Section: Hospital Administration

Original Research Article

A STUDY ON PATIENT'S PERCEPTION OF SAFETY AND THE ASSESSMENT OF HOSPITALIZED PATIENT'S PARTICIPATION ON QUALITY OF CARE PROVIDED, AT A TERTIARY CARE TEACHING HOSPITAL

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ABSTRACT

Background: Patient safety is a global priority and a key indicator of healthcare quality. Increasingly, patient participation is recognized as an essential component in enhancing patient safety and Quality of care provided. Rationale of the study: The purpose of this study is to determine the perceived patient safety related to health care during hospitalization. To understand the extent to which hospitalized patient's participation in their care, and assess the association of patient's participation with quality of care and patient safety.

- The findings in this study will have several implications for quality improvement in the study areas in the hospital. Also, continuous assessment of patient safety culture in the study area could encourage the staff to report errors without being punished.
- Such assessments are the foundation for quality improvement. These results will encourage research into a more explicit understanding of the issues and identification of strategies to address patient safety in health care.

Objectives

1. To determine hospitalized patients' perceptions of patient safety.
2. To assess the extent of patient participation in their care.
3. To evaluate the association between patient participation, quality of care, and patient safety.

Materials and Methods: Ethics Committee approval is taken. A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted among 345 inpatients at a tertiary care teaching hospital. A structured 27-item questionnaire (Items 1–5: Socio-demographic details, Items 6–20: Patient safety perception, Items 21–27: Patient participation) was administered to assess patient safety perception, and patient participation in care provided. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics.

Results: Among 345 patients, 98.8% reported participation in at least one safety-related activity. High participation was significantly associated with favourable ratings of quality of care. About 27.8% strongly agreed that all safety measures were adequately met, while 0.5% strongly disagreed with certain safety aspects. Key perceived safety factors included time spent with senior doctors, proper signages, prompt handling of medical errors, and clear communication regarding treatment and adverse effects.

- Participation: 98.8% (341 patients) reported participation in at least one safety-related activity.
- High Participation: Strongly associated with better quality of care ratings.
- Safety Perception:

- 27.8% strongly agreed all safety measures were met
- 0.5% strongly disagreed with selected safety parameters

Conclusion: Patient participation plays a crucial role in enhancing perceived quality of care and patient safety. Strengthening communication, transparency, and patient engagement strategies can significantly improve safety culture in healthcare settings.

Keywords: Patient safety, patient participation, quality of care, safety culture, hospitalized patients

INTRODUCTION

Patient safety is a global imperative with far-reaching implications for healthcare systems, healthcare professionals, and patients alike. It affects all stakeholders, including WHO Member States, healthcare workers, and individuals when they become patients. A strong safety culture within healthcare organizations is essential and is characterized by shared values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies, and patterns of behaviour that determine an organization's commitment to health and safety management.

Assessing an organization's existing safety culture is the first critical step toward developing and strengthening it. Organizations with a positive safety culture demonstrate effective communication based on mutual trust, shared perceptions of the importance of safety, and confidence in preventive measures.

Increasing evidence highlights the important role patients can play in promoting healthcare safety. Active patient participation contributes significantly to improving safety outcomes. Effective and interactive communication between healthcare providers and patients forms the foundation for perceived patient safety. Proper management of uncertainty in the patient–provider relationship enhances safety, builds trust, and improves patient satisfaction.

A cultural shift toward transparency and learning from past errors is essential for continuous improvement in patient safety. Encouraging open communication and adopting a non- punitive approach to errors can significantly strengthen safety outcomes.

The main objective of this study is to determine the perceived patient safety related to healthcare during hospitalization. To understand the extent to which hospitalized patient's Participation in their care, and assess the association of patient's participation with quality of Care and patient safety.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design

Cross-sectional Descriptive study.

Study Setting

Gandhi Hospital, A Tertiary care teaching hospital, Secunderabad.

Study Population

Patients admitted to general wards during the study period.

Inclusion Criteria

- All patients admitted in general wards during the study period and willing to provide consent.

Exclusion Criteria

- ICUs, Emergency and Paediatric ward patients
- Patients unwilling to participate

Sample Size

A total of 345 patients (calculated using Rao's sample size calculator), admitted during March 2023 to July 2023.

Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling technique

Data Collection Tool

A structured 27-item questionnaire:

- Items 1–5: Socio-demographic details
- Items 6–20: Patient safety perception
- Items 21–27: Patient participation

Methodology

A 27 itemed questionnaire is adopted to take the opinion of the patients. After obtaining an informed consent, the questionnaire is distributed to the eligible patients, in which item 1-5 are about socio demographic data & admission details, item 6-20 are about patient's perception of safety and item 21-27 are about survey regarding their participation in the care provided in the Hospital. After collecting the completed questionnaire, the data analysed and based on the results appropriate recommendations are suggested to improve the Quality of care and Patient's safety provided by the Hospital.

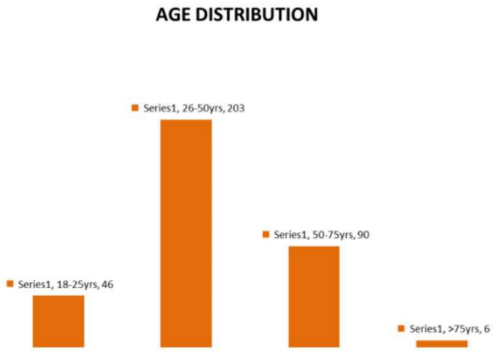
Data Collection Procedure

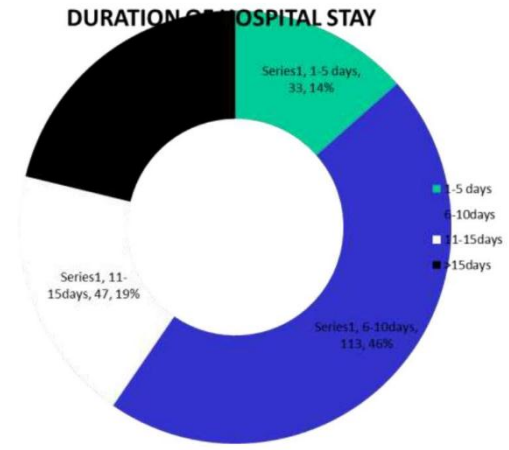
After obtaining informed consent, questionnaires were distributed and collected. Data were analysed using descriptive statistical methods.

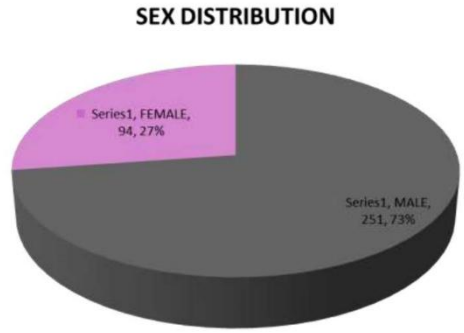
RESULTS

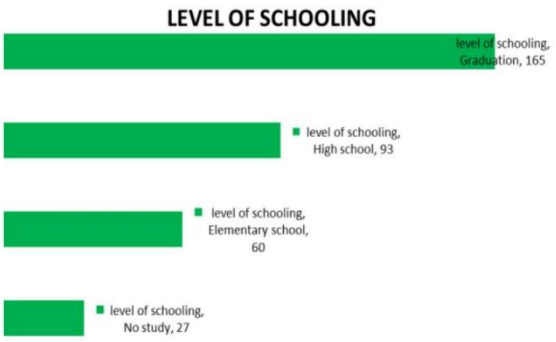
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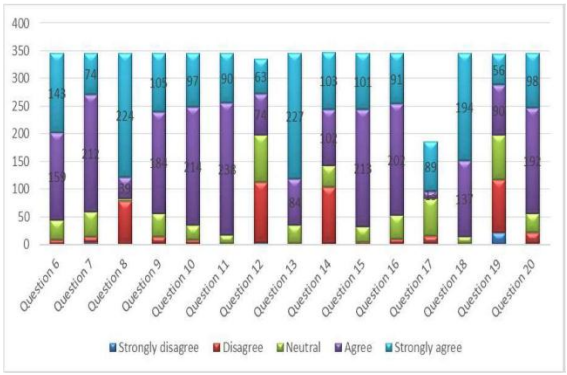
- High Participation: Strongly associated with better quality of care ratings.
- Safety Perception:
  - 27.8% strongly agreed all safety measures were met
  - 0.5% strongly disagreed with selected safety parameters











21.During that hospital stay, how much did you know about the medical problem for which you were admitted? n(345)	A lot (38) some(217) A little(82) Not at all(8)
22.During that hospital stay, how often did you feel well enough to be able to talk with your doctors and nurses?	Always (27) Usually(101) Sometimes(148) Never (69)
23. When you wanted information about your care and treatment, how easy or difficult was it to find a doctor or nurse to tell you what you wanted to know?	Very easy (44) Somewhat easy (91) Somewhat difficult(127) Very difficult (83)
24. During the hospital stay, when decisions had to be made, how often did your doctors and nurses describe the good and bad things about your treatment options?	Usually (69) Sometimes (110) Never (166)
25. Did you participate in the decisions your doctors made about your care ?	Less than wanted(168) About the right amount (141) More than wanted(36)
26. During that hospital stay, did you have a family member or a friend visit you? If yes, did that person help you make sure your health care wishes were being followed by the hospital staff ?	Visitor always made sure(44) sometimes made sure(84) Never made sure(217) No visitors(0)
27. During that hospital stay, when you were given medicines, did you ever check to make sure that they were the correct ones? If yes, how often did you check the medicines given to you by the hospital staff ?	Checked always (62) Checked usually (65) Checked sometimes (93) Did not check (124)

Key Factors Enhancing Perceived Safety

- Time spent with senior doctors
- Proper self-illuminating signages
- Immediate handling of medical errors
- Explanation of treatment benefits and risks
- Communication about adverse effects before procedures

Areas of Concern (Low Agreement)

- Staff identification (badges)
- Counselling about next plan of care
- Emergency contact accessibility
- Availability of bedside lockers
- Post-discharge care explanations

DISCUSSION

This study demonstrates that patient participation is strongly associated with improved perception of care quality and safety. Most patients actively engaged in their care, including communication with providers and involvement in decision-making.

However, fewer patients engaged in more proactive safety behaviours, such as verifying medications. This indicates a need to further empower patients.

The findings suggest that healthcare institutions should:

- Encourage shared decision-making
- Improve communication strategies
- Strengthen transparency in care processes

Safety-oriented organizations create environments that promote access to information, patient involvement, and trust-building.

CONCLUSION

In this study of patients treated in the selected areas of the institute, virtually all respondents participated in their care during hospitalization in ways that may

promote patient safety. Patients reported that they were aware of the reason for their admission, felt well enough to communicate with caregivers, and were able to identify a clinician who could provide necessary information. They also discussed the advantages and disadvantages of treatment options and participated in decision-making regarding their care.

However, fewer respondents reported engaging in more active participation behaviours, such as verifying the correctness of their medications. Patients with higher levels of participation were more likely to report a higher perceived quality of care.

The findings of this study have important implications for quality improvement and the continuous assessment of patient safety culture within the studied setting. Such assessments form the foundation for identifying gaps and developing strategies to enhance patient safety in healthcare organizations.

Out of 345 respondents, only 0.5% of patients strongly disagreed that certain safety-related measures contributed to patient safety. These included:

- Staff wearing badges with name and designation on their uniforms (Q7)
- Daily counselling about next plan of care (Q12)
- Display of emergency contact numbers or availability of a call bell for patients (Q14)
- Provision of a bedside locker for keeping valuables (Q17)
- Explanation about post-discharge care, including follow-up dates (Q20)

These findings suggest that the vast majority of patients perceived these measures as important components of safety.

Safety-oriented healthcare organizations can create conditions that facilitate patients' access to healthcare providers, ensure timely and clear provision of information, and encourage participatory decision-making. Patient participation and involvement are nuanced concepts that encompass the efforts and contributions of patients and their caregivers, their perspectives and experiences, and the relationships they share with healthcare professionals.

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