

Patient Characteristics on Satisfaction with Healthcare Quality in a Teaching Hospital in Nepal

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the relationship between patient demographics (gender, age) and service factors (number of hospital visits) on patient satisfaction with healthcare quality in a teaching hospital in Nepal. A quantitative cross-sectional study was conducted using a convenience sample of 40 patients attending the hospital. Data was collected using a questionnaire to assess satisfaction across various dimensions of care. The sample mainly comprised younger females attending the hospital for the first time. Most patients reported average satisfaction with sense of wellbeing, treatment received, staff skills and information provided. No significant correlations were found between gender, age, number of visits and overall satisfaction ($p>0.05$). Patient demographics and prior hospital experience did not significantly influence satisfaction levels in this study. However, scope remains for improving various quality domains to enhance patient experience. Further research with a larger sample is needed to better understand drivers of satisfaction in the Nepalese healthcare context.

Keywords: healthcare providers, patient satisfaction, service quality.

Introduction

The study is carried out to gain knowledge and ideas about the experience of the patients regarding the service quality in the Teaching Hospital. This study is done to measure service satisfaction with relation to service quality. Patient satisfaction has emerged as an increasingly important health outcome. Satisfaction is believed to be an attitudinal response to value judgments that patients make about their clinical encounter (Kane et al., 1997, p. 714). Satisfaction is either implicitly or explicitly defined as an evaluation based on the fulfillment of expectations (Williams, 1995, p. 559). In our point of view, satisfaction is what a consumer expectations, judging and at the end, acceptance or rejection is the outcome from the product or service. Patient satisfaction is an important and commonly used indicator for measuring the quality in health care (Niraula, 2019). Patient satisfaction affects clinical outcomes, patient retention, and medical malpractice claims. It affects the timely, efficient, and patient-centered delivery of quality health care. Patient satisfaction is thus a proxy but a very effective indicator to measure the success of doctors and hospitals. Patient satisfaction leads to patient loyalty. A patient's liking the doctor has a lot to do with the patient getting better. A patient's expectations of a good service depend on age, gender, nature of illness, hour of the day, his or her attitude toward the problem and the circumstances. In general, patients expect their doctors to keep up the timings, behave cordially, and communicate in their language. They expect care, concern, and courtesy in addition to a good professional job (Prakash, 2010; Rimal, 2022).

Patient satisfaction regarding health care is a multidimensional concept that now becomes a very crucial health care outcome. A meta-analysis of satisfaction with medical care revealed the following aspects for patient satisfaction and overall performance of an organization's overall quality, trust, reputation, continuity, competence, information, organization, facilities, attention to psychosocial problems, humaneness and outcome of care (Hall & Dorman, 1988, p. 935). All of these factors have high influence on service quality of health care organizations and at the same time can influence the satisfaction level. Patient satisfaction regarding health care is a multidimensional concept that now becomes a very crucial health care outcome. A metaanalysis of satisfaction with medical care revealed the following aspects for patient satisfaction and overall performance of an organization: overall quality, trust, reputation, continuity, competence, information, organization, facilities, attention to psychosocial problems, humaneness and outcome of care (Hall & Dorman, 1988, p. 935). All of these factors have high influence on service quality of health care organizations and at the same time can influence the satisfaction level. Patient satisfaction was influenced by health service quality, with the empathy dimension as the greatest influence on patient satisfaction. Therefore, it should be considered a priority by government hospitals to train doctors in interpersonal relationship skills to enhance the doctor-patient relationship (FS, 2014). Due to technological advancement in the recent years, health care service provider's practices have also changed dramatically. Health care system is now a challenge for every government, state, political parties and insurance agencies due to high competition in field. The health care system that was dominated by non-profit/public hospitals, is now provided increasingly by private sector.

This competition results in satisfying patient through improvement in service quality dimensions.

Statement of problem

It explains the patient's current health problem and as well as the doctors and nursing interventions need to care for the patients. Quality improvement in health care centre is essential to improve the patient outcomes and upgrade the overall quality of care. However, it is very difficult to identify what are the major influencing factors of patient satisfaction regarding quality services in TU teaching hospital. Nowadays, many people seek for the hospital where there is advance technology and aesthetic environment. The one of the main problem in health care sector is medical negligence. It directly affects the level of patient satisfaction. So, to minimize the medical negligence, various efforts should be made. This research deals with the problems that are arising in the hospital such as waiting time for the test as well as sense of security from the physical harm that the patient felt in the hospital.

The research addresses the following issues:

- What role does the physician behaviour plays in providing friendly environment?
- How is the communication of nurses with patients?
- How long does the patient need to wait for the test and medication?
- Are the patient satisfy with the skill of the physicians and nurses attending them?
- Is there any impact of the politeness of the healthcare providers towards patients with patient's satisfaction?
- Does the adequacy of the explanations about the treatments affect the level of patient's satisfaction?

Significance of the study

This study plays a key role to know what type of service patient are receiving while visiting hospitals. A study on patient satisfaction regarding quality service holds profound significance within the realm of healthcare and medical research. By delving into the factors that influence patient contentment and fulfilment, such a study offers valuable insights that reverberate across various dimension of healthcare landscape.

First and foremost, investigating patient satisfaction contributes to an enhanced understanding of the quality of healthcare service provided. The study helps to identify areas of excellence as well as potential shortcomings, guiding healthcare institution towards improvement and refinement in service delivery. Furthermore, it acts as a driving force for the elevation of patient-centred care, prompting healthcare providers to tailor their approaches to meet individual patient needs, preferences and expectations. Moreover, patient satisfaction research has a direct impact on health outcomes. Satisfied patients are more likely to adhere to treatment plans, actively engage in their health management, and actively communicate with healthcare professionals. This heightened involvement, rooted in a positive experience, translates into improved treatment adherence, better health outcomes and even reduce healthcare costs. Beyond individual patient wellbeing, the implications extend to the broader healthcare ecosystem. Positive patient experiences foster patient loyalty and word-of-mouth

recommendation, which in turn can enhance the reputation of health care institution. In a digital age, where patient reviews and testimonials hold substantial sway, a study on patient satisfaction can influence the choices of prospective patients and thereby influences competitiveness and sustainability of healthcare providers.

In summary, a study on patient satisfaction regarding quality service stands as a beacon illuminating the path toward patient-centric care, improved health outcomes and the fortification of healthcare institutions standing in an increasingly discerning and interconnected world. Its significance resonates not only within the confines of medical research but also in the lives of patients, healthcare providers and the healthcare industry at large.

Objectives

- To explore the patient satisfaction regarding quality service

Research hypothesis

- There is significant relationship between gender and patient satisfaction regarding quality service.
- There is significant relationship between age and patient satisfaction regarding quality service.
- There is significant relationship between number of visit and patient satisfaction regarding quality service.

Research Methods

Quantitative research approach is used in this research to collect, analyse and interpret the data. The cross-sectional study design was used to fulfil the objective of the study research (Mahat & Aithal, 2023; Parajuli, Mahat, & Kandel, 2023). This study was conducted in the T.U Teaching hospital. The rationale for selecting this hospital for the study was that the hospital is more reachable to different types of group of people. It helps to know the service quality received by different kinds of people. The target population of this study is both male and female admitted in the hospitals as well as visitors. Especially the study was done between 16-35 years old for the easy survey of the research study. The sample size consist of 40 patients. Patient who are at hospital or different ward during the data collection period and who fulfilled the inclusion criteria were collected as samples by the convenient sampling technique. Data Collection tool refers to the instrument which was used by the researcher during the research period for the relevant data result (Mahat, Neupane, & Shrestha, 2024). Questionnaire technique was used during the time period of the research sample collection. Different statistical tools such as correlation of coefficient, frequency and mean were used. The appropriate computer software (SPSS) was extensively used to measure the relationship between the variables under study (Parajuli, Mahat, & Kandel, 2023).

Data Analysis and Results

Demographic analysis

Table 1: Demographic analysis

		Count	Column N %
Gender	Male	11	27.5%
	Female	29	72.5%
Age	16-24	35	87.5%
	25-34	5	12.5%
	35-44	0	0.0%
	45-54	0	0.0%
	55 and above	0	0.0%

Study, 2024

A total number of 40 respondents have been taken for conducting research in the survey for the purpose of obtaining search results. The respondents have been representing age and gender from Kathmandu Valley.

The table 1 shows the respondents profile according to age and sex. Male respondent were found to be 27.5% whereas female were found to be 72.5%. It can be concluded that majority of respondents were female i.e 72.5%. Similarly, majority of respondents were between the age 16-24 i.e 87.5%.

Response analysis

The table 2 shows the response of the participants			
Response Analysis			
How many times have you attended Teaching Hospital in the last three years	Response	In number	Percent age
	First time	20	50.0%
	Twice or three times	13	32.5%
	Four or five times	5	12.5%
	Six times or more	2	5.0%
	Sense of wellbeing that you felt in the hospital	Very bad	1

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	Bad	3	7.5%
	Average	27	67.5%
	Good	9	22.5%
	Very good	0	0.0%
Ability of hospital to treat you the way you expected	Very bad	1	2.5%
	Bad	5	12.5%
	Average	21	52.5%
	Good	11	27.5%
	Very good	2	5.0%
Sense of security from physical harm you felt in the hospital	Very bad	0	0.0%
	Bad	4	10.0%
	Average	15	37.5%
	Good	20	50.0%
	Very good	1	2.5%
Waiting time for medication	Very bad	6	15.0%
	Bad	16	40.0%
	Average	13	32.5%
	Good	5	12.5%
	Very good	0	0.0%
Waiting time for test	Very bad	1	2.5%
	Bad	16	40.0%
	Average	18	45.0%
	Good	4	10.0%
	Very good	1	2.5%
Speed and ease of admission	Very bad	0	0.0%
	Bad	7	17.5%
	Average	23	57.5%
	Good	9	22.5%
	Very good	1	2.5%
Skills of the nurses attending you	Very bad	0	0.0%
	Bad	4	10.0%
	Average	22	55.0%
	Good	14	35.0%

	Very good	0	0.0%
Skill of those performing your test	Very bad	0	0.0%
	Bad	1	2.5%
	Average	23	57.5%
	Good	12	30.0%
	Very good	4	10.0%
Skill of the physician attending you	Very bad	1	2.5%
	Bad	0	0.0%
	Average	9	22.5%
	Good	22	55.0%
	Very good	8	20.0%
Adequacy of explanation about your treatment	Very bad	0	0.0%
	Bad	2	5.0%
	Average	9	22.5%
	Good	26	65.0%
	Very good	3	7.5%
Responsiveness of nurses to your needs	Very bad	0	0.0%
	Bad	5	12.5%
	Average	19	47.5%
	Good	16	40.0%
	Very good	0	0.0%
Clarity of information about your condition	Very bad	0	0.0%
	Bad	2	5.0%
	Average	9	22.5%
	Good	26	65.0%
	Very good	3	7.5%
Politeness of the physician	Very bad	0	0.0%
	Bad	2	5.0%
	Average	7	17.5%
	Good	27	67.5%
	Very good	4	10.0%

Study, 2024

The respondents were asked “if they have a sense of well-being that you felt in the hospital” and out of 40 respondents, 2.5% responded “very bad”, 7.5% replied “bad”, 67.5% responded “average” and 22.5% replied “good”.

Similarly, the respondents were asked “Ability of hospital to treat you the way you expected” and out of 40 respondents, 2.51% responded “very bad”, 12.5% responded “bad”, 52.5% responded “average”, 27.5% responded “good” and 5% replied “very good”.

The respondents were asked “Sense of security from physical harm you felt in the hospital” and out of 40 respondents, 10% responded “bad”, 37% replied “average”, 50% responded “good” and 2.5% replied “very good”.

The respondents were asked “Waiting time for medication” and out of 40 respondents, 15% replied “very bad”, 40% responded “bad”, 32.5% replied “average” and 12.5% responded “good”.

The respondents were asked “Waiting time for test” and out of 40 respondents, 2.5% replied “very bad”, 40% responded “bad”, 45% replied “average”, 10% responded “good” and 2.5% replied “very good”.

The respondents were asked “Speed and ease of admission” and out of 40 respondents, 17.5% responded “bad”, 57.5% replied “average”, 22.5% responded “good” and 2.5% replied “very good”. Again, the respondents were asked “Skills of the nurses attending you” and out of 40 respondents, 10% responded “bad”, 55% replied “average” and 35% responded “good”. The respondents were asked “Skill of those staffs performing your test” and out of 40 respondents, 2.5% responded “bad”, 57.5% replied “average”, 30% responded “good” and 10% replied “very good”. The respondents were asked “Skill of the physician attending you” and out of 40 respondents, 2.5% replied “very bad”, 22.5% replied “average”, 55% responded “good” and 20% replied “very good”. The respondents were asked “Adequacy of explanation about your treatment” and out of 40 respondents, 5% responded “bad”, 22.5% replied “average”, 65% responded “good” and 7.5% replied “very good”. The respondents were asked “Responsiveness of nurses to your needs” and out of 40 respondents, 12.5% responded “bad”, 47.5% replied “average” and 40% responded “good”. The respondents were asked “Clarity of information about your condition” and out of 40 respondents, 5% responded “bad”, 22.5% replied “average”, 65% responded “good” and 7.5% replied “very good”. At last, the respondents were asked “Politeness of the physician” and out of 40 respondents, 5% responded “bad”, 17.5% replied “average”, 67.5% responded “good” and 10% replied “very good”.

Correlation

Table 3: Correlation between gender and patient satisfaction regarding quality service

		Gender	mean1
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	.167
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.304
	N	40	40
mean1	Pearson Correlation	.167	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.304	
	N	40	40

Study, 2024

The results shows that there is no significant relationship ($p>0.05$, ie., 0.304) between gender and patient satisfaction regarding quality service. This result rejects the alternative hypothesis. (There is significant relationship between gender and patient satisfaction regarding quality service). According to the survey of 2015, “Positive and significant relationships among gender as well as other dimensions and patient satisfaction have been found. (Naik, et al., 2015)

Correlation between age and patient satisfaction regarding quality service

Table 4: Correlation between age and patient satisfaction

		Age	mean1
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	-.028
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.865
	N	40	40
mean1	Pearson Correlation	-.028	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.865	
	N	40	40

Study, 2024

The table 4 shows the correlation between age and patient satisfaction regarding quality service. The result shows that there is no significant relationship ($p>0.05$ i.e 0.865) between age and patient satisfaction regarding quality service. This result rejects the alternative hypothesis. (There is significant relationship between age and patient satisfaction regarding

quality service).According to G. Cohen, “Dissatisfaction is decreased markedly with age, and also showed a weaker but significant association with measures of psychosocial health and pain”. (G.cohen, 1996)

Correlation between number of visit and patient satisfaction regarding quality service

Table 5: Correlation between no. of visits and patient satisfaction regarding quality service

		How many times have you attended Teaching Hospital in the last three years	mean1
How many times have you attended Teaching Hospital in the last three years	Pearson Correlation	1	.028
	Sig. (2tailed)		.863
	N	40	40
mean1	Pearson Correlation	.028	1
	Sig. (2tailed)	.863	
	N	40	40

Study, 2024

This result shows that there is no significant relationship ($p > 0.05$ i.e 0.863) between number of visits and patient satisfaction regarding quality service. This result rejects the alternative hypothesis. (There is significant relationship between number of visits and patient satisfaction regarding quality service). According to the survey of 2015, “There is Positive and significant relationships between the number of visits as well as other dimensions and patient satisfaction. (Naik, et al., 2015)

Conclusion and Recommendations

The summary describes the findings and compares the result with those of previous studies. The patient were found to be satisfied with the services provided by the T.U teaching hospital regarding quality. Out of 40 patients, most of the respondents were female (72.5%) and majority of respondents were between the age 16-24 i.e 87.5%. Through the analysis, it was observed that there is no significant relationship between demographic characteristics and patient satisfaction.

Most of the patients are also satisfied with the behaviors as well as skills of the doctors and nurses. Skills and behaviors of Medical Professionals plays vital role in satisfying the needs

and wants of the patients. When their needs are fulfilled, it helps to increase level of satisfaction of the patients.

Our focus of the study was to investigate the effect of quality service on patients' satisfaction. The research question was "How do quality service affect patient satisfaction?" in the hospitals. The study contains alot of research variables which are done while collection of questionnaire data. The statistical results we got for demographic characteristics have no effect on patient satisfaction regarding the quality services of TU teaching hospital but the focus should be whether the research questions was answered or not.

Recommendations

Nowadays, patients are more conscious about their health. So they seek quality of services in healthcare centres. Although the study indicates the patient's satisfaction regarding the quality services in term of age, gender and number of visits in teaching hospital. However, there are various variables as well as dimension to measure the level of patient's satisfaction. From the above results, patients are not highly satisfied with the responsiveness of the nurses towards the patient's needs. The hospital needs to focus more on the responsiveness of the nurses towards the needs of the patients. The nurses should be more alert to fulfil the needs and wants of the patients. In addition, to improve in various dimensions of the hospital, continuous training to the medical staffs and security staffs should be provided on time to time as it helps to enhance knowledge and capability of the staffs of the hospital. Patients will be satisfied when there is quality processes, quality of infrastructure and quality of atmosphere in the hospitals. Therefore, hospital needs to focus more on quality processes, quality infrastructure and quality atmosphere to meet the level of satisfaction of the patients.

In addition, ongoing efforts should be made to improve the quality of services and it is essential of listening to the patient's feedback to identify the areas for improvements. Similarly, the concerned authorities should also pay attention to and actively play their roles to strengthen the quality of services in the hospital.

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