

Influence of Interpersonal Services on Clients' Satisfaction in Primary Health Center, Ika Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

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Abstract

Quality care is possible when there is a good interpersonal relationship between the provider and the client. Establishing a quality relationship matters because it fosters trust between the duos. This was a descriptive study conducted between June 3rd and July 3rd 2024. The aim was to determine influence of interpersonal services on clients' satisfaction in PHC Urua Inyang, Ika LGA. The study targeted all adult clients seeking care at the Urua Inyang PHC, a total of 365 respondents were randomly recruited for the study. A self-administered questionnaire titled: Influence of Interpersonal Services on Clients Satisfaction (IISCS) was the instrument for data collection. The validity and reliability of the instrument were ascertained. Ethical approval was obtained for the study and participation was voluntary. A face-face method of data collection was used to administer 365 copies questionnaire to respondents and same number retrieved at the spot after completion. Regression analysis was used to answer research questions and to test all the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. Result indicated that, confidentiality significantly influenced clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA, AKS. It was concluded that confidentiality influences satisfaction, the researcher recommends that health workers should do well to protect clients' information in PHC in Ika LGA.

Key words: Clients, Interpersonal, Primary, Satisfaction, Services,

Introduction

Quality care is possible when there is a good interpersonal relationship between the provider and the client. Establishing a quality relationship matters because it's fosters trust between the duos. Valentine et al (2018) highlighted that interpersonal components of health system include; autonomy, dignity, confidentiality and communication.

Confidentiality is one of the core duties of medical practice. It requires healthcare providers to keep a patient's personal health information private unless the patient or client consents the provider to do so. It is important in care because it aids the establishment of a trusting relationship with the provider (Bord & Dudziinki, 2018). Charter College (2023) maintained that some conditions like sexually transmitted infections, and mental illness still carry a stigma, thus confidentiality protects the patients and prevents discrimination. This could be seen in their willingness to use the facility subsequently. Negash et al. (2022) maintained from a study that confidentiality was the highest responsive element of health system. Gore (2022) pointed out from a study that clients that privacy was not respected. This was linked to the consultation rooms been always overcrowded with medical students. The

implication is that patients tend to hide information when they feel their privacy was not respected.

Communication is a two-way process that involves the exchange of ideas or information between two people. To accurately diagnose and manage a patient effectively, there must be clear and honest communication between the health provider and the patient (Tulane University, 2021). Kwame and Petrucka (2021) outline barriers to effective communication between patient and provider to include; institutional, environmental, and personal/behavioral. The main determinants of patient satisfaction mentioned to be clear and concise communication (Kalaja, 2023). Kalaja (2023) suggested more research in this area. Communication takes place the two people involved understood themselves effectively. Alharbi et al (2022) concluded from their study that communication is greatly influence by educational levels. Apart from taking health history, another important way to communicate with a client is through health teaching. Study by Radwan et al. (2023) in PHCs revealed that majority registered dissatisfaction with health education. Kalaja (2023) suggested more research in this area thus the need for this study to fill this gap in literature and specifically to determine influence of interpersonal services on patients' satisfaction in PHC Ika LGA, Akwa Ibom State.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on interpersonal theory proposed by Carl Rogers in the 1950s. The theory premise is that individuals have different expectations for positive self-regard and strive to maintain positive self-concepts. The theory further proposes that these needs expectations influence the way individual communicate and relate in the social context (Newcastle University, 2020). The theory is applicable to the present study because it explains that in every human relationship there are expectations, which if not met could result in dissatisfaction. The social context in the present study is the Primary Health Center which provides a platform for patients and the healthcare worker to interact for the purpose of seeking and obtaining care. During this relationship, it is conceptualized that the clients will expect a clear communication and confidential information for the period the relationship will last.

Significance of the Study

Findings of this study when implemented will aids the development of a therapeutic relationship between clients and health workers. Findings will benefit clients as it will help managers to reposition the health system to provide patient-centered care which will be tailored to meeting their needs and also protect the patient rights. Finally, the study will Contribute to the body of knowledge in interpersonal services and provide additional information for further research.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives were to;

1. Examine the influence of communication on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA, AKS.

2. Determine the influence of confidentiality on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA, AKS.

Research Questions

The following research question were raised to guide the study

1. What is the influence of communication on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA, AKS?
2. What is the influence of confidentiality on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA, AKS?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were raised and tested at 0.05 level of significance

- H₀₁ There is no significant influence of communication on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA, AKS.
- H₀₂. There is no significant influence of confidentiality on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA, AKS.

Methodology

A descriptive research design was adopted to study influence of interpersonal services on patients' satisfaction from 3rd June 2024 to 3rd July 2024. The study was conducted in Ika LGA which is one of the tenth LGAs in Akwa Ibom North East senatorial district. Ika is bounded by Etim Ekpo LGA and part of Abia state. Ika LGA has 10 wards with the headquarters located at Urua Inyang (Ministry of Economic Development, 2018). PHC base is situated at Urua Inyang, the local government headquarters where data was collected for the study. The study targeted adult patients who seek and obtained services in the PHC Urua Inyang. In the selected facility, the researcher adopted a simple random sampling technique to recruits 365 participants for the study. The instrument for data collection was a closed-ended self-administered questionnaire designed by the researcher from reviewed literature titled 'Influence of Interpersonal Services on clients' Satisfaction' (IISCS). The questionnaire comprised of three (3) sections. Section A, elicited responses on respondents' demographic data while Section B and C consisted of item questions related to the study variables. Section B was divided into two parts. Part A: Influence of communication, this consist four (4) items questionnaire. Part B: Influence of confidentiality: this consist four (4) items questionnaire.

The instrument was given to two Public Health experts and one measurement and evaluation officer for contributions. Their inputs were used to develop the final copy, thus, contents and face validity were ascertained. The researcher used Cronbach Alpha statistic to test the consistency of the instrument and a reliability coefficient of 0.80 was obtained for the instrument, hence the instrument was found to be reliable. A face-to-face method of data collection was adopted by the researcher. With three trained research assistant, the researcher visited the facility and administered 365 copies of the questionnaire to 365 respondents in the

selected Primary Health Care center. Completed copies were retrieved on the spot into file jacket. Data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23. Demographic characteristics were analyzed using frequency and percentages. Regression analysis was used to answer research questions and to test all the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. Ethical approval was duly sorted and obtained from Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Health Ethical Committee. Purpose of the study was explained to the participants and their consent obtained. Participation in the study was voluntary.

Result

Research Question 1: What is the influence of communication on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA?

Table 1: Summary of Regression Analysis for influence of communication on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		R Square
		B	Std. Error	Beta	r	
1	(Constant)	54.883	2.930			
	Communication	.428	.091	.245	.245	.060

Source: Researcher's field computation (2024)

Table 1 shows the summary of the simple regression test. The result shows that the unstandardized coefficient value is .428, indicating that there is a positive influence of communication on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is .060, indicating that 6% changes in clients' satisfaction is attributed to communication. This indicates that communication has a low positive influence on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA.

Research Question 2: What is the influence of confidentiality on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika?

Table 2. Summary of Regression Analysis for influence of confidentiality on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		R Square
		B	Std. Error	Beta	r	
1	(Constant)	30.054	1.875			
	Confidentiality	.578	.028	.746	.746	.557

Source: Researcher's field computation (2024)

Table 2 shows the summary of the simple regression test. The result shows that the unstandardized coefficient value is .578, indicating that there is a positive influence of confidentiality on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is .557, indicating that 56% changes in clients' satisfaction is attributed to

confidentiality. This indicates that confidentiality has a moderate positive influence on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant influence of communication on clients' satisfaction at the PHCs in AKS

Table 3: Summary of Significant Regression Test for influence of communication on clients' satisfaction at the PHCs in AKS

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.522	1	1.522	.015	.901*
	Residual	34022.329	346	98.330		
	Total	34023.851	347			

*Not Significant at $p > .05$._{.901} Source: Researcher's field computation (2024)

Table 3 shows the summary of the regression test. The probability value (p-value) is .901. Since the probability value is greater than the alpha level of .05 ($P > .05$._{.901}), the result is statistically not significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is retained. Hence, there is no significant influence of communication on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA.

Table 4: Summary of Significant Regression Test for influence of confidentiality on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18942.951	1	18942.951	434.607	.001*
	Residual	15080.900	346	43.586		
	Total	34023.851	347			

*Significant at $p < .05$._{.001} Source: Researcher's field computation (2024)

Table 4 shows the summary of the regression test. The probability value (p-value) is .001. Since the probability value is less than the alpha level of .05 ($P < .05$._{.001}), the result is statistically significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant influence of confidentiality on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA.

Discussion of Findings

Findings highlights that communication has a low positive influence on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA. The test of hypothesis reveals there is no significant influence of communication on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA. For communication which plays a critical role in diagnosis and management of patient to have a low positive influence on clients' satisfaction at Primary Healthcare Center suggests that there are barriers to communication. There is need to identify and address such in order to encourage clients for open dialogue, make them feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and

needs. Kwame and Petrucka (2021) outline barriers to effective communication between patient and provider to include; institutional, environmental, and personal/behavioral. Kalaja (2023) found that communication is an extremely important element that affects patient satisfaction. Jazieh *et al.* (2020) see family involvement as a critical component of patient-centered care that impacts the quality of care and patient outcomes. For effective communication, two major communication models were proposed; identifying the responsible person and establishing a point of communication.

Result disagrees with Radwan *et al.* (2023) who from a study on the evaluation of levels and determinants of patient satisfaction with PHC services in Saudi Arabia concluded that there was dissatisfaction with health education services. The contradiction may be due to the fact that communication is done in local dialect of clients. This finding is supported by Alijaralla *et al.* (2021) who carried out a study to assess the level of patients' satisfaction with medical services showed satisfaction increases among those who had effective communication with medical personnel. Also study by Alharbi *et al.* (2022) highlighted significant differences in mean satisfaction scores for communication. Communication being a major factor and a primary factor driving satisfaction so improving communication in PHCs requires a holistic approach, ensuring that it complements other aspects of care to maximize client satisfaction.

The result equally shows that confidentiality has a moderate positive influence on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA. The hypothesis test however, shows that there is a significant influence of confidentiality on clients' satisfaction at the PHC in Ika LGA. This result implies that confidentiality is core in establishing and maintaining a trusting relationship between the provider and client. Charter College (2023) maintained that confidentiality should be valued in health care because some health conditions still carry stigma and will also lead to the reuse of the facility in the future. In practice, when patients are more open and honest about their conditions and trust that their sensitive information is not shared without their consent, potentially leads to better care and a more positive experience. This condition in PHCs strengthens confidentiality and ensure client's satisfaction.

This finding is in tandem with Negash *et al.* (2022) whose findings showed an overall high health system responsiveness to confidentiality and dignity. The finding is supported by Adhikari *et al.* (2024) who found that medical personnel still value confidentiality of patients. It is also in line with findings of Gore (2022) in a study to Evaluate patient satisfaction and quality perception towards health services in Joba Teaching Hospital which revealed that patients tend to hide information when their privacy is not respected.

Implication of the Study

Result indicated that confidentiality significantly influence satisfaction at the PHCs in Ika LGA, AKS. The implication of this finding to public health is that lack of confidentiality

can lead to stigmatization of patients. This can pose a serious threat when it comes to controlling certain disease conditions like HIV, mental illness and others in the society because they still carry stigmatization. For fear of being stigmatized, those suffering from the condition may not want to present themselves again for treatment.

Conclusion

From the result, it was concluded that confidentiality influence clients' satisfaction in PHC Ika LGA. The researcher thus recommends that appropriate measures be put in place to protect clients' right.

Recommendations

1. Health workers should not allow patient cards into the hand of unauthorized persons in the health facilities.
2. Health workers should take health history in cubicles or consulting rooms away from other clients.
3. Government should put in place an electronic data base in health facilities for prompt retrieval of information about a patient.

Contribution to Knowledge

The contribution of this study on Influence of Interpersonal Services on clients' satisfaction to knowledge is that it has shown empirically, that confidentiality significantly influence clients' satisfaction in Primary Health Centers.

Suggestions for Further Study

Comparative study on satisfaction levels across different healthcare settings (primary health centers, secondary and tertiary hospitals) to identify best practices and areas for improvement in each setting.

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