The Level of Patient Satisfaction in Health Sector of Pakistan: A Systematic Review

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Abstract:
The Pakistan is not at the stage to achieving the desired health task. It is very important to make some policies and standard operating procedure for enlightening health sector. These policies should use for the long term welfares for the health sector not only for short term. There is really need to do some extra in health sector of Pakistan. Its responsibility of the government to take initiative for every domain of the health sector either private or government. This article detected six themes from the studies of 2003 to 2016 which are mainly affected to the patient satisfaction in Pakistan. Our systematic review stated that Hospital Service and Quality Services are the main factors who affect the level of patient satisfaction in Pakistan, the rest of the factors having low effects on the patient satisfaction in Pakistan. The main focus of the Pakistani is on the quality service and what types of services are providing by the hospitals to the patient.

Keywords: Health Sector, Level of Patient Satisfaction

Background:
The health sector has to face ignorance for few past years. The health issue is basically most important to develop a stable and healthy society. The health is also essential part of the policymaker with respect of health sector. In Pakistan there are two financial sources of the health sector government and public. The health sector is basically suffered from many issues like accesses of all the people toward the quality services.(settle, 2010). Since 1982 the private hospital is very important part of the health sector. This sector was the greatest sources of donations and funds in health sector. Total 58% of the expenditure was contributed by the private hospital but government sector contribute only 27%, as the private hospital contributed much than the government hospitals then its services also more than government.(Shehzade, 2003).

The population is increasing day by day in Pakistan. The Lahore is the 142nd city in the world with respect to the population. In 2014 the population of Lahore was 7.566 million("Pakistan Demographic Profile 2014," 2015). Although the health infrastructure of the Lahore is developed("Comprehensive Needs Assessment Refugee Affected and Hosting areaDistrict Lahore Punjab," 2014) The provision of healthcare to the increasing population, needs better planning, developing and proper strategies. There is also a requirement of adequate budget from the government side in the health sector. The service quality of the government hospital is not up to mark. The basic reason of low quality is mostly public hospitals are established in Punjab. The most people are living in villages, towns and backward areas. They avail the facilities from the small healthcare units and dispensaries. But when they got severe sickness, they rush to the public hospitals. Therefore public hospitals have a lot of patient’s burden, because of this, it is difficulties for the management to handle the patient(S.M.Irfan, 2012). The frustration created due to the burden of patients and not the availability of required equipment in the public hospitals. The people had to go private hospitals when they did not get proper attention from the public hospitals.(Dr. Arab Naz, 2012).

The Patients are the strength of the hospitals while satisfaction of the patient is not a new subject for the health sector. The patients are those people who are treated and mainly affected by the hospitals. There are not clear confines of patient care and treatment, because in the modern age there are new ways of treatment as well as new type of diseases. But there is the difference between precaution and treatment in patient’s perception and patient want to care for them (Muhammad Ismail Alvi, 2012). Patient satisfaction can also be defined as to evaluate the emotions and feedbacks of the patient with the special care of nursing.(Erikson, 1987). The importance of patient satisfaction is like the other clinical health parameters of the patient. This helps to
measure the status of the health care delivery system. It is necessary for the health sectors to give patient satisfaction for continuing the share in the market(Powell, 2001).

It is very difficult for the developing countries to be focused on the quality service due to low income, which is not sufficient for fulfilling basic needs of life. There are no proper arrangements to manage the increasing population in the hospital. The public hospital has sufficient resources, but nobody knows how to manage it. The staff of the public hospital is not having the clear job description. The participative style of management should use for taking the point of views of all stakeholders. The hospital structure has the positive impact on the quality health services.(Dr. Ali Sajad, 2008).

The quality care is not limited on that care which is given by the physician but it includes every service given to the patient. It is necessary to the executive of the healthcare to ensure that patient must treated with rigorous care. Thus, the hospital tried to give patient-focused care.(C.Grant, 2012). As health sector is mostly dependent on the people because all procedures and operations do by the human being. The patient required basically a good communication, emphatic behavior, attention and respect from the side of doctors and nurses. The patient wants not only medical care but he / she required caring behavior also from the hospital staff. The patient satisfaction is based on the behavior and care of the well trained staff, nurses, doctors and paramedical staff (Grant, 2012) because communication is the important factor in care of the patient. (L.M.L.Ong, 1995) The quality of health services is also really important for the care of people. The mentality of perceiving quality of different people is varying, for make sure the quality standard there must be priorities of the sectors(Agha Molaei T., 2007). All government and private healthcare institutions are suffering in problem due to high cost of treatment and diagnostics of the patient. That’s why the quality is most important factor to attain the satisfaction of the patient. The Total Quality Management System and Critical Success Factor are the better parameters to achieve the desired healthcare services(S.M. Irfan, 2014). But there is no commission who provides grants to the hospitals particularly for improving the quality services in Pakistan. The management information system is not up to mark. The quality can be improved by the top management through proper guidelines and policies. There must be some policies and procedure and complete authority to the top management for the implementation of these policies. It is also good for healthcare services to create the competitive environment in market(Dr. Gohar Wajid, 2002).

Methodology:
The systematic review is used for this research. The reason for selecting the systematic review is reducing biasness and probability affect from the study, the authenticity of the previous studies can also be described, and the findings are based on the scientific method of these studies(Hunt, 2002). This systematic review has used to identify and sum up all factors affecting the patient satisfaction in the health sector of Pakistan.

Different keywords have been used to search the article. These words are “Patient Satisfaction” “Private Hospital,” “Public Hospital,” “Health sector” and “Satisfaction Level in Pakistan.” The different database was used to search the research papers on patient satisfaction like “Google scholar,” “PubMed, Medline,” “and Science Direct” and others. Only those article was used which are in English. The articles which are selected for this study are from 2003 to 2016. A snowball process was used to search the article for making more accurate and rigid the study. This helped to search the studies from the references list of the articles to reach the exact phenomena. The study selection was based on the title of research article and abstract. The articles which are clear with the purpose are selected for the whole study and decide to involve in the study.(Mischa Willis-Shattuck, 2008).

The inclusion Criteria:
That article which having the factors and determinates of patient satisfaction in hospitals of Pakistan are used. Only those article has been used which are in Pakistan. The studies conducted in 2003 to 2016 have been taken.
Exclusion Criteria:

Those articles are eliminated from the studies which are based on the clinical perceptive, e.g., Diabetic patient, Obs/Gynae patient or any others. The articles other than 2003 to 2016 also excluded from the study. The articles are not including which are other than Pakistan. Furthermore, the books and research reports are not included in this study only research articles have included (Abir S. Al-Harrasi, 2014).

Table-1 Major Theme

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<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Quality Care/services</th>
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<th>Staff Attitude</th>
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Quality Care
The Quality of care and the dimension of the quality are strongly affected in the 60% of the studies. As Raja Irfan Sabir defined his study contained on the comparative analysis of combined military hospitals, private hospitals and public hospitals in Pakistan. He concluded that combined military hospitals and private hospitals are much better in patient satisfaction level as compare to public hospitals. The people showed their concern about public hospital’s facilities. The satisfaction level of the patients for doctors and staff nurses is very low. Furthermore, for increasing the effectiveness of the public hospitals Total Quality Management is necessary to handle the bulk of patient in available resources. It also helps to attain desired results from the public hospitals. (S.M Irfan, 2012).

Hospital Services:
There are 60% of the studies discussed about the Hospital Services. It was also mentioned in above mentioned articles that Hospital Services are very much important for the satisfaction of the patient. According to the Ahmad Rizwan Raheem (2014), most people are satisfied in private hospitals of Karachi. Many services of the hospital are being satisfied for the patient. But there are some hospital services which required more attention to improve their quality. The tertiary care hospitals also have high satisfaction in Lahore. The consultants of these hospitals are very kind and affectionate with patients. The patients were more willing to come back these hospitals for checkup. (Dr. Fatima Mukhtar, Dr. Aslam Bajwa, Shahzan, Shahzad, Shahzeb Hamid, Zahara Masood, Ramsha Mustafa, 2013). Syeda Shuja Qadri, 2012 state that as per the feedbacks of the patients and their attendant regarding different defects and shortcoming of the hospital can be improved by the hospital administration. It will also give the benefit in term of patient satisfaction (Syeda Shuja Qadri, 2012).

Cost:
Only 20% of the studies discussed the factor of cost regarding patient satisfaction in Pakistan. People have better experiences in private hospitals, but they cannot afford the expenses of private hospitals. Author directed
to every type of management either private or public for taking initiatives for improving their services for the patient. (Raja Irfan Sabir, 2014)

**Demographics:**
The 16% studies have been conducted on the demographics and support of this factor for the satisfaction of the patient. A study presented by the Muhammad Afzal, 2011 of the outdoor patient. He made analysis according to demographics of the patients. He showed the overall patient satisfaction level is 61% in participants. Further, he studied the age wise satisfaction among the patients. He concluded that elder patients are more satisfied than youngsters. He also added that lower income people are more satisfied than higher income.

**Hospital Staff:**
The 40% of the studies have been discussing the staff as hospital staff is a most important factor in the health sector of Pakistan. Physician services, nurse’s services, and other staff have affected the level of patient satisfaction. (Qidwai, 2003)

**Staff Attitude:**
A comparative study has been conducted in Pakistan for the service quality of public and private hospitals. This indicates that patient satisfaction is significantly differing in public and private hospitals. Every dimension of the service needs to be improved for achieving the better quality service. The empathetic behavior and given attention to the patient cause of high level of satisfaction of the patient. Patients prefer these hospitals again when they fall into some problem regarding their health (Muhammad Nawaz, 2016).

**Discussion:**
The health sector has to face many problems in Pakistan. The ambiguous economic situations are followed by the external debt. A “Devolution Plan” has been stared which helped in many sectors of Pakistan. It is also important to make a partnership of private and public hospitals for sharing the cost of health. There should also be a system which represents the gender recognition and gives a chance for appropriate decision making in a different program (Islam, 2000).

Pakistan is not at the stage to achieve the desired health task. It is very important to make some policies and standard operating procedure for the enlightening health sector. These policies should use for the long term welfares not only for short term. There is really need to do some extra in the health sector of Pakistan. Its responsibility of the government to take the initiative for every domain of the health sector either private or government(Uzma Afzal, 2013). The rural areas are far from the facilities of the health sector. They really need the secondary unit care in their villages. There is no proper availability of doctors and medicine(Mujib-ur-Rehman, 2007).

**Conclusion:**
The quality services of the private healthcare provider may also doubtful due to serving the large portion of the patient with multiple services like 24 hour services, no waiting, easily accessibility and many others facilities. The behavior is an important part for the patients who require a good health with positive attitude. Due to dissatisfaction from the public healthcare patients visits many hospitals for checking services of the different hospitals. Even people has been forced to go the secondary hospital in case of little disease or illness. It is necessary to see the level of patient satisfaction in the private hospitals. The patient satisfaction is the understood components of the evaluation of the performance of the hospitals.(Sheikh, 2005). It is also important to make policies and procedures for the health sector. There is also need the hierarchy of the health sector to decentralization. Because Pakistan is providing an opportunity to reduces the different problem. (Babar Sheikh, 2007). The Hospital services and quality of care are very important factors in the health sector regarding patient satisfaction in Pakistan.

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