

ASSESSMENT OF PATIENT SATISFACTION SEEN AT A PRIVATE HOSPITAL IN KARACHI

¹ANUM MAHMOOD, ²ADEL ZIA SIDDIQUI, ³RIDA SHAHID, ⁴IRSHADULLAH, ⁵NAQEEB, ⁶ZARA KHAN

ABSTRACT

Oral health is important for a healthy lifestyle. Patients have to visit dental hospitals to get the treatment. For providing good quality services, it is necessary to find out the strength and weakness of a dental hospital, the assessment of patient satisfaction is necessary. Present study was aimed to assess the patient satisfaction with the services provided by the Private Dental Hospital.

This was a cross-sectional study conducted among the dental patients of Baqai Dental Hospital. The study was carried out from October 2019 to January 2020. Informed written consent was taken from the participants. The Othman questionnaire was modified and distributed among the patients at the end of their dental treatment. Data were entered and analysed using SPSS version 22. Frequency and percentages were calculated.

The study found the majority of the dental patients were satisfied with the dentist-patient interaction as well as with the staff-patient interaction, and with the cost of the treatment. But the study also revealed that majority of dental patients were unsatisfied with the other services such as a toilet, drinking water, and long waiting time.

Therefore, evaluation surveys of patient satisfaction must be conducted regularly to improve the performance of the hospital and also for the quality care of the patients.

Key Words: Patient satisfaction, Private dental hospital, Services provided.

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INTRODUCTION

Oral health is a gateway to an individual's overall health and quality of life. A healthy oral cavity enables a person to be more confident while eating, speaking and to make social connections without any discomfort.¹ Patients are generally dependent on hospitals to treat their oral pathologies. Now a day's patients not only emphasize on the quality of treatment but are also looking for hassle-free services in a relaxed environment, be it a private clinic or a hospital setup.^{2,3,4} For the success of any hospital, patient feedback is consid-

ered as a key factor.⁵ Satisfaction is an emotional state which shows us about likes and dislikes carried out by a person.⁶ Patient satisfaction is the extent to which a patient is happy with their health care both inside and outside the dental hospital. To measure the quality of care, patient satisfaction gives health care providers insight into various aspects of medicines, including the effectiveness of care and level of their empathy.^{7,8,9}

Kamdar *et al* and Rajkumari *et al* wrote that patient satisfaction is based on five key factors: 1) Accessibility to medicine 2) Clean environment 3) Respect & behaviour of doctor and staff 4) Treatment charges 5) Infrastructure.^{10, 11}

To meet the standards of patient's expectations dental hospitals and specialists should provide the best quality of treatment along with services provided by the hospital.¹² The conflict between what patients want and what services patient receives results in an unsatisfactory response from the patients which will affect the hospital.⁴ Visits of dental patients will be affected due to the unsatisfactory services and behaviour from the hospital team that will bring bad name to the

¹ **For Correspondence:** Anum Mahmood, BDS, CHPE, Lecturer, Science of Dental Materials, Baqai Dental College, Baqai Medical University, Near Toll Plaza Karachi. Email: dr.anumahmed@gmail.com. Contact Number: 0321-2308662

² Adel Zia Siddiqui, BDS, MSc, CHPE, Professor, Science of Dental Materials.

³ Rida Shahid, BDS, House officer.

⁴ Irshadullah, BDS, House officer.

⁵ Naqeeb, BDS, House officer.

⁶ Zara Khan, BDS, Dental Practitioner, Dr Irfan's Institute of Clinical Orthodontics, Karachi.

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hospital.¹³

Over the past years, numerous health sectors have been taking initiative and a keen interest in this domain to improve their services and treatment strategies for the improvement of their hospitals due to rise in competitions and to facilitate their patient by using modern equipments, using new technologies by taking feedbacks from patients regarding how satisfied they are and what they expect from the hospitals, from doctors and the staff in order to improve and to provide modern health care facilities to every citizen.¹³

The main aim and objective to conduct this study was to assess the satisfaction of dental patients coming to Baqai Dental Hospital. Previously no study was conducted in Baqai Dental Hospital regarding the facilities provided, thus the main objective was to assess the satisfaction of patients with the hospital services provided by this private dental hospital.

METHODOLOGY

This was a cross-sectional study conducted among the dental patients of Baqai Dental Hospital. The study was carried out from October 2019 to January 2020. Informed written consent was taken from the participants before data collection and they were assured about the confidentiality of collected information from individuals. The questionnaire were distributed among the patients at the end of their dental treatment. Patients aged 18 years and above were included who understood the questions. Children, disabled patients and those who did not give the consent to participate were excluded from the study.

The questionnaire used in this study was based on Othman L.¹⁴ The questionnaire consisted of two sections. First section comprised of age, gender, occupation, marital and educational status. The second section comprised of doctor and staff behaviour, competency of treatment, treatment charges, and a clean environment. All the questions were designed in such a way that they were easy to follow and were understandable. Each item of the questionnaire was assessed by using 3 points Likert response scale where 1= satisfied, 2= neutral and 3= unsatisfied. The data were entered and analysed using SPSS version 22. Frequency and percentages were calculated.

RESULTS

A total of 390 patients participated in the study. Male were 230 (59%) and female were 160 (41%). The detailed demographic status of the study participants is shown in Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of the studied variables are shown in Table 2. The frequency and percentage of the unsatisfied variables are shown in Table 3.

DISCUSSION

This cross-sectional study was designed to measure the patient's satisfaction with the dental services received at Baqai Dental Hospital. The satisfaction of patients mostly is influenced by the quality of treatment and care provided along with the services received from the hospital.^{14, 15}

The satisfactory response is achieved when all needs of the patient are met exactly what the patient expects and unsatisfactory responses showed that the hospital needs to work according to the needs of what their patient demands.

Thus, this measurement of patient satisfaction is considered as a motivational and a positive tool to make necessary arrangements for the betterment of the hospital as well as for their patient.

Results of this study showed that 89% of the patients were satisfied with the behaviour of the dentist. For the success of the hospital, the behaviour of the dentists towards the patients should be friendly, so that the patient can communicate properly. Nowadays patients judge the doctor on his/her attitude and how he/she behaved and deal with the patients. This result is in accordance with the study of Mukhtar *et al* who showed 98% satisfaction with the dentist.¹⁷ Dentist and patient relationship is most valuable and vital

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC STATUS OF THE STUDY PARTICIPANTS

| Variables | Frequency | %age |
|--------------------|-----------|------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 230 | 59 |
| Female | 160 | 41 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Married | 259 | 66.4 |
| Unmarried | 127 | 32.6 |
| Divorced | 2 | 0.5 |
| Widowed | 2 | 0.5 |
| Educational Status | | |
| Uneducated | 157 | 40.3 |
| Primary | 90 | 23.1 |
| Matric | 76 | 19.5 |
| Intermediate | 40 | 10.3 |
| Graduation | 24 | 6.2 |
| Madrasa | 3 | 0.8 |
| Occupation | | |
| Employed | 163 | 41.8 |
| Unemployed | 227 | 58.2 |

TABLE 2: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE VARIABLES

| Variable | Mean \pm Std. |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Behaviour of the dentist | 1.16 \pm 0.481 |
| Dentist always listen's to the patient query | 1.14 \pm 0.465 |
| Explanation of the treatment by the dentist | 1.28 \pm 0.537 |
| Professionalism and competency in performing treatment | 1.26 \pm 0.625 |
| Dental treatment was not painful | 1.20 \pm 0.503 |
| Privacy of patient treatment | 1.13 \pm 0.413 |
| Professional and competent staff | 1.25 \pm 0.621 |
| Receptionist behaviour | 1.08 \pm 0.342 |
| Sterilization of instruments | 1.77 \pm 0.904 |
| Waiting time before dental treatment | 2.12 \pm 0.410 |
| Scheduling dates for next appointment for treatment | 1.65 \pm 0.519 |
| Long waiting time between appointments | 1.90 \pm 0.466 |
| Cost of the treatment | 1.26 \pm 0.479 |
| Cleanliness | 1.22 \pm 0.558 |
| Fans and lighting | 1.30 \pm 0.551 |
| Toilet facility | 2.05 \pm 0.377 |
| Drinking water facility | 1.98 \pm 0.456 |
| Availability of sufficient seats | 1.31 \pm 0.593 |
| Ease of finding dental OPDs | 1.08 \pm 0.353 |
| Comfortable waiting area | 1.13 \pm 0.457 |
| Availability of lifts | 1.03 \pm 0.188 |
| Parking facility | 2.07 \pm 0.375 |
| Feasibility of convince | 1.06 \pm 0.310 |
| Queue system | 1.99 \pm 0.433 |

for the success of satisfaction level. It has been seen and studied that the well-mannered attitude, showing sympathy and politeness nature of the dentist changes the overall health of the patient.^{10,13,17}

The dentist should always carefully listen to the patient whenever they have a query. This is an important aspect for building a trustful relationship among dentist and a patient. Present study reported 90% satisfactory response which is similar to a study conducted by Farah *et al* that showed 97% satisfaction level.¹⁸

Explanation of the dental treatment to the patient is an important aspect for the success of the procedure, for good quality care and the cooperation of the patient

TABLE 3: FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF THE MOST UNSATISFIED VARIABLES

| Variable | Frequency | %age |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Queue system | 317 | 81.3% |
| Availability of lifts | 382 | 97% |
| Feasibility of convenience | 372 | 95.4% |
| Long waiting time between the appointments | 302 | 77.4% |
| Scheduling dates for next appointment for treatment | 237 | 60.8% |
| Waiting time before dental treatment | 319 | 81.8% |
| Drinking water | 309 | 79.2% |
| Toilet facility | 334 | 85.6% |
| Parking facility | 333 | 85.4% |

towards the treatment given. In this study, 76.7% of patients were satisfied with the explanation given by the dentist. The similar satisfactory response of 70.2% was found in a study conducted by Abdul Rehman and 60.4% results were studied in a study by Naguib *et al*.^{19,20}

Professionalism and competency in performing dental treatment by the dentist are considered as a priority of patients in choosing the hospital and the doctor. Current study revealed 83.3% satisfaction and 88.5% satisfaction was observed in Nagappan and John study.²¹

Privacy of patient treatment shows an 89.7% satisfaction level that was quite satisfactory. 90.7% satisfaction was observed in a study done by Mahrous and Hifnawy.²²

Privacy and confidentiality of patient treatment is also an important factor for a trustful relationship between dentist and patient.²³

On asking the question from patients about professional and competent dental staff, this study revealed 84.4% satisfaction which showed less satisfaction when compared to Mahrous study which reported 96.3% satisfaction. But showed similar satisfaction response 85.8% by Farah *et al*.^{22,18}

Parking facilities for patients showed 85.4% unsatisfactory results. Another study showed 34.1% unsatisfactory response for parking.²¹

Fans and lightening found 74.6% satisfaction response in present study, while it was 97.3% satisfaction level in the study done by Farah *et al*.¹⁸

For the success and increase flow of patient towards the hospital and for building trust with the

patients, proper sterilization of the instruments, control of the infections and cleanliness is considered important. The current study found that 84.9% of the patients were satisfied with the cleanliness. In comparison to Abdul Rehman study, where 74% of the patients were satisfied by the cleanliness.¹⁹ Sterilization of the instruments in this study showed 55.1% satisfaction while study by Kamdar *et al* reported 65%.¹⁰

85.6% of patients of Baqai Dental Hospital were not satisfied about toilet facilities. A study conducted by Arvind also found unsatisfactory results 68% with the toilet facility.²⁴

In the present study, it was also found 79.2% of the respondents were not happy and unsatisfied about the availability of drinking water. 56% unsatisfactory response was studied in Arvind study.²⁴

The result of present study showed 81.8% patients were unhappy and marked unsatisfactory when asked about waiting time before dental treatment. Study by Al-Harajin *et al* showed 65.3% unsatisfactory results with concerns to long waiting time.²⁷

When patients were asked about scheduling of next treatment present study found patient felt difficulty and 60.8% were unsatisfied. Study by Nagappan and John showed that 31.9% patients were unsatisfied.²¹

Results showed that 75% of the patients found the cost of the treatment to be affordable. Similar results were seen in the study conducted by Kamdar *et al*.¹⁰ High treatment charges are considered as a factor that causes hindrance to the patient's seeking and choosing the hospital. Lower the cost of treatment more patients will be visiting the hospital.¹³

Unsatisfied patients 56% were found in response to the long waiting time between the appointments. This study also showed a 77% unsatisfactory response.²⁰

Current study revealed 76% satisfaction level when patients were asked about sufficient seats in the waiting area. And 51% response rate found in the study by Kamdar *et al*.¹⁰

In this study, it was observed that 81% of patients were not happy with the availability of drinking water. 56% unsatisfied response was found in the study conducted by Arvind.²⁴

In this present study when respondents were asked about ease of finding clinical OPDs, it was found that 94% of the patients were satisfied. In contrast to this study conducted by Arvind, 31.4%

of the respondents showed an unsatisfactory response.²⁴ And 85.4% of the satisfactory response was reported in the study by Nagappan and John.²¹

Current study reported that 84% were satisfied with the treatment performed by the dentist which was not painful. In the study by Nagesh¹² 77.3% satisfactory response was reported.

In this study when patients were asked about satisfaction, 95% were not satisfied. A study by Sanjeeva showed 75.3% response of dissatisfaction.²⁵

Present study showed 97% dissatisfaction on response to the availability of lifts in the hospital. Study by Nagappan and John revealed 70.1% patients were satisfied.²¹ Another source of dissatisfaction was faced by patients due to improper queue or patient calling system. Patients were called by their name in the waiting area, because of this some patients missed their name or came late for their turn. In this study, 81.3% of patients were found dissatisfied and similar dissatisfaction was observed in researches of Naaz²⁶ and Iqbal *et al*.³

The present study showed 91% satisfactory response of a comfortable waiting area. A study by Mukhtar *et al* showed 63% satisfaction level.¹⁷ In the current study, 93.8% of patients were satisfied with the receptionist behaviour which was 96% similar to the study done by Mukhtar *et al*.¹⁷

CONCLUSION

The conducted study revealed that the majority of the dental patients were satisfied with the dentist-patient interaction as well as with the staff-patient interaction, and with the cost of the treatment. But the study also revealed that the majority of dental patients were unsatisfied with other services such as toilet, drinking water, and long waiting time. Therefore, evaluation surveys of patient satisfaction must be taken regularly to improve the performance of the hospital and also for the quality care of the patients.

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CONTRIBUTIONS BY AUTHORS

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Anum Mahmood: | Concept and Design, Drafting Manuscript, Data Interpretation |
| 2 Adel Zia Siddiqui: | Critical Revision, Supervision |
| 3 Rida Shahid: | Data Collection, Data Entry |
| 4 Irshadullah: | Data Collection, Data Entry |
| 5 Naqeeb: | Data Collection, Data Entry |
| 6 Zara Khan: | Reference Collection |