

## ASSESSMENT OF OPD PATIENT'S SATISFACTION WITH HEALTH CARE SERVICES AT AL-NAFEES MEDICAL HOSPITAL

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### ABSTRACT

**OBJECTIVE:** To determine socio-demographic profile among the OPD patients and the overall satisfaction level of the patients utilizing the OPD.

**STUDY DESIGN:** A descriptive cross sectional study.

**PLACE AND DURATION:** Conducted in OPD of Al-Nafees Hospital Islamabad from 12<sup>th</sup> January -12<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

**METHODOLOGY:** Through convenient sampling a closed ended structured questionnaire was employed to collect the quantitative data. OPD patients aged 18-64 who showed willingness to participate were included in the study. Indoor patients, patients below 18 and above 64 and those who were not willing were excluded.

**RESULTS:** The study was conducted on 209 patients. Overall satisfaction level of patients with the OPD health services was 86.2%. Satisfaction level was found to be more in females than males. 42.6% had a family income of >15000 Rupees but satisfaction level with OPD services was same among respondents falling in different categories of family income. Patients with primary level of education were more satisfied. 41.1% waited 15-30 minutes for the examination by the doctor. 89% of the patients were satisfied from the registration staff. 73.3% were satisfied with doctor's service. The satisfaction level from the nurses was 64.6%. 63.3% were satisfied from the services provided by the pharmacy. 63.2% said that the medical expenses were affordable. 88% of the patients agreed upon the cleanliness of the building of the hospital and 77% stated that that signs and boards were easy to follow.

**CONCLUSION:** In the current study it was found that majority of respondents were highly satisfied with the OPD services offered at Al-Nafees Hospital. Patients were satisfied with the behavior of registration staff, Physicians' communication skills, waiting time for examination, nursing care, pharmacy services and logistic arrangements.

**KEY WORDS:** Out Patient Department, Services, Satisfaction, Patient

### INTRODUCTION

Patient satisfaction has been given a lot of importance in recent years but still a lot more should be done in this field. Out Patient Department (OPD) is considered to be the first point of contact of hospital with patients that's why it has significant influence on patient satisfaction level. Patient satisfaction has become a favorite debate for enhancing quality of OPD services however it still needs a lot of improvement for the better delivery of health care services<sup>1</sup>.

Outpatient department (OPD) is the first point of contact of the hospital with patients. The care in the OPD is believed to indicate the quality of services of a hospital and is reflected by patients' satisfaction with the services being provided.

Satisfaction is actually determined by the interaction of two aspects i.e. patient hope and provision of the actual services. If health care is not according to what was expected, the patient is not satisfied and if it is according to their hope, then it is other way round. Patient satisfaction is actually a contest between

what patient expected and what he/she experienced during the provision of health care<sup>2</sup>.

Satisfaction can be defined as the extent of an individual's experience compared with his or her expectations<sup>3</sup>. There are twelve essentials of patient satisfaction which are overall satisfaction, satisfaction to approach, affordability, excellence, empathy, proficiency, guidance provided, technical arrangement, physical services, consideration on psychological and social aspects, permanence of care and effect of care<sup>4</sup>.

Patient satisfaction with health care is important because of the following factors: It influences patients' health seeking behavior<sup>5</sup>. It is an indicator of long term viability and success<sup>6</sup>. Satisfied patients are more compliant to doctors' recommendations about the medical regimens, suitable use of health care resources and recovering from disease as soon as possible<sup>7</sup>. Attention should be given to establish health service according to patient's satisfaction rather than just treating the disease<sup>8</sup>. The doctor knows that they are responsible for the patient and answerable to administration as a result to accept the patient's involvement in treatment decisions<sup>9</sup>.

The major barriers in the patient satisfaction are lack of doctor patient interpersonal communication, doctors and nursing staff behavior, financial aspects, inadequately equipped facilities and unavailability of adequate services<sup>10</sup>. The main hindrance to better health care for the people living in developing countries is deficiency of access to even essential health care. Other reasons are extended waiting time, unaffordable treatment cost and lab investigation<sup>11</sup>. Along with this patient personality also have an effect: older patients and those who are not much educated appear to be more satisfied. In addition, psychosocial status

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play a role in the form that patients report more satisfaction than they actually experience because they fear that they will not be treated well next time they seek health care<sup>12</sup>.

There are many factors which have an impact on patient satisfaction e.g. the type and number of investigative tests performed, clear interaction with the doctors or nurses, their compassion and empathy, accessibility to the service and time spent in the encounter. The patients expects quality health services but if the setup is not well equipped and qualified and devoted staff is not present then this leads to patient discontent. There should be pleasant waiting area, adequate room temperature, purpose built hospital design, well maintained washrooms and easily readable sign boards. Keeping in mind the state of affairs regarding OPD satisfaction this study was conducted to determine socio-demographic profile among the OPD patients and the overall satisfaction level of the patients utilizing the OPD.

### METHODOLOGY

This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted on Out Patient Department of Al-Nafees Hospital, Islamabad over a period of 2 months from 12<sup>th</sup> January to 12<sup>th</sup> March OPD patients aged 18-64 who were willing to participate in the study were included by convenient sampling. A structured questionnaire was administered to collect quantitative data comprising of sociodemographic profile, quality of OPD services and Overall satisfaction level. The questionnaire was designed with the help of internet and previous studies, was administered in English language and was filled in by the 4<sup>th</sup> year students under supervision of faculty of Department of Community Medicine. Indoor Patients were excluded from the study. Data was analyzed by using SPSS version 20 and frequencies were calculated and cross tabulation was done.

### RESULTS

**Socio-demographic profile of the patients:** The Socio-demographic profile of 209 patients showed that most of the patients were males (n=127, 60.8%), they were married (136, 65.1%), majority were matriculate and were earning more than 15000Rs (n=90, 43.0%). (n=77, 36.8%) were unemployed but 97% were earning by being involved in some kind of occupation.

#### 2-Patients' experiences & satisfaction with OPD Services:

When the patients were asked about the over-crowding at the registration counter (n=84, 40.2%) agreed, and when they asked if they were treated with respect by the registration staff (n=138, 66%) agreed to the query.

When asked about services provided by the doctors (n=136, 65.1%) agreed that the doctors were available for the

consultation, listened to the problems attentively, they gave an opportunity to know about their illness and believed that doctor gave them sufficient time. Almost half of the patients agreed that the doctors performed physical examination with respect after taking permission.

More than (n=135, 64.6%) patients believed that nurses and ayas treated them with respect. More than half of the patients agreed that medical expenses were affordable and waiting time for the pharmacy was not long. Almost half of the patients believed that prescribed drugs were available.

Almost (n=86, 41.1%) of the patients agreed that they had to wait for 15-30min to get themselves examined by the doctor and the total time spent to get complete health services was 30-60 minutes.

More than (n=127, 60.8%) of the patients agreed that the hospital building was clean and direction boards were easy to follow. Almost half of the patients agreed that there were enough sitting chairs in the waiting room.

**3-Overall Satisfaction Level:** When it was asked about the Satisfaction of patients with Outpatient Department services, it was found that out of 209 patients, (n=132, 63.2%) Patients were satisfied and (n=48, 23.0%) patients strongly agreed to the overall satisfaction level.

When patients were asked to rate the Hospital services, it was found that out of 209 patients, (n=81, 38.8%) patients rated it as good, (n=59, 28.2%) patients rated as very good, (n=38, 18.2%) patients rated as excellent, (n=24, 11.5%) patients rated as Satisfactory and (n=7, 3.3%) patients rated as poor.

Out of 209 respondents, 127 were male members. Among 127 males 105 (82.6%) were satisfied while among 82 females 75 (91.2%) were satisfied. Our study results revealed that female gender was more satisfied than males regarding OPD services

Out of 209 respondents 10 fell in the category of family income of < 5000 among which 8(80%) were satisfied with the OPD services. 52 respondents fell in the category of family income of 5000-10000 among which 44(84.61%) were satisfied. 54 respondents fell in the category of family income of 1000-15000 among which 45(83.33%) were satisfied. 93 respondents fell in the category of family income of >15000 among which 79(84.94%) were found to be satisfied with OPD services. According to our study results satisfaction level with OPD services was same among respondents falling in different categories of family income.

Out of 209 respondents 36 were illetrate, among which 28(77.7%) were satisfied with OPD services. 44 were having primary level of education among which 42(95.4%) were found to be satisfied. 72 were matriculate, out of which 61(84.7%) were satisfied with OPD services. 57 were graduates among which 49(85%) were satisfied.

TABLE-I: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF PATIENTS (n=209)

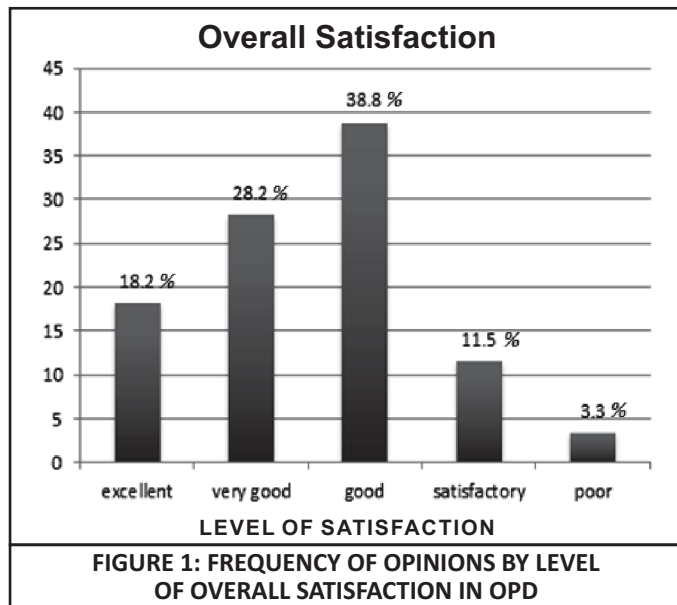
|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                            |             |
| Male                                     | 127 (60.8%) |
| Female                                   | 82 (39.2%)  |
| <b>Marital Status</b>                    |             |
| Single                                   | 60 (28.7%)  |
| Married                                  | 136 (65.1%) |
| Widow /Widower                           | 8 (3.8%)    |
| Separated / Divorced                     | 5 (2.4%)    |
| <b>Education</b>                         |             |
| Illiterate                               | 36 (17.2%)  |
| Primary                                  | 57 (27.3%)  |
| Matric                                   | 72 (34.4%)  |
| Graduate                                 | 44 (21.1%)  |
| <b>Occupation</b>                        |             |
| Not employed                             | 77 (36.8%)  |
| Government employee                      | 24 (11.5%)  |
| Private employee                         | 39 (18.7%)  |
| Business                                 | 19 (9.1%)   |
| Agriculture                              | 15 (7.2%)   |
| Laborers/daily wages                     | 35 (16.7%)  |
| <b>Family income per month in rupees</b> |             |
| <5000                                    | 11 (5.2%)   |
| >5000                                    | 19 (9.0%)   |
| <10000                                   | 35 (16.7%)  |
| >10000                                   | 25 (11.9%)  |
| <15000                                   | 29 (13.8%)  |
| >15000                                   | 90 (43.0%)  |

TABLE II: FREQUENCY OF PATIENTS' EXPERIENCES &amp; SATISFACTION WITH OPD SERVICES.

| Questions  | Answer        | N=    | %     |
|--|---------------|-------|-------|
| <b>Registration Staff:</b>   |               |       |       |
| Was the registration staff overcrowded?  | Agreed        | n=84  | 40.2% |
| Registration staff treats the patients with respect?                                   | Agreed        | n=138 | 66%   |
| <b>Doctor:</b>   |               |       |       |
| Your doctor was available for consultation?  | Agreed        | n=136 | 65.1% |
| The doctor listened to your problems attentively?                                      | Agreed        | n=119 | 56.9% |
| The doctor did your physical examination after taking you permission and with respect? | Agreed        | n=102 | 48.8% |
| The doctor gave you an opportunity to know about your illness?                         | Agreed        | n=128 | 61.2% |
| Do you believe the doctor gave you sufficient time?                                    | Agreed        | n=128 | 61.2% |
| How much time did you have to wait for examination by the doctor?                      | 15-30 minutes | n=86  | 41.1% |
| What was the total time you spent in the OPD for getting complete health services?     | 30-60 minutes | n=85  | 40.7% |
| <b>Nurses/Ayas :</b>   |               |       |       |
| Hospital Nurses/ Ayas treated the patients with respect?                               | Agreed        | n=135 | 64.6% |
| <b>Medical expenses</b>  |               |       |       |
| Expenses for routine lab tests were affordable?  | Agreed        | n=106 | 50.7% |
| <b>Pharmacy:</b>   |               |       |       |
| Waiting time for receiving medicine from OPD was long?                                 | Disagreed     | n=90  | 43.1% |
| All of the prescribed drugs were available in pharmacy?                                | Agreed        | n=101 | 48.3% |
| <b>Logistic arrangements:</b>  |               |       |       |
| Building of this hospital is clean?  | Agreed        | n=126 | 60.3% |
| Waiting room has enough sitting chairs?  | Agreed        | n=100 | 47.8% |
| Sign and direction boards were easy to follow?   | Agreed        | n=127 | 60.8% |

**TABLE: III: CROSS-TABULATION BETWEEN SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND PATIENT SATISFACTION**

|                      | Satisfaction Level |            |           |           | Total |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-------|
|                      | Strongly Agree     | Agree      | Disagree  | Undecided |       |
| <b>Gender</b>        |                    |            |           |           |       |
| Male                 | 25 (19.6%)         | 80 (63%)   | 19 (15%)  | 3 (2.3%)  | 127   |
| Female               | 23 (28%)           | 52 (63.4%) | 5 (6.15)  | 2 (2.45)  | 82    |
| <b>Family Income</b> |                    |            |           |           |       |
| <5000                | 2 (20%)            | 6 (60%)    | 2 (20%)   | 0 (0%)    | 10    |
| (5000 -10000)        | 11 (21.2%)         | 33 (60%)   | 6 (11.5%) | 2 (3.9%)  | 52    |
| (10000-15000)        | 11 (20.4%)         | 34 (63%)   | 6 (11.1%) | 3 (5.5%)  | 54    |
| >15000               | 24 (25.8%)         | 55 (59.1%) | 9 (9.7%)  | 5 (5.4%)  | 93    |
| <b>Education</b>     |                    |            |           |           |       |
| Illiterate           | 13 (36.1%)         | 15 (41.6%) | 8 (22.2%) | 0 (0%)    | 36    |
| Primary              | 10 (22.7%)         | 32 (72.7%) | 1 (2.3%)  | 1(2.3%)   | 44    |
| Matric               | 12 (17%)           | 49 (68.1%) | 9 (12.5%) | 2 (2.8%)  | 72    |
| Graduate             | 13 (22.8%)         | 36 (63.2%) | 6 (10.5%) | 2 (3.5%)  | 57    |



**DISCUSSION**

Patient satisfaction with the health services is an important indicator for determining quality of care provided in the out-patient department. The different attributes of demography in our study were gender, marital status, education, occupation and family income however identity of the patients were kept confidential. Our study results showed that most of OPD patients were married and that female patients tended to have higher level of satisfaction than the male patients. This may be due to the reason that in our setup females are almost always accompanied by male attendants, and all discussion about their investigations and management occur between doctor and the attendant, and most of the times they have no opinion in this discussion and they are satisfied with whatever they are offered<sup>2</sup>. Our study differs with another study that showed that men tended to have higher satisfaction scores than women<sup>10</sup>. Our study showed that the patients with primary level of

education were more satisfied as compared to higher levels of education. This is consistent with a study conducted in Malaysia showed that patients with high school education perceived a significantly higher service satisfaction in comparison to graduates<sup>11</sup>. Similarly, another study showed that those with no education or only primary education had higher satisfaction levels<sup>10</sup>.

Another important factor in satisfaction is level of income. According to our study results satisfaction level with OPD services was same among respondents falling in different categories of family income, this differs with the results of another study conducted by Ganasegeran K, which showed significantly higher service satisfaction among patients with a lower income in comparison to those with higher income<sup>11</sup>. Waiting time, for examination by the doctor is an important area to address for increasing overall satisfaction ratings<sup>12</sup>. Most of patient in our study waited (15-30 minutes) for examination and (30-60 minutes) for getting complete OPD services (investigations), however this is contrary to a study by Ahmed I where patients had to wait for a much longer time<sup>4</sup>.

Trakroo listed some of the factors which affect the satisfaction level of OPD patients. Some of them are long waiting time at registration table, short-tempered behavior of registration staff, lack of seating area for waiting, too long waiting time for doctors' opinion, unwelcome behavior of doctors and lack of proper doctor-patient interaction<sup>18</sup>.

In our study most of the patients were satisfied from the registration staff behavior. Regarding the doctors behavior our study showed that (majority of the patients were satisfied. This is supported by another study conducted by Karstensen B, which showed good satisfaction level with doctors' behavior. This study also showed that empathy and competence by the staff on the patient's OPD visit was positively related to health education, physical examination and patient management. In our study, only a few patients suggested that number of doctors should be increased to reduce the waiting time. A few patients also thought that the methods of providing the medicines to the

consumers should be improved and there should also be an improvement in the attitude of OPD auxiliary staff and they wanted more time with the doctors. The way health care providers behave with the patients play a major role in the patients' satisfaction. In a study (21%) patients were not satisfied with the approach and manner with which doctors/paramedical staff behaved.<sup>3</sup> Short contact time with healthcare personnel is a common source of patient dissatisfaction with the consultation process<sup>14</sup> however this is contrary to our study which showed that majority patients were satisfied with time given by doctors.

In our study 82.5% of the patients were satisfied from hospital nurses behavior. Another study showed that doctor and nurse interaction with patients was important for patients' satisfaction<sup>15</sup>. Contact of patients with nurses and nursing staff is more significant for the patients because nurses have more early and frequent contact with the patients than doctors in case of distress or if they have any queries<sup>16</sup>.

The majority of patients (67.4%) were satisfied regarding pharmacy services. This is contrary to one of the study conducted by Leonard KL revealed that high price of medicine was a dilemma for the patients as they anticipated to pay lesser amount, most of the patients were satisfied with the care provided at subsequent visits and treatment given<sup>4</sup>.

According to our study the patients were satisfied with the cleanliness of the hospital and waiting area conditions. Whereas another study showed that the cleanliness of the wards was the worst scenario<sup>4</sup>. According to results of our study 76.8% of patients were satisfied from environmental attributes. A study by Quintana showed that the factors leading to dissatisfaction from environmental aspects were poor water supply, lack of proper lights and fans etc., and poorly maintained and dirty toilets<sup>10</sup>. The results of our study are not in line with this survey and majority of the patients were satisfied by quality of services in Al-Nafees hospital.

Patients' satisfaction relationship to quality as reported by Leonard (2008) in a study done in Arusha Tanzania showed that patient satisfaction is not directly associated with quality, but improvement in quality do lead to changes in satisfaction, as patients notices improvements<sup>17</sup>.

Finally our study showed that Majority of patients received quality OPD services from Al- Nafees Hospital. The gap between expected and received service quality among OPD patients was not present among most of the patients' satisfaction level and overall satisfaction level of the patients utilizing the OPD was good however there is always a room for improvement and we recommend that continuous efforts for further improvements should always be made.

### CONCLUSION

Majority of respondents were highly satisfied with the OPD services offered at Al-Nafees Hospital. Patients were satisfied with the behavior of registration staff, Physicians' communication skills, waiting time for examination, nursing care, pharmacy services and logistic arrangements. Female gender and primary education had a significant relationship

with patient satisfaction level.

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