



FINAL YEAR RESEARCH REPORT

THE EFFECT OF WAITING TIME ON PATIENT PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF CARE IN HEALTH CENTERS IN MBALE DISTRICT.

By;

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Waiting time is an important indicator in determining the quality of care offered in health facilities. The average waiting time is 1 to 2 hours in Malaysia, Nigeria and Atlanta, and about 4 hours in developing countries. High number of patients, seasonal illnesses, limited resources and unnecessary visits to medical facilities contribute to lengthy waiting. There is an inverse relationship between waiting time and patient satisfaction. The lengthy waiting affects utilization of health services and continuity of care.

Objectives: To determine the waiting time, identify determinants of waiting time, assess the effect of waiting time on patient satisfaction with the quality of care and identify other factors affecting patient satisfaction with care.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study with both quantitative and qualitative methods carried out in the Outpatient Departments of Namatala Health Center IV and Kolonyi Hospital in Mbale district, Eastern Uganda. A total of 352 patients and caretakers of children obtained using systemic random sampling at the health facilities were interviewed using an online interviewer-administered questionnaire. Quantitative data was entered into Microsoft excel sheets software and exported to STATA software version 15.0 for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics, chi-square test and logistic regression were conducted.

Results: The mean age was 30.22 ± 12.34 years. The participants were mostly females, 18-24 years old, unemployed, married and with secondary education. Overall, the mean waiting time and consultation time was 60.15 ± 39.82 minutes and 3.71 ± 3.70 minutes respectively with the mean waiting time longer in the public health facility (68.46 minutes) than the private health facility (29.99 minutes). Only 98(27.8%) met the Institute of Medicine recommendation of having at least 90% of the patients seen within 30 minutes. Participants at Namatala HCIV were 9 times more likely to experience prolonged waiting time as compared to those at Kolonyi Hospital Majority (98.30%) of the participants were satisfied with care.

Conclusion: Overall, waiting time was prolonged and the consultation time was short. Waiting time differed among participants according to the health facility they visited with longer waiting time at Namatala HCIV, a public health facility compared to Kolonyi Hospital, a private health facility. If the recommendation of the Institute of Medicine is to be realized, there is an urgent need for the government to increase the number of health workers in public health facilities to reduce the waiting time and therefore increase patient satisfaction with waiting time and the satisfaction with the quality of care as a result.

Key words: *waiting time, satisfaction, quality of care*

DECLARATION

I, Naminya Isaac, a fourth year Nursing student of Busitema University Faculty of Health Science declare to the best of my knowledge that this is my own original work and has never been submitted elsewhere for any kind of purpose.

I therefore submit it for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Science in Nursing of Busitema University.

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APPROVAL

This dissertation has been submitted with approval of my research supervisor.

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ACRONYMS

BUFHS	Busitema University Faculty of Health Sciences
NRH	National Referral Hospital
RRH	Regional Referral Hospital
WHO	World Health Organization
OPD	Outpatient Department
HC	Health Center
WT	Waiting Time
CT	Consultation Time