

Book Chapter

Healthcare: How do Greek Outpatients Evaluate it? A Descriptive Study in a General Hospital of Athens

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Abstract

Introduction: Measuring patient satisfaction with health services in recent decades has been an important tool for assessing the quality of specific services.

Purpose: The investigation of the level of satisfaction of patients attending the Regular Outpatient Clinics of a General Hospital in the broader area of Athens.

Method: For the gathering of research data, a structured questionnaire with "closed" questions was used regarding the

patients' satisfaction with the reception - environment, speed of service, clinical and laboratory examinations, impressions from the medical care, impressions from the nursing care, the administrative services and the general service.

Results: The study included 36 men (57.1%) and 27 women (42.9%) with a mean age of 56.78 years. The majority of them were insured (79.4%), Greek citizens (90.5%) and high school graduates (36.5%). Also, most outpatients evaluated very satisfactorily the services provided by the Regular Outpatient Clinics of the Hospital.

Conclusions: The findings from the present research are significant and indicate that patients are very satisfied from different aspects of health care, which is the reception - environment, speed of service, clinical and laboratory tests, impressions of medical care, impressions of nursing care, administrative services and general service.

Keywords

Healthcare; Satisfaction; Outpatients

Introduction

According to Donabedian [1,2] the patients are valuable and necessary resource information in the effort evaluation of health services. The patient satisfaction is considered as therapeutic intervention while at the same time the measurement can be successfully used in personnel management, at decision-making, in evaluation organizational changes and promotion of health services [3].

The concept of patient satisfaction is not new. In reference to Bond and Thomas [4] in order to explain meeting the needs of patients from the nursing services, they argued that patients are satisfied when they have fulfilled their internal needs, such as need for in personal relationships, recognition and participation in decisions, while it is dissatisfied when the environmental factors and the facilities provided are not the suitable [5].

According to the literature, the patient's expectations directly affect the degree of satisfaction. Other factors that seem to play a role are the previous experiences, the information that come from doctors and nurses, as well as the development of illness which affects expectations the patients [1].

In every health intervention, the expectations of the patients should be identified with the expectations of health professionals. Evaluating and meeting patient expectations, a basic cooperation is achieved, which is a condition for the provision high quality care [4]. Moreover, the satisfied patients is more possible to cooperate and to accept medical treatment, having an active role in their treatment and to continue to trust medical care services. On the other side, it is pointed out that satisfaction of patients is considered of dubious benefit in facilitating its process medical treatment, as patients do not they have specialized clinical experience and perhaps are easily influenced by non-medical people factors.

The aim of the present study is to investigate the level of satisfaction of patients who come to the Regular Outpatient Clinics (OTCs) of a General Hospital. Despite the fact that similar studies have been conducted in the past, the number of such investigations related to the field of regular outpatient clinics is limited.

Method

The present study is cross-sectional and descriptive adopting a quantitative methodology. The sample consisted of 36 men (57.1%) and 27 women (42.9%) and was a convenience sample. The criteria for entering the research included the patient being > 18 years old, communicating in the Greek language and visiting the morning Regular Outpatient Clinics of the Hospital. An exclusion criterion was the existence of a serious psychiatric disorder. For the collection of research data, a structured questionnaire with 32 "closed" questions was used regarding patient satisfaction with the reception - environment, speed of service, clinical and laboratory tests, impressions of medical care, impressions of nursing care, administrative services and general service. It should be noted that the participants were informed about their anonymity and the confidentiality of their

responses and that they should answer honestly. The study was carried out in the months of May - June 2019. Qualitative variables were expressed as absolute (N) and relative frequencies (%) in each category of the variable, and quantitative variables were expressed as mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values. All data sets were tested for normality using the Kolmogorov - Smirnov normality test. All statistical analyzes were performed with the SPSS 25 statistical program.

Results

The sample consisted of 36 men (57.1%) and 27 women (42.9%) with a mean age of 56.78 years of life (± 17.88). In table 1, the demographic characteristics of the study patients are presented in detail. In the context of studying the reliability of the tool used to collect the research data, the Cronbach a index showed high reliability, reaching 0.895.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the study patients.

n	63	
gender		
(male) n (%)	36	57,1
(female)n (%)	27	42,9
education		
High school n (%)	23	36,5
Lyceum n (%)	23	36,5
University n (%)	17	27,0
age		
18-35 n (%)	10	15,9
36-50 n (%)	11	17,5
51-65 n (%)	22	34,9
>65 n (%)	20	31,7
nationality		
Greek n (%)	57	90,5
Another n (%)	6	9,5
existence of insurance		
Yes n (%)	50	79,4
No (%)	13	20,6

The following tables show in detail the patients' opinions (satisfaction degree) about the reception - environment, speed of service, clinical and laboratory tests, impressions of medical care, impressions of nursing care, administrative services and general service.

Table 2: Call service (information).

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	rather bad	1	1,6	1,6	3,2
	nor good or bad	6	9,5	9,5	12,7
	rather good	12	19,0	19,0	31,7
	very good	38	60,3	60,3	92,1
	don't know	5	7,9	7,9	100,0
Total		63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results in table 2, the majority of patients (38, 60.3%) rated the telephone service and information provision as very good, followed by 12 patients (19%) who rated it as fairly good.

Table 3: Reception staff behaviour.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	nor good or bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	rather good	6	9,5	9,5	11,1
	very good	56	88,9	88,9	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 3, the majority of patients (56, 88.9%) characterized the behavior of the reception staff at the hospital as very good, followed by 6 patients (9.5%) who rated it as quite good.

Table 4: Waiting time.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	rather bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	nor good or bad	6	9,5	9,5	11,1
	rather good	28	44,4	44,4	55,6
	very good	28	44,4	44,4	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 4, the majority of patients (28, 44.4%) characterized the time that elapsed until the appointment as very good. Also, 28 patients (44.4%) rated it as fairly good.

Table 5: Receiving directions.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	rather bad	2	3,2	3,2	4,8
	nor good or bad	5	7,9	7,9	12,7
	rather good	9	14,3	14,3	27,0
	very good	45	71,4	71,4	98,4
	don't know	1	1,6	1,6	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 5, the majority of patients (45, 71.4%) characterized the provision of instructions and information in the hospital as very good, followed by 9 patients (14.3%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 6: Signs for directions.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	rather bad	4	6,3	6,3	7,9
	nor good or bad	4	6,3	6,3	14,3
	rather good	22	34,9	34,9	49,2
	very good	30	47,6	47,6	96,8
	don't know	2	3,2	3,2	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 6, the majority of patients (30, 47.6%) characterized the signaling (presence of signs) within the hospital area as very good, followed by 22 patients (34.9%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 7: Cleaning & functioning impressions.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	nor good or bad	4	6,3	6,3	6,3
	rather good	17	27,0	27,0	33,3
	very good	42	66,7	66,7	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 7, the majority of patients (42, 66.7%) described the cleanliness and in general the operation of regular outpatient clinics as very good, followed by 17 patients (27.0%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 8: Availability of seats.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	rather bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	nor good or bad	2	3,2	3,2	4,8
	rather good	10	15,9	15,9	20,6
	very good	50	79,4	79,4	100,0
Total		63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 8, the majority of patients (50, 79.4%) characterized the availability of seats in the regular outpatient clinics as very good, followed by 10 patients (15.9%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 9: Room temperature.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	nor good or bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	rather good	9	14,3	14,3	15,9
	very good	53	84,1	84,1	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 9, the majority of patients (53, 84.1%) characterized the temperature in the regular outpatient clinics as very good, followed by 9 patients (14.3%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 10: Quietness.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	nor good or bad	3	4,8	4,8	4,8
	rather good	11	17,5	17,5	22,2
	very good	49	77,8	77,8	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 10, the majority of patients (49, 77.8%) characterized the quietness in the regular outpatient clinics as very good, followed by 11 patients (17.5%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 11: Clean WC.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	rather bad	2	3,2	3,2	3,2
	nor good or bad	7	11,1	11,1	14,3
	rather good	14	22,2	22,2	36,5
	very good	30	47,6	47,6	84,1
	don't know	10	15,9	15,9	100,0
Total		63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 11, the majority of patients (30, 47.6%) characterized the cleanliness of the toilets in the regular outpatient clinics as very good, followed by 14 patients (22.2%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 12: Accessibility for handicapped.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	nor good or bad	11	17,5	17,5	19,0
	rather good	12	19,0	19,0	38,1
	very good	20	31,7	31,7	69,8
	don't know	19	30,2	30,2	100,0
Total		63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 12, the majority of patients (20, 31.7%) characterized the accessibility of people with disabilities in regular outpatient clinics as very good, followed by 19 patients (30.2%) who did not know how to answer.

Table 13: Waiting time for appointment.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	nor good or bad	7	11,1	11,1	12,7
	rather good	19	30,2	30,2	42,9
	very good	35	55,6	55,6	98,4
	don't know	1	1,6	1,6	100,0
Total		63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 13, the majority of patients (35, 55.6%) described the waiting period at the regular outpatient clinics as very good until they were called for an examination by

the doctor, followed by 19 patients (30.2%) who rated it as quite good.

Table 14: Keeping of appointment.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	rather bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	nor good or bad	6	9,5	9,5	11,1
	rather good	18	28,6	28,6	39,7
	very good	37	58,7	58,7	98,4
	don't know	1	1,6	1,6	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 14, the majority of patients (37, 58.7%) expressed a very good impression of the fact that there was no cancellation of appointments by the hospital, followed by 18 patients (28.6%) who rated it as quite good.

Table 15: Waiting time for exams.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	nor good or bad	7	11,1	11,1	11,1
	rather good	16	25,4	25,4	36,5
	very good	31	49,2	49,2	85,7
	don't know	9	14,3	14,3	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 15, the majority of patients (31, 49.2%) rated the waiting period until the test results were issued as very good, followed by 16 patients (25.4%) who rated it as quite good.

Table 16: Quality of medical care.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	rather good	8	12,7	12,7	12,7
	very good	54	85,7	85,7	98,4
	don't know	1	1,6	1,6	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 16, the majority of patients (54, 85.7%) characterized the quality of the provided medical care as very good, followed by 8 patients (12.7%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 17: Full & comprehensible briefing.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	nor good or bad	2	3,2	3,2	3,2
	rather good	7	11,1	11,1	14,3
	very good	53	84,1	84,1	98,4
	don't know	1	1,6	1,6	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 17, the majority of patients (53, 84.1%) characterized the medical and psychological information provided to them as very good, followed by 7 patients (11.1%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 18: Quality of nursing care.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	rather good	14	22,2	22,2	22,2
	very good	48	76,2	76,2	98,4
	don't know	1	1,6	1,6	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 18, the majority of patients (48, 76.2%) characterized the quality of the provided nursing care as very good, followed by 14 patients (22.2%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 19: Administrative staff behaviour.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	rather bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	nor good or bad	2	3,2	3,2	4,8
	rather good	13	20,6	20,6	25,4
	very good	47	74,6	74,6	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 19, the majority of patients (47, 74.6%) characterized the behavior of the administrative staff as very good, followed by 13 patients (20.6%) who evaluated it as quite good.

Table 20: Waiting time for transaction.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	rather bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	nor good or bad	3	4,8	4,8	6,3
	rather good	13	20,6	20,6	27,0
	very good	46	73,0	73,0	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 20, the majority of patients (46, 73.0%) characterized the time spent on their transaction at the regular outpatient clinics as very good, followed by 13 patients (20.6%) who evaluated it as good enough.

Table 21: Staff behavior to the relatives.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	nor good or bad	3	4,8	4,8	4,8
	rather good	16	25,4	25,4	30,2
	very good	37	58,7	58,7	88,9
	don't know	7	11,1	11,1	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 21, the majority of patients (37, 58.7%) characterized the staff's behavior towards relatives/attendants as very good, followed by 16 patients (25.4%) who rated it as quite good.

Table 22: Confidentiality.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	nor good or bad	1	1,6	1,6	1,6
	rather good	8	12,7	12,7	14,3
	very good	54	85,7	85,7	100,0
	Total	63	100,0	100,0	

Based on the results of table 22, the majority of patients (54, 85.7%) rated the level of confidentiality as very good, followed by 8 patients (12.7%) who rated it as fairly good.

Discussion

The findings from the present research are significant and indicate that patients are very satisfied from different aspects of

health care, which is the reception - environment, speed of service, clinical and laboratory tests, impressions of medical care, impressions of nursing care, administrative services and general service. This finding is in full agreement with those of similar studies [6-10].

Regarding the limitations of the present research, it is noted that the results obtained from the said study can be further investigated in samples from other hospital contexts, private or even public, giving the possibility to control the variables under study, to compare the results, so that more general conclusions can be drawn. However, it should be noted that this study was conducted in only one hospital and therefore, because the sample is small, the results cannot be generalized.

Today, an increased interest is observed in measuring the results from medical and nursing actions and the degree patient satisfaction, as well as this is important for his speech result of health care, in definition of quality dimensions. The medical and nursing care play decisive role in its formation satisfaction of the patients from the health services and often judge her quality of hospitals family services from the quality of the services provided medical and nursing services. It is therefore necessary to develop tools measuring patient satisfaction from the health services and to publish the results so that benefit the patients, the health workers and the health system in general.

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