Original Article

PATIENT’S SATISFACTION IN PHYSICAL THERAPY OPD OF AL-NAFEE HOSPITAL ISLAMABAD
Muhammad Naveed Babur¹, Muhammad Junaid², Misha Ansari³, Muhammad Zubair⁴

Abstract
Background: Information regarding satisfaction of patients from treatment received at physiotherapy Out-patient department.

Objective: To examine the satisfaction level of patients receiving treatment at Physical therapy Out-patient department of Isra Institute of Rehabilitation, Farash Town, Islamabad.

Methods: Mizener, Ebbecke & Associates Physical Therapy Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire was used to measure patient satisfaction. It was distributed to 81 patients receiving treatment at Physical therapy Out-patient department of Al-Nafees Medical College and Hospital, Farash Town, Islamabad.

Results: Respondents' characteristics showed that more than half were female (54.9%, n = 45), male (43.9% n = 36) with a mean age (SD) of 39.1 years (16.1). When asked about patient satisfaction from the treatment received, (47.6%, n = 39) strongly agreed, (41.5%, n = 34) agree, (6.1%, n = 5) neither agree nor disagree, (3.7%, n = 3) disagree. Was therapist courteous, (75.6%, n = 62) strongly agreed, (22.0%, n = 12) agree and (1.2%, n = 1) disagreed. Overall quality satisfaction (46.3, n = 38) agree, (45.1%, n = 37) strongly agree and (7.3%, n = 6) neither agree nor disagree.

Conclusion: The treatment provided by expert therapist to patients at Physical therapy Out-patient department of Al-Nafees Medical College and Hospital, Farash Town, Islamabad is very effective as shown by the high satisfaction level of patients.

Keywords: Patient satisfaction, Physical therapy.

Introduction
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.

Recently as evidence based practice concept is prevailing, there has been a growing interest in the measurement of patient satisfaction in healthcare research, demonstrating a move towards patient centered care. Patient-centered health care is now the dominant paradigm in health service delivery. Patient satisfaction is generally regarded as an important component in quality health care. However, there has been little satisfaction research in physiotherapy compared with that in other clinical fields with few studies that have explored patients' perceptions and attitudes and satisfaction from physiotherapy.

Patient satisfaction surveys provide several benefits for healthcare professionals. They can be used to measure the success of delivering information¹, and to predict patient re-attendance and compliance with treatment²,³, which is particularly relevant in the management of problems where compliance with an 'exercise program and/or a 'medication regime' are common interventions. In literature there exists mixed opinions about satisfaction questionnaires and how they reflect the quality of health care but the consensus is that patient satisfaction is reflective of the patient's perception of the quality of the healthcare they receive⁴.

In Pakistan in physiotherapy no such surveys have been conducted previously. While the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP, UK) has included patient feedback questionnaires in their Core Standards of practice⁵, they have not provided any validated outcome to measure patient satisfaction with physiotherapy treatment and the majority of

1. Principal IIRS, Isra University Islamabad Campus
2. DPT Student 9th Semester, IIRS, Isra University Islamabad Campus
3. Lecturer, IIRS, Isra University Islamabad Campus.
4. Clinical Audiologist, PIRS, Isra University Islamabad.

Correspondence
Misha Ansari, Lecturer DPT, IIRS Isra University Islamabad
e-mail: ansari.misha@gmail.com

¹²³⁴
existing literature regarding patient satisfaction with physiotherapy is based on US populations, where differences in healthcare systems between there and Europe, specifically Ireland and the UK, make international comparisons difficult. Furthermore, in previous studies the measurement tools used for patient satisfaction mostly have unclear psychometric properties regarding validity and reliability. Although, no single methodology, for the measurement of satisfaction is recommended over another, most studies use self report questionnaires, which are less expensive, less time consuming, and have less potential bias towards false high scores than interviewer administered questionnaires.

In measuring patient satisfaction with physiotherapy, one must be clear regarding the parameter they wish to measure – 'patient satisfaction with physiotherapy treatment' or 'patient satisfaction with outcome', the current study wished to investigate the former. Both of these concepts are separate entities, independent of each other, and are influenced by different domains or factors. Hudak and Wright suggest that patient 'satisfaction with outcome' relates to the results of treatment, whereas 'satisfaction with care' reflects the service the patient received during the course of care. This separation is especially relevant for such patients who are satisfied with various treatment domains (i.e. direct access, appointment timings, and cost) but they may remain dissatisfied with their resultant ongoing symptoms. Furthermore modern approach is that 'patient satisfaction with physiotherapy' is a multidimensional rather than a uni-dimensional parameter.

Uni-dimensional measures of patient satisfaction obviously provide a quick and easy means of measuring patient satisfaction, but provide no information regarding which aspects of a service a patients may have been particularly satisfied or dissatisfied with and tend to provide high satisfaction levels that are likely to be false positives. Although no definitive set of dimensions or domains for 'patient satisfaction with physiotherapy treatment' exists, May recommends patient involvement in the definition of these domains to increase the construct validity of a questionnaire.

To study trends of satisfaction of the patients about the treatment they receive at Physiotherapy out-patient department (OPD) different studies have already been occurred in certain countries. Patient satisfaction surveys often report remarkably high levels of contentment or satisfaction with health services. For some components of care this may indeed be a valid reflection of patient views and not simply an artifact of survey design and conduct. However, it has long been acknowledged that the wording and presentation of questions may influence response. This study was conducted in physical therapy department (IIRS), Al-Nafees medical college, Isra university, Islamabad. It was conducted to see that either the patient coming to the physical therapy OPD is satisfied with the treatment provided, location of facility, prognosis or not. This study will show the lacking zones of the OPD and thus will help to modify the approach of PTs towards the patients in a better manner to improve the quality of health services being provided.

Materials and Methods

A cross sectional survey was conducted to know about the satisfaction rate of the patients about the physical therapy OPD of IIRS, ISRA University, Islamabad. The Study was carried out in Physical Therapy OPD (IIRS), Al Nafees medical college, Isra University, Islamabad for four months from October 2014 to January 2015. The study was conducted after approval from advanced study & research committee (ASRC) of Isra institute of rehabilitation sciences, Isra University Islamabad. The study was conducted according to the ethical guidelines of Helsinki declaration and Pakistan Medical research Council (PMRC). The consent of participation was taken from the patients included in the study. Mizener, Ebbecke & Associates Physical Therapy Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire was used as a questionnaire to measure patient satisfaction.

Instructions about the statements of the questionnaires were read to respondents and they were encouraged to ask any question regarding the ambiguity of the items. They were briefed about the purpose of the research, questionnaires were presented to them and asked to rate their responses against each item. Assurance was given that the provided information would be kept confidential and would only be used for research purpose. All the misunderstanding of the participants about the questionnaires was cleared after completions of
questionnaires. All the patients coming to physical therapy OPD who were willing to participate in the study were included by non probability convenient sampling. All the patients who were not willing to participate in the study were excluded. 81 patients’ data was collected through a standardized patient satisfaction questionnaire.

Following literature review, Mizener, Ebbecke & Associates Physical Therapy Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire was used as ‘patient satisfaction questionnaire‘. This questionnaire contains 34 positively and negatively worded statements that are scored using five-point Likert scales ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Socio-demographic section. This recorded patient and treatment details, and included a comment section to allow the respondent to give feedback on the physiotherapists and the physiotherapy clinics. Data was analyzed through SPSS version 17.

Results

Respondents' characteristics showed that more than half were female (54.9%, n = 45), male (43.9% n = 36) with a mean age (SD) of 39.1 years (16.1). The most common reasons for attending physiotherapy were lower back pain (29.3%, n = 24), or shoulder (15.9% n = 13), neck problems (13.4%, n = 11), others (24.4%, n=20), knee ( 9.8%, n = 8), foot ( 3.7%, n = 3), elbow ( 2.4%, n = 2). In relation to referral pathways, the majority of respondents (61.0%, n = 50) were referred by their physician, while (15.9%, n = 13) learnt about the relevant physiotherapy practice through friends, (11.0%, n =9) learnt through former patients of the clinic and (11.0%, n = 9) through other means. (Table 1)

When asked about patient satisfaction from the treatment received, (47.6%, n = 39) strongly agreed, (41.5%, n = 34) agree, (6.1%, n = 5) neither agree nor disagree, (3.7%, n = 3) disagree. Was therapist courteous, (75.6%, n = 62) strongly agreed, (22.0%, n = 12) agree and (1.2%, n = 1) disagreed. Physiotherapist understood your problem (46.3%, n = 38) agreed, (41.5%, n = 34) strongly agreed and (11.0%, n = 9) neither agree nor disagreed. Overall quality satisfaction (46.3, n = 38) agree, (45.1%, n = 37) strongly agree and (7.3%, n = 6) neither agree nor disagree. (Figure 1) Were bills accurate, (54.9%, n = 45) strongly agree, (34.1%, n = 28) agree, (7.3%, n = 6) neither agree nor disagree, (2.4%, n = 2) disagree. (Table 1)

![Figure 1: Overall Quality Satisfaction](image-url)
Table 1: Questions and responses of Satisfaction Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Strongly disagree n(%)</th>
<th>Disagree, n(%)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree, n(%)</th>
<th>Agree, n(%)</th>
<th>Strongly agree, n(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>satisfied with the treatment provided by my physical therapist</td>
<td>23.0% (n = 18)</td>
<td>6.1% (n = 5)</td>
<td>41.5% (n = 34)</td>
<td>47.6% (n = 39)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My physical therapist was courteous.</td>
<td>1.2% (n = 1)</td>
<td>14.0% (n = 9)</td>
<td>43.6% (n = 38)</td>
<td>41.5% (n = 34)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My physical therapist understood my problem or condition.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My bills were accurate.</td>
<td>2.4% (n = 2)</td>
<td>8.3% (n = 6)</td>
<td>34.1% (n = 28)</td>
<td>54.9% (n = 45)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructions my physical therapist gave me were helpful.</td>
<td>1.2% (n = 1)</td>
<td>6.2% (n = 5)</td>
<td>27.2% (n = 22)</td>
<td>39.5% (n = 32)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The location of the facility was convenient for me</td>
<td>3.7% (n = 3)</td>
<td>24.7% (n = 20)</td>
<td>4.9% (n = 4)</td>
<td>27.2% (n = 22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

This study has measured patient satisfaction with physiotherapy OPD of Al-Nafees Medical College and Hospital for the first time, using a validated physiotherapy-specific patient satisfaction questionnaire. The results demonstrate high levels of patient satisfaction with physiotherapy, but raise some concerns regarding the cost of private physiotherapy treatment. Studies of patient satisfaction with similar processes of care internationally have previously reported high levels of satisfaction, but lack of consistent methodologies or outcome measures impedes direct comparison. The respondent characteristics were consistent with previous unsolicited postal surveys of patient satisfaction with healthcare who recorded an average response rate of 50%, and with studies used to develop ‘patient satisfaction with physiotherapy’ questionnaires.

It has been reported that satisfied patients will return for treatment when the need arises, and will speak in favorable terms about the treatment and facility and will refer it to other people as it has been shown that the majority of patients learned about the physiotherapy practice through friends and former patients of the clinic and also majority were referred by the physician. This survey also provided information that the majority of patients attending physiotherapy presented with low back pain, shoulder and neck pain rather than foot, ankle and other problems and information of this nature may help to guide physiotherapists regarding advertising or continuing professional development (CPD) priorities.

Finally, the survey instrument also provided information regarding the cost of treatments and it showed that the patients are satisfied with the billing of the services provided so there need to be no improvement made regarding the billing of the services.

Conclusion

This survey has measured for the first time the levels of patient satisfaction with physiotherapy for patients in this setting, finding high satisfaction levels in the sample surveyed, and has showed that a good quality treatment is provided to patients by expert therapist. The study has provided a greater understanding and knowledge base for physiotherapy related satisfaction issues, which should encourage the routine measurement of patient satisfaction by practitioners and researchers in other areas, and has the potential to assist physiotherapists in making choices regarding continuing professional development and marketing strategies, in a manner that incorporates patient feedback.

Reference