Original Article

Assessment of Satisfaction Levels of Patients Availing Dental Services at a Private Dental Institution in Bareilly: A Cross-sectional Survey

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ABSTRACT

Background: Patient satisfaction is an important indicator of the quality of healthcare services and reflects patients' perceptions regarding treatment, communication, staff behavior, infection control, and overall dental care. Assessing patient satisfaction helps identify areas requiring improvement and enhances the quality of patient-centered dental services. **Materials and Method:** A cross-sectional questionnaire-based observational study was conducted among 111 patients attending the Department of Public Health Dentistry, Institute of Dental Sciences, Bareilly. A structured Dental Treatment Satisfaction Questionnaire consisting of 14 items was used to assess various domains of patient satisfaction using a five-point Likert scale. Data were collected after obtaining informed consent and analyzed using SPSS version 29.0. Descriptive statistics along with Student's t-test and ANCOVA were applied, and a p-value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant. **Results:** The majority of participants expressed high levels of satisfaction with treatment explanation, dentist competence, respectful behavior, staff interaction, infection control measures, treatment quality, and overall dental services. Comparatively lower satisfaction was observed regarding treatment duration and waiting time. The findings indicate that the institution provides quality patient-centered dental care while highlighting the need for further improvements in appointment scheduling and patient flow management.

Key words: Patient satisfaction, Dental services, Public Health Dentistry, Cross-sectional survey, Quality of care, Bareilly

INTRODUCTION

Patient satisfaction is considered one of the most important indicators of the quality of healthcare services. In dentistry, patient satisfaction reflects the extent to which dental care services fulfill patients' expectations, needs, and perceived standards of treatment. Over recent decades, healthcare delivery has shifted from a provider-centered model to a patient-centered approach, making patient satisfaction a crucial component in evaluating healthcare quality.[1]

Patient satisfaction influences treatment compliance, follow-up visits, patient retention, and overall treatment outcomes. Studies have shown that dissatisfaction with healthcare services may lead to poor compliance with treatment instructions, delayed healthcare seeking behavior, and reduced trust in healthcare professionals. Therefore, assessing patient satisfaction is essential for improving the effectiveness and quality of healthcare delivery systems.[2]

In dental practice, factors such as communication skills of the dentist, professional competence, staff behavior, waiting time, clinic cleanliness, infection control measures, and treatment outcomes significantly affect patient satisfaction. Regular assessment of these factors helps dental institutions identify deficiencies in service delivery and improve patient-centered care.[3]

Private dental institutions especially need continuous evaluation of patient experiences to maintain high-quality services and improve institutional reputation.[4]

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Therefore, the present study was conducted to assess the satisfaction levels of patients availing dental services at the Department of Public Health Dentistry, Institute of Dental Sciences, Bareilly.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design: A cross-sectional questionnaire-based observational study was conducted.

Study Setting: The study was carried out in the Department of Public Health Dentistry, Institute of Dental Sciences, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, India.

Study Duration: The duration of the study was three months from January 2026 to March 2026.

Study Population: Patients visiting the Public Health Dentistry Outpatient Department (OPD) for dental treatment were included in the study.

Sample Size: The sample size was calculated using G*Power Version 3.1 software based on the study conducted by Rao et al. The estimated sample size was 111 participants.

Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling method was used.

Inclusion Criteria

- Patients aged 18 years and above.
- Patients receiving dental treatment in the OPD.
- Patients willing to participate in the study.

Exclusion Criteria

- Patients with cognitive or medical conditions preventing questionnaire completion
- Emergency patients experiencing severe pain or distress.

Data Collection Procedure

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Ethical Committee prior to commencement of the study. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants.A structured Dental Treatment Satisfaction Questionnaire consisting of 14 questions was administered to participants. The questionnaire assessed different domains including:

- Communication and treatment explanation
- Dentist competence and behavior
- Staff interaction
- Infection control measures
- Treatment quality
- Overall patient satisfaction

Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

Statistical Analysis

Data were entered into Microsoft Excel and analyzed using SPSS version 29.0.

- Frequencies and percentages were calculated for categorical variables.
- Mean and standard deviation were calculated for quantitative variables.
- Student's t-test and ANCOVA were used for inferential statistics.
- A p-value <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

A total of 111 participants participated in the study.

The majority of patients reported positive experiences regarding dental treatment and overall service quality.

- 42% of participants were strongly satisfied with the treatment received.
- 36% were satisfied with the services provided.
- 12% showed neutral responses.
- 7% were dissatisfied.
- 3% were strongly dissatisfied.

Most participants reported that:

- The treatment procedures were adequately explained.
- Dentists demonstrated professional competence and respectful behavior.
- Staff interactions were satisfactory.
- Infection control measures were adequate.
- Post-treatment instructions were clearly explained.

Table1: Satisfaction level of the patients

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Treatment plan explained	40.5%	38.7%	11.7%	6.3%	2.7%
Opportunity to ask questions	37.8%	38.7%	13.5%	7.2%	2.7%
Consent before procedure	36.0%	37.8%	15.3%	7.2%	2.7%
Dentist competence	45.0%	36.9%	9.9%	5.4%	2.7%
Doctor knowledge satisfactory	41.4%	36.0%	12.6%	7.2%	2.7%
Respectful behavior	44.1%	36.9%	10.8%	5.4%	2.7%
Communication caring	43.2%	36.9%	11.7%	5.4%	2.7%
Staff Interaction	39.6%	37.8%	13.5%	6.3%	2.7%
Personal needs addressed	38.7%	36.9%	15.3%	6.3%	2.7%
Infection control	45.0%	36.9%	9.9%	5.4%	2.7%
Treatment quality	46.8%	37.8%	8.1%	4.5%	2.7%
Treatment time	36.0%	38.7%	16.2%	6.3%	2.7%
Post-treatment instructions	41.4%	36.9%	12.6%	6.3%	2.7%
Overall satisfaction	42.3%	36.0%	11.7%	7.2%	2.7%

DISCUSSION

The present study assessed the satisfaction levels of patients receiving dental treatment at the Department of Public Health Dentistry, Institute of Dental Sciences, Bareilly. The findings revealed that the majority of participants expressed positive perceptions regarding the various aspects of dental care evaluated in the study, indicating an overall high level of satisfaction with the services provided. Most respondents reported that their treatment plans were clearly explained, they were given adequate opportunities to ask questions, and informed consent was obtained before procedures were performed. These findings suggest that effective communication and patient involvement were well maintained within the institution. Clear communication is essential in dental practice as it helps patients understand their treatment, reduces anxiety, and promotes trust in healthcare professionals. Similarly, a large proportion of participants perceived the dentists as professionally competent and knowledgeable, indicating confidence in the clinical abilities of the healthcare providers.[5] Professional competence is a key determinant of patient satisfaction because patients often associate technical expertise with quality of care and successful treatment outcomes. The study also demonstrated high satisfaction regarding respectful behaviour and caring communication by the dentist.[6,7] Participants appreciated the courteous, empathetic, and supportive attitude of the dental professionals, highlighting the importance of interpersonal relationships in achieving positive healthcare experiences. Respectful treatment enhances patient comfort and trust, thereby strengthening the patient–provider relationship.

Furthermore, most participants expressed satisfaction with staff interactions,[8] suggesting that receptionists, assistants, and supporting personnel contributed positively to the overall patient experience. Positive interactions with staff members help create a welcoming and patient-friendly environment, which can significantly influence patient perceptions of healthcare quality. The majority of respondents also reported that their personal needs and concerns were adequately addressed during treatment.[9] This finding reflects the patient-centered approach adopted by the institution, where individual preferences and concerns are recognized and respected. Satisfaction with infection control practices was particularly high,[10] indicating that patients perceived the clinic environment as safe, clean, and hygienic. The implementation of effective infection prevention measures is especially important in dental settings because it enhances patient confidence and reinforces trust in the quality of care provided. Participants also reported favorable opinions regarding the quality of treatment received, suggesting that the clinical services met or exceeded their expectations. High treatment quality is closely associated with positive treatment outcomes and contributes substantially to overall patient satisfaction.[6,12]

Although satisfaction levels were generally high across all domains, comparatively lower satisfaction was observed regarding treatment duration and waiting time. While most participants remained satisfied, a small proportion expressed neutral or dissatisfied opinions, indicating that operational factors such as appointment scheduling and patient flow management may require further attention. Similar findings have been reported in previous studies, where waiting time was identified as an important factor influencing patient satisfaction. The majority of participants also agreed that post-treatment instructions were adequately explained, demonstrating the institution's commitment to ensuring continuity of care and promoting successful treatment outcomes. Clear post-treatment guidance helps patients understand necessary precautions and follow-up measures, thereby improving treatment effectiveness and patient confidence. Overall satisfaction findings showed that most participants were either satisfied or highly satisfied with the dental services received. The high levels of satisfaction observed in the present study can be attributed to effective communication, professional competence, respectful behaviour, positive staff interactions, attention to patient needs, satisfactory infection control measures, and quality treatment outcomes.[5,11] These findings highlight the importance of maintaining a patient-centered approach in dental healthcare delivery and emphasize the need for continuous evaluation and improvement of services to further enhance patient experiences and healthcare quality.

The limitations of this study was that the sample size was small, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Hence, it is recommended that future studies involving larger sample sizes and multi-centric populations can be undertaken to strengthen the existing evidence.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study demonstrated that the majority of patients attending the Department of Public Health Dentistry, Institute of Dental Sciences, Bareilly, were satisfied with the dental services provided. High levels of satisfaction were observed in relation to treatment explanation, patient involvement in decision-making, professional competence of dentists, respectful behaviour, staff cooperation, infection control measures, and treatment outcomes. These findings indicate the successful implementation of a patient-centered approach within the institution. The high satisfaction scores reflect the commitment of the dental team towards delivering quality oral healthcare services and maintaining effective communication with patients. However, comparatively lower satisfaction regarding treatment duration and waiting time highlights the need for further improvements in appointment scheduling and patient flow management. Continuous monitoring of patient satisfaction and periodic quality assessment are recommended to identify service gaps and strengthen the overall quality of dental care. Such efforts will contribute to improved patient experiences, better treatment compliance, and enhanced institutional reputation.

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