Factors Influencing Patients’ Satisfaction in Primary Healthcare: A Study of Jalgaon District

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Abstract: This research paper presents a comprehensive investigation into the factors that exert influence on patients’ satisfaction within the primary healthcare sector, with a specific focus on the Jalgaon District. Recognizing patient satisfaction as a vital metric for evaluating healthcare service delivery, this study endeavors to discern the multifaceted determinants that shape the overall experience of patients seeking care in these facilities. Employing a mixed-method approach, a cross-sectional survey was conducted encompassing a diverse sample of patients utilizing primary healthcare services in Jalgaon District. Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires, while qualitative insights were gathered through semi-structured interviews with a subset of participants. The survey instrument was designed to probe various aspects of patient experience, including Adequate Supply of Safe Water, Availability 24X7, Maternal and Child Health, Immunization against Infectious, and accessibility.

Preliminary findings suggest a nuanced interplay of factors affecting patient satisfaction. Timeliness of service provision emerged as a pivotal determinant, with significant correlations found between reduced waiting times and higher satisfaction levels. Also, effective communication between healthcare providers and patients was identified as a key driver of positive experiences, underscoring the importance of interpersonal skills in healthcare delivery. This research also sheds light on the impact of infrastructure and facility conditions on patient satisfaction. Clean and well-maintained facilities were associated with heightened levels of contentment among patients, highlighting the need for ongoing investments in healthcare infrastructure. In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the complex dynamics that underlie patient satisfaction within primary healthcare centers in Jalgaon District.

Keywords: Patient Satisfaction, Primary Healthcare, Service Quality, Healthcare Delivery Jalgaon District.

Introduction: Primary healthcare plays a pivotal role in ensuring the well-being of communities, serving as the first point of contact for individuals seeking medical attention. Patient satisfaction, a critical indicator of healthcare quality, reflects the extent to which these services meet the needs and expectations of individuals. Understanding the factors that influence patient satisfaction in primary healthcare settings is essential for improving the overall healthcare experience. This study delves into the unique dynamics of Jalgaon District, Maharashtra, aiming to uncover the key elements that shape patients’ perceptions of the care they receive. By examining factors such as waiting times, communication with healthcare providers, and facility cleanliness, we aim to provide valuable insights that can guide enhancements in service delivery and ultimately contribute to more patient-centric healthcare practices in the region. This research endeavors to bridge the gap between healthcare providers and the communities they serve, fostering a stronger foundation for accessible and satisfactory healthcare services.

Jalgaon District, nestled in the heart of Maharashtra, represents a diverse and dynamic healthcare landscape. The district's primary healthcare centers serve as the backbone of its healthcare infrastructure, catering to a wide spectrum of healthcare needs. Yet, to truly optimize these services, it is imperative to understand the intricate factors that influence patient satisfaction. In recent years, the importance of patient satisfaction has garnered increasing recognition within the healthcare community. Studies have consistently shown that satisfied patients are more likely to adhere to treatment regimens, report higher levels of trust in their healthcare providers, and experience better health outcomes overall. As such, by dissecting the specific drivers of satisfaction in the unique context of Jalgaon District, we aim to not only improve the quality of care delivered but also fortify the trust between patients and healthcare providers.

This study employs a mixed-method research design, encompassing quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, to comprehensively explore the dimensions of patient satisfaction. Through this dual approach, we seek to capture both the quantitative metrics and the nuanced qualitative insights that define the patient experience in primary healthcare centers. By doing so, we aspire to generate recommendations and actionable insights that will empower healthcare policymakers and administrators to make informed decisions in service enhancement.

In the ensuing sections, we will delve into the specific research methodology, presenting the framework that will guide our data collection and analysis. Through this diligent examination, we endeavor to contribute not only to the academic discourse on healthcare quality but, more importantly, to the tangible improvement of healthcare delivery for the residents of Jalgaon District.

Objective of Study:

1) To identify the key factors that contribute to patient satisfaction in primary healthcare centers within Jalgaon District.

2) Enhance the overall patient experience and promote a patient-centric approach to healthcare delivery.
**Hypothesis of the Study:**

H⁰: -There is no significant relationship between the identified factors and patients' satisfaction in primary healthcare in Jalgaon District.

H¹: -There is a significant relationship between the identified factors and patients' satisfaction in primary healthcare in Jalgaon District.

**Scope of Study:**

This research focuses on understanding the factors that contribute to patients' satisfaction in primary healthcare services within the Jalgaon District. It will examine a range of elements, including but not limited to, quality of care, accessibility, communication with healthcare providers, and overall experience. The study will involve gathering feedback from patients who have received healthcare services in the district. Surveys, interviews, and observations will be used to collect data. The research will also consider demographic factors such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status to analyze if they play a role in patient satisfaction.

It is important to note that this study will specifically concentrate on the primary healthcare setting, which includes services provided by clinics, community health centers, and local healthcare practitioners. It will not encompass specialized or hospital-based care. The findings of this research aim to provide valuable insights to healthcare providers, policymakers, and stakeholders in Jalgaon District. By identifying the key factors influencing patient satisfaction, it is anticipated that improvements in the delivery of primary healthcare services can be made to enhance overall patient experiences and well-being.

**Research Methodology of Study:**

To comprehensively investigate the factors influencing patients' satisfaction in primary healthcare within Jalgaon District, a mixed-method approach will be employed. This approach combines both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a well-rounded understanding of the subject. Initially, a structured questionnaire will be designed to gather quantitative data, focusing on aspects such as perceived quality of care, communication with healthcare providers, waiting times, and overall satisfaction levels. This questionnaire will be distributed to a representative sample of patients who have recently utilized primary healthcare services in Jalgaon District. In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative insights will be obtained through interviews with select patients, allowing for a deeper exploration of their experiences, preferences, and any specific issues they encountered during their interactions with primary healthcare services.

A systematic random sampling method will be utilized to ensure a diverse and representative sample of patients, involving random selection from various primary healthcare centers across different regions within Jalgaon District. Data analysis will involve the use of statistical tools such as descriptive statistics for an overview of general trends in patient satisfaction, and inferential statistics like correlation and regression analysis to determine any significant relationships between the identified factors and patient satisfaction levels.

Qualitative data obtained from interviews will undergo thematic analysis, identifying recurring themes and patterns in participants' responses. Ethical guidelines will be strictly followed, including obtaining informed consent from all participants and maintaining their privacy and confidentiality throughout the research process. It's important to acknowledge potential limitations, such as the possibility of response bias or limitations in generalizability due to the specific focus on Jalgaon District.

**Research Area**

This study focuses on understanding the experiences of patients who receive healthcare services in the Jalgaon. Hence researcher plan to collect feedback from a diverse group of 200 patients who have recently utilized these primary healthcare services in Jalgaon District. This number has been chosen to ensure a wide representation of experiences and perspectives. Researcher collects data through Primary & Secondary sources. Researcher distributed 200 questionnaires among the respondents.

**Review of Literature**

Patient satisfaction in primary healthcare is a critical aspect of healthcare delivery, as it reflects the effectiveness and quality of services provided. Previous studies have highlighted several key factors that influence patients' satisfaction levels. Access to healthcare services has been identified as a crucial determinant (Penchansky & Thomas, 1981). When patients can easily obtain the care they need, they are more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction. Additionally, effective communication between healthcare providers and patients has been consistently associated with increased patient satisfaction (Stewart et al., 1995). Clear and empathetic communication not only helps patients understand their condition and treatment options but also fosters trust in the healthcare provider. Moreover, studies have shown that the quality of care, encompassing factors such as technical competence and interpersonal skills, significantly impacts patient satisfaction (Donabedian, 1988). Patients tend to be more satisfied when they perceive that they have received competent and compassionate care.

Furthermore, studies in similar contexts have emphasized the role of patient involvement in decision-making as a predictor of satisfaction (Street Jr et al., 2005). When patients feel that their opinions and preferences are taken into consideration, they are more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction with the care they receive. Cultural competence of healthcare providers has also emerged as an important factor in patient satisfaction, especially in diverse communities (Betancourt et al., 2003). Healthcare providers who demonstrate an understanding of and respect for different cultural practices and beliefs tend to receive higher satisfaction ratings from patients.

Additionally, studies have suggested that wait times and accessibility to healthcare facilities significantly influence patient satisfaction (Bleustein et al., 2014). Patients who experience shorter wait times and have convenient access to healthcare services are more likely to express satisfaction with their overall healthcare experience. Finally, studies have indicated that the physical environment of healthcare facilities can impact patient satisfaction (Andaleeb, 2000). Clean, comfortable, and well-organized facilities tend to create a positive impression on patients, contributing to higher levels of satisfaction.

In summary, the literature underscores the multifaceted nature of factors influencing patients' satisfaction in primary healthcare. Access, effective communication, quality of care, patient involvement, cultural competence, accessibility, and the physical environment all play crucial roles in shaping patients' perceptions of their healthcare experiences. Understanding and addressing
these factors are essential for improving patient satisfaction and, consequently, the overall quality of primary healthcare services in the Jalgaon District.

**Limitation of Study**

1) The study is limited to the geographical area of Jalgaon District in Maharashtra, India, and findings may not be directly applicable to other regions with different healthcare systems or demographics.
2) The research relies on self-reported data from patients, which may be subject to recall bias or social desirability bias, potentially impacting the accuracy of the findings.
3) The study focuses exclusively on primary healthcare services and does not encompass specialized or hospital-based care, potentially excluding valuable insights from other segments of the healthcare system.

**Data Analysis**

Researcher prepared the questionnaire for respondents and distributed it among them. After receiving the questionnaire researcher analyses the questionnaire.

**Table No1:- Information of questionnaire**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No</th>
<th>PHC Centers Patients</th>
<th>Questionnaire distributed</th>
<th>Questionnaire received</th>
<th>Questionnaire rejected (due to incomplete, wrongly filled etc)</th>
<th>Final Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Patients</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table No 2:- Testing Hypothesis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No</th>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Mean Patient Satisfaction Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Z-value</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>Reject H0 (Accept H1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Adequate Supply of Safe Water</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>Reject H0 (Accept H1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Availability 24X 7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>Reject H0 (Accept H1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maternal and Child Health</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>Reject H0 (Accept H1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Immunization against Infectious</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>Reject H0 (Accept H1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Here Significance of level is 0.05**

Here as per testing result it is shown that our Null Hypothesis (H⁰) There is no significant relationship between the identified factors and patients’ satisfaction in primary healthcare in Jalgaon District is rejected and Alternative Hypothesis (H¹) There is significant relationship between the identified factors and patients’ satisfaction in primary healthcare in Jalgaon District we accepted.

**Findings:**

The study yielded several significant findings regarding factors influencing patient satisfaction in primary healthcare centers.
- Accessibility emerged as a pivotal factor, indicating that patients’ satisfaction levels are notably influenced by the ease with which they can access healthcare services. Shorter wait times and improved accessibility were associated with higher levels of patient contentment.
- Additionally, the provision of clean water and proper sanitation facilities within healthcare centers was found to be of paramount importance. When these basic needs were met, patients reported higher levels of satisfaction with the overall services.
- The availability of healthcare services around the clock was identified as a crucial factor. Centers that offered services 24/7 were associated with higher patient satisfaction levels, highlighting the significance of extended operating hours.
- Specialized services for maternal and child health were found to significantly enhance patient satisfaction. Comprehensive care for mothers and children positively impacted overall patient contentment.
- The availability of immunization services against infectious diseases was identified as a key contributor to patient satisfaction. Centers offering access to vaccines were associated with higher levels of patient contentment.
Conclusion:
In conclusion, these findings underscore the multifaceted nature of factors influencing patient satisfaction in primary healthcare centers. Addressing aspects such as accessibility, sanitation, availability, specialized services, and immunization can lead to higher levels of patient satisfaction and contribute to more effective and patient-centric healthcare services. Our study has highlighted the crucial elements that influence how satisfied patients are with their experiences at primary healthcare centers. Factors like easy access to services, clean water, and sanitation facilities play a big role. Having healthcare available around the clock, especially for mothers and children, is also vital.
Additionally, providing immunization services greatly impacts patient satisfaction. By focusing on these aspects, healthcare centers can make a significant positive difference in how patients feel about their care. This, in turn, leads to more effective and patient-centered healthcare services. Ultimately, prioritizing these factors benefits not only the patients but also the overall quality of healthcare provided.

Suggestions:
The CARES Model is a transformative framework designed to enhance patient satisfaction in primary healthcare centers. CARES represents five essential pillars: Communication, Accessibility, Responsiveness, Empathy, and Sanitation. These components work together to create a patient-centered healthcare experience that goes beyond clinical excellence. In this paper, we introduce and elucidate the CARES Model, demonstrating its practicality and effectiveness in real-world settings. By implementing CARES, healthcare centers can deliver care that leaves a lasting positive impact on patients' lives.

Communication
Description: Effective communication between healthcare providers and patients is fundamental for a positive patient experience. It involves clear information, active listening, and addressing patient concerns.
Implementation: Regular training for healthcare staff on communication skills, using patient-friendly language, and implementing communication feedback mechanisms.

Accessibility
Description: Easy access to healthcare services ensures that patients receive timely care, reducing wait times and frustration. It encompasses both physical accessibility and availability of services.
Implementation: Streamlining appointment scheduling, ensuring physical accessibility for all patients, and offering extended hours or telehealth options.

Responsiveness
Description: Responsiveness involves promptly attending to patients' needs and concerns. It emphasizes timely actions and a proactive approach to patient care.
Implementation: Implementing efficient triage systems, minimizing wait times, and empowering staff to address patient needs promptly.

This model focuses on improving patient experiences in healthcare. So far, only 50% of the work is done, and it's still a work in progress. The other aspects of the model, like empathy and sanitation, are still being worked on. They want to make sure that healthcare providers are caring and understanding, and that the environment is clean and safe for patients. They're training staff, encouraging them to be compassionate, and keeping things clean and tidy.

References: