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Patient Satisfaction Regarding Hospital Services in A Tertiary Level Hospital of Chitwan

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ABSTRACT

Background

Patient satisfaction is an important component of evaluating care. Patient satisfaction describes how patients value and regard their care. Patients' satisfaction with health care services is becoming an essential factor in health promotion. When patients are satisfied with healthcare services, it will enhance their quick recovery. Therefore, the study objective was to assess the patient's satisfaction level in the tertiary-level Hospital.

Methods

A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among purposively selected 335 Patients and visitors from five wards of Bharatpur Hospital, Chitwan. Data was collected using a semi-structured interview schedule that included a Five-Point Likert Scale questionnaire. Informed written consent was obtained to ensure their rights. Data were analyzed in SPSS 22 version using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results

The study findings revealed that 94% of participants were satisfied with hospital services with a mean value of 3.79 ± 0.463 . The highest satisfaction score was found regarding doctors' care (4.04 ± 0.74), followed by nursing care (3.93 ± 0.577), and low satisfaction with hospital policy (3.66 ± 0.655). There is no significant association between sociodemographic characteristics and patient satisfaction. The most frequently recommended areas for improvement were sanitation and cleanliness (15.48%), followed closely by improvement of physical facilities (14.83%) and crowd management (14.19%).

Conclusions

Almost all of the participants were satisfied with hospital services. Satisfaction with the care of doctors and nurses was high, and low satisfaction with hospital policy. It is recommended for the hospital management to enhance the hospital policy, cleanliness and facilities of the toilets and bathrooms.

Keywords: hospital services; patient satisfaction; tertiary level hospital.

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INTRODUCTION

Patients' satisfaction with health care services is an essential component of health promotion. If patients are satisfied with healthcare services, it will enhance their quick recovery. An assessment of patient satisfaction is required to monitor the quality of health care.¹ Peymania Hospital of Iran has a higher level of satisfaction in nursing services in terms of the nutrition services, diagnostic services, accounting and insurance, and hospital management services.² In India, Patients were highly satisfied with courtesy (46%), quality of care (44%), physical environment (42%) and were less satisfied with convenience (25%), and out of pocket cost (23.5%).³ In another study, the overall satisfaction level was 73% excellent to good, 22% average. Out of the total 68% respondents were unsatisfied with the toilet facility and 56% were unsatisfied with the drinking water facility.⁴ The satisfaction level of outpatients admitted to the polyclinic in Hanol of Vietnam was found low although the attitude and communication of health workers were good.⁵ A study in Nepal showed that doctor - patient communication was satisfied.⁶ A study in Gujranwala, Pakistan found 41.3% of clients were satisfied with the services from basic health units and there is significant relationship client's occupation and income with the patient satisfaction level.⁷ In Nepal, most of the respondents were satisfied with availability of services, professional care, waiting time, behavior of consultant, nurses, paramedical staff and other staff. Assessment of patient satisfaction helps to identify the gaps and work on those gaps to render effective, efficient, accessible, acceptable, equitable and safe health care services.⁸

METHODS

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among patients/ visitors at Bharatpur Hospital, Chitwan, Nepal. Ethical approval was taken from the institutional review committee (IRC) of Bharatpur Hospital (Ref. No. 081/82-023). Informed written consent was taken before data collection. The calculated sample size of this study was 335. A non-probability type of purposive sampling technique

was used to select the sample. A semi structured interview questionnaire was developed after an extensive literature review. Questionnaire consists of Five-Point Likert Scale including 43 items under six domains these are basic hospital amenities (9 items), satisfaction towards nursing care (9 items), satisfaction towards doctor's care (10 items), satisfaction towards accessibility of services (7 items), hospital policy (4 items), other employment's services (4 items). The five-point Likert scale ranged between 1 (indicating very unsatisfied) to 5 (indicating very satisfied). The validity of the research instruments was ensured through a literature review and consultation with subject experts and a statistician. The reliability of the tool was ensured by pretesting the tool among 10% of the total sample size. The internal consistency of the tool was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, and a value of 0.948 was yielded. Based on the pre-test result, necessary modifications were made to the tool. The Face-to-face interview technique was used to collect data from the selected five wards. Data were entered and analyzed in SPSS 22 version using descriptive (Frequency and percentage) and inferential statistics (Chi-Square test).

RESULTS

Among 335 participants, more than half (62.1%) were 20-39 years. The mean age was 35.55 ± 15.208 years. Sixty-six percent were female, and nearly a similar percent were Brhamin/Chettri (42.7%), and Janajati (43.3%). The maximum participants were married (88.1%) and belonged to a joint family (62.4%). Most of the patients (84.8%) stayed in the hospital for less than 7 days at data collection. Regarding education status, 42.7% had completed secondary level. Around one third (37.9%) of the participants were housemaker and retired. There is no significant association between sociodemographic characteristics and patient satisfaction (Table 1).

Cleanliness of the ward (4.06 ± 0.628), physical and psychological safety (3.99 ± 0.663) of the ward

Table 1. Association between sociodemographic characteristics and patient satisfaction. (n=335)				
Variables	Frequency (%)	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	p-value
Age in completed years				
<20	15(4.5)	2(13.3)	13(86.7)	0.241
20-39	208(62.1)	15(7.2)	193(92.8)	
40-59	70(20.9)	2(2.9)	68(97.1)	
60	42(12.5)	1(2.4)	41(97.6)	
Mean age \pm SD = 35.55\pm15.208 years, Min: 16, Max: 75				
Sex				
Male	114(34.0)	6(5.3)	108(94.7)	0.695
Female	221(66.0)	14(6.3)	207(93.7)	
Ethnicity				
Brhamin/Chettri	143(42.7)	5(3.5)	138(96.5)	
Janajati	145(43.3)	9(6.2)	136(93.8)	0.05
Dalit	40(11.9)	6(15)	34(85.0)	
Muslim	7(2.1)	0(0)	7(100)	
Marital status				
Married	295(88.1)	17(5.8)	278(94.2)	
Unmarried	40(11.9)	3(7.5)	37(92.5)	0.663
Types of family				
Nuclear	126(37.6)	7(5.6)	119(94.4)	
Joint	209(62.4)	13(6.2)	196(93.8)	0.804
Length of stay in hospital				
≤ 7 days	284(84.8)	17(6.0)	267(94.0)	0.977
> 7 days	51(15.2)	3(5.9)	48(94.1)	
Education status				
Illiterate	47(14.0)	0	47(100)	0.324
Basic	101(30.1)	7(6.9)	94(93.1)	
Secondary	143(42.7)	10(7.0)	133(93.0)	
Bachelor and above	44(13.1)	3(6.8)	41(93.2)	
Occupation				
Agriculture	77(23.0)	2(2.6)	75(97.4)	
Service	65(19.4)	3(4.6)	62(95.4)	
Bussiness	37(11.0)	2(5.4)	35(94.6)	0.481
Housemaker/retired	127(37.9)	11(8.7)	116(91.3)	
Students	29(8.7)	2(6.9)	27(93.1)	

were high level of satisfaction. There was lowest satisfaction regarding cleanliness and facilities of toilet and bathroom (3.39 \pm 1.032) which are notable area of concern. Regarding nursing care, participants were topped the list of satisfied in the area of confidence and trust (4.08 \pm 0.670), involving you and your family in making decisions about your care (4.09 \pm 0.705). The lowest satisfaction are relate to health education and responsiveness (Table 2).

With the Doctor's care, participants were highest satisfied in confidence and trust in doctors (4.27 \pm 0.611), behaviour of doctors (4.14 \pm 0.647), treatment process (4.13 \pm 0.646), involves you and your family in making decisions about your treatment and care (4.11 \pm 0.654), and treats you with respect, dignity and maintains privacy (4.02 \pm 0.628). However, doctor's communication regarding patients' concerns, treatment procedures, and treatment room

Table 2. Patient satisfaction towards basic hospital amenities and nurse's care.						
Basic Hospital Amenities	VU n(%)	U n(%)	N n(%)	S n(%)	VS n(%)	Mean±SD
Cleanliness of ward	1(0.3)	6(1.8)	32(9.6)	228(68.1)	68(20.3)	4.06±0.628
Physical and psychological safety in ward	1(0.3)	9(2.7)	43(12.8)	223(66.6)	59(17.6)	3.99 ±0.663
Elevator facilities	8(2.4)	39(11.6)	85(25.4)	170(50.7)	33(9.9)	3.54±.908
Cleanliness of bed	4(1.2)	30(9.0)	59(17.6)	196(58.5)	46(13.7)	3.75±0.847
Water facilities	9(2.7)	33(9.0)	52(15.5)	190(56.7)	51(15.2)	3.72±0.931
Facilities of bathroom and toilet	15(4.5)	52(15.5)	65(19.4)	178(53.1)	25(7.5)	3.39±1.032
Cleanliness of bathroom and toilet	20(6)	52(15.5)	65(19.4)	172(51.3)	26(7.8)	3.39±1.032
Internal environment of hospital	3(0.9)	12(3.6)	64(19.1)	207(61.8)	49(14.6)	3.86±.736
External environment of hospital	1(0.3)	15(4.5)	67(20.0)	205(61.2)	47(14.0)	3.84±0.723
Nurses' care						
Friendly and courteous manner	7(2.1)	8(2.4)	48(14.3)	197(58.8)	75(22.4)	3.97±0.807
Confidence and trust	1(0.3)	5(1.5)	42(12.5)	206(61.5)	81(24.2)	4.08±0.670
Answers your questions in a way you could understand	4(1.2)	13(3.9)	49(14.6)	194(57.9)	75(22.4)	3.96±0.796
Treats you with respect, dignity and maintains privacy	3(0.9)	9(2.7)	40(11.9)	224(66.9)	59(17.6)	3.98±0.696
Involves you and your family in making decisions about your care	2(0.6)	6(1.8)	39(11.6)	200(59.7)	88(26.3)	4.09±0.705
Give information about your latest condition	2(0.6)	16(4.8)	45(13.4)	211(63.0)	61(18.2)	3.93±0.747
Attends you immediately when called for help without delaying	6(1.8)	34(10.1)	47(14.0)	185(55.2)	63(18.8)	3.79±0.924
Gives you advice about the ways to avoid illness and stay healthy	5(1.5)	37(11)	46(13.7)	189(56.4)	58(17.3)	3.77±0.914
Explains about every details before, during and after procedure	4(1.2)	29(8.7)	44(13.1)	190(56.7)	68(20.3)	3.86±0.878

Note: VU: very unsatisfied, U: unsatisfied, N: neutral, S: satisfied, VS: very satisfied.

Table 3. Patient satisfaction towards doctors' care.						
Doctors' Care	VU n(%)	U n(%)	N n(%)	S n(%)	VS n(%)	Mean±SD
Confidence and trust in doctors	0	5(1.5)	14(4.2)	200(59.7)	116(34.6)	4.27±0.611
Behaviour of doctors (Speaks politely with respect)	2(0.6)	5(1.5)	23(6.9)	220(65.7)	85(25.4)	4.14±0.647
Addresses your worries and concerns	4(1.2)	13(3.9)	54(16.1)	193(57.6)	71(21.2)	3.94±0.796
Involves you and your family in making decisions about your treatment and care	2(0.6)	6(1.8)	25(7.5)	222(66.3)	80(23.9)	4.11±0.654
Knows about your latest condition/ Progress	1(0.3)	9(2.7)	59(17.6)	203(60.6)	63(18.8)	3.95±0.705
Gives information about your disease condition and treatment modalities to your satisfaction	1(0.3)	12(3.6)	22(6.6)	223(66.6)	77(23.0)	4.08±0.678
Explains in details about every procedures before, during and after procedure	3(0.9)	12(3.6)	48(14.3)	207(61.8)	65(19.4)	3.95±0.749
Treats you with respect, dignity and maintains privacy	1(0.3)	5(1.5)	41(12.2)	226(67.5)	62(18.5)	4.02±0.628
Treatment process	2(0.6)	5(1.5)	24(7.2)	221(66.0)	83(24.8)	4.13±0.646
Treatment room	1(0.3)	12(3.6)	65(19.4)	199(59.4)	58(17.3)	3.90±0.727

Note: VU: very unsatisfied, U: unsatisfied, N: neutral, S: satisfied, VS: very satisfied.

could be improved (Table 3).

Regarding the accessibility of services, most of the patients were satisfied with the admission process and is well organized (3.86 ± 0.771), and the least satisfaction was with (3.56 ± 1.016) waiting time to consult a doctor after collection of lab report. The aspect of hospital

policy illustrated that most of the participants were satisfied with the visiting time and hours allocated in the ward is systematic and adequate (3.76 ± 0.823). Some participants faced difficulties in paying bills at counter (3.49 ± 0.975). Most of the participants were satisfied with the services and behavior of the security

Table 4. Patient satisfaction towards accessibility of services, hospital policy and other employment's service.

Accessibility of services	VU n(%)	U n(%)	N n(%)	S n(%)	VS n(%)	Mean \pm SD
Prescribed medicines available at hospital pharmacy	10(3.0)	42(12.5)	66(19.7)	175(52.2)	42(12.5)	3.59 \pm 0.962
Scheduled procedures performed at an appointed time	4(1.2)	32(9.6)	63(18.8)	191(57.0)	45(13.4)	3.72 \pm 0.858
Admission process is well organized	5(1.5)	13(3.9)	57(17.0)	209(62.4)	51(15.2)	3.86 \pm 0.771
USG, CT scan, X-ray are done in time without delay	10(3.0)	45(13.4)	60(17.9)	180(53.7)	40(11.9)	3.58 \pm 0.966
Availability of staff, report dispatched timely	6(1.8)	34(10.1)	54(16.1)	198(59.1)	43(12.8)	3.71 \pm 0.880
Price of test: urine, blood, stool, sputum	7(2.1)	31(9.3)	62(18.5)	191(57.0)	44(13.1)	3.70 \pm 0.887
Waiting time to consult doctor after collection of lab report	16(4.8)	41(12.2)	59(17.6)	177(52.8)	42(12.5)	3.56 \pm 1.016
Hospital policy						
Hospital charges are reasonable	9(2.7)	22(6.6)	56(16.7)	204(60.9)	44(13.1)	3.75 \pm 0.862
Information regarding hospital services can be easily obtained	13(3.9)	30(9.0)	58(17.3)	196(58.5)	38(11.3)	3.64 \pm 0.933
The visiting time and hours allocated in ward is systematic and adequate	6(1.8)	23(6.9)	57(17.0)	207(61.8)	42(12.5)	3.76 \pm 0.823
Easy to pay bills in counter	14(4.2)	43(12.8)	76(22.7)	170(50.7)	32(9.6)	3.49 \pm 0.975
Other employment's service						
Behavior of other staff (non medical professional)	15(4.5)	28(8.4)	59(17.6)	199(59.4)	34(10.1)	3.62 \pm 0.936
Behavior of bill counter staff	8(2.4)	28(8.4)	60(17.9)	215(64.2)	24(7.2)	3.65 \pm 0.826
Services and behaviour of security guard	7(2.1)	12(3.6)	52(15.5)	228(68.1)	36(10.7)	3.82 \pm 0.750
Service and behavior of office assistant	14(4.2)	15(4.5)	52(15.5)	216(64.5)	38(11.3)	3.74 \pm 0.872

Note: VU: very unsatisfied, U: unsatisfied, N: neutral, S: satisfied, VS: very satisfied.

Table 5. Mean score of patient satisfaction on six domains and level of satisfaction. (n=335)

Statements	Mean \pm SD	Satisfaction Rank
Basic Hospital amenities (9 items)	3.73 \pm 0.551	3
Satisfaction towards Nursing care (9 items)	3.93 \pm 0.577	2
Satisfaction towards doctors' care (10 items)	4.04 \pm 0.74	1
Satisfaction towards accessibility of services (7 items)	3.67 \pm 0.646	5
Hospital Policy (4 Items)	3.66 \pm 0.655	6
Other employment's service (4 items)	3.70 \pm 0.656	4
Overall mean score	3.79 \pm 0.463	-
Level of Satisfaction		
Unsatisfied n(%)	20(6.0)	-
Satisfied n(%)	315(94)	-

Table 6. Recommended areas for improvement in hospital services. (n=155)

Statements	Frequency (%)
Doctor should be available and provide information	10 (6.45)
Professional behavior of employees	12(7.74)
Sanitation and cleanliness	24(15.48)
Reduce service cost/equity for poor patient	17(10.96)
Service should be fast in the pharmacy, ticket counter, lab	20(12.90)
Improve physical facility	23(14.83)
Adequate supply of drinking water	12(7.74)
Manage crowd	22(14.19)
Manage human resource	5(3.22)
Nursing service should be fast	4(2.58)
Easily available inquiry service	6 (3.87)

guard (3.82 ± 0.750) (Table 4).

Regarding the six domains of patient satisfaction, the highest satisfaction rank was reported in doctors' care (4.04 ± 0.74). Secondly, nursing care scored 3.93 ± 0.57 , which also found higher satisfaction. The lowest satisfaction was with hospital policy (3.66 ± 0.655), which suggests improvement in the implementation of hospital policies. Despite some variation across domains, the overall mean score of 3.79 indicates a generally high level of satisfaction. With 94% of patients satisfied, the hospital appears to be performing well in meeting patient expectations (Table 5).

Out of 335 participants, 155 participants were recommended for further improvement of hospital services. The most prioritized area for improvement was sanitation and cleanliness (15.48%). There was a need for clean toilets and bathrooms. Similarly, 14.8% of the participants were recommended for improvements in physical facilities such as adding more fans, opening the AC, maintenance of the elevator, visitor sitting room, racks for belongings, cc camera. The participants also recommended managing the crowd in the Lab, Pharmacy, Bill/Ticket counter, USG, as well as services should be fast, reduce service cost/ equity for poor patients, Professional behaviour of employees, and adequate supply of drinking water, doctors should available and provide information regarding disease condition (Table 6).

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted among 335 participants, and 94% of participants were satisfied with hospital services. The highest satisfaction was found with doctors' care (4.04 ± 0.74). Nursing care also scored high (3.93 ± 0.57), which placed on second rank. The lowest satisfaction was with hospital policy (3.66 ± 0.655).

In this study, more than half (62.1%) were 20-39 years. The mean age was 35.55 ± 15.208 years. Sixty six percent were female whereas Sapkota et al.⁹ stated that 23% of the participant were the age group 20-39 years. The mean age was 45 ± 22.6 years and only 37.7 % participants were female. Nearly similar percent were Brhamin/Chettri (42.7%), and Janajati

(43.3%). Hindu (83%) was the most common religion and maximum (88.1%) participants were married where as the study done by Poudel Lisasha shows that Half (50%) of the respondents were Brahmin/ Chhetri followed by Janajati/Adhivasi 35.1%. and most of the (88.1%) respondents were married.¹⁰ Most of the patients stayed in hospital less than 7 days at data collection time. Regarding education status, 42.7% had completed secondary level, which is inconsistent with the study done by Thapa S shows that 74% of the respondents were literate.¹¹ Around one third (37.9%) of the participants were housemaker and retired from their job, which is consistent with the study done by Gokul et al shows 29.22% were housemaker.¹² There was no statistically significant association between the level of satisfaction towards hospital services with sociodemographic variables of participants which is a similar finding to the study done by Sapkota S., which showed that there was no statistically significant association between the level of satisfaction towards nursing services with sociodemographic variables of patients.¹³ Regarding basic amenities of the hospital, 68.1% of the participants were satisfied with cleanliness of the ward and 15.5% of the participants were unsatisfied with facilities and cleanliness of toilet and bathroom where as the study conducted by Niraula TP and Poudel SR shows more than one third of clients reported to be not satisfied in safe drinking water facilities (36.1%) and toilet facility (34.4%).¹⁴ Regarding nursing care, participants were topped the list of satisfied in the area of confidence and trust (4.08 ± 0.670), involves you and your family in making decisions about your care (4.09 ± 0.705) another study conducted by Alotaibi JS the three items with the highest mean values were nurse's manner in going about their work (3.98 ± 1.03), then amount of privacy nurses gave you (3.956 ± 1.0890), and how capable nurses were at their job (3.95 ± 0.98).¹⁵ With the doctor's care, participants were highest satisfied in confidence and trust in doctors, behaviour of doctors, treatment process, involves you and your family in making decisions about your treatment and care, and treats you with respect, dignity and maintains privacy which

is nearly similar to the study conducted by Shrestha S reveals that patients seemed to be high satisfied with confidence and trust in doctors and speaks to you politely. Regarding the accessibility of services, most of the patient were satisfied with admission process is well organized and least satisfaction in waiting time to consult doctor after collection of lab report whereas the study done by Shrestha S shows most of the patients were satisfied with all the items under this domain.⁸

The aspect of hospital policy illustrated that majority of the participants were not satisfied with hospital policy. Among them, majority (61.8%) of the participants were dissatisfied with the visiting time and hours allocated in ward is systematic and adequate and Some participants faced difficulties in pay bills in counter which is inconsistent with the finding of Subedi D that reveals 51.4% were mentioned that visiting hours is good and 65.8% of the respondents mentioned that payment system of the hospital is good.¹⁶ Majority (68.1%) of the participants were dissatisfied with services and behaviour of security guard.

Regarding the six domains of patient's satisfaction, the highest satisfaction was reported in doctors' care (4.04 ± 0.74). Nursing care also scored high (3.9 ± 0.57), which placed second rank. The lowest satisfaction was with hospital policy (3.66 ± 0.655), suggesting improvement in how hospital policies are implemented. Despite some variation across domains, the overall mean score of 3.79 indicates a generally high level of satisfaction.

In this study overall patient satisfaction level was 94%, The highest satisfaction appeared in doctor's care (4.04 ± 0.74). Nursing care also scored high (3.93 ± 0.57), which placed on second rank. The lowest satisfaction was with hospital policy (3.66 ± 0.655), suggesting improvement in how hospital policies are implemented. Despite some variation across domains, the overall mean score of 3.79 indicates a generally high level of satisfaction which was similar to findings (91.25%) noted in the study

done by Dhungana et al., most of the participants (93.36%) were satisfied with physicians and nurses services compared to satisfaction with other physical facilities (89.86%).¹⁷ Out of 335 participants, 155 participants were giving recommendations for further improvement of hospital services. The most frequently recommended areas for improvement were sanitation and cleanliness (15.48%), followed closely by improvement of physical facilities (14.83%) and better crowd management (14.19%). These results suggest that patients place strong emphasis on the hospital environment and infrastructure, as well as the efficiency of managing patient flow. Operational efficiency was also a notable concern. About 12.90% of participants emphasized the need to speed up services at the pharmacy, ticket counters, and laboratory, while 10.96% recommended reducing services costs or ensuring equity for poor patients. These findings highlight patient concerns regarding accessibility and affordability of services. The another study showed that the top six improvement area were the health workers should report to work on time at 29.8% followed by doctors should listen to patients' concerns, examine them thoroughly and explain their findings and diagnosis 17.8%, hospital should improve its stocks of essential medicines, diagnostics and medical furniture at 14.7%, health workers must conduct themselves professionally at 12.9%, hospital management has to be improve in sanitation and cleanliness (6.7%), health worker should not priorities their relatives and friends over other patients (4.0%).¹⁸

Limitations

The study was confined into only one setting with limited sample size so generalization of the findings might be difficult.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concluded that the participants were highly satisfied with the hospitals' services. The higher satisfaction rate with doctors' care, and secondly, nurses' services. The satisfaction rate was low with hospital policy in adequate amount of medicine in the

pharmacy and self- introduction by the physicians. There is still a requirement to improve health care services, which would be a significant benefit to the hospital. Hospital administration needs to strengthen existing services, especially in low-satisfaction areas.

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