



RESEARCH ARTICLE

SATISFACTION LEVEL OF GENERAL POPULATION TOWARDS PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES; A CROSS SECTIONAL SURVEY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Background: Patient satisfaction is an important patient-centered health outcome. To date, no systematic review of the literature or patient satisfaction with physiotherapy services has been conducted.

Purpose: The purpose of the present study is to evaluate patient satisfaction with the physiotherapy services from various private clinics, public hospitals, rehabilitation centers and general population and also to identify the factors that affects patient satisfaction with physiotherapy services.

Limitation: One of the limitation of the study is that it is difficult to generalize the study findings to the regions at a large.

Conclusion: Patients are highly satisfied with the physiotherapy services across various cities of North India physical therapists can enhanced the quality of patient centered care by understanding and optimizing these determinates of patient satisfaction.

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INTRODUCTION

The year 2016 marks the completion of 64 years of Physiotherapy in India. Physiotherapy may be defined as 'A healthcare profession concerned with human function and movement and maximizing its potential. (Apurv Shimpi et al., 2014) Physical therapy is a field under rehabilitation sciences that has a pivotal role in maintaining health and overcoming impairments (musculoskeletal & neuromuscular). It involves the direct or indirect access of the patients for the therapy and the therapy session is based upon examination, evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis and plan of care for the patient. (Muhammad Naveed Babur et al., 2015) Physiotherapy is an essential part of health care delivery system (Olajide A. Olawale and Magdaline T. Adjabeng). With increases inmarket place competition, patient satisfaction has emerged as a variable of critical importance. (Thilini Tennakoon Piyanjali de Zoysa, 2014) Patient satisfaction is an attitude. Though it does not ensure that the patient will remain loyal to the doctor or the hospital, it is still a strong motivating factor. Patient satisfaction is only an indirect or a proxy indicator of the quality of doctor or hospital performance. Delivery of patient-focussed care requires that we provide care in a particular way, not just sometimes or usually, but always. It must be every patient every time. It is an ironic fact - the better you are, the

better you must become. Quality does not stand still. It should be linear and always ascending. One should strive to provide better care and soar above each and every patient's expectations. "A satisfied patient is a practice builder". Several dimensions have been suggested in studies on patient satisfaction with Physical therapy. These dimensions were classified as patient-therapist interaction, treatment efficacy, convenience, comfort, overall satisfaction, dissatisfaction, clinic location and costs treatment admission, logistics, overall satisfaction, courtesy and privacy, admission efficiency, time of consultation/waiting time and convenience. (Mendonça and Guerra, 2007) Other than patient- and Physiotherapist-related factors, patient satisfaction is also associated with the organization and infrastructure of the Physiotherapy treatment facility. Well-organized Physiotherapy care is a determinant of high patient satisfaction. (Thilini Tennakoon Piyanjali de Zoysa, 2014) Although Physiotherapy has a great role to play in the society, it seems to lack a clear identity with the public who demonstrate limited awareness and understanding of the scope of the profession's role and have difficulty differentiating it from alternate practitioners. Olajide A. Olawale and Magdaline T. Adjabeng) The department of health in Britain and in Australia has already accepted the Physiotherapists capability to handle the patient directly. (Apurv Shimpi et al., 2014) A quality care will lead to enhancement of the profession. Patient satisfaction will give an emphasis to quality improvement of health services and Physiotherapists profession as well.

Need of study

Patient satisfaction is an important patient focused indicator of the quality of patient care, such studies are limited to western countries. The measurement of such satisfaction in Indian setup is essential for improving services and would add to the scarce literature. This study will meet the gap between patient satisfaction and the therapist and will help to an extent to overcome it.

Aims and Objectives

To evaluate patient satisfaction with the Physiotherapy services from various private clinics, public hospitals and rehabilitation centers and to identify the factors that affects patient satisfaction with Physiotherapy treatment

Methodology

A total number of 500 subjects had participated in the study. The subjects were taken from private clinics, government hospitals, rehabilitation centers and general population from various cities of North India. This was a cross-sectional survey study.

Inclusion Criteria

Age: 18 to 75 year, Gender: Male and Female, Subjects who have received physiotherapy treatment in last two years
Subjects who can read and write.

Exclusion criteria

Patients suffering from hearing or visual impairment will be excluded

Procedure

The present survey was designed to identify the level of satisfaction in general population towards physiotherapy services from various cities of north India using the Medrisk instrument. 500 subjects were approached, out of which only 320 willingly participated in the study. The aims and objectives were explained to the subjects and informed consent was taken. They were explained that there is need to find out the factors that are affecting satisfaction of patient and their answers will help to find out the answers which are a big gap between patient satisfaction and therapist and will help to an extent to overcome it. The researcher first of all start collecting the data from convenient places and after that send the forms to participants of various cities through known contacts via email, and postal address. The places where researcher herself approached, filled the forms in front of the participant by seeking answers from them. Firstly participants were asked to answer about the Medrisk variables and then about the self-designed questions. Answers were filled by the researcher in the way what is told by the patient. Secondly the forms which are sent to the known contacts are filled by the known contact (therapist) in the way what the patient replied. The researcher is in contact with the known contacts by telephonic conversation as to explain the questions in the manner what she is getting filled by the patients. Medrisk Instrument-The MedRisk instrument developed by Paul Baettie *et al.* for measuring patient satisfaction in physical therapy care (MRPS) is relatively short length and reliable for clinical practice and

research related to patient satisfaction with care. The patient was asked to answer the questions 1-5. 1 was strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neutral, 4 agree and 5 strongly agree. For question number 1,3,5,11, and 12 patient can place the answer as not applicable. The scoring of the Medrisk was done by using 5 point likert scale. Response options 1 and 2 were combined to indicate a low level of satisfaction, 3 was used to indicate a moderate level of satisfaction and response options 4 and 5 were combined to indicate a high level of satisfaction. Total score was calculated as 100 (20 questions multiplied by 5) whereas the total number of score may vary according to the answers placed in regards of non-applicable. The 19th item in the Medrisk assessed the overall satisfaction with the physiotherapy services received. With regards to the study answers of the self-designed questions were asked and filled by the researcher to broadly identify the factors that are affecting the patient satisfaction.

Data Analysis

The data of the study was analysed by using SPSS version 14 software. Descriptive statistics was used to calculate mean value and standard deviation of demographic data. Out of 500 forms distributed, 320 questionnaires were returned. Out of 320 forms 50 were collected from Jammu, 50 were collected from Mathura, 75 were collected from Lalitpur, 100 were collected from Dehradun and 45 were collected from Delhi. The distribution of participants in the study are shown in Fig. 1.

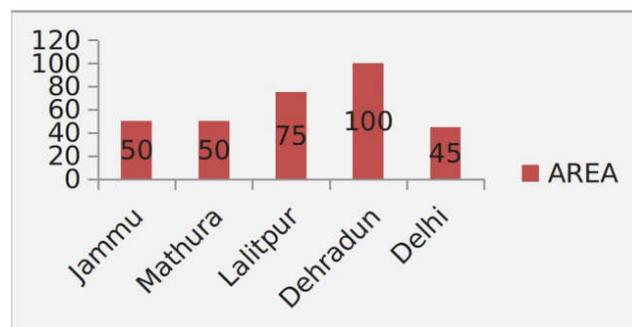


Fig.1. Total no. of participants

Among the respondents who participated in the study the percentage of males were 56.66% and 43.33% were females.

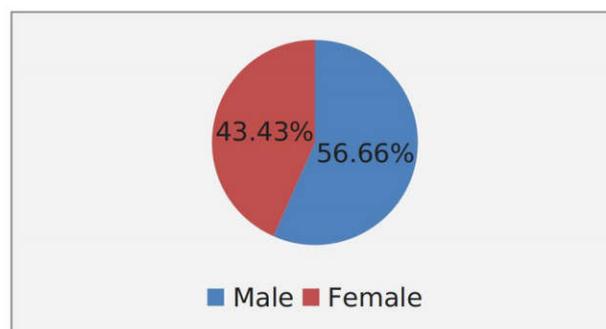


Fig.2. Percentage of Males Vs Females

Among the respondents who participated in the study 9.06% of the participants showed low level of satisfaction, 13.75% of the participants showed moderate level of satisfaction & 77.18% of the participants showed high level of satisfaction towards physiotherapy services.

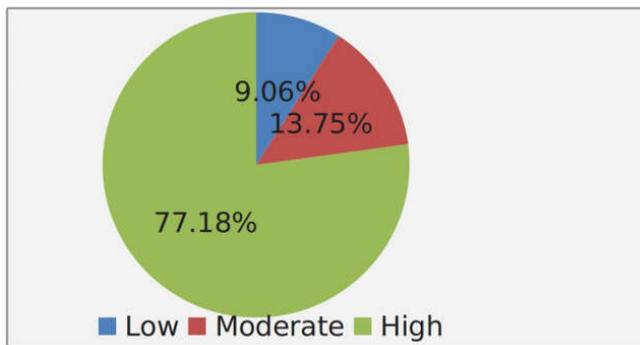


Fig.3. Overall level of satisfaction in participants

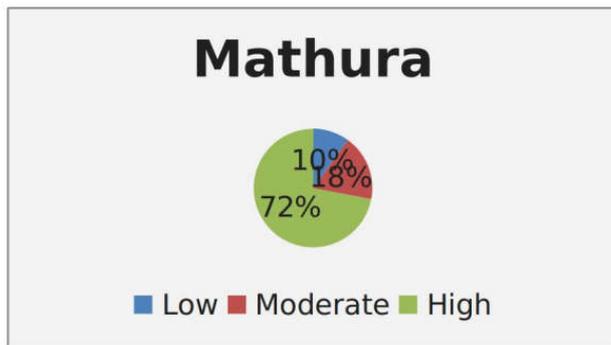


Fig.7. Overall level of satisfaction in Mathura

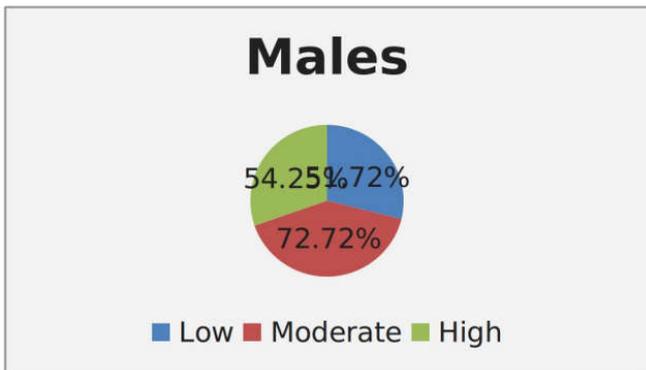


Fig.4. Overall level of satisfaction in Males

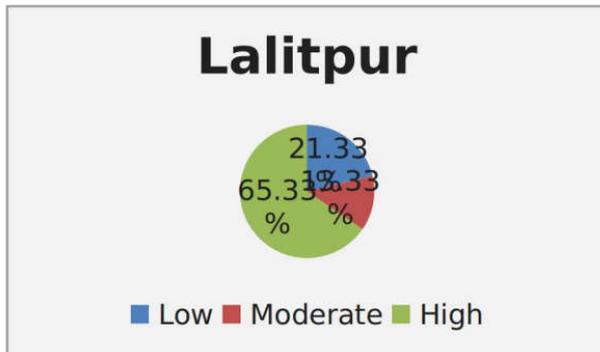


Fig.8. Overall level of satisfaction in Lalitpur

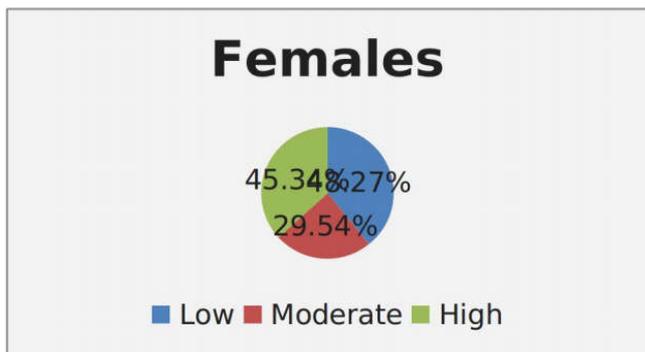


Fig.5. Overall level of satisfaction in Females

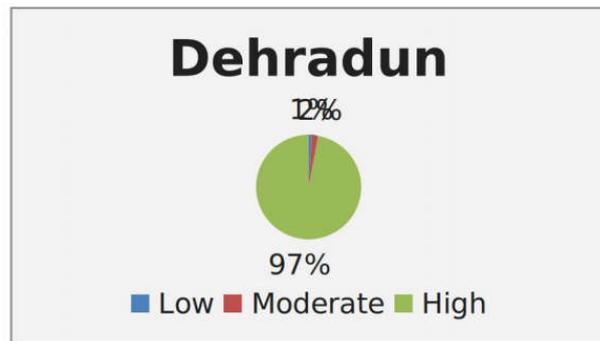


Fig.9. Overall level of satisfaction in Dehradun

Table 1. Satisfaction level of Males and Females (Low moderate High)

Level of Satisfaction	Males	Females
Low	51.72%	48.27%
Moderate	72.72%	29.54%
High	54.25%	45.34%

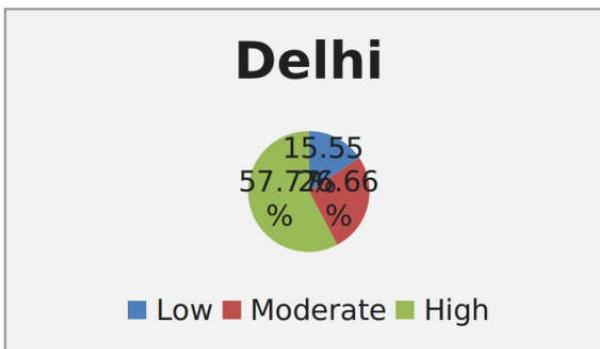


Fig.10. Overall level of satisfaction in Delhi

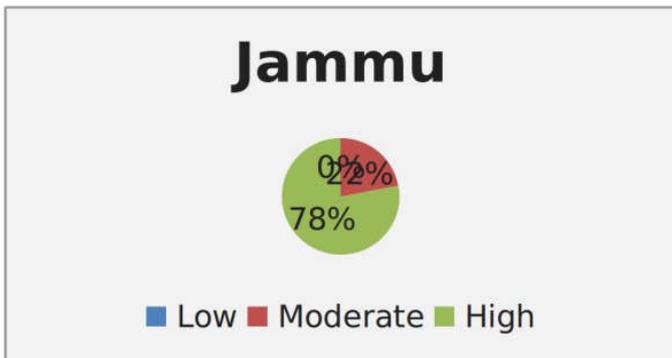


Fig.6. Overall level of satisfaction in Jammu

Table 2. Overall level of satisfaction in participants

Level of satisfaction-	Low	Moderate	High
Places			
Jammu	0%	22%	78%
Mathura	10	18	72
Lalitpur	21.33	13.33	65.33
Dehradun	1	2	97
Delhi	15.55	26.66	57.77

The purpose of the present study was an attempt to evaluate the patient satisfaction regarding the physiotherapy services from various cities of north India as the best area for sample collection with subjects being selected from private clinics, public hospitals, rehabilitation centers and general population and also to identify the associated factors that affects the patient satisfaction with physiotherapy treatment. The study indicated that overall 77.18% of patients were highly satisfied whereas 13.75% were moderately satisfied and 9.06% were having low level of satisfaction. Such a high level of satisfaction mean that the physiotherapy service is of good standered or that patient expectations of care are low. A healthy physiotherapist–patient relationship is a important component of a successful treatment programme. Several dimensions of the relationship were explored in the study. Treatment explanation also contributes to the physiotherapist patient relationship. In this study participants agreed that the physiotherapists explained with this explanation. This may expect that participants from various cities of north India do not expect much explanation regarding treatment. (Muhammad Naveed Babur *et al.*, 2015) Higher satisfaction is reported when the treatment process is more consultative. However, Cooper *et al* found some participants wanted less involvement in the decision-making process, considering the physical therapist as the “expert.” This finding highlights the need for physical therapists to assess each patient’s desire for involvement in decision making and tailor their approach accordingly. Well-organized physical therapy care is an also a determinant of high patient satisfaction. Multiple studies found that patients were more satisfied if the physical therapy service had easy access (location, parking, clinichours), helpful administrative staff, low waiting times, and premises of a high standard. However, compared with therapist and treatment components of care, organizational variables were weaker predictors of overall satisfaction with physical therapy care. Clearly, a high quality patient-therapist interaction is more important to patients than a convenient clinic with accessible parking. This conclusion is supported by other studies that evaluated the relative determinants of satisfaction with physical therapy care. (Julia M. Hush *et al.*, 2010) This study shed lights on the patient satisfaction with physiotherapy services in a private clinic, public hospital and general population from various cities of North India. (Apurv Shimpi *et al.*, 2014)

In addition to the current study, All-item self-designed questions was especially administered to the participants. Initially questions were asked about the number of days participants had taken treatment, health condition of the participant location of the problem etc. most questions explored further details of the dimensions of the Med Risk instrument for measuring patient satisfaction with physical therapy care such that more in depth information could be obtained. New dimensions such as how the participant learn about the facility, cost appropriate for treatment taken and reason for discontinuing the physiotherapy treatment were included to explore the study on a broad measure. According to the results obtained of self-designed questions, it has been shown that highly satisfied patients had undergone treatment twice in the last 2year. Majority of the patients were referred by physician and also learned about the physiotherapy practice through friends while some were informed by the former patients of the respective clinics etc. Maximum number of participants also reported that they took treatment for Musculoskeletal pain, In support of our results Sarah N Casserly et al. depicted high level of satisfaction with all components of physiotherapy

treatment provided valuable patient feedback regarding musculoskeletal pain. The participants also reported that their treatment included both manual and modality for their respective conditions. In our results it has been also noted that back was found to be the most common location of problem for which the majority of participants received the physiotherapy treatment. This survey also provided the information that the majority of subjects attending physiotherapy presented with LBA, shoulder & neck pain rather than foot, ankle, hip & knee and information of this nature may help to guide physiotherapists regarding advertising or continuing professional development priorities. (Thilini Tennakoon Piyanjali de Zoysa, 2014) In this study, maximum number of participants were highly satisfied in terms of privacy and concern towards them. A significant association was observed between physiotherapists listening to patients’ concerns and satisfaction with the service received. Being listened to by the physiotherapist is an acknowledgment to the patient that the physiotherapist is demonstrating concern. Majority of the participants agreed to the scheduled appointment of the clinic being convenient. As this may draw the attention of the participant at a greater extent that the therapist is punctual and dedicated towards his work which could add a key factor to the patient therapist relationship and quality of services. In our study, 15days was the maximum time for which the subjects had undergone the physiotherapy treatment which thereby proves that the quality of treatment and physiotherapy services are well established that in less period of time subjects are recovering very well which would add to a positive key point to the high level of satisfaction in subjects towards physiotherapy services. For majority of the population the treatment was cost effective, the results showed that the patients are satisfied with the billing services provided so that there is no need to be no improvement made regarding the cost appropriateness. Majority of the participants reasoned their good recovery for discontinuing the physiotherapy treatment.

This is the quality key component which adds a strong base that patients are getting a very good standered of physiotherapy services which are drawing their attention towards physiotherapy. Majority of the subjects reported that for sure they will recommend about the physiotherapy to their, family member, friends and known ones. At last patients were asked about their remarks about what could have done better in reference to identify the minor factor which couldn’t come in consideration which affected the level of satisfaction level in general population towards physiotherapy services. Majority of the participants said that cleanliness was not adequate, interiors were not well equipped (fans, cushions, treatment table, couches) and less manpower was also reported. In conclusion, the study measured the level of satisfaction with physiotherapy services. The study has provided a greater understanding and knowledge base for physiotherapy satisfaction issues, which should encourage the routine measurement of patient satisfaction by practitioners and researchers in different regions of India. This would suggest that patients had a positive outlook towards physiotherapy services and would encourage other people to enjoy the benefits of physiotherapy services. This study provides evidence based information that may be valuable to clinicians and educators in guiding their professional practice towards optimizing patient satisfaction and quality of care towards physiotherapy services. Overall a high level of satisfaction among the participants was reported. Patients are the bread runners of health care system so they have to be given highest priority for making the health care

system more efficient and effective. It is advisable to undertake a similar type of assessment of patient satisfaction should be ongoing process as this may help the hospitals to improve their services continuously.

Conclusion

Overall, a high level of satisfaction is reported as patients focused more on the outcome of treatment such an assessment should be ongoing process as this may help the hospitals to improve their services continuously. Patient satisfaction with physiotherapy treatment is an increasingly important patient centered outcome which is overlooked in healthcare research using non-validated instrument tools. The measurement for such satisfaction is essential for improving services and would add to the scarce worldwide literature on this subject.

Clinical significance

Our study established high level of satisfaction among the participants showing that the physiotherapy services met the expectations of the general population. This study also served us the learning tool to highlight staff training developmental needs of quality of care by therapists.

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