

**A Cross Sectional Study Among Patients Attending NEIAH Hospital OPD To Evaluate The Level of Satisfaction and Analyze The Factors Related**

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**Abstract**

**Background:** Patient satisfaction survey is a valuable tool to measure the services provided by the hospitals. Patient satisfaction is a key determinant of quality of health care and may draw attention from the health care providers, administrators, and health policy makers, in order to monitor the performance, understand patients’ needs, plan the further development of hospital services. Further, as a huge number of patients visit the Out Patient Department (OPD) for clinical services, this becomes a very crucial area of hospital services and the patient satisfaction to OPD services becomes the key determinant for the assessment of quality of patient care. Thus, there is a need to assess the patient satisfaction regarding the Out Patient department of a hospital.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study was carried out in 100 patients attending outpatient department of North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda and Homoeopathy, Shillong. The patients were selected randomly from different specialty departments. The study was conducted for 15 days. All patients were interviewed by using pre-structured questionnaires which included physical facilities, registration service, doctor services, nurses/attending

staff, laboratory staff services, expenses, pharmacy services and quality of services. The structured questionnaires included in this study had to be replied in choices of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree (based on Likert’s 5-point scale). Consent of each patient was taken verbally.

**Results:** A total of 100 OPD patients were included in the study. Majority of them were satisfied with the facilities available as well as the behavior of the doctors and other health staff. The overall satisfaction was noticed in maximum of the patients.

**Conclusion:** According to patient satisfaction survey, the study revealed that the degree of satisfaction was high with respect to physical facilities, registration services, doctor’s services, laboratory and expenses, pharmacy services. The healthcare delivery can be further improved by monitoring the delivery of quality care on ongoing basis.

**Keywords:** Health care services, Outpatient Department, Patient Satisfaction.

**Introduction**

Patient satisfaction is one of the important goals of any health system, but it is difficult to measure the

satisfaction of health systems as both clinical and nonclinical outcomes of care influence the customer satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> The healthcare services aim at improving the health status of the population. The scope of health care facilities varies from place to place and is influenced by local health problems, and available resources to provide these services.<sup>2</sup> Patient Satisfaction Survey is an important tool to get feedback from the people and is a means of measuring the effectiveness of health care delivery in a particular area, as it reveals the strengths and weaknesses regarding the services provided in the health sector.<sup>3</sup> Patient satisfaction is a multidimensional healthcare issue which is affected by the quality of patient care services and can be improved by using a multi-disciplinary approach that combines patient inputs as well as expert judgement.<sup>4</sup> Patient's perception about quality is critical to understand the relationship between quality of care and utilization of health services. All the hospitals provide same type of service but they might not provide the same quality of service.<sup>5</sup> The factors influencing patient satisfaction can be categorized as patient-related factors, medical personnel-related factors and system related factors<sup>6</sup>.

### **Background**

Patient satisfaction is considered as one of the important factors which determine the success of health care facility. Delivering services with good quality is the real challenge and just not getting with mere requirements. Thus, there is a need to assess the health care systems regarding patient satisfaction. Out Patient Department (OPD) is considered as the first point of contact of hospital with patients and hence it has significant influence on patient satisfaction level.<sup>10</sup>

Outpatient department in any hospital is considered to be the shop window of the hospital. <sup>5</sup> Patient's perception about the services is most important in assessing the

strategies to improve health care services in any hospital. Keeping in mind to study the patient's perception and the scope for improvement of health services, the present study was planned and conducted in North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda and Homoeopathy, Shillong. This is an autonomous institute under the Ministry of AYUSH, promoting the integration of different systems of medicine- Ayurveda and Homoeopathy.

The measurement of patient satisfaction is an important tool for research, administration, and planning and is the real testimony to the efficiency of the hospital administration.<sup>11</sup> Patient satisfaction is one of the most important parameters of quality and is indicator of how the patient has perceived qualitative aspects of care. Patient satisfaction can be defined as a combination of expectations, experiences, needs perceived, patient's subjective evaluation of their cognitive and emotional reactions as a result of the interaction between their expectations regarding ideal care. <sup>10</sup> Patient satisfaction surveys are helpful in monitoring hospital's quality of care with various services offered and also serves as a significant quality indicator.<sup>12</sup>

### **Aim and Objectives**

#### **Aim**

The aim of this study was to evaluate level of satisfaction among the patients attending the OPD after their interaction with the system in different phases of services such as registration services, department and doctors, availability of services, waiting time and cost provided for services.

#### **Objective**

##### **Primary**

- a) To evaluate the level of satisfactions among the patients attending NEIAH OPD

## Secondary

- a) To analyze different factors associated with patients' satisfaction
- b) To compare the influence of human centric factors with Facility centric factors and overall patients satisfaction in long course.

## Materials and Methods

### Setting and Study design

A cross-sectional study was carried out at North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda and Homoeopathy, Shillong. This is a centre for undergraduate and postgraduate AYUSH training and provides outpatient and inpatient consultations along with Panchakarma therapies and Physiotherapy.

### Sample size and data collection

The study was carried out in the month of January 2025. The study included all interested patients who gave informed consent and agreed to be part of the survey. A total of 100 patients, having age above 18 years were enrolled for the study. Patients working in the health care facility and patients with serious physical or mental pathologies, such as terminal disease were excluded from the study. The patients attending the various OPDs were selected for the interview by systemic random sampling at the pharmacy counter. Every 3<sup>rd</sup> patient was selected for the interview. A systematic random sampling technique was used to select respondents from outpatient departments.

## Result

### A. Physical Facilities

Table 1: (Q1) Waiting area is clean

Points	Frequency	Percent (%)
2	1	1.0
4	27	27.0
5	72	72.0
Total	100	100.0

## Study Tool/ Questionnaire

A predesigned and pretested Performa was used for data collection. Questionnaire comprised of various points which measure dimensions of patient satisfaction like- Physical facilities, Registration service, Doctor services, Nurses/ attending staff, Laboratory Staff Services, Expenses, Pharmacy services, Quality of services and overall satisfaction. Patients were asked to give ratings on Likert's 5 points Scale. The rating was done as following- 5= Strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3= Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1= Strongly disagree. Those who selected strongly agree, agree and neutral were considered satisfied and who chose strongly disagree and disagreed were considered dissatisfied. Patients were also asked if they had specific comments or suggestions regarding their encounter in the hospital.

### Tool Administration

On the day of the attending the OPD, after informing the patient about objectives of the study, the patient was interviewed by the intern and predesigned "outdoor patient feedback form" was filled up. After completion the form was signed by the intern and the patient.

### Statistical analysis

Data was entered in Microsoft Excel sheet and analyzed using the software SPSS version 17 and Open Epi version 2.3.

72% (n=100) patients strongly agree that the waiting area was clean, 27 percent agreed and only 1 percent disagreed to it.

Table 2: (Q2) Waiting area has enough sitting arrangement

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1.0
2	1	1.0
3	6	6.0
4	32	32.0
5	60	60.0
Total	100	100.0

60 percent (n=100) agreed that the waiting area has enough sitting arrangement, 32 percent agreed, 6 were neutral, 1 each disagreed and strongly disagreed.

Table 3: (Q3) Sign and direction boards were easy to follow

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1.0
3	4	4.0
4	32	32.0
5	63	63.0
Total	100	100.0

When asked about whether the Sign and direction boards were easy to follow, 63 percent people strongly agreed to it. 32 percent agreed, while 4 people were neutral and 1 strongly disagreed.

## **B. Registration Service**

Table 4: (Q4) Registration staff is friendly & helpful to you

Points	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	1	1.0
3	6	6.0
4	28	28.0
5	65	65.0
Total	100	100.0

65 percent replied that registration staff was friendly and helpful while 1 percent disagreed to it.

Table 5: (Q5) Registration Staff has good communication skill

Points	Frequency	Percent
2	1	1.0
3	3	3.0
4	37	37.0
5	59	59.0
Total	100	100.0

59 percent people strongly agreed that the registration staff has a good communication skill, 37 percent agreed and 1 percent disagreed to it.

### C. Doctor Services

Table 6: (Q6) You are satisfied with the examination you received

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1.0
3	3	3.0
4	32	32.0
5	64	64.0
Total	100	100.0

64 percent of the patients were strongly satisfied with the examination they received, 32 percent agreed, 3 were neutral while 1 disagreed.

Table 7: (Q7) Doctor explained to you about your illness/prognosis/time requires for treatment

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1.0
3	2	2.0
4	29	29.0
5	68	68.0
Total	100	100.0

68 percent patients strongly agreed and 29 percent agreed that doctor explained to them about your illness/prognosis/time requires for treatment. While 1 percent disagreed, 3 were neutral.

Table 8: (Q8) The doctor did your physical examination after taking you permission and with respect?

Points	Frequency	Percent
2	1	1.0
3	5	5.0
4	25	25.0
5	69	69.0
Total	100	100.0

When asked whether the doctor did their physical examination after taking their permission and with respect, 69 percent strongly agreed, 25 percent agreed, 5 were neutral and 1 strongly disagreed.

Table 9: (Q9) Do you believe the doctor gave you sufficient time

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1.0
3	4	4.0
4	24	24.0

5	71	71.0
Total	100	100.0

When asked about whether the doctor gave the patients sufficient time, 71 percent strongly agreed, 24 percent agreed, 4 were neutral and 1 strongly disagreed.

**D. Nurses/Attending Staff**

Table 10: (Q10) Hospital Nurses/ Staff treated the patients with respect

Points	Frequency	Percent
2	1	1.0
3	1	1.0
4	31	31.0
5	67	67.0
Total	100	100.0

67 percent strongly agreed and 31 percent agreed that the nursing staff/ attending staff treated them with respect. 1 was neutral while 1 disagreed.

Table 11: (Q11) Staff is friendly & helpful to you

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1.0
3	1	1.0
4	34	34.0
5	64	64.0
Total	100	100.0

Out of a sample of 100 patients, 64 percent strongly agreed, 34 percent agreed, 1 was neutral and 1 strongly disagreed that the staff was friendly and helpful to them.

**(E) Laboratory Staff Services**

Table 12: (Q12) People collecting samples/ doing procedures are friendly & helpful to you

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1.0
3	9	9.0
4	42	42.0
5	48	48.0
Total	100	100.0

When enquired about the laboratory services, 48 percent strongly agreed and 42 percent agreed that people collecting samples/ doing procedures were friendly & helpful to them, while 9 were neutral and 1 strongly disagreed.

Table 13: (Q13) Tests/ results received on time as told to you by the lab

Points	Frequency	Percent
2	1	1.0
3	12	12.0
4	38	38.0
5	49	49.0
Total	100	100.0

49 percent patients strongly agreed, 38 percent agreed that tests/ results received on time as told to them by the lab, while 1 percent strongly disagreed.

**(F) Expenses**

Table 14: (Q14) Expenses for routine lab tests were affordable?

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1.0
3	8	8.0
4	40	40.0
5	51	51.0
Total	100	100.0

51 percent patients strongly agreed, 40 percent agreed that expenses for routine lab tests were affordable, 8 were neutral, 1 percent strongly disagreed.

**(G) Pharmacy Services**

Table 15: (Q15) Waiting time for receiving medicine from OPD was not long?

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	2	2.0
2	8	8.0
3	16	16.0
4	38	38.0
5	36	36.0
Total	100	100.0

Regarding the pharmacy services, 36 strongly agreed, 38 agreed that waiting time for receiving medicine from OPD was not long. While there was variation of 16 percent being neutral, 8 disagreed and 2 strongly disagreed.

Table 16: (Q16) All of the prescribed drugs were available in pharmacy?

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	2	2.0
2	17	17.0
3	29	29.0

4	22	22.0
5	30	30.0
Total	100	100.0

Regarding availability of prescribed medications, 30 percent patients strongly agreed, 22 disagreed, 29 were neutral, 17 disagreed and 2 strongly disagreed.

Table: 17 (Q17) Pharmacist explained about the treatment clearly

Points	Frequency	Percent
2	3	3.0
3	8	8.0
4	39	39.0
5	50	50.0
Total	100	100.0

50 Percent patients strongly agreed and 39 agreed that pharmacist explained about the treatment clearly, while 8 were neutral and 3 disagreed.

Table 18: (Q18) Pharmacist is friendly & helpful to you

Points	Frequency	Percent
2	2	2.0
3	7	7.0
4	34	34.0
5	50	50.0
Total	100	100.0

54 percent patients strongly agreed, 37 percent agreed that pharmacist is friendly & helpful to them, 7 percent were neutral and 2 percent disagreed

**(H) Quality of Services**

Table 19: (Q19) You would recommend the services of this hospital to friends/relatives

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1.0
2	1	1.0
4	35	35.0
5	63	63.0
Total	100	100.0

63 percent of the patients strongly agreed and 35 agreed that they would recommend the services of this hospital to friends/relatives while 1 strongly disagreed and a disagreed.

Table 20: (Q20) In future, if you feel unwell, you will return to the hospital for services

Points	Frequency	Percent
2	2	2.0
3	3	3.0
4	32	32.0
5	63	63.0
Total	100	100.0

63 percent respondents agreed strongly and 32 percent agreed that in future, if they feel unwell, they will return to the hospital for services, 3 were neutral and 2 disagreed.

Table 21: (Q21) Overall Satisfaction

Points	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1.0
3	3	3.0
4	40	40.0
5	56	56.0
Total	100	100.0

Around 56 percent and 40 percent were strongly agreed and agreed to the overall satisfaction while 3 were neutral 1 strongly disagreed.

### Discussion

Patient satisfaction is considered as one of the important quality indicator at the healthcare institutes. Satisfaction is achieved when the patients' perception of the quality of care and services that they receive in healthcare setting meets their expectations. <sup>2</sup> Assessing satisfaction of patients is a simple and cost-effective way for the evaluation of health care services. However it is challenging to measure the satisfaction and proper response of the health care systems as not only the clinical but also the non-clinical outcomes of care do influence the patient satisfaction. <sup>10</sup> The present survey / study was an attempt to assess the levels of satisfaction of patients with OPD services.

The present study revealed that more than 95 percent patients were satisfied with the physical facilities of the hospital (Fig. 2,3,4) This included clean waiting area,

sitting arrangement on the waiting area and the signs and boards to guide them in the hospital.

The patients utilizing the OPD services have their first interaction with the hospital at OPD registration counters. The present study revealed that majority of the patients were satisfied with the services provided during registration process such as behavior and courtesy of the staff, information to their queries and the communication skills of the staff .(Fig 5,6)

Doctor's behavior has the greatest effect on the patient satisfaction. Good communication between the patients and the physicians is the single most important component of good medical practice, as it defines expectation and helps to establish trust between the clinician and patient.<sup>10</sup> In other words; bad communication between the doctor and the patient makes most patients dissatisfied. The present study revealed that most of the patients were satisfied by the services

rendered by the doctors (Fig. 7, 8, 9, 10). About 99 percent patients were satisfied with the doctor's behavior and courtesy. Equal percentage of patients was satisfied with regards to the privacy maintained by the doctor while examining and the information provided by the doctor regarding their illness. Good patient-doctor relationship is itself therapeutic and successful consultation with a trusted and respected consultant has the highest level of satisfaction.

A good number of the respondents were satisfied with the various components of nursing/ attending staff services like courtesy, behavior. (Fig. 11, 12) .Only 1 percent was not satisfied. Most of the patients were satisfied with the laboratory services and expenses. (Fig. 13,14 ,15)

The availability of the prescribed medicines along with the courteousness and communication skills of pharmacy staff has been key attributes towards patient's satisfaction. The present study showed that pharmacy services were considered to be satisfactory with reference to the waiting time for the medicines, availability of the medicines, communication skills of the pharmacists and the behavior of the pharmacists with the patients. (Fig. 16, 17, 18, 19)

The overall satisfaction of the patients received from the hospital came out to be 99 percent which includes referring the hospital to other patients and following up in the hospital in case required. (Fig. 20, 21, 22)

### **Conclusion**

The findings of the present study carried out for assessing satisfaction of OPD patients reveals that the patients were satisfied with the doctor-patient, doctor-staff relationships. Most of the patients were satisfied with the physical facilities, registration facilities, doctor services, attending staff and laboratory services, pharmacy services.

### **Limitations**

Despite of the relevance and applicability of the information obtained from this study, the study might be extended further to patients utilizing IPD services and emergency services also. The sample size for OPD patients might be increased depending upon the time availability.

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