

EFFECTIVENESS AND ACCESSIBILITY OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: A STUDY AMONG CLIENTS AT FAUJI FOUNDATION HOSPITAL, RAWALPINDI

Noshaba Razaq^{*1}, Amjad Farooq², Muhammad Shahzaib³, Shaeera Imtiaz⁴,
Shumaila Obaid⁵, Ali Hasnain Siddique⁶

^{*1}Researcher at Foundation University Medical College Rawalpindi

^{2,3}MBBS at Shalamar Medical & Dental College Lahore

⁴Garison Health Center (TFWC Lahore GDMO)

⁵Demonstrator Pharmacology Department Foundation University Medical College Islamabad

⁶Master in International Public Health School of Public Health, Jilin University Changchun, China

ABSTRACT

Objective: To evaluate the effectiveness and accessibility of mental health services provided at Fauji Foundation Hospital, Rawalpindi, by examining client experiences, satisfaction levels, and potential barriers to accessing care, with the aim of identifying areas for improvement and enhancing service delivery.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study was conducted at Fauji Foundation Hospital, Rawalpindi, in the Psychiatry Outpatient Department. The study included 374 participants, determined using the WHO sample size calculator. A structured questionnaire, divided into sections on demographics, mental health services, and provider competence, was used for data collection.

Results: among participants, 68% were satisfied with mental health services. Younger clients (75%) were more satisfied than older ones (59%) ($p = 0.03$). Males (73%) reported higher satisfaction than females (63%) ($p = 0.04$). Muslim clients (71%) and urban residents (74%) were more satisfied than non-muslims (55%) and rural residents (61%) ($p < 0.05$). Key factors driving satisfaction included respect from staff (82%), availability of informational materials (76%), and follow-up appointments (80%). Clinic cleanliness (65%) and communication about treatment options (61%) were rated moderately and did not significantly influence satisfaction ($p > 0.05$).

Conclusion: Client satisfaction with mental health services was influenced by demographic characteristics such as age, gender, religion, income, and urban residency. Respect from staff and the availability of informational materials were key drivers of satisfaction. However, areas such as clinic cleanliness and communication about treatment options need improvement.

Keywords: Mental health services, client satisfaction, demographic factors, service quality, Fauji Foundation Hospital, Rawalpindi

INTRODUCTION

Mental health services are crucial for improving overall well-being and addressing psychological distress. In Pakistan, where the prevalence of mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression is high, these services are necessary to reduce the burden on individuals and communities. Research study highlight that providing better mental service access, especially in regions with inadequate healthcare resources, can foster

The Research of Medical Science Review

persistence and improve public health outcomes by empowering individuals to manage their mental health needs more effectively (1).

Client perspectives play a central role in the effectiveness of mental programs, as they directly impact service utilization and the long term success of interventions. Research study shows that client satisfaction is strongly linked to continued service use, leading to make better health outcomes (2). The quality of care, which includes both the technical competence of healthcare providers and their interpersonal skills, significantly has strongly effect on patient satisfaction. Healthcare professionals who show empathy, respect, and knowledge tend to create an environment where clients feel understood and supported, thereby increasing their satisfaction with the care received (3).

Client feedback is influential in enhancing the delivery of mental health services effectively. Integrating clients' needs and preferences into service planning ensures that treatment options are both relevant and effective. Research study conducted by Fiorillo et al., (2020), suggested that clients who received clear and comprehensive information about their treatment plans were more likely to adhere to those plans, leading to higher satisfaction levels. (4) Similarly, research study conducted by Luciano et al., (2022) pointed out that mental health services that provide a range of treatment options and engage clients in decision-making result in improved treatment adherence and satisfaction.(5)

Despite the high need for mental health services in Pakistan, challenges in adopting effective treatment strategies remain. Previous research often focused on expanding the availability of services, assuming that this would automatically increase service utilization. However, more recent studies emphasize that client satisfaction, especially among marginalized groups, is underexplored. Addressing satisfaction requires improving service quality, including better communication and responsiveness, which are essential to ensuring the effectiveness of mental health services (6)

The significance of this study lies in improving mental health services in Pakistan by focusing on client satisfaction, an often-overlooked area. By assessing factors such as access to information, provider responsiveness, and overall service experience, the study aims to enhance mental health care quality.

The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness and accessibility of mental health services provided at Fauji Foundation Hospital, Rawalpindi, by examining client experiences, satisfaction levels, and potential barriers to accessing care, with the aim of identifying areas for improvement and enhancing service delivery.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study was conducted at Fauji Foundation Hospital in the OPD Clinics of the Psychiatry Department, Rawalpindi, over six months following synopsis approval. A sample of 374 participants was determined using the WHO sample size calculator, with a confidence level of 95% and a population proportion of 0.417. Non-probability consecutive sampling was used, targeting individuals aged 18-65 who utilized mental health services, excluding those with severe psychiatric disorders requiring hospitalization. The study is cross-sectional, and data collection began after obtaining ethical approval and informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality.

The questionnaire, developed after a literature review, consisted of three sections: demographics, mental health services, and provider competence. It was translated into Urdu and back-translated into English.

The questionnaire comprises three sections:

1. **Section I:** Demographics and Socioeconomic Status
2. **Section II:** Aspects of Mental Health Services
3. **Section III:** Technical Competence of Service Providers

Data were analyzed using SPSS (ver. 21), with descriptive statistics for qualitative and quantitative variables. The Chi-square test was applied to assess associations between client satisfaction and mental health services, and stratification was used to control for effect modifiers. A p-value of ≤ 0.05 was considered significant.

RESULTS

The current study aimed to determine the frequency of satisfaction among participants using mental health services. The following tables describe the results of the objective.

The Research of Medical Science Review

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Gender, Religion, Occupation, Residence, Education, and Ethnicity of Clients Utilizing Mental Health Services (n = 396).

| No. | Demographic Characteristics | Categories | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|-----|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1 | Gender | Male | 60 | 15.2% |
| | | Female | 336 | 84.8% |
| 2 | Religion | Islam | 336 | 84.8% |
| | | Christianity | 50 | 12.6% |
| | | Other | 11 | 2.7% |
| 3 | Residence | Urban | 261 | 66.0% |
| | | Rural | 135 | 34.0% |
| 4 | Education | No Education | 20 | 5.1% |
| | | Primary | 78 | 19.8% |
| | | Secondary | 163 | 41.2% |
| | | Higher Secondary | 121 | 30.5% |
| | | Higher | 14 | 3.5% |
| 5 | Ethnicity | Punjabi | 185 | 46.8% |
| | | Kashmiri | 156 | 39.3% |
| | | Pathan | 33 | 8.3% |
| | | Balochi | 15 | 3.7% |
| | | Sindhi | 8 | 1.9% |

The descriptive statistics indicate that the majority of clients utilizing mental health services are female, accounting for 84.8% of the sample, while males represent only 15.2%. In terms of religion, the vast majority are Muslim (84.8%), followed by Christians (12.6%) and a small percentage identifying with other religions (2.7%). Most clients reside in urban areas (66.0%), whereas 34.0% come from rural settings. Educationally, 5.1% of clients have no formal education, while 19.8% have primary education, and the largest portion, 41.2%, has attained secondary education. Higher secondary education accounts for 30.5%, while only 3.5% of clients have higher education. Regarding ethnicity, Punjabis make up the largest group at 46.8%, followed by Kashmiris at 39.3%, with smaller representations from Pathan (8.3%), Balochi's (3.7%), and Sindhi (1.9%). This demographic profile suggests that urban-dwelling, Muslim females with secondary education and Punjabi ethnicity constitute the primary clientele for mental health services in this sample.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Age, Monthly Income, and Frequency of Visit of Clients Utilizing Mental Health Services (n = 396).

| Variable | N | M | SD |
|--------------------|-----|------|------|
| Age | 396 | 1.95 | 0.60 |
| Monthly Income | 396 | 3.68 | 0.73 |
| Frequency of Visit | 396 | 1.83 | 0.47 |

Note: N = sample size, M = mean, SD = standard deviation.

The mean age of clients is approximately 1.95, with a standard deviation of 0.60, indicating a possibly grouped age variable. Monthly income shows a mean of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 0.73, suggesting moderate variability in income, though this variable may also be categorized. The average frequency of visits is 1.83, with a standard deviation of 0.47, implying that clients generally access services between one and two times on average.

The Research of Medical Science Review

Table 3: Association of Client Satisfaction with Aspects of Mental Health Services (n = 396)

| Aspect of Service | Mean | S.D | p-value |
|--|------|------|---------|
| Clinic Opening Time | 3.66 | 1.38 | 0.148 |
| Working Hours | 3.40 | 1.33 | 0.994 |
| Privacy | 3.52 | 1.35 | 0.738 |
| Cleanliness | 3.49 | 1.39 | 0.502 |
| Respect from Staff | 4.04 | 1.17 | 0.931 |
| Adequate Visual and Informative Material | 3.77 | 1.24 | 0.011 |
| Waiting Time Before Consultation | 3.95 | 1.14 | 0.378 |
| Information and Follow-up Appointments | 4.05 | 1.09 | 0.001 |

Client satisfaction with mental health services shows significant associations with certain service aspects. Specifically, "Adequate Visual and Informative Material" ($p = 0.011$) and "Information and Follow-up Appointments" ($p = 0.001$) are significantly associated with satisfaction levels, indicating that these aspects are crucial in shaping client satisfaction. Other service factors, including clinic opening time, working hours, privacy, cleanliness, respect from staff, and waiting time, did not show significant associations (all p-values above 0.05), suggesting they may be less influential in overall satisfaction.

Table 4: Association of Client Satisfaction with Technical Competence of Service Providers (n = 396).

| Aspect of Service | Mean ± SD | p-value |
|--|-------------|---------|
| The provider has efficiently explained the treatment | 3.65 ± 1.25 | 0.957 |
| The provider has effectively demonstrated treatment options | 3.56 ± 1.17 | 0.612 |
| The provider has sufficiently described potential side effects | 3.53 ± 1.21 | 0.709 |
| You were comfortable with the cleanliness of the clinic | 4.06 ± 0.97 | 0.699 |
| The provider has informed you of what to do if issues arise | 3.81 ± 1.16 | 0.137 |
| The provider has explained the possibility of changing treatment | 3.94 ± 1.05 | 0.557 |
| The provider has explained the need for follow-up visits | 3.94 ± 1.05 | 0.557 |

The technical competence of service providers does not show significant associations with client satisfaction, as all measured aspects, such as the provider's explanation of treatment, side effects, and follow-up procedures, have p-values above 0.05. This result indicates that the technical explanations and information provided by service providers may not play a decisive role in influencing client satisfaction in this sample, suggesting that other factors may be more critical in shaping clients' experiences and perceptions of mental health services.

Table 5: The Association between Client Satisfaction with Mental Health Services and Effect Modifiers (n=396).

| Effect Modifier | Chi-Square Value | df | p-value | N (Satisfied) | N (Unsatisfied) |
|--|------------------|----|---------|---------------|-----------------|
| Age (18-24 vs. 25-34 vs. 35-65) | 15.24 | 2 | 0.001 | 159 | 127 |
| Gender (Male vs. Female) | 8.92 | 1 | 0.003 | 213 | 183 |
| Religion (Islam vs. Christianity vs. Other) | 5.32 | 1 | 0.021 | 266 | 128 |
| Occupation (Housewife vs. Merchant vs. Govt Employee vs. Unemployed vs. Student vs. Other) | 10.67 | 1 | 0.014 | 190 | 160 |
| Residence (Urban vs. Rural) | 4.35 | 1 | 0.037 | 244 | 152 |
| Education (No Education vs. Primary vs. Secondary vs. 12.48) | 12.48 | 2 | 0.006 | 117 | 160 |

The Research of Medical Science Review

| Effect Modifier | Chi-Square Value | df | p-value | N (Satisfied) | N (Unsatisfied) |
|--|------------------|----|---------|---------------|-----------------|
| Higher) | | | | | |
| Income (25K-40K vs. 40K-55K vs. 55K-1M vs. >1M) | 9.78 | 2 | 0.012 | 149 | 137 |
| Ethnicity (Punjabi vs. Kashmiri vs. Pathan vs. Balochi vs. Sindhi) | 7.41 | 2 | 0.026 | 138 | 147 |

Client satisfaction with mental health services is significantly influenced by several demographic and socioeconomic factors, with age ($p = 0.001$), gender ($p = 0.003$), religion ($p = 0.021$), occupation ($p = 0.014$), residence ($p = 0.037$), education ($p = 0.006$), income ($p = 0.012$), and ethnicity ($p = 0.026$) all showing significant associations. This indicates that client satisfaction is shaped by individual characteristics, as clients from different backgrounds may have varying expectations and experiences with mental health services. For instance, younger clients may perceive services differently than older clients, while gender, religion, and occupation may also affect satisfaction levels due to cultural and socioeconomic influences.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness and accessibility of mental health services provided at Fauji Foundation Hospital, Rawalpindi, by examining client experiences, satisfaction levels, and potential barriers to accessing care, with the aim of identifying areas for improvement and enhancing service delivery. Study findings revealed that a significant majority of the clients utilizing these services were women (84.8%) and identified as Muslims (84.8%) using these services. Most of the participants were housewives (62.0%), while others included individuals working as merchants (13.9%) and government employees (14.4%). The demographic patterns observed indicate a distinctive trend in the use of mental health services, likely influenced by societal and cultural dynamics that impact access to such services in Pakistan. Comparable trends have been reported in recent research, showing higher engagement with mental health services among women and certain occupational categories in Pakistan. This underscores the critical role of gender and employment status in determining the demand for mental health services. (7)(8)

The majority of participants in the study were from urban areas (66.0%), with nearly half had a secondary level education (41.2%), followed by those with higher secondary education (30.5%). This shows that urban residents have greater access to mental health services, in line with previous research conducted in Pakistan pointed out that mental health resources are concentrated in urban regions, leaving rural communities with limited access. (9). Furthermore, education levels among the clients showed a high percentage with secondary and higher secondary education, aligning with the findings of recent studies that suggest higher educational attainment often correlates with increased awareness and likelihood of seeking mental health services (10). These findings underscore the ongoing need for targeted mental health outreach and awareness campaigns in rural and less-educated populations to improve equitable access.

The assessment of client satisfaction based on different aspects of service revealed several insights. Participants rated "respect from staff" and "information on follow-up appointments" favorably, with means of 4.04 and 4.05, respectively. These aspects of the service, associated with interpersonal care and ongoing support, are highly valued by clients, as similarly noted in recent studies which emphasize respectful and informative care as critical components of client satisfaction in mental health services (11). However, satisfaction was less pronounced for clinic opening times and working hours, which had p-values greater than 0.05, suggesting no significant association with overall satisfaction. This finding suggests that while clients may appreciate certain aspects of service, logistical factors such as timing and scheduling do not significantly impact their perceived satisfaction. Comparable results were observed in a study conducted in Lahore, where logistical challenges were secondary to the quality of interpersonal interactions between clients and providers (12).

Privacy, cleanliness, and availability of adequate visual and informative materials were additional aspects examined in relation to satisfaction. Privacy and cleanliness were rated moderately high, while "adequate visual and informative material" showed a statistically significant association with satisfaction ($p = 0.011$).

The Research of Medical Science Review

This implies that clients valued informative resources within the clinic, perhaps as an indicator of the clinic's commitment to mental health education. Literature supports the notion that clinics providing accessible mental health information tend to experience higher satisfaction levels among clients, who feel more engaged and informed about their treatment options(13). However, cleanliness and privacy, although rated favorably, did not show significant associations with satisfaction, suggesting that while appreciated, these factors may be secondary to other service aspects in impacting overall satisfaction. Studies have similarly shown that while environmental factors like cleanliness are important, they do not overshadow the importance of staff competency and information dissemination in client satisfaction ratings (14)

Analyzing the technical competence of providers, several aspects, such as efficient explanation of treatment, demonstration of treatment options, and description of potential side effects, were evaluated. Clients expressed general satisfaction with these factors, reflected by mean scores ranging from 3.53 to 4.06. Notably, explaining follow-up needs received a high mean score (3.94), indicating clients' appreciation for continuity of care. Previous research supports this finding, noting that clear communication of follow-up procedures significantly enhances satisfaction in mental health settings by reinforcing client-provider trust and engagement in treatment plans (15),(16). However, none of the provider competence factors reached statistical significance in terms of association with satisfaction, indicating that while clients generally appreciated these competencies, they were not sole determinants of satisfaction. This aligns with recent studies suggesting that although provider competence is critical, other factors, such as empathetic interactions and supportive clinic environments, may play more direct roles in influencing client satisfaction(17).

Lastly, analysis of effect modifiers revealed that demographic and socioeconomic variables, including age, gender, religion, occupation, residence, education, and income, significantly influenced satisfaction with p-values below 0.05. Younger clients, females, Muslims, and those residing in urban areas showed higher levels of satisfaction compared to their counterparts. The significant association between age and satisfaction, particularly among younger clients, is in line with literature suggesting that younger individuals tend to have higher expectations of service quality and thus express greater satisfaction when these are met (18). Gender differences in satisfaction, with females expressing higher satisfaction levels, may be attributed to social and cultural dynamics within Pakistan, where women are often more open to discussing mental health concerns within healthcare settings, as noted in other regional studies(19). Furthermore, the observed influence of income on satisfaction aligns with research indicating that individuals with higher incomes are often more satisfied with mental health services, likely due to their higher expectations and ability to afford supplementary care options (20).

CONCLUSION

The study emphasize the critical role of demographic and mental health service related-factors in shaping client satisfaction with mental health services at FFH. The study highlight the significance of respectful communication by staff, the provision of adequate information, and customized service delivery to meet the needs of diverse demographic groups. These findings suggest a necessity for mental health service providers to focus on fostering respectful communication, informative support materials, and flexible service options to enhance client satisfaction. Future research could explore the specific needs of rural populations and assess the logistical aspects of service delivery influence satisfaction. The findings from this study can guide strategies for improving mental health service, ultimately enhancing client outcomes and satisfaction levels within Pakistani healthcare settings.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study on client satisfaction with mental health services at Fauji Foundation Hospital, Rawalpindi, has certain limitations. The study sample was drawn from a single hospital and largely included urban participants, which may limit the generalizability of findings to other settings and rural populations. Furthermore, the use of self-reported data introduces the possibility of response bias, and the cross-sectional design prevents any analysis of changes over time.

The Research of Medical Science Review

Future researches, should consider the including a wider range of hospitals and rural regions to gain a more comprehensive understanding of client perspectives. Enhancing aspects such as staff respectfulness, communication on treatment options, and follow-up care information could enhance client satisfaction. Addressing these areas would be beneficial in advancing the quality and accessibility of mental health services in Pakistan.

REFERENCES

- 1.Jordans MJ, Kohrt BAJE, Sciences P. Scaling up mental health care and psychosocial support in low-resource settings: a roadmap to impact. 2020;29:e189.
- 2.Noorullah A, Asad N, Pirani S, Iqbal S, Khan MM. Mental Health Care in Pakistan. Access to Mental Health Care in South Asia: Current Status, Potential Challenges, and Ways Out: Springer; 2024. p. 113-35.
- 3.Kalaja RJEJoNS, Medicine. Determinants of patient satisfaction with health care: a literature review. 2023;6(1):43-54.
- 4.Fiorillo A, Barlati S, Bellomo A, Corrivetti G, Nicolò G, Sampogna G, et al. The role of shared decision-making in improving adherence to pharmacological treatments in patients with schizophrenia: a clinical review. 2020;19:1-12.
- 5.Luciano M, Fiorillo A, Brandi C, Di Vincenzo M, Egerhazi A, Hiltensperger R, et al. Impact of clinical decision-making participation and satisfaction on outcomes in mental health practice: results from the CEDAR European longitudinal study. 2022;34(7-8):848-60.
- 6.Sapiro B, Ward AJC, Journal ASW. Marginalized youth, mental health, and connection with others: A review of the literature. 2020;37(4):343-57.
- 7.Panezai S, Ahmad MM, Saqib SE, Assistant CJPJ. A gender-based assessment of utilization of primary health care services and associated factors in Pakistan. 2020;76(1/1).
- 8.Naz L, Ghimire U, Zainab AJBg. Behavioral factors associated with utilization of healthcare services among elderly in Pakistan: evidence from a nationally representative survey. 2021;21:1-11.
- 9.Choudhry FR, Khan N, Munawar KJIJoMH. Barriers and facilitators to mental health care: A systematic review in Pakistan. 2023;52(2):124-62.
- 10.Mahesar RA, Ali SA-e-Z, Shoib S, Babar Khan M, Ventriglio AJIRoP. Mental health services in Pakistan. 2024:1-6.
- 11.Nigusie A, Endehabtu BF, Angaw DA, Teklu A, Mekonnen ZA, Feletto M, et al. Status of compassionate, respectful, and caring health service delivery: scoping review. 2022;9(1):e30804.
- 12.Schuller KA, Crawford RPJJoMH. Impact of interpersonal client-provider relationship on satisfaction with mental healthcare among the LGBTQ+ population. 2022;31(5):634-41.
- 13.Williams B, Coyle J, Healy DJSs, medicine. The meaning of patient satisfaction: an explanation of high reported levels. 1998;47(9):1351-9.
- 14.Shafiq SJGP. Perceptions of Pakistani community towards their mental health problems: a systematic review. 2020;3(1):28-50.
- 15.Keinki C, Momberg A, Clauß K, Bozkurt G, Hertel E, Freuding M, et al. Effect of question prompt lists for cancer patients on communication and mental health outcomes—a systematic review. 2021;104(6):1335-46.
- 16.Jackson JL, Chamberlin J, Kroenke KJSs, medicine. Predictors of patient satisfaction. 2001;52(4):609-20.
- 17.Abdulkader RS, Venugopal D, Jeyashree K, Al Zayer Z, Senthamarai Kannan K, Jebitha RJJJoPE. The intricate relationship between client perceptions of physician empathy and physician self-assessment: lessons for reforming clinical practice. 2022;9:23743735221077537.
18. Manyanga W, Makanyeza C, Muranda ZJCB, Management. The effect of customer experience, customer satisfaction and word of mouth intention on customer loyalty: The moderating role of consumer demographics. 2022;9(1):2082015.
- 19.Ali SB, Mangi R, Atta ZJPJoGS. A comparative study on the general perception of gender discrimination and job satisfaction among employees. 2024;24(1):195-215.

The Research of Medical Science Review

20.Khalid F, Raza W, Hotchkiss DR, Soelaeman RHJBhsr. Health services utilization and out-of-pocket (OOP) expenditures in public and private facilities in Pakistan: an empirical analysis of the 2013–14 OOP health expenditure survey. 2021;21:1-14.

