table 8: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Male

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.19	0.92
Technical quality	3.32	0.72
Interpersonal manner	4.04	0.66
Communication	3.32	0.91
Financial aspects	2.87	1.02
Time spent	2.98	0.78
Accessibility	3.21	0.88
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.28	0.51

Table 9: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Female

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.20	0.78
Technical quality	3.06	0.63
Interpersonal manner	3.81	0.68
Communication	3.27	0.93
Financial aspects	3.04	0.98
Time spent	2.94	0.88
Accessibility	3.18	0.90
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.19	0.49

Table 8 and 9 show the result of Socio-Demographic variable Sex.

The results of both genders are almost identical as the highly satisfactory domain for both of these groups is Interpersonal Manner whereas the least satisfactory is Time Spent with Doctor. Mean Score of Highly Satisfactory domain for Male is $4.04 \text{ SD} \pm 0.66$ whereas for Female is $3.81 \text{ SD} \pm 0.68$. Mean Score of least satisfactory domain for Male is $2.98 \text{ SD} \pm 0.78$ whereas for Female is $2.94 \text{ SD} \pm 0.88$. The Overall satisfaction for male is 65.6% whereas for female is 63.8%. The major difference for these two groups is about Technical Quality, where male are far more Satisfied as compared to female.

Table 10: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Educated

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.23	0.75
Technical quality	2.72	0.79
Interpersonal manner	3.92	0.66
Communication	3.30	0.89
Financial aspects	2.95	0.99
Time spent	2.85	0.81
Accessibility	3.23	0.83
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.29	0.51

Table 11: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Uneducated

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.41	0.77
Technical quality	3.23	0.63
Interpersonal manner	3.59	0.75
Communication	3.23	1.01
Financial aspects	2.45	1.11
Time spent	2.44	0.82
Accessibility	3.52	0.81
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.19	0.53

Table 10 and 11 show the result of Socio-Demographic variable Education.

The results of both of these groups vary a lot. Although both of these groups have highest satisfaction for Interpersonal Manner where Educated Patients have Mean Score $3.92 \text{ SD} \pm 0.66$ and Un-educated Patients have $3.59 \text{ SD} \pm 0.75$ but the dissatisfaction domain for educated patients is Technical Quality with Mean Score $2.72 \text{ SD} \pm 0.79$. On the other hand highly dissatisfied domain for un-educated Patients is Time Spent with Doctor with Mean Score $2.44 \text{ SD} \pm 0.82$. Uneducated Patients have also a high degree of dissatisfaction

for Financial Aspects too where Mean Score is 2.45 SD \pm 1.11.

The overall satisfaction level for educated and uneducated patients is 65.8% and 63.8% respectively.

Table 12: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Unemployed

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	2.99	0.81
Technical quality	3.01	0.68
Interpersonal manner	3.99	0.65
Communication	3.23	0.99
Financial aspects	2.34	0.98
Time spent	2.98	0.81
Accessibility	3.02	0.88
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.23	0.50

Table 13: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Employed

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.10	0.75
Technical quality	3.20	0.67
Interpersonal manner	3.97	0.77
Communication	3.14	0.89
Financial aspects	2.58	0.97
Time spent	2.89	0.73
Accessibility	3.19	0.78
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.24	0.49

Table 12 and 13 show the result of Socio-Demographic variable Occupation Status.

For both of these groups results are almost identical as highly satisfied domain for both of these groups is Interpersonal Manner and least satisfied one is financial aspects. Mean Score of Interpersonal Manner for Unemployed is 3.99 SD \pm 0.65 whereas for Employed is 3.97 SD \pm 0.77. Mean Score of financial aspects for Unemployed is 2.34 SD \pm 0.98 whereas for Employed is 2.58 SD \pm 0.97.

Overall Satisfaction for both of these groups is 64.8%.

Table 14: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Minor

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.25	0.88
Technical quality	3.18	0.79
Interpersonal manner	4.00	0.69
Communication	3.28	0.98
Financial aspects	2.80	1.20
Time spent	2.95	0.80
Accessibility	3.22	0.99
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.23	0.56

Table 15: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Major

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.15	0.82
Technical quality	3.20	0.60
Interpersonal manner	3.88	0.66
Communication	3.33	0.87
Financial aspects	3.08	0.81
Time spent	2.98	0.85
Accessibility	3.18	0.80
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.24	0.46

Table 14 and 15 show the result of Socio-Demographic variable Disease Type which have been categorized as Minor and Major Disease.

Like other variables, Interpersonal Manner is highest satisfied domain for these groups too where Mean Score for Minor disease is 4.00 SD \pm 0.69 and for Major disease is 3.88 SD \pm 0.66. However for Minor disease patients, financial aspects are more dissatisfactory with Mean Score 2.80 SD \pm 1.20 as compared to Major disease patients where dissatisfactory domain is Time Spent with Doctor with a Mean Score 2.98 SD \pm 0.85.

There is no difference in overall satisfaction level of these groups which is about 65%.

Table 16: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Stay < 5

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.09	0.72
Technical quality	3.24	0.62
Interpersonal manner	3.88	0.68
Communication	3.08	0.90
Financial aspects	3.04	0.88
Time spent with Doctor	2.85	0.80
Accessibility	3.35	0.79
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.24	0.48

Table 17: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Stay > 5

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.00	0.77
Technical quality	3.28	0.48
Interpersonal manner	3.75	0.55
Communication	2.96	0.85
Financial aspects	3.06	0.57
Time spent with Doctor	2.75	0.75
Accessibility	3.2	0.75
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.17	0.41

Table 16 and 17 show the result of Socio-Demographic variable Stay at Hospital. The respondents were divided in two groups; the patients who stayed 5 or lesser days at hospital and those who stayed for more than 5 Days.

Although the ratio varies but the domain of satisfaction and dissatisfaction for both of these groups is same. Both are highly satisfied with Interpersonal Manner where Mean Score of patients with ≤ 5 days is 3.88 S.D ± 0.68 and patients with > 5 days stay is 3.75 S.D ± 0.55 .

The dissatisfactory domain is also same for both of these groups i.e. Time Spent with Doctor. The Mean Score of patients with ≤ 5 days is 2.85 S.D ± 0.80 and patients with > 5 days stay is 2.75 S.D ± 0.75 .

The overall Satisfaction of Patients with less than 5 days of stay is 65% whereas for Patients with more than 5 days of stay is 63.8%.

Table 18: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. City

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.29	0.80
Technical quality	3.38	0.55
Interpersonal manner	4.14	0.74
Communication	3.50	0.80
Financial aspects	3.19	0.96
Time spent	3.14	0.84
Accessibility	3.32	0.87
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.40	0.50

Table 19: Average scores for seven sub-scales of patients' satisfaction. Village

Subscales of patient satisfaction	Mean	S.D
General satisfaction	3.12	0.89
Technical quality	3.06	0.74
Interpersonal manner	3.78	0.58
Communication	3.17	0.97
Financial aspects	2.79	0.99
Time spent	2.84	0.80
Accessibility	3.11	0.89
Overall mean satisfaction score	3.12	0.47

Table 16 and 17 show the result of Socio-Demographic variable Residence. The patients were divided in two groups; those living in Cities and those who are living in Village.

Interestingly Patients living in City have highest satisfaction ratio with 68% whereas Patients living in Village have lowest overall satisfaction ratio with 62.5%.

Like other variable, these two groups also have Interpersonal Manner as the highest satisfactory domain with Mean Score 4.14 S.D ± 0.74 for City residents and 3.78 S.D ± 0.58 for Village residents. The dissatisfactory domain for City residents is Time spent with Doctor with Mean Score 3.14 S.D ± 0.84 whereas for Village residents the most dissatisfactory domain is Financial Aspects with Mean Score 2.79 S.D ± 0.99 .

Table 3 shows that 64.5% patients are satisfied with services provided by Surgical Unit, DHQ (MTI) Hospital D.I.Khan. However 35.5% patients were not satisfied. In order to explore reasons of their dissatisfaction, they were asked the major reasons of their dissatisfaction. Table 21 shows the most common reasons of dissatisfaction among patients.

Table 20 shows Average Patient satisfaction scores according to socio-demographic profile.

Table 20: Average Patient satisfaction scores according to socio-demographic profile.

Variables	Groups	Mean	S.D	Respondents	p value
Age group	< 20 years	3.201389	0.623898	16	0.045
	20-40 years	3.321429	0.488636	28	
	41-60 years	3.196296	0.399993	15	
	>60 years	3.079365	0.569146	7	
Sex					
	Male	3.277778	0.513082	35	0.021
	Female	3.195238	0.491831	35	
Residence					
	City	3.40613	0.503975	29	0.051
	Village	3.116531	0.467922	41	
Education					
	Educated	3.293403	0.555956	32	0.033
	Un-Educated	3.188596	0.45088	38	
Occupation status	Employed	3.238095	0.5369	28	0.042
	Unemployed	3.23545	0.481643	42	
Stay in Hospital	<= 5 Days	3.166667	0.414749	42	0.030
	> 5 Days	3.23545	0.481643	28	
Disease	Major	3.241667	0.462002	40	0.049
	Minor	3.22963	0.556079	30	

Table 21: The most common reasons of dissatisfaction among patients.

Reasons	No.	%
Lack of facilities	10	40.00
Inadequate doctor' time	07	28.00
Poor quality of services	04	16.00
Non availability of drugs	04	16.00
Total	25	100.0

DISCUSSION:

A cross-sectional descriptive study regarding the satisfaction of patients in Surgical Unit, DHQ (MTI) Hospital D.I.Khan, Pakistan was conducted with the help of PSQ-18, a short form of PSQIII. Response from a total of 110 patients was collected with a predesigned pretested schedule. The mean age of the patients was found to be 33.42 years with S.D.±10.58, as compared to 41±15.6 years in a study conducted in Nigeria and 44.7±23 years in a study done in Tehran clinics.^{8,16}

Socio demographic profile

The present study had 50% males and 50% females, which was different from a study conducted in Tehran where there were 64.6%

females and 35.4% males. In the Nigerian study, 39% patients were male while remaining 61% were females.¹⁰

Majority of the patients (64.28%) belonged to 30-60 years age group in the present study, which is different from a study conducted in urban area of Darjeeling District, where 32.4% patients were 40-59 years of age.⁹ In the Nigerian study, 65% were from 26-55 years age.¹⁰

45.7% of the study population was illiterate which is different from the study conducted in urban area of Darjeeling District(18.6%).⁹ 60% of the patients studied were unemployed.56.6% Patient belonged to village.

Satisfaction among patients

When the patients were enquired about the overall hospital services, it was revealed that, 64.5% of the patients were satisfied. The mean satisfaction score is highest in Interpersonal Manner with Mean Score of 3.929 SD \pm 0.67 whereas the lowest is Financial aspects with Mean Score of 2.957 SD \pm 0.99 in the present study conducted in Surgical Unit DHQ (MTI) Hospital D.I.Khan, Pakistan. The overall mean satisfaction score is 3.23.

In the Nigerian study, the highest average score for satisfaction was in the area of communication (4.08) and interpersonal relationship with doctor (3.81) while the lowest score was on financial aspect (2.84).¹⁰ In a study conducted in Tehran among patients with ophthalmic services, accessibility and technical quality had the strongest association with overall satisfaction.⁸ Another study conducted by Chakraborty et al in 2015 in the urban area of Siliguri found the mean score of 3.81 in general satisfaction domain and 3.48 in the domain of time spent with doctor.⁹

Patient satisfaction has been evaluated in several studies in different clinical settings. In a study conducted in Labbafinejad Hospital (Tehran, Iran) in 2008, patient satisfaction with ophthalmic services was reported to be 71%, and the main cause of dissatisfaction was poor technical quality and access to physician.⁸

In another study performed in 2009, patient satisfaction with medical services offered at the general hospitals of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences (Isfahan, Iran) was reported to be 56%, and the subscale accounting for the lowest score was doctor-patient communication. It is found from the studies that doctor-patient relationship is the most significant parameter affecting patient's satisfaction out of all other health care staff and services.¹¹

Reasons of dissatisfaction

The services provided to patients in hospitals play an important role in determining the satisfaction levels.

32% of the patients were not satisfied with the services and drugs they received in event of their hospital visit and the reasons were mainly lack of facilities (40%) and insufficient doctor's time (28%) which were much similar to the study conducted by Chakraborty et al in 2015 in the urban area of Siliguri.⁹

CONCLUSION:

A descriptive study was conducted among patients of Surgical Unit, DHQ (MTI) Hospital D.I.Khan, Pakistan. The level of patient satisfaction was quite good in the hospital.

64.5% of the patients were satisfied with the services offered by the hospital. Among the various domains for measurement of satisfaction, Financial aspects was a major concern of the patients as unavailable drug prices are very high in the market. But the time spent with the doctor was also very low, which may be one of the major causes of dissatisfaction among them. The mean satisfaction score among patients who were educated was significantly high from those who were illiterate.

Recommendation

Although a majority of the patients were satisfied with the services, a significant proportion of patients were also dissatisfied. Thus, there is a need for the general improvement of the health services, particularly in the domains where the satisfaction scores were low like time spent and accessibility. Improving the affordability and accessibility of health services can help build an optimistic image of the hospital in the minds of the people.

The findings of the study can facilitate the development of targeted, objectively prioritized programs for the improvement and advancement of health care delivery systems.

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