

Assessment of Patient Satisfaction by Physician Assistants in Super Specialty Hospital

A.S. Princy, M. Rajeswari



Abstract: *Purpose: To assess the Patient Satisfaction of Physician Assistants in Super Specialty Hospital. Understand evolution, role and growth of physician assistant professionals in hospital.*

Methods: *Structured questionnaires are used to collect data from 100 English speaking patients who were above 18 years of age. Secondary data from the year 1960 to 2018 was analyzed which is available in internet database in English literature is taken in to account to understand the role. Survey and discussions methods are also used to get the updated data from healthcare team.*

Findings: *PA's provide satisfactory care to their patients while being courteous and respectful, having a good understanding of the patient's problem, explaining to patients and using simple words that are nontechnical and have proven themselves to be an asset to the hospital.*

Conclusions: *Research concluded that role of Physician Assistant can be utilized in Indian healthcare sector to compensate the deficiency of physicians in the healthcare outreach areas.*

Keywords: *Healthcare, Physician Assistant, Patient Satisfaction, roles, responsibilities, Profession*

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of Physician Assistant came from United States of America. Physician Assistant profession kick started in India around 20 years ago. This paper focuses on the literatures available in Indian context and pub from USA. Physician Assistants literature related to role, transition, policy, etc are also available in other countries like Canada, UK, Netherland and Taiwan. According to Indian Association of Physician Assistants "Physician Assistant is a skilled healthcare professional who is qualified with academic and clinical training to provide healthcare services under the supervision of a specialist Physician" Dr. K.M Cherian is the pioneer of Physician Assistant program in India. The idea of

Physician Assistant emerged to support a busy physician to have an improved healthcare delivery. He got trained in cardiac surgery from University of Alabama. He worked with John W. Kirklin, MD, who developed the earliest American Cardiac Surgical PA programs. When he came back to India he developed same scenario as US. Junior doctors who have bachelor degree in medicine used to work with specialized surgeons and assist them during the surgeries. But this workforce is not a permanent resource because they often go for sabbaticals to prepare for competitive higher education entrance exams. Dr. Cherian tried to fill this gap by introducing new healthcare professionals.

II. OBJECTIVES

- To assess the patient satisfaction of Physician Assistants in Super Specialty Hospital.
- To understand the role of PA professionals
- To understand the evolution and growth of PA in India

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

I. Growth of physician assistant profession

Dr. Cherian tries to fit Physician Assistant program in India in 1992. Physician Assistant programme started in Institute of Cardiovascular Disease in Chennai. Initially it was a two year post graduate diploma programme in which fresh science graduates are eligible to join. First batch emerged with three Physician Assistant in 1994. Second batch program has been incorporated as two year Master programme and got affiliation from Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, Rajasthan with the help of Honorary Director of the training centre of ICVD. Prof. Ramakrishnan. Physician Assistant profession got good feedback among the surgeons and they started floating along with the Physicians to different hospitals in India.

Few years Physician Assistants are trained in ICVD settings so their job opportunities are limited. Later few changes in the training modules of the programme have done to other field to extent the role of Physician Assistant. Couple of batches came out with Masters and even M. Phil degrees. Then it extends it programme to Bachelor degree with many specialties like neurology, nephrology, gastroenterology and plastic surgery. This profession got recognized among Physicians, human resource teams, etc. Presently there are nearly 1300 PAs and 1200 students of Physician Assistant are there in India.

Revised Manuscript Received on October 30, 2019.

* Correspondence Author

A.S. Princy, Research Scholar, School of Management, Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Chennai and Assistant Professor, Chettinad Academy of Research and Education, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Dr. M. Rajeswari, Associate Professor, School of Management Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Chennai (Tamil Nadu), India.

© The Authors. Published by Blue Eyes Intelligence Engineering and Sciences Publication (BEIESP). This is an [open access](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)

Assessment of Patient Satisfaction by Physician Assistants in Super Specialty Hospital

II. EXPANSION OF PA PROGRAMME

PA profession is expanded in almost all departments in hospitals like Outpatient unit, Operation theatre, Intensive care unit, organ transplant, respiratory medicine, dermatology, nephrology, neurology, radiology, perfusion, anesthesia, emergency and trauma care and medical laboratory.

Table 1.0 Specialty of Physician Assistants in 2018

Sl#	Area of Specialties
1.	Radiology and Imaging Technology
2.	Emergency and trauma care
3.	Anesthesia Technology
4.	Cath lab Technology
5.	Cardiac Technology
6.	Dialysis Technology
7.	Nephrology Technology
8.	Neuroscience Technology
9.	Dermatology
10.	Respiratory Technology
11.	Medical Laboratory Technology
12.	Perfusion Technology
13.	General Surgery

Demands of Physician Assistants are increasing day by day, nearly 47 Institutes in India offers Physician Assistant diploma or bachelors degree programme. PA programme are offered by private Institutes only, But Dr. MGR Medical University in Tamil Nadu is the government medical university which has this programme. Geographically PA profession and colleges spread widely in all south Indian states, West Bengal, Gujarat, Delhi, etc. (Table 2)There is no standardized syllabus. Programme structure is 4- year degree programme, which includes 1 year internship. Eligibility to join this programme is Plus two with Physics, Biology, Chemistry and or Math.

Table 2.0 Institutes in India

Sl #	Institute/University name	State
1.	Sri Venkateswara Medical College	Andhra Pradesh
2.	Micro Info Web Pvt. Ltd	Delhi
3.	Khatu Shyam Institute of management and Technology	Delhi
4.	BN Patel Institute of Paramedical Science	Gujarat
5.	Martin Luther Christian University	Meghalaya

6.	Jayasree Academy	West Bengal
7.	JSS medical College and Hospital	Karnataka
8.	Frontier Lifeline Hospital	Tamil Nadu
9.	M.M.M College of Health Sciences	Tamil Nadu
10.	Sri Gokulam College of Nursing	Tamil Nadu
11.	Surabhi School of Nursing	Tamil Nadu
12.	Vinayaka Missions University	Tamil Nadu
13.	Sri Gokulam Institutes of Paramedical Sciences	Tamil Nadu
14.	Saga Institute of Management Studies	Kerala
15.	Sri Ramachandra Medical College	Tamil Nadu
16.	Care Hospitals	Andhra Pradesh
17.	Amrita Institute	Kerala
18.	Dr. MGR Medical University	Tamil Nadu

III. ROLE OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

Most Physician Assistants work in private hospitals. In outpatient wing Physician Assistants examines the patient, takes history, summarizes the order, interpret reports like X-rays, ECG, sonogram, treadmill test, etc. They have to counsel the patients and their family also. In wards and critical care areas Physician Assistants takes rounds, meet emergency situations, prepare progress notes, discharge summary, etc. In surgeries Physician Assistants support Physicians as first or second assistants for harvesting saphenous vein for CABG surgery, role as clinical perfusionist, post operative treatment, etc. They even work in non clinical set ups like hospital administration, clinical research and hospital information systems. The scope for Physician Assistant professional is not only limited to hospitals but they can get placed in medical software institutions, pharmaceutical industries, organizations developing sophisticated medical devices, medical tourism and medical insurance.

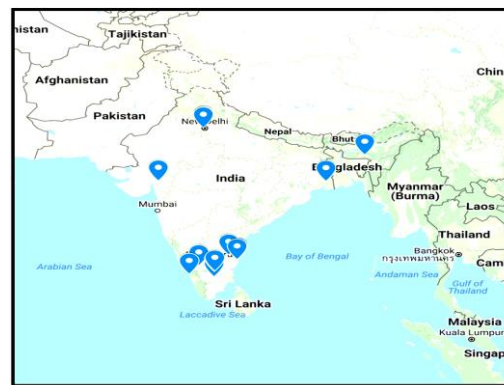


Fig. 1. Geographical distribution of PA Institutes

IV. INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

Indian Association of Physician Assistants formed on 8th April 2008. IAPA was registered under the jurisdiction of Registrar of societies, North Madras with the Institute of cardiovascular Disease, Madras. Main objective of this organization is to support Pas professional and personal development. IAPA conducts National Scientific Meets, so it helps PAs as a platform to present their research papers and to meet all PAs working around the country. IAPA continues to press government to standardize the curriculum and recognize this profession in India.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection method used for this study is random sample of 100 English speaking patients who were above 18 years of age while they waited for their appointment with the Physician Assistants between the months of October and November 2018. Research instrument is structured questionnaire. Likert five point scales are used to analyse these competencies which ranges from: 5- Strongly Agree, 4- Agree, 3- No Opinion, 2- Disagree and 1- strongly disagree.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This study focuses on 7 variables such as courteous & respectful, understand, explain, simple words, listen carefully, enough time and competence. The criteria's to measure the patient satisfaction of PAs are: they courteous towards the patients. PAs understand the patient problems properly. PAs are explaining the procedures and process clearly. PAs are using simple language to communicate. PAs listen carefully to the patient and their relatives. PAs have enough time with the patients. PAs are competent.

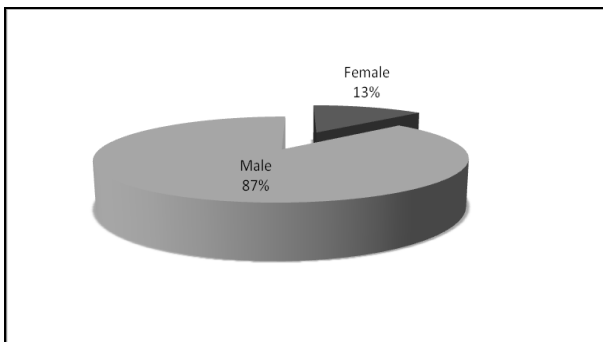


Fig. 2. Genders of Respondent

Interpretation: Most of the respondents are men (about 87%), 13% are women.

Table 4.0 Criteria for measuring Patient satisfaction of Physician Assistant

Criteria	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Courteous & respectful	0	0	0	17	83
Understand	0	0	2	28	70
Explain	0	1	2	19	78
Simple words	0	0	0	12	88
Listen carefully	1	0	6	17	76
Enough time	1	0	0	30	69
Competence	0	0	2	27	71
Overall	0	0	1	26	73

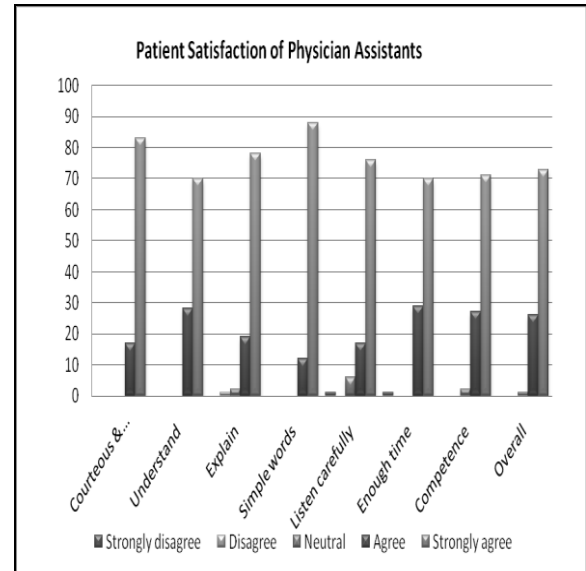


Fig. 3. Patient satisfaction

Table 3. Gender of respondents

Gender	No. of Respondents
Female	13
Male	87

VII. FINDINGS

- About 83% of the patients strongly agree that physician Assistants as Courteous & respectful and 17% agrees.
- 70% strongly agree that they understand them, 28% agree and 2% are neutral.
- About 78% strongly agree that PAs explain clearly
- 88% strongly agree PAs uses simple words to communicate with patients.
- 76% strongly agree that PA listen to patient carefully.



Assessment of Patient Satisfaction by Physician Assistants in Super Specialty Hospital

- 69% strongly agree that PA have enough time with patients.
- 71% strongly agree to the fact that PA is competent.
- Overall PA performs better with the patients

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

This study helps to understand the Physician Assistants role and their importance in healthcare system. Highest scored criteria are PAs are using simple words to explain the patients about their disease and the procedures. The lease score is the times spend by the PAs with the patient and associates. As population in India is increasing in volume, demand of Physician Assistant professions will be increasing so governing bodies has to recognize and utilized their role in healthcare sector. Government has to take action to curb with the present shortage of Physicians in the health care sector.

REFERENCES

1. Kuilman, L., Sundar, G., & Cherian, K. M. (2012). Physician assistant education in India. *Journal of Physician Assistant Education* (Physician Assistant Education Association), 23(3).
2. Sundar, G. (2014). Physician assistants in India: Triumphs and tribulations. *Journal of the American Academy of PAs*, 27(4), 9-11.
3. Antony KR.(October 8, 2012) Awaiting the new foot soldiers of community health care. *The Hindu*. Available at: www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/awaiting-the-new-foot-soldiers-of-community-health-care/article3975089.ece.
4. Rao, K. D., Stierman, E., Bhatnagar, A., Gupta, G., & Gaffar, A. (2013). As good as physicians: patient perceptions of physicians and non-physician clinicians in rural primary health centers in India. *Global Health: Science and Practice*, 1(3), 397-406.
5. Dehn, R. W., Everett, C. M., & Hooker, R. S. (2017). Research on the PA profession: The medical model shifts. *Journal of the American Academy of PAs*, 30(5), 33-42.
6. www.ibef.org WHO: World Health Statistics Robinson, J. D., & Heritage, J. (2006). Physicians' opening questions and patients' satisfaction. *Patient education and counseling*, 60(3), 279-285.
7. Jawahar, S. K. (2007). A study on out patient satisfaction at a super specialty hospital in India. *Internet Journal of Medical Update*, 2(2).
8. Mishra, P. H., & Mishra, T. (2014). Study of patient satisfaction at a super specialty tertiary care hospital. *Indian Journal of Clinical Practice*, 25(7), 624-634.
9. Joshi, K., Sochaliya, K., Purani, S., & Kartha, G. (2013). Patient satisfaction about health care services: A cross sectional study of patients who visit the outpatient department of a civil hospital at Surendranagar, Gujarat. *International Journal of Medical Science and Public Health*, 2(3), 659-664.
10. Younger, D. S. (2016). Health care in India. *Neurologic clinics*, 34(4), 1103-1114.
11. Mittman, D. E., Cawley, J. F., & Fenn, W. H. (2002). Physician assistants in the United States. *Bmj*, 325(7362), 485-487.
12. Singh, S., & Badaya, S. (2014). Health care in rural India: A lack between need and feed. *South Asian journal of cancer*, 3(2), 143.
13. Berkowitz, O., Gelbshtein, U., Segal, I., & Jacobson, E. (2018). The new Israeli PA. *Journal of the American Academy of PAs*, 31(7), 46-48.

AUTHORS PROFILE



Ms. A.S Priney is doing her Ph.D. from School of Management, Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India and currently working as Assistant Professor- FAHS in Chettinad Academy of Research and Education, Chennai. She has completed M.B.A from Bharathiar University and also passed UGC –NET in management. She has published and presented papers at

domestic and international conferences.



Dr. M Rajeswari, M. Com, M.B.A, M. Phil, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, School of Management, Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. She has presented numerous papers at national and international conferences. Her research contributions are in Scopus Indexed and UGC Recommend Journals. She has total 21 years of experience with 5 years of industrial experience and 16 years of teaching experience.