

Challenges Faced by Pakistan's Public Health: Doctors Perspective

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Abstract

Background: It has been recognized that almost in every part of the world health services are not provided properly as expected, and peoples face challenges and problems in one way or other while assessing fundamental right.

Objective: Current study aimed to assess challenges and problems perceive by the public in Government hospital (LRH Peshawar) by doctor's perspective.

Methodology: A questioner was prepared in three major sections and cross sectional survey was performed among doctors of LRH and questioner was asked to fill.

Result: Cross sectional survey result revealed among respondent (n=20 66.6%) were female doctors and remaining were male doctors (n=10, 33.3%). Besides this 9 (30%) doctors were surgeon, n=12 (40%) were gynecologist n=5 (16.66%) were general medical specialist and n=4 (13.33%) were eye specialist. Further n=17 (56.66%) have 15-20 years of experience. while n=7 (23.33%) have experience of 5-10 years On the other hands few of them n=6 (20%) was recently appoint with 4 years of experience. In second part of the questioner 83% of the doctors agreed that patient bed is in very limited number due to which some patients suffered a lot while 60% doctors agreed that inadequate cleaning and sterilization which is not sufficient to prevent

hospital acquired infections. And 86% doctor suggest that clinical orientation should be given to doctors at first 3 years of posting. Besides this 90% doctors think due to high illiteracy rate there is always communication gap between doctors and patient, while patient suffered with inferiority complex thinks that they are not treated well.

Conclusion: There are many difficulties and challenges by public health in perceiving health services current study was one of the major challenge and it conclude that majority of the problem was associated with the hospital management. And due to overload of patient and lack of facilities in government hospital it was difficult for doctors to manage. Hospital management should take care of these situations.

Key words: Public health, challenges, LRH, Peshawar

Introduction

Seeking basic health services is the fundamental right of every individual on this planet. But millions of people around the globe do not access to this fundamental right, due to poverty or critical ill health condition. Almost everywhere in the world standard of the health services are not good as expected especially in the rural areas, and there is clear demand for better services [1]. Majority of the public face problems, most particular problem is of distance to hospitals. Besides this there are several other reasons associated with the public health challenges like in some countries including Pakistan socio-culture problems especially with the nurses also raise difficulties for both health professionals and patients [2]. Apart from this many other reasons as explained by some researchers and analytics [3,4,5,].

In Pakistan about 25% of its population is below poverty line and unable to finance their health treatment and this is the main reason that majority of the Pakistan population seek basic health treatment from government hospitals, making them over crowded [6,7]. Everyone have their own point of view about the problems associated with the public health. So current study was aimed to focused on the doctor's perceptions about the public health in Peshawar Lady Ready Hospitals (LRH).

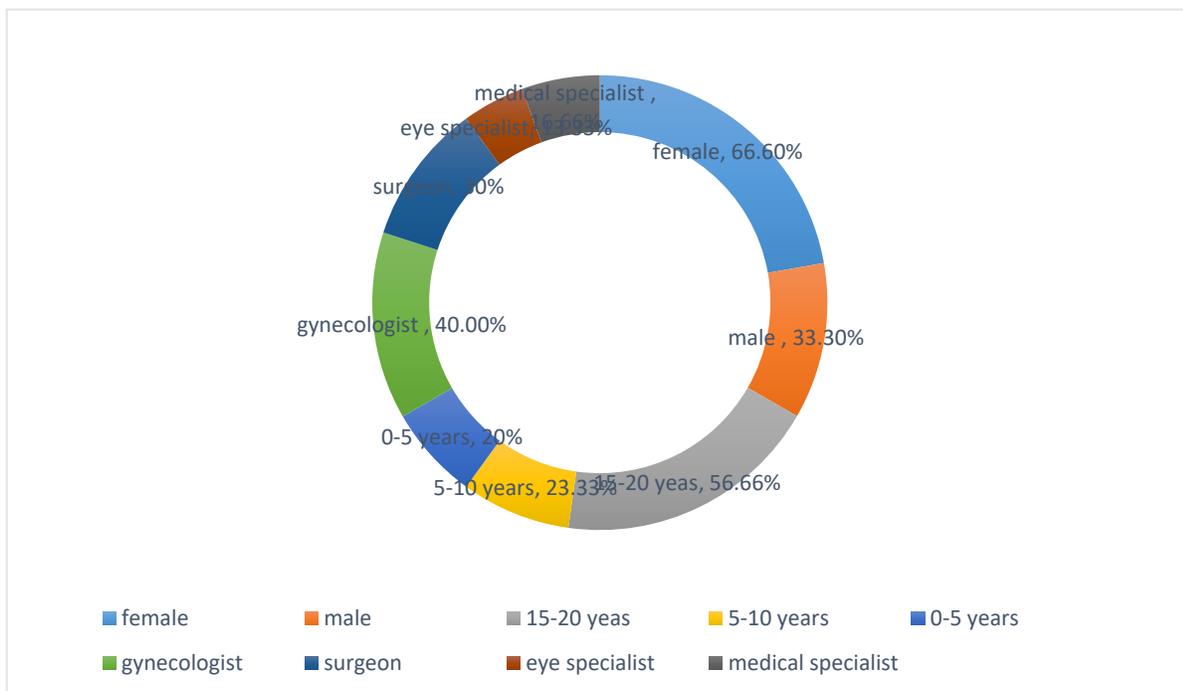
Materials and methods:

A qualitative survey was conducted among random doctors of the lady reading hospital Peshawar. Oral consent was taken from the respondent. Questioner was divided into three major portion 1st portion consist of only three question that is 1) gender 2) specialization 3) experience. 2nd portion contains questions about the hospitals managements while 3rd portion consist of the questions related to the patients. One questioner can be answered fully in approximately 15 minutes Each of the response is evaluated separately and data is represented in percentages.

Result

Total of 30 doctors participated in the survey. Among the respondent (n=20 66.6%) were female doctors and remaining were male doctors (n=10, 33.3%). 9 (30%) doctors were surgeon, n=12 (40%) were gynecologist n=5 (16.66%) were general medical specialist and n=4 (13.33%) were eye specialist. Majority of our respondent were well experienced staff with 15-20 years of experience n=17 (56.66%) while n=7 (23.33%) have experience of 5-10 years. On the other hands few of them n=6 (20%) was recently appoint with 4 years of experience. Detail of this portion is illustrated in the following figure 1

Figure1: General categorization of the respondents



Second portion of the questioner is sub divided into two portion 1contains question about problems associated with the managing staff of hospitals. Due to which doctor is facing problems in turn local community is facing the problems. While third portion contains question related to doctors. Details is depicted in the table 1 and 2

Table1: Issues related to hospitals managements

Questions raised		True	Sometime	False
1.	Lack of instructions (written and graphical) for the patients to trace diagnostic labs, OPD's and different wards in a hospital.	(n=3) 10%	(n=15) 50%	(n=12) 40%
2.	Diagnostics labs (lacking working equipment in comparison to total quantity of the beds) .	(n=15) 50%	(n=7) 23.33%	(n=8) 26.66 %
3.	Doctors security and facilities.	(n=16) 53.33%	(n=10) 33.3%	(n=4) 13.33%
4.	Higher authority supervision	(n=14) 46.66%	(n=12) 40%	(n=4) 13.33%
5.	Limited supply of beds in wards.	(n=25) 83%	(n=5) 16.66 %	(n=0) 00.00%
6.	Insufficient cleaning and sterilization to prevent/inhabit hospital acquired infection (especially toilets and lavatories)	(n=18) 60%	(n=7) 23.33%	(n=5) 16.66%

It was revealed that majority of the doctor (83 %) was agreed to the problems related to the beds supplied from the hospitals administration. And besides this majority of the doctors (60%) were also agreed that there is insufficient cleaning and sterilization measurements taken to prevent hospitals acquired infections and disease.

Table 2: problems related to doctors

Questions raised		True	Some time	False
1	Deficiency of clinical orientation during first 3 years of posting	86% (n=26)	10% (n=3)	3.33% (n=1)
2	Insufficient salary to health professionals (doctors and paramedical staff) by government	60% (n=18)	16.66% (n=5)	23.33% (n=7)
3	Un-availability of health professionals	33.33% (n=10)	50% (n=15)	16.66% (n=5)
4	Insufficiency of health personals (especially doctors and nurses) to give health education to patient.	50% (n=15)	23.33% (n=7)	26.66% (n=8)

2nd portions of questioner result revealed that majority of the doctors (86%) are agreed that clinical orientation should be given to every first three years of posting. Results in between 10% to 60% is given in the table 2.

Table 3: problems associated with the patients seeking treatments in government hospitals

Questions related problems associated with the patients are three. These are the most important questions which drew attentions most. About 90% doctors thinks that due to literacy rate patients and doctors are facing problems in communication. And 80% doctors are agreed that due illiteracy and poverty most of their patients thinks that they are not treated well.

Discussion

Satisfactory, accessible, affordable and appropriate health treatment is the basic right of every on this earth. And this right can be well recognized by global leadership under the banner of WHA (world health assembly) 1978 and 1998 (8) But due to a lot of issue there are bundles of problems and challenges perceived by public health. Questions and problems raised in current research drew attentions for the most. This study was conducted among the doctors. In order to evaluate their perceptions and thoughts about the challenges faced by doctors and patients.

Result revealed that majority of our respondent were female, well experienced and most of

Questions raised		True	Sometimes	False
1	Due to poverty patients has the Inferiority complex,	80% (n=24)	13% (n=4)	6.66% (n=2)
2	Patients and families are not following the instruction of the doctors	46.66% (n=14)	20% (n=6)	33.33% (n=10)
3	Communication gap between doctors and patients or directions to many locations in hospitals create problem for patients and doctors due to illiteracy.	90% (n=27)	10% (n=3)	0.00% (n=0)

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In the second segment 3rd question is 53 % of the doctors tick it true. this is may be due to doctors were killed [9, 10]. This situation is of prime importance for the higher authority of the health department. Because if someone not feel safe they cannot do their best. Besides this

majority of the doctors agreed that doctors are not well facilitated. And it is obvious that peace of mind is very important factor while working in the crowded areas. [11]

In the same segments question no 5, about the hospital facilities for patient in which, 83% of the doctors agreed that hospitals have limited supply of beds. Due to which most of the admission are late while some critical patient didn't receive in time attention and appropriate treatment. Besides this migration from the rural areas to urban due to many reasons like job, treatment and better life, cities are overcrowded and in turn overcrowd the government hospitals. Unfortunately, lack of funds leads to lack of facilities like number of beds and laboratory equipment [12]. Apart from this, directions sign for patients to locate wards, laboratory or any other places is not sufficient is mark true by very few doctors but this is one of the basic problem which make patient disorient especially those attendants or patient who are suffered critically. In turn they think that they are not treated very well. As in the last of the questioner question was asked about the patient satisfaction. Problems associated to the hospital management is very critical and have direct impact on the hospital efficiency. [13,14]

Further question was raised about the problems associated with the doctors. In which most of the doctors agreed that clinical orientation should be given to the doctors in the first two years of the posting. But due to overcrowded government hospitals it is not possible to manage such things because it needs human resource and time, even this overcrowding also effect hospital service quality [15, 16, 17]. In next question majority of the doctors think that doctors don't have sufficient salary. This might be the reason that doctors are taking less interest in the government patient and try to practice private. As we already mention that lack of facilities for doctors means that lack of mind peace. Apart from this doctors to patient ratio is very low. Number of patient is very high while number of doctors are very low. Due to this problem many patients suffer a lot. Last segment of the questioner dealt with the problem associated with the patient. In which most of the doctors agreed that due to low literacy rate in patient they normally suffered with communication gap with the patient. Besides this patient normally don't observe the follow-up this might be possible due to over load in government hospitals or they feel better at first dose and they ignore doctors' advice. Which sometimes leads to critical situations.

Conclusion

As 25% of our population is below the poverty line and they seek treatment in government hospitals. Where they suffered a lot. Due to overcrowding, staff shortage, lack of funds, medicine, equipment's, facilities and health supplies. Moreover, in many places syringes and surgical instruments are used repeatedly without proper sterilization. Promote many hospitals based infections. Measures should be taken to improve understanding about the follow-ups and doctors' advice.

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