

Original article:

Level of patients' satisfaction with care provided by health care givers in a selected tertiary hospital in south western Nigeria

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Abstract:

Background of the Study: Patients' level of satisfaction with health care has been identified as one of the major determinants of effective service delivery. The level of patients' satisfaction with health care system needs to be periodically assessed in both public and private health institutions.

Aim of Study: This study investigated and compare level of in- patients' satisfaction with care received from doctors, nurses and physiotherapists in a tertiary health institution in Nigeria.

Methodology: The cross- sectional study recruited 61 in-patients that receives care from doctors, nurses and physiotherapists at Federal Medical Centre, Owo, Ondo State in South-western Nigeria. Participants inform consent was sought and obtained before the commencement of the study. Data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire. Data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.0 software. Alpha level was set at 0.005.

Results: The result showed that 36 (59.0%) of the respondents were very satisfied with care provided by doctors, 30 (49.2%) nurses and 35 (57.4%) physiotherapists. There was no significant difference between respondents' level of satisfaction between physiotherapists and doctor, between physiotherapists and nurses. However, a significance difference was observed between doctors and nurses.

Conclusion: Although the level of in-patients' satisfaction with care provided by doctors, and physiotherapists and nurses was very high, professionals attitudes in terms of showing kindness, empathy and patients involvements in decisions making needs improvement.

Keywords: Physiotherapy, Health care, Patients Satisfaction

Introduction:

Patient satisfaction is considered as one of the most important quality dimensions and key success indicators in health care and is becoming an evolving trend to measure the quality of health care ^(1,2). Satisfaction during a health care encounter is related to the relationship between patients' expectations and experiences of the treatment received from health facilities and professionals ⁽³⁾. Satisfaction with service provision has been reported to be a sensitive tool and has

been used severally for measuring quality of service within and outside the health system ⁽⁴⁾. Patient satisfaction with care received is an important dimension of evaluation that is examined only rarely in developing countries ⁽⁵⁾.

Patients' satisfaction, in terms of healthcare, is important because it has been observed to have significant influence on patients' attitudes towards health care services ⁽⁶⁾. Patients who are satisfied are more likely to seek more medical advice, adhere to treatment recommendations, keep appointments, cooperate with health professionals in service delivery and even refer other patients to their physicians ⁽⁷⁾.

Several studies has been conducted on the subjects of patients' satisfaction with health care. A study conducted by Jorge et al, ⁽⁸⁾ in Bangladesh reported that the most powerful predictor for client satisfaction with health services was provider's behaviour, especially respect and politeness. Also, in a study on patient satisfaction with primary health care services in the United Arab Emirates, educational status was statistically significant for the domain of effectiveness. People with higher levels of education felt that the clinic service was less effective than those who were less educated ⁽⁹⁾. A weak but statistically significant association was found between education and satisfaction; people with some college education were less likely to be satisfied with the health system than people without a high school diploma ⁽⁹⁾.

Faxelid et al.⁽¹⁰⁾ conducted a study examining patients' perception of care, and it was revealed that older patients tended to be more satisfied than younger patients. In a related study on patient satisfaction with primary health care services in the United Arab Emirates, age was statistically significant for the domains of comprehensiveness. Older people felt that the clinic service was more comprehensive than younger people ⁽¹¹⁾. A positive association was also found between age and satisfaction; individuals age $d > 70$ years were more likely to be satisfied with the health system than individuals in the age range of 18-29 years ⁽¹²⁾.

Previous studies have identified prolonged waiting times as the main component of patient dissatisfaction, as well as the most frequent reason patients leave before medical evaluation ^(5,13-15). A study conducted by Eze and Okaro ⁽¹⁴⁾ reported that 67.5% of respondents complained of long waiting time of one to four hours to see their doctor. Similar findings also in a Nigerian teaching hospital by Ademola-Popoola et al.⁽¹³⁾ reported long waiting time in 89.4% of respondents particularly for doctor's consultation. This is also in line with a study conducted by Sambo et al.⁽¹⁶⁾ where 36.7% of respondents waited for 1-3 hours before seeing a doctor. A study conducted in Calabar, Nigeria by Oyo-ita et al.⁽¹⁷⁾ found out that poor attitude of health staff was a major area of dissatisfaction for patients. Although, majority of patient satisfaction surveys performed in tertiary hospitals in Nigeria indicate generally high satisfaction with health care ^(4,18-21), however, other professional based evaluation indicated moderate level of satisfaction with nursing care ⁽²²⁻²⁶⁾ and with in-patient physiotherapy services ⁽²⁷⁻²⁹⁾.

Several efforts have been made in recent times to improve infrastructures in Nigeria health institutions in addition to capacity building however, the impact of these upgrade in Nigeria health institutions in terms of facilities and manpower education on level of patient satisfaction needs be investigated. Furthermore, previous studies in Nigeria have investigated patients satisfaction among health workers, however there seems to be paucity of studies that compared level of in- patients' satisfaction with care received from doctors, nurses and physiotherapists. This study was therefore designed to investigate and compare level of in- patients' satisfaction with care received from doctors, nurses and physiotherapists in a tertiary health institution in Nigeria.

Aims and Objectives:

The aims of this study were:

1. To investigate the level of in- patients' satisfaction with care received from doctors, nurses and physiotherapists in a tertiary health institution in Nigeria.
2. To compare the level of in- patients' satisfaction with care received from doctors, nurses and physiotherapists.
3. To determine any significant differences in the level of in- patients' satisfaction with care received from doctors, nurses and physiotherapists

Materials and Methods:

The cross- sectional study recruited 61 patients admitted to the five major wards of Federal Medical Centre, Owo, Ondo State in South-western Nigeria. The inclusion criteria for participants were: Patients that receives health care services from Doctors, Nurses and Physiotherapists continuously for not less than 4 weeks of admission irrespective of clinical conditions. Patients that were not fully conscious were excluded from the study. The study protocol was approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee of Federal Medical Centre, Owo (FMC/OW/380/LXXIV/109). Participants inform consent was sought and obtained before the commencement of the study. The survey instrument for the study was a self-administered questionnaire that sought information on socio-demographic, admission details and level satisfaction with health care received.

Data analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.0 software. Data were summarized using a descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and percentage. Inferential statistics of paired t test was used to test level of significance difference in the level of satisfaction between the professional groups. Alpha level was set at 0.005.

Results:

A total of 61 patients participated in this study. 25 (41%) were female while 36 (59%) were male. Most of the respondents fall within the age group 20-30 (24.6%), followed by 71-80 (18%). 62.3% of the respondents were married while 24.6% were single. The socioeconomic and admission status of the respondents is as presented in table 1. The result showed that, majority of the respondents had tertiary education (52.5%), followed by secondary (21.3%) while only 8.2% had no formal education. The result also showed that, majority of the respondents 24 (39.3%) earn a monthly income of between 15,000-50,000 naira, followed by 13 (21.3%) who earn between 50,000-100,000 naira monthly. Only 34.4% of the respondents had once been admitted for treated in the hospital while majority (65.6%) had never been admitted previously. 41.0% of the participants were admitted to orthopedic ward, 32.8% in Medical ward, 14.8% in surgical ward. The result also showed that majority of the respondents had no medical insurance. The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents is presented in table 1

Results of respondents level of satisfaction with care provided by Nurses, doctors and physiotherapists is presented in table 2. Patient's level of satisfaction with Nurses revealed that majority of the patients (67.2%) are very satisfied with courtesy of nurses, respect for privacy (57.4%), friendliness and helpfulness (54.1%), and quality of nursing care (82.0%). The overall level of satisfaction with nursing care showed that, 11 (18.0%) of the respondents were strongly satisfied, 30 (49.2%) were very satisfied, 19 (31.2%) satisfied while none (0.0%) was not satisfied. Respondents' level of satisfaction with services provided by the Medical doctors reveals that, most of the patients are satisfied with

courtesy of doctors (67.2%), respect for patients' privacy (68.9%), quality of care and responsiveness to health care problems (52.5%), show of kindness and empathy (49.2%). The overall level of satisfaction with medical services showed that, 17 (27.9%) of the respondents were strongly satisfied, 36 (59.0%) were very satisfied, 7 (11.5%) satisfied while only 1(1.6%) was fairly satisfied with medical services. Result of level of satisfaction with Physiotherapy services showed that majority of the respondents are satisfied with courtesy of physiotherapists (59.0%), respect for privacy (59.0%), quality of care (54.1%), duration of treatment (45.9%), being involved in decisions on care and treatment (47.5%), listening and addressing patients' concern (44.3%) and explaining in a way the patients understands (49.2%). The result also showed that, greater proportion of the respondent (37.7%) were strongly satisfied with physiotherapists' show of kindness and empathy. The overall level of satisfaction with physiotherapy services showed that, 18 (29.5%) of the respondents were strongly satisfied, 35 (57.4%) were very satisfied, 7 (11.5%) satisfied while only 1(1.6%) was fairly satisfied with physiotherapy services.

The overall satisfaction score for doctors, nurses and physiotherapists are shown in table 3 while the result of paired-test to compare means difference in overall satisfaction is presented in table 4. The analysis showed no significant mean difference in respondents' level of satisfaction between Physiotherapists and Doctors (p value of 0.816 > 0.05), similarly there is no significant mean difference in overall satisfaction of respondents between Physiotherapists and nurses (p value of 0.083 > 0.05).The result however revealed that, there is a significant mean difference in respondents overall level of satisfaction between Doctors and Nurses (p value of 0.021 < 0.05)

Table 1: Socio-demographics Characteristics of Respondents

Gender		
Male	36	59.0
Female	25	41.0
Age Group		
20-30	15	24.6
31-40	8	13.1
41-50	9	14.8
51-60	8	13.1
61-70	8	13.1
71-80	11	18.0
81-90	2	3.3
Marital Status		
Single	15	24.6
Married	38	62.3
Divorced	1	1.6
Widowed	7	11.5
Education		
None	5	8.2

Primary	10	16.4
Secondary	13	21.3
Tertiary	32	52.5
Monthly Income		
<7500	5	8.2
7,500- 15,000	13	21.3
15,000- 50,000	24	39.3
50,000- 100,000	13	21.3
100,000- 150,000	1	1.6
> 200,000	5	8.2
Are you on Medical Insurance?		
Yes	14	23.0
No	47	77.0
Current Ward of Admission		
Orthopaedic Ward	25	41.0
Surgical Ward	9	14.8
Medical Ward	20	32.8
Burns Unit	4	6.6
Obstetric	3	4.9
Previous Admission to this Hospital		
Yes	21	34.4
No	40	65.6

Table 2: Respondents' level of satisfaction with Nursing, Doctors and Physiotherapist's care

NURSING	Strongly satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Not satisfied
I am satisfied with courtesy of Nurses	12 (19.7)	41 (67.2)	8 (13.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
The Nurses respected my privacy during my stay in the hospital	9 (14.8)	35 (57.4)	17 (27.9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with the quality of care provided by Nurses	7 (11.5)	50 (82.0)	3 (4.9)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with how well nurses responded to my health care problems	7 (11.5)	35 (57.4)	18 (29.4)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)
Nurses were friendly and helpful	9 (14.8)	33 (54.1)	19 (31.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with the duration of wait-time for a	14 (23.0)	24 (39.3)	23 (37.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

nurse after calling for his/her attention					
The Nurses showed kindness and empathy towards me	10 (16.4)	22 (36.1)	25 (41.0)	4 (6.6)	0 (0.0)
The Nurses listened carefully to me whenever I had questions to ask	11 (18.0)	33 (54.0)	16 (26.2)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)
Nurses explained things in a way I could understand	10 (16.4)	36 (59.0)	14 (23.0)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with overall Nursing care	11 (18.0)	30 (49.2)	19 (31.2)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)
DOCTOR					
I am satisfied with courtesy of Doctors	14 (23.0)	41 (67.2)	6 (9.8)	0 (0)	0 (0.0)
The Doctors respected my privacy during my stay in the hospital	17 (27.9)	42 (68.9)	2 (3.3)	0 (0)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with the duration of wait-time for a Doctor after calling for his/her attention	11 (18.0)	28 (45.9)	16 (9.8)	6 (9.8)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with the quality of care provided by Doctors	13 (21.3)	32 (52.5)	16 (26.2)	0 (0)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with how well Doctors responded to my health care problems	13 (21.3)	32 (52.5)	16 (26.2)	0 (0)	0 (0.0)
Doctors involved me in decisions regarding my care and treatment	18 (29.5)	23 (37.7)	17(27.9)	3 (4.9)	0 (0.0)
The Doctors showed kindness and empathy towards me	13 (21.3)	30 (49.2)	16 (26.2)	2 (3.3)	0 (0.0)
The Doctors listened carefully to me whenever I had questions to ask	19 (31.2)	30 (49.2)	11 (18.0)	1 (1.9)	0 (0.0)
The Doctor(s) explained things in a way I could understand	16 (26.2)	30 (49.2)	13 (21.3)	2 (3.3)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with overall Medical care	17 (27.9)	36 (59.0)	7 (11.5)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)
PHYSIOTHERAPIST					
I am satisfied with courtesy of Physiotherapists	18 (29.5)	36 (59.0)	6 (9.8)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)
The Physiotherapists respected my privacy	17 (27.9)	36 (59.0)	8 (13.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with the quality of care provided	15 (24.6)	33 (54.1)	13 (21.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with how well Physiotherapists responded to my health care problems	21 (34.4)	18 (29.5)	22 (36.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with duration of treatment session	18 (29.5)	28(45.9)	14 (23.0)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)
Physiotherapists involved me in decisions regarding my care and treatment	20 (32.8)	29 (47.5)	12 (19.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
The Physiotherapists showed kindness and empathy towards me	23 (37.7)	20 (32.8)	17 (27.9)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)

The Physiotherapists listened to and carefully addressed my concerns	20 (32.8)	27 (44.3)	14 (23.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with Physiotherapists' explanation of my condition and advises given to me on my health	20 (32.8)	30 (49.2)	11 (18.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
I am satisfied with overall Physiotherapy care	18(29.5)	35 (57.4)	7 (11.5)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)

Table 3: Overall Satisfaction Scores

Level of Overall Satisfaction	Nurses		Doctors		Physiotherapists	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly satisfied	11	18.0	17	27.9	18	29.5
Very satisfied	30	49.2	36	59.0	35	57.4
Satisfied	19	31.2	7	11.5	7	11.5
Fairly satisfied	1	1.6	1	1.6	1	1.6
Not satisfied	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Table 4: Result of Paired- test to compare means difference

Variables	Means ± Standard Deviation	Sig (2-tailed)	P= 0.05
Overall satisfaction with Physiotherapist	4.0820 ± 0.7809	0.816	No significant difference
Overall satisfaction with Doctors	4.1148 ± 0.7325		
Overall satisfaction with Physiotherapist	4.0820 ± 0.7809	0.083	No significant difference
Overall satisfaction with Nurses	3.8361 ± 0.7344		
Overall satisfaction with Doctors	4.1148 ± 0.7325	0.021	Significant
Overall satisfaction with Nurses	3.8261 ± 0.7344		

Discussion:

This study investigated the level of in-patient satisfaction with services provided by three major clinical departments (doctors, nurses, and physiotherapists) while on admission at Federal Medical Centre, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria. There were more male respondents than female in this study with the majority of the respondents on low monthly income. It was also observed that greater proportion of the respondents are not on any medical insurance. This could be attributed to low socio economic status of the respondents which could have made insurance cover unaffordable. The overall satisfaction result in this study shows that majority of the respondents claimed to be very satisfied with quality of care provided by the nurses, doctors and physiotherapists. Although previous studies have reported moderate level of

satisfaction with nursing care ⁽²²⁻²⁶⁾ and with in-patient physiotherapy services ⁽²⁷⁻²⁹⁾, however, the findings of the present study supported reports from previous patients' satisfaction surveys performed in tertiary hospitals across Nigeria that indicated high level of satisfaction with health care services ^(4,18-21). The high level of satisfaction observed in this study could be attributed to the impact of monthly seminars and workshops on best clinical practice and patients-professional relationships organized by the hospital's management.

Respondents' report on nursing care shows they were very satisfied with the following nursing care: courtesy, friendliness and helpfulness, duration of wait time after calling for attention, respect for privacy and overall quality of care. This findings supported reports from previous studies ⁽³⁰⁾ where a very high percentage of the patients were satisfied with services rendered by nurses.

A study conducted by Jorge et al.⁽⁸⁾ in Bangladesh reported that the most powerful predictor for client satisfaction with health services was provider's behaviour, especially respect and politeness. Patients has legitimate expectation and concerns each time he/she visits the hospital; recognizing and meeting these expectations and concerns will contribute to the overall satisfaction of the health care service received during the visit ⁽²⁰⁾. Patients from entry into the ward are directly in the care of the nurses who are with them all through the day, making nurses readily accessible to patients. The high level of satisfaction with nurses in the present study could therefore be attributed to the availability, accessibility, good attitude to work and the effects of periodic seminars on work ethics for nurses in the organization. Although about 7.0% of the respondent reported fair level of satisfaction in nurse's show of kindness and empathy, responsiveness, listening and addressing inquiries. How well nurses respond, listen and explain things in a way the patient will understand depends largely on the nurses' attitude. Past studies had revealed that, attitude and conduct of the professionals ranks highest among complaints by patients ⁽³¹⁾. One of many reasons why satisfaction with nursing care is not optimal has been attributed to the wide margin of nurse to patient ratio in the Nigerian health system, such that nurses are overworked, thereby influencing their responsiveness, interaction with the patient and sensitivity to the patients need ⁽³²⁾.

Result from the present study showed that majority of the respondents were very satisfied with the care provided by the medical doctors in terms of courtesy, respect for privacy, quality of care and responsiveness. Naidu ⁽³³⁾ reported that, if the service provider's competence is perceived high, then levels of satisfaction also increase, perception of competence of the medical doctor by the respondents might possibly have influence the level of satisfaction in this study. Respondents however, reported fair satisfaction in areas of: waiting time, involvement in decisions, show of kindness and empathy, listening and explaining in a way patient will understand. This findings could be attributed to poor doctor to patient ratio of 1/3001 in Nigeria against World Health Organization recommendation ratio of 1 doctor to 600 patients ⁽³⁴⁾ which results in longer waiting time for patients. The most frequent complaints in parts of the world are usually linked to expectations, such as being treated in a respectable manner, communication problems and being properly informed ⁽³¹⁾. These lapses could also result in fair rather than an optimal patient satisfaction.

Observation from this study revealed that respondents were very satisfied with services provided by physiotherapists with respect for privacy, quality of care, responsiveness to health care problems, and being involved in decisions on care and treatment, listening and explaining to patients understanding. This is in agreement with previous study by Olatunji et al, ⁽³⁵⁾ which reported that the respondents were generally satisfied with the therapist's character, courtesy,

respect, skill, ability and willingness to listen to their complaints. A standard physiotherapist-patient consultation involves interaction, with patient to elucidate the problems through active listening skills promoting patient involvement. However, a negligible proportion of respondents' reported fair level of satisfaction with respect to duration of treatment time, courtesy, kindness and empathy shown. The report of fair satisfaction with duration of treatment time corresponds to findings in Olatunji et al,⁽³⁵⁾. Due to the nature of the practice, the treatment time for a patient adds to the waiting time of the next patient therefore time spent with each patient has to be minimized to reduce the waiting time of other patients. It is necessary to note the socioeconomic status of the majority of the respondents for this study.

The comparative results from this study only revealed a significant difference in overall patients' satisfaction between doctors and with nurses. The result suggest that patients are more satisfied with care provided by the doctors than nurses. The physician's perceived competence or intelligence seems to be important in determining patient satisfaction with their physician, and consequently their adherence to treatment regimens ⁽³³⁾. Also, the role of nurses carrying out the orders of the doctors might proffer an illusion to the patients seeing the doctor as the nice person and the nurses as a hard person, whereas the nurse is actually carrying out the doctor's orders.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study revealed that, the level of satisfaction with care provided by doctors, nurses and physiotherapists among admitted patients was very high in the study environment, however, there is the need to improve on the attitudes of health care professionals in the area of showing kindness, empathy and involvement of patients in decisions regarding their care and treatment.

Workshops on clinician-patients communication skills should be organized periodically to improve clinician-patients relationship while patient satisfaction survey should be integrated into hospital management planning and administration as part of quality improvement. Furthermore, patients should be educated and encouraged to have a medical insurance to help ensure they have access to full healthcare notwithstanding their socioeconomic status.

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