

“STUDY ON REDUCING WAITING TIME IN THE OUT-PATIENT DEPARTMENT”

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Introduction

- OPDs is considered as the window to hospital services and a patient's impression of the hospital begins at the OPD.
- Patients' waiting time has been defined as “the length of time from when the patient entered the outpatient clinic to the time the patient actually leaves the OPD”.
- Whether it's a time used for registration of patient, routine doctor's appointment, emergency room treatment, laboratory/ diagnostic test, procedures, receiving the results of various tests, waiting happens to just about everyone seeking medical care.
- This impression often influences the patient's sensitivity to the hospital and therefore it is essential to ensure that OPD services provide an excellent experience for customers. It is also well-established that 8-10 per cent of OPD patients need hospitalization.

Stakeholders' Comments

- 'Why I have been given an appointment at 11:00am if my Doctor doesn't arrive at this time?' –*patient voice*.
- 'What is the purpose of booking an appointment if I still have to wait' –*patient voice*.
- Every half an hour my turn is extended in the queue, how long I have to wait if I don't have an appointment with Doctor? –*walk-in patient*
- 'As waiting time increases, it becomes difficult to handle patients' queries, each patient ask about cause of delay, it causes crowding around Nurse counter' –*nurse*

PROBLEM STATEMENT

- Outpatient Department is a critical process for any hospital . Short waiting time and positive experience represent important drivers of patient satisfaction. Meanwhile, inefficient processes can result in increasing waiting time, lost revenues and poor community image.

Rationale

- The purpose of study was to understand the OPD patient flow process and come up with reforms to reduce patient waiting time and then measure the effect of the reforms.
- It was seen that 92% patient complaints in OPD were about long waiting time.
- 70% of OPD patients came in as walk-ins, So long waiting times for walk-in patients was one of the biggest challenge.
- As OPD is first point of contact for most of the patients, their experience here determines their behavior towards other hospital services.

RESEARCH QUESTION

- How to reduce long waiting time of Out-Patient Department?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To identify the average time spent by the patient in the OPD.
2. If the waiting time is high, then identify the factors those are responsible for high waiting time in the OPD.
3. To recommend appropriate suggestions to optimize the waiting time in OPD.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Location of study

- Out-patient Department
- Apex Hospitals, Jaipur.

Study Design

- mix of qualitative and quantitative.

Study Period

- 1st March 2015-30th April 2015

Sample Size

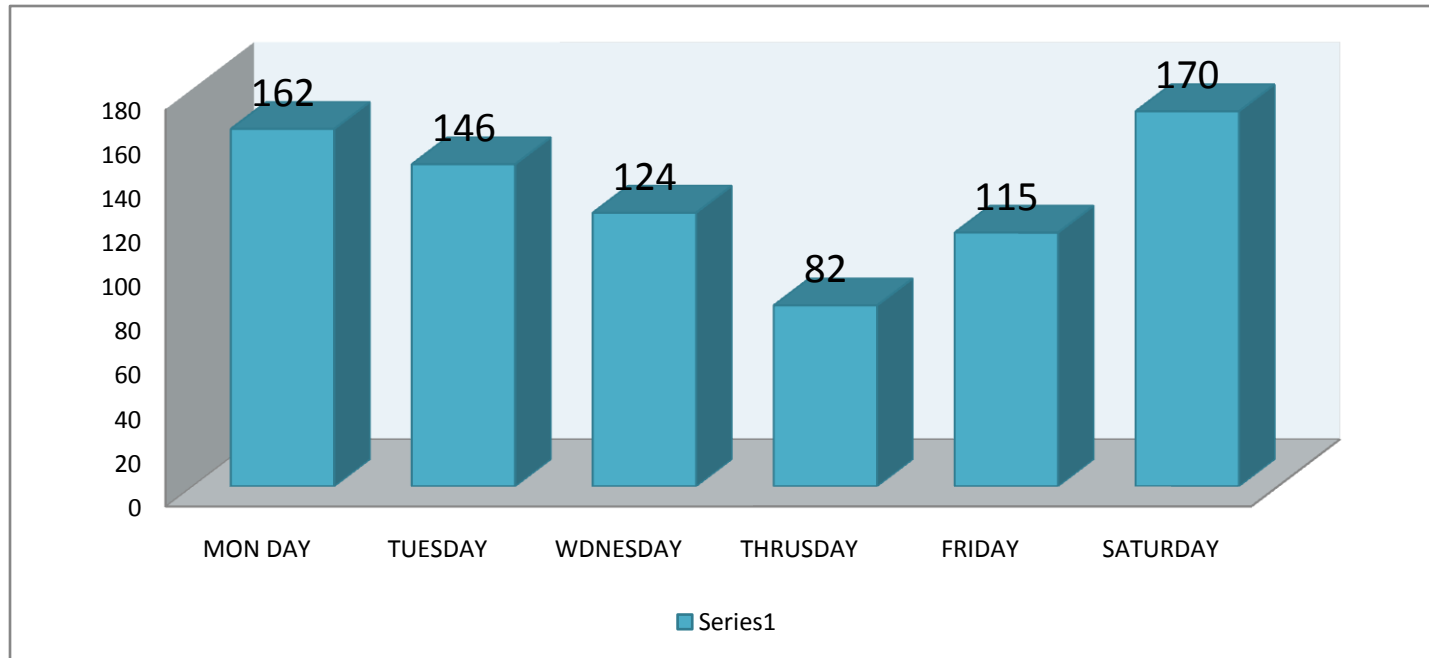
- 100 Patients

Sample Technique

- Probability.(CONVENIENCE SAMPLING)

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

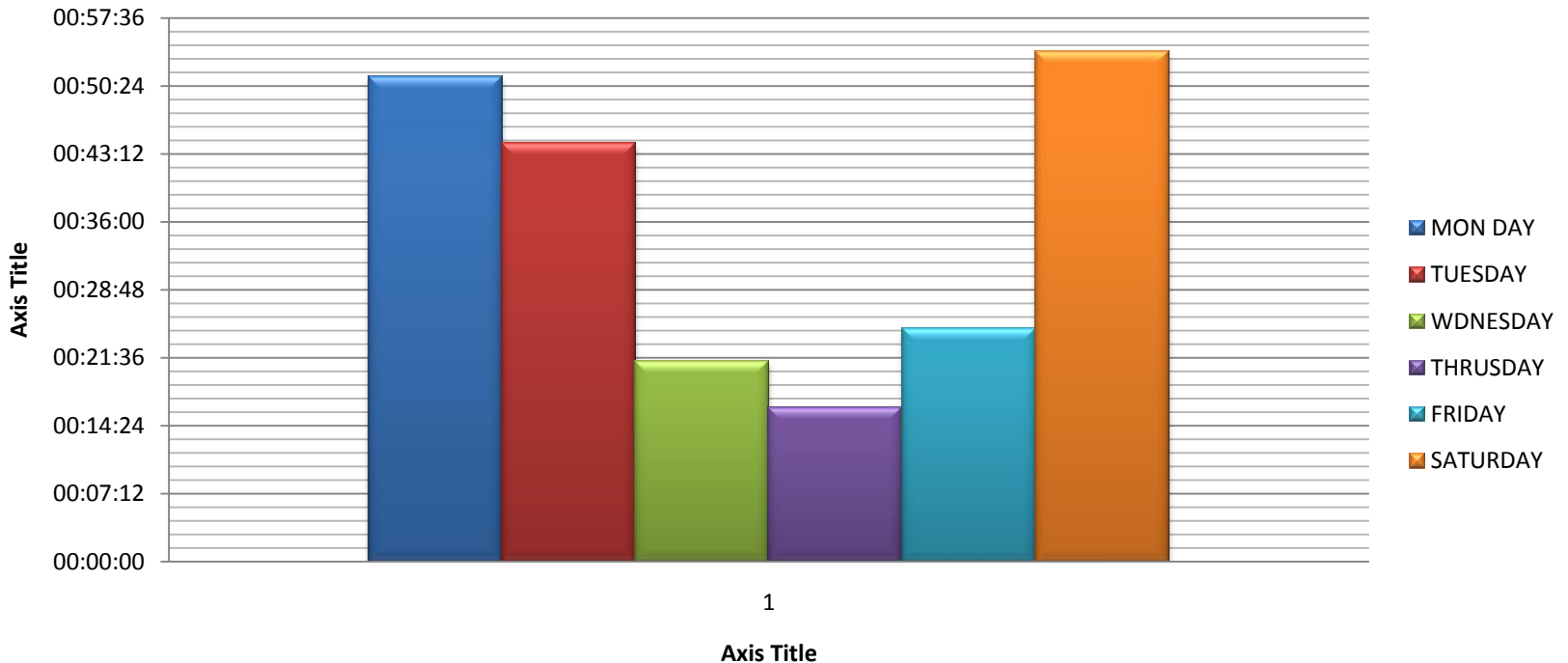
- **Uneven Patient flow during week days**



x-axis denote no. of patients and y-axis denotes days.

- On Monday and Saturday number of patients are more as compared to other days of the week so the waiting time for OPD patients are more.
- **SOLUTION:** increase number of appointments on other days of the week.
- Train reception staff to convenience the patient to take appointment.

VARIATION OF WAITING TIME OVER WEEK



x-axis shows time in minutes and y-axis shows days

This graph shows the variation of waiting hours over a week. On Wednesday and Thursday (21.13 & 16.21mins) the waiting time is less as compare to other days of week but on Monday and Saturday the waiting time is high (51.26mins & 54.04mins).

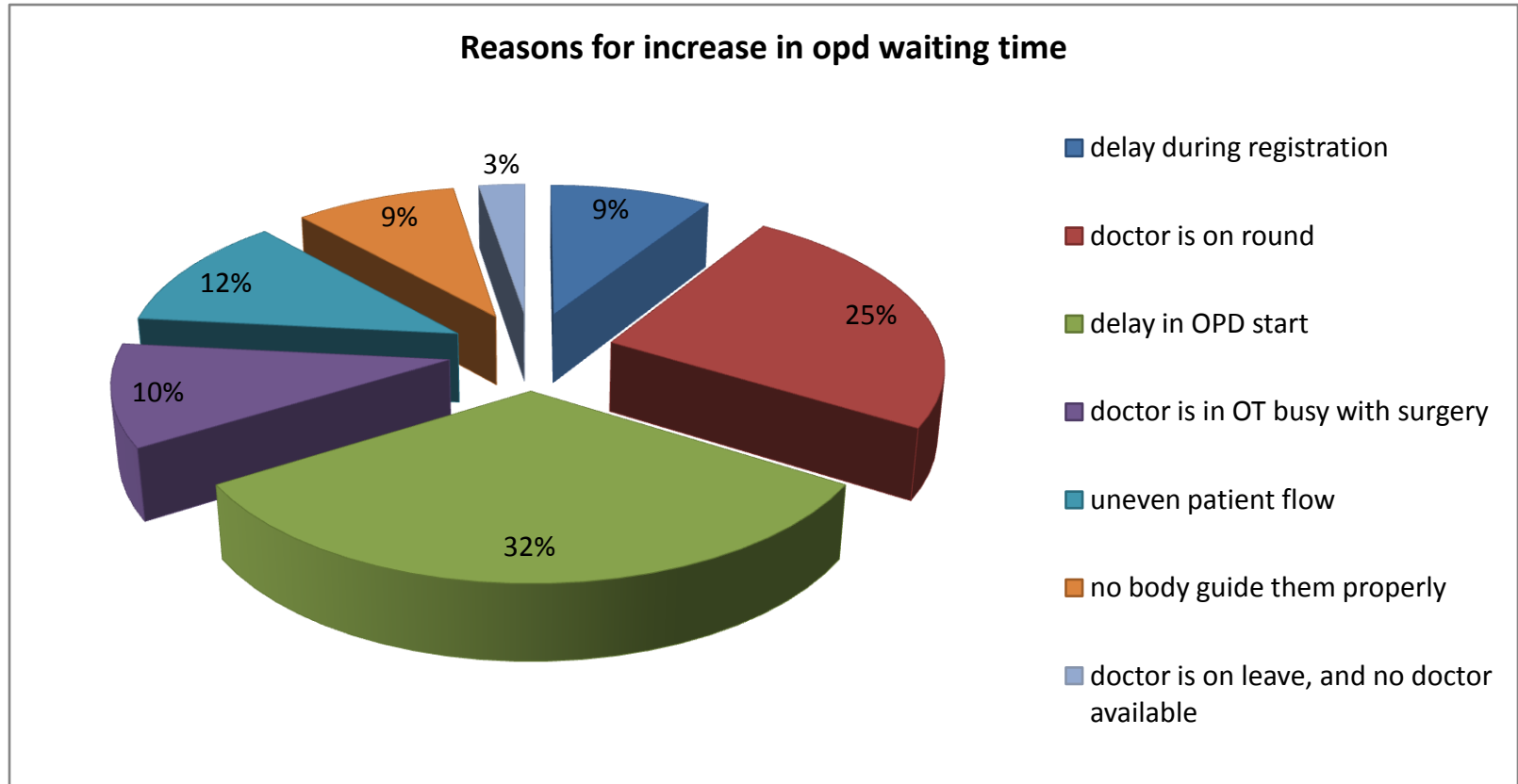
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Average waiting time for OPD patients is 54.04mins.

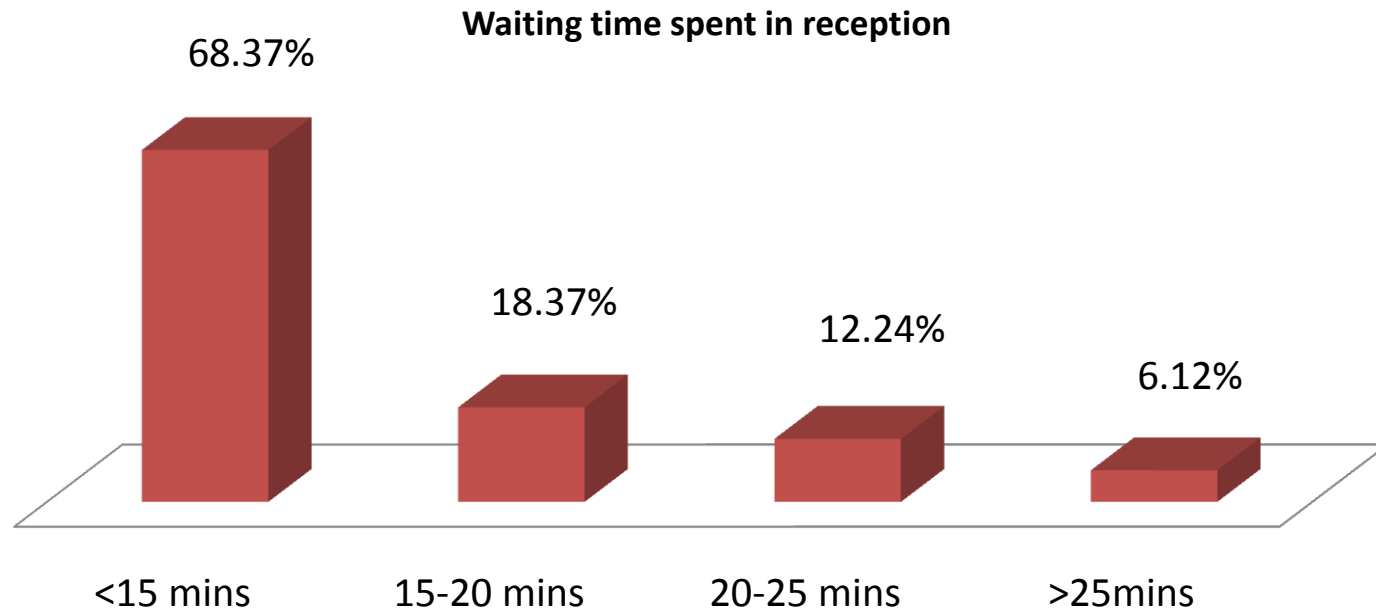
Average time to reach the OPD waiting area from registration desk:- 14.03mins

Average time to enter into the doctors chambers from OPD waiting area:-40.01mins

Reasons for high OPD waiting time:

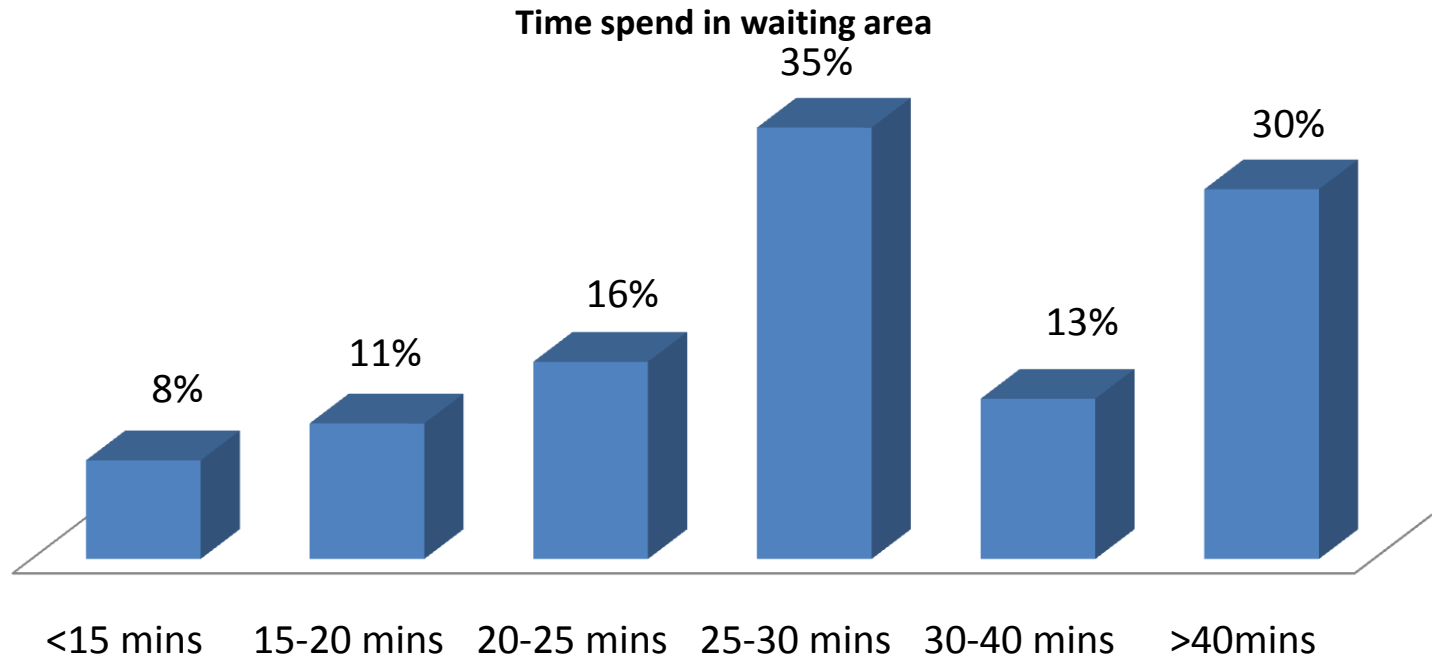


Waiting time spent at reception or registration.



Out of 100 patient, 68.37% had to wait for less than 15 mins, 18.37% waited for 15-20 mins, 12.24% waited for 20-25 mins, and only 6-7 number of patient had to wait for more than 25 mins at the reception for registration.

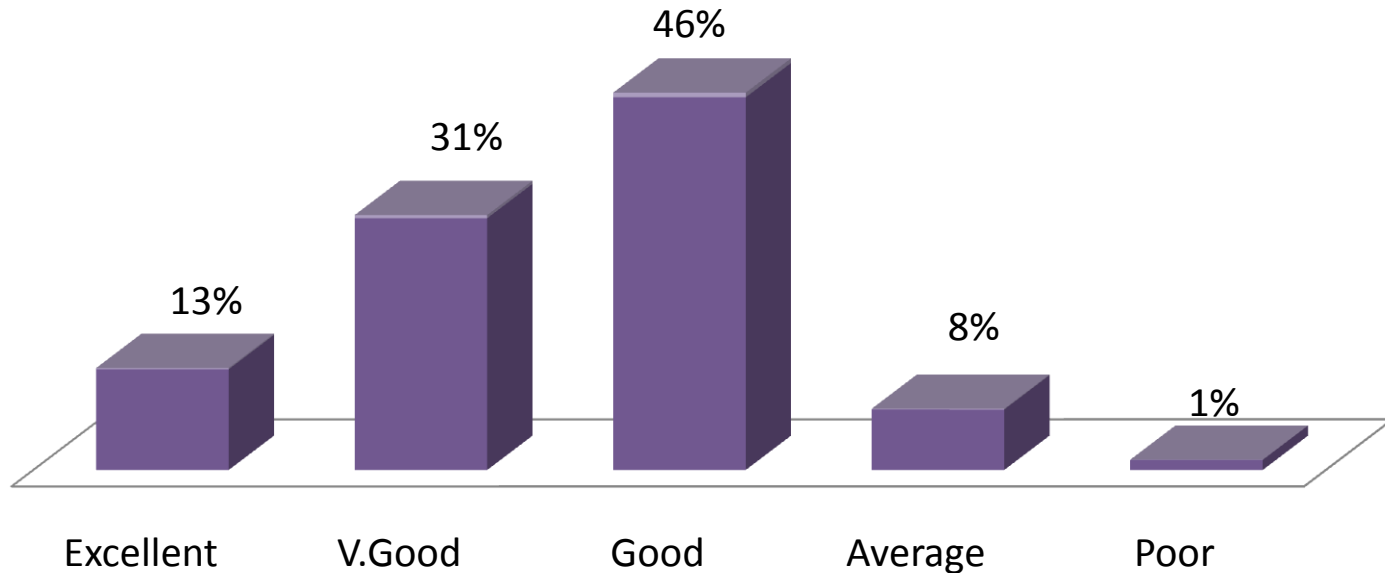
Waiting time for consultation



Out of 100 patient, highest is 35.71% patient had to wait for more than 25-30 mins and lowest 8% patient waited for less than 15 mins. While 11% patient waited for 15-20 mins. 16% patient waited for 20-25 mins and 30% patient had waited for more 40 mins. In OPD for consultation.

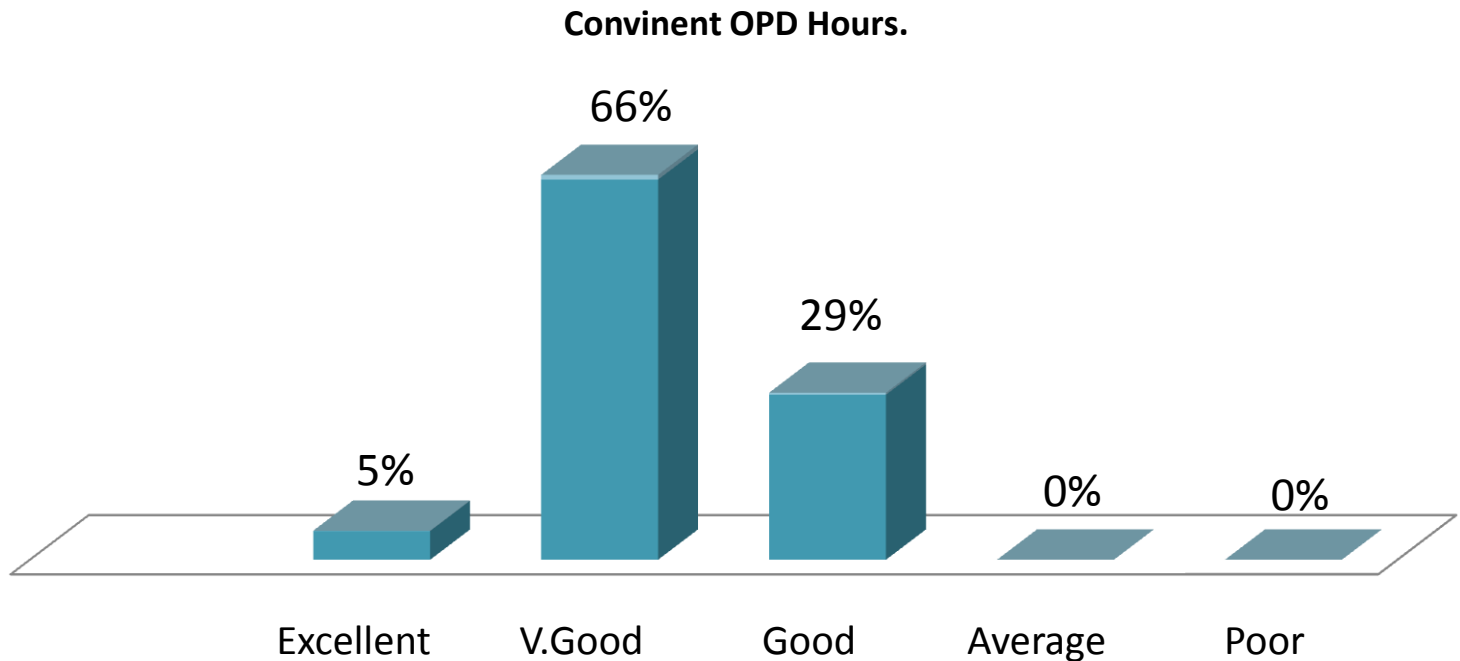
Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire Analysis

The hospital parking is quiet convenient



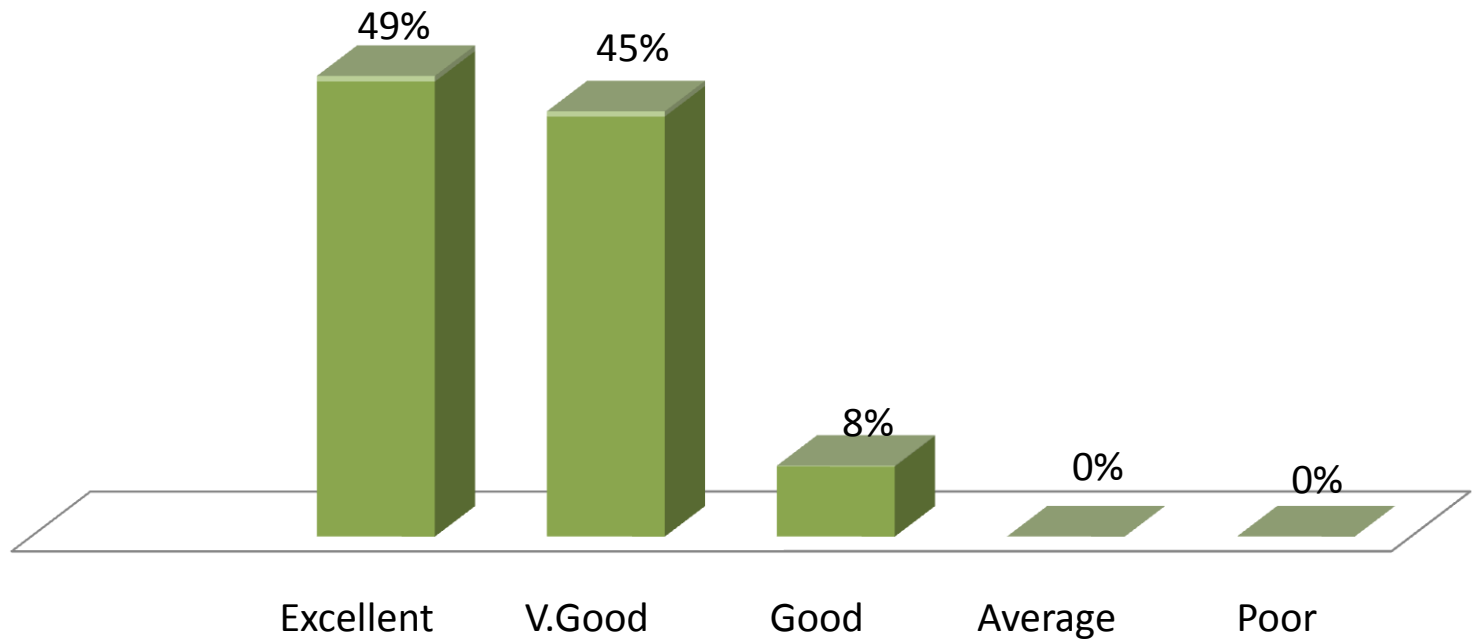
13% patient says that parking facility in hospital is excellent, 25 (31%) respond to it is very good and 37 (46%) respond to it is good and rest 7 (9%) says that the parking in the hospital premise is **average**.

The hospital OPD working hours were quiet convenient



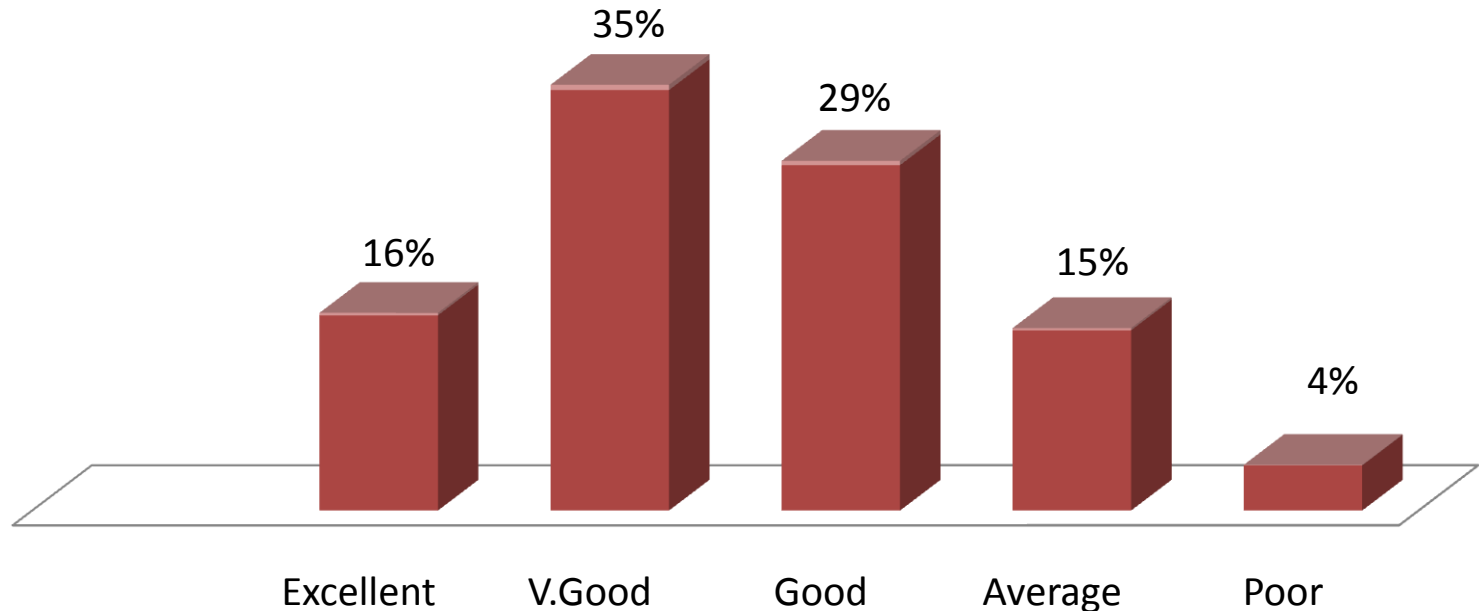
5% patients are highly satisfied with the OPD working hours and 66% patients are satisfied with the working hours of OPD these working hours are quiet convenient for them.

Did the patient face any problem in finding the department location



49% patient respond excellent that they did not face any difficulty in finding the various departments, and 45% patient says very good that it is quiet easy for them to find the different department, and rest 8% patient are not satisfied with that they face bit difficulty in finding various departments in the hospital.

The patient had to wait too long for getting investigation done



16% patient observed that this service of investigation is excellent that they didn't have to wait too long for investigation getting done, the response of 35% (28) patient says that this service very good, 29% patient gives good and rest 19% patient are not satisfied with this they had waited too long for investigation getting done

FINDINGS

- Miscommunication.
- Improper sinages.
- uneven patient flow during week days.
- Delay in OPD start.
- Staffing issues.
- Doctors are busy with rounds and surgeries during OPD hours.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide timely training to the front office executives regarding OPD forms so that miscommunication between front office executive and the patient will reduce to certain level it will ends up with decrease in OPD waiting hours.
- Put either proper sign boards for various OPD departments so that the patient will follow and reach to specific department without wasting time.
- Encourage more number of appointment on Wednesday and Thursday, also encourage patient to book prior appointment.

- Delay of more than 15 minutes should be recorded and weekly report to be shared with the chairman.
- Increase number of appointment slots and redesign number of slots.
- Educating patient about booking an appointment before coming for consultation. Train FOE to convenience patient for prior appointment.
- In case of emergency situation if doctor moves out of OPD inform front office staff or appoint a resident doctor on behalf of him.

Appointment Scheduling for Doctors

EARLIER (12 slots)

Time	Patient Details	visit type	Reason for Contact	Contact Details
11:00-11:10				
11:10-11:20				
11:20-11:30				
11:30-11:40				
11:40-11:50				
11:50-12:00				
12:00-12:10				
12:10-12:20				
12:20-12:30				
12:30-12:40				
12:40-12:50				
12:50-1:00				



NOW (20 slots)

Time	Patient Details	visit type	Reason for Contact	Contact Details
11:00-11:06				
11:06-11:12				
11:12-11:18				
11:18-11:24	blocked			
11:24-11:30				
11:30-11:36				
11:36-11:42				
11:42-11:48	blocked			
11:48-11:54				
11:54-12:00				
12:00-12:06				
12:06-12:12	blocked			
12:12-12:18				
12:18-12:24				
12:24-12:30				
12:30-12:36	blocked			
12:36-12:42				
12:42-12:48				
12:48-12:54				
12:54-1:00	blocked			

THANK YOU