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| **Original Article** |

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| **Quality of Health Care Services in Medical OPD**  |

**Patient Satisfaction Regarding Quality of Health Care Services in Medical Outpatient Department at Secondary Care Hospital in District Jamshoro**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** To determine patient satisfaction level and factors related to patient satisfaction and dissatisfaction, at Secondary Care Hospital of District Jamshoro.

**Study Design:** A Mix Method Study

**Place and Duration of Study:** This study was conducted at the Outpatient department (OPD) of Civil Hospital – District Headquarter Hospital (DHQ) Kotri, District Jamshoro from July to September 2017.

**Materials and Methods:** A sample of 110 patients was selected according to inclusion criteria. Sampling interval was every 10th patients coming out of medical OPD. Data was analyzed on SPSS 19.0. Quantitative data was analyzed as frequencies, and %, while variables as mean ± SD analyzed at 95% CI (P≤0.05). The health care providers & health managers were interviewed through key informant interviews. The qualitative analysis was done through manual transcription and content analysis. The triangulation of results was carried out in order to get the final results.

**Results:** Of 110 participants; 59 (54%) were female and 51 (46%) were male. 91% of participants mentioned the location of OPD was easy. 90%, 89% and 87% were satisfied with physical examination, doctor`s attitude and time given to patients. 71% participants agreed of getting medicine from hospital pharmacy and 65% agreed of patient examination with done with equipment.97% responded wash rooms were dirty enough.

**Conclusion:** Overall a good level of patient satisfaction was recorded from this study with major contribution of interaction with physician services and least by the overall physical environment. Furthermore, appropriate and timely patient satisfaction surveys help in optimizing the performance of outpatient department to achieve better health outcomes. Initiating a quality improvement process in resource limited setting is in itself a huge task, taking into consideration the number of challenges these facilities face.

**Key Words:** Patient Satisfaction, Health Care Quality, Civil Hospital, Kotri

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**INTRODUCTION**

Increased competitions in the health business sector has increased the customer`s expectations of providing excellent health services. Customer`s requirements are also increasing putting the most organizations at critical situation making it too difficult to satisfy and retain their customers and their satisfaction.**1,2**

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Similarly, the improved living standards and health delivery care have increased the medical services expectations of the public. Sudden increases in medical professionals and hospitals have created an inevitable competition among medical institutions. Increasing level of public expectations from health sector has put the medical institutes at too much stress to maintain their standards and sustainability.**3** In this era, the health care system has already been shifted from supplier – oriented to customer oriented trend. Medical industry is now growing towards the patient – oriented trends in the country. Hence there is need of improving the standards and providing high-quality medical services desired by customers, is becoming an emerging culture. Essence of patient – oriented marketing is to base on provision of best medical services by the healthcare organizations.**3** Medical institutions in Pakistan are continuously increasing in number. Thus, for the survival of healthcare system, a patient – oriented approach is needed to meet the quality medical services and these needs to be revisited. Donabedian**4**classified the health care quality into health care provider`s professional skills, and patient’s perception of health delivery services. Bopp categorized health care quality into technical and functional qualities as perceived by patient and argued the functional quality is of prime importance**5**. Dramatic increase in private sector hospitals has led to a decline in patient’s number in the public sector hospitals. Role of public sector is decreasing due to avoidance phenomenon by the health care providers. This is caused by several reasons such as low attention of health care provider, lack of facilities, public image of old fashioned, avoidance by hospital staff and perception of low standards due to deteriorating financial conditions of public sector hospitals.**6** Nowadays, the patients are well aware of fact that the public sectors hospitals are ignorant in providing a quality service.**7** A hospital with low standards of health delivery results in loosing of capital invested by the government and patients will never visit again. Hence patient satisfaction is the pivotal key of assessing the performance of hospital. There is always need to renew the factors affecting the patients satisfaction as the interest of public is always changing to the best services as the awareness is increasing. The present study was conducted to determine patient satisfaction level and factors related to patient satisfaction and dissatisfaction, health care providers and health managerial perspectives for implementing better health strategies. This study will help improving quality of health delivery system of public sector hospitals in the country.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The present mix method study was conducted from July to September 2017 to analyze and focus on health care delivery system as per six building blocks of an ideal health system. Study was conducted at the Medicine outpatient department (OPD) of Civil Hospital – District Headquarter Hospital (DHQ) Kotri, District Jamshoro. Catchment area of hospital includes surrounding five million populations. Research objectives were explored at maximum through quantitative & qualitative methods. Quantitative information was observed in exit interviews from patients and qualitative information as key informants from participants. Sample size was calculated by OPEN EPI Software using calculation n=Z2 p (1-p)/d2at 1.96 margin of random error, precision degree of +9%, confidence interval (CI) of 95% and average patient satisfaction of 68% as cited previously from Sindh.**8** Sample (n = 103) calculated as n = (1.96)2 0.68(1-0.68) / (0.09).**7** Final sample was (n=110) for adjusting with the non-response rate of 10%.Every 10th patient exiting out of medical OPD was interviewed.**9** Inclusion criteria for exit interviewers were; age 18 – 60 years, both genders, volunteers, willing for written informed consent and understanding the language. Too ill to answer and not understating local language were excluded. Participants were informed they have to sign the consent proforma voluntarily**.** Data was collected on a pre–structured proforma designed by the principal investigator adopted from a previous study.**9** Proforma was edited in Sindhi, Urdu and English languages for better understanding. Ethical permission was taken from the institute – the Aga Khan University and Directorate health department. Privacy of participant data was maintained and kept confidential. Printed proforma was saved in lockers. Data variables were analyzed on SPSS 19.0 (IBM, Incorp, USA). Qualitative variables were analyzed as frequencies, and %, while quantitative variables as mean ± SD. Level of significance was taken at 95% CI (P≤0.05).

All Health care providers of medicine department and health managers were interviewed through a questionnaire developed by the researcher and the results were transcribed after manual transcription and content analysis.

Keeping in view the results from quantitative and qualitative sections data triangulation was done to come up with more robust and authentic information.

**RESULTS**

Of 110 participants; 59 (54%) were female and 51 (46%) were male. Majority of participants belonged to 18 – 30 years age group (54%), followed by 31 – 45 years (31%) and 15% belonged to 46 – 60 years. 91% of participants mentioned the location of OPD was easy (Table – 1). 56% agreed enough are in rooms, 34% satisfied of clean tidy OPD, and 44% quoted OPD area was spacious, lightning and ventilated. 97% responded wash rooms were dirty enough. 71% participants agreed of getting medicine from hospital pharmacy and 65% agreed of patient examination with done with equipment. 90%, 89% and 87% were satisfied with physical examination, doctor`s attitude and time given to patients (Table – 2). Table – 3 and Graph – 1 shows the overall patient satisfaction of hospital.

The Key informant interviews revealed that most of the patients are satisfied from the overall services, but on the administrative part there was unnecessary involvement of paramedical staff.



**Figure No.1: Graphical presentation of overall patient satisfaction level coming out from Medical OPD**

**Table No.1: Patient Satisfaction Status After Outpatient Clinic Consultation From Medicine Department at A District Hospital In Jamshoro - Experience from OPD Environment & Services**

|  | Satisfied  | Unsatisfied | Don’t Know |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Overall OPD environment  |
| OPD was easy to locate | 100 | 91 | 10 | 09 | - | - |
| OPD was clean and tidy | 37 | 34 | 73 | 66 | - | - |
| Waiting areas were separate | 41 | 37 | 69 | 63 | - | - |
| Enough waiting chairs present  | 36 | 33 | 74 | 67 | - | - |
| Spacious, bright and airy rooms  | 49 | 44 | 59 | 54 | 02 | 02 |
| Washrooms were clean | 03 | 03 | 95 | 86 | 12 | 11 |
| Drinking water was clean | 19 | 17 | 85 | 77 | 06 | 06 |
| Physical examination in separate rooms for male and females | 78 | 71 | 31 | 28 | 01 | 01 |
| Consultation room was capacious | 62 | 56 | 47 | 43 | 01 | 01 |
| Services Experience  |  |
| Equipments were used (BP apparatus,, thermometer, weighing machine, etc) | 72 | 65 | 33 | 30 | 05 | 05 |
| Pharmacy medicine available  | 78 | 71 | 32 | 29 | - | - |

**Table No.2: Patient Satisfaction Status After Outpatient Clinic Consultation From Medicine Department At A District Hospital in Jamshoro - Experience of Doctor’s Interaction**

|  | **Satisfied**  | **Unsatisfied** | **No Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **%** | **No.** | **%** | **No.** | **%** |
| **Courtesy** |  |
| Doctor welcomed  | 94 | 86 | 16 | 14 | - | - |
| Doctor listened to complaints carefully | 97 | 88 | 13 | 12 | - | - |
| Doctor examined physically  | 99 | 90 | 10 | 09 | 01 | 01 |
| Doctor gave enough time | 96 | 87 | 14 | 13 | - | - |
| Doctor advised for the follow-up | 90 | 82 | 20 | 18 | - | - |
| Doctors’ attitude was friendly | 98 | 89 | 12 | 11 | - | - |
| Record kept confidential | 77 | 70 | 27 | 25 | 06 | 05 |
| Privacy maintained | 73 | 67 | 18 | 16 | 19 | 17 |
| **Quality Care** |  |
| Doctor had adequate skills | 76 | 69 | 06 | 06 | 28 | 25 |
| Equipment used was in working order | 37 | 34 | 32 | 29 | 41 | 37 |

**Table No.3: Patient Satisfaction Status After Outpatient Clinic Consultation From Medicine Department At A District Hospital In Jamshoro - Patient`s Satisfaction of overall health care services**

| Component | Satisfied  | Unsatisfied | No Comments |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Patient Satisfaction |  |
| Service level is close to my expectations | 35 | 32 | 68 | 62 | 07 | 06 |
| Service level is fairly satisfactory | 39 | 35 | 63 | 57 | 07 | 06 |
| Come again for medical services | 92 | 84 | 16 | 14 | 01 | 01 |
| Recommend to others | 87 | 79 | 21 | 19 | 02 | 02 |

**DISCUSSION**

Patient satisfaction is a business point score and plays pivotal role in the most of hospitals regarding quality of health care provision and health care providers. With the advent of telecommunication, curiosity of patients is inclining for health provision demanding best services making them more anxious towards the health services offered and their expectations.**10,11** Growing concern of health facilities and delivery has made it too difficult to reach to their expectations, has been problematic for majority of hospitals. Improved economic levels of urban civilization has raised the health care demands of patients and shifted minds towards a healthier care of health delivery system.**10** Patient satisfaction is of prime importance for determining successfulness of health care facilities. We analyzed the patient’s satisfaction through standard proforma using Donabedian’s**4** framework with clear mentions of different levels of patient’s demands and satisfaction in the public health sector of Pakistan.**10** The present study observed that patients were satisfied with physical examination, doctor`s attitude and time given to patients were 90%, 89% and 87% respectively and 71% participants agreed of getting medicine from hospital pharmacy and 65% agreed of patient examination with done with equipment. The findings are in agreement with a previous study**11** that has shown 99%, 88% and 84% satisfaction of doctor availability, paramedical staff and specialist availability respectively. However, 97% responded wash rooms were dirty enough. The findings are supported by previous studies from Pakistan.**12,13** The overall observation of patient satisfaction was good for health facilities provided expect of wash rooms that were found dirty enough to use. Major contribution of HCPs and HM was good and quality of health provided by them was satisfactory to the patients. Soomro et al**14** (2018) conducted study on patient satisfaction at Bibi Asifa Dental College Hopsital Larkana concluded the health care delivery was overall satisfactory as responded by the patients. Patient satisfaction fulfilled positively when the patient`s perception of health services and their quality is satisfying and to the expectations.**15** Although patient satisfaction is a subjective indicator that may not be relied upon, but it tells many flaws of the health system that need to be corrected form time to time. The present study conducted focusing on different levels of health delivery system of country at secondary care level that is being reported may be for the first time, and results show overall good performance of health department. Overall, the patients were satisfied with health care services offered by public sector hospital. Another previous study**16** witnessed 94.4%patient’s satisfaction with of hospital services from a provincial teaching hospital. In present study, 97% patients responded wash rooms were dirty enough that is in disagreement with a previous study form a developing country**17** that reported 50% patients were satisfied with cleanliness of the hospital. Cleanliness in OPD and timing of physicians of present study is supported by other studies**9,18** that showed patients were fully satisfied of seating arrangement, OPD cleanliness and timings that is almost similar to the present study. By comparative literature search and critical comparison, overall, the findings of present study are satisfactory that needs to be improved as there is always space of improving the things and similar is the condition of public health sector of the country that needs special attention in terms of health care facilities provision, patient satisfaction and some other domains. Based on the outcomes of present study, it is concluded the public health sector still needs improvement in the basic infrastructure and health delivery system to their clients. The present study provides directions for the future research on the topic and measures to be improve the hospitals.

**CONCLUSION**

The present study found patient satisfaction with the quality of healthcare services at the District Headquarter Hospital of Kotri, Jamshoro. However, many discrepancies and deficiencies were complained by the patients that need to be improved properly. Level of patient’s satisfaction was satisfactory that may be upgraded to better and then best by implementing essential measures that are missing due to financial constraints and lack of medical and paramedical staff. Patient’s satisfaction was on lower side regarding hospital environment, however, satisfaction level was on higher side considering the services rendered and care offered by the health care providers. Overall infrastructure of hospitals needs to be resolved on priority basis for making them attractive to patients. Present study may help health policy makers for understanding and formulating proper strategies to be implemented for good quality of health care service delivery and improving the patient satisfaction.

**Author’s Contribution:**

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| Concept & Design of Study: | Adil Ali Shaikh |
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**Conflict of Interest:** The study has no conflict of interest to declare by any author.

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