REDUCING DROPOUTS AND IMPROVING PATIENT RETENTION A STUDY AT A MATERNITY HOSPITAL

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INTRODUCTION

Why Patient Retention Matters

- Maternity hospitals play a crucial role in continuous reproductive care. Daily footfall**: 250 on weekdays, >300 on Saturdays.**

- High dropout rates disrupt care retention and affect maternal outcomes.

Target patient segments-

- Pregnant women
- Gynaecological patients
- Fertility treatment seekers

Strategic Importance of Retention

📈 **Why Focus on Retention?**

• Better health outcomes through uninterrupted care.
• Financial stability via repeat visits and full-course treatments
• Word-of-mouth promotion from satisfied customers reduces marketing costs

Retention Goals:

• Enhance patient loyalty via
• Cultural sensitivity
• Affordable care plans
• Personalized support & communication

Research Question

What targeted strategies can be implemented to enhance patient retention in maternity, gynecological, and fertility care settings?

2.What are the primary causes contributing to dropouts across maternity hospital services?

Objectives

- To determine effective strategies for retaining customers in the hospital.
- To support the development and implementation of focused approaches to reduce dropout rates and improve retention.

Literature Review

Authors	Year	Location	Methodology	Key_Findings
Tadese et al.	2022	Debre Berhan, Ethiopia	Cluster Sampling	Low income, rural residence & lack of partner support contribute to dropouts.
Opon et al.	2020	Kenya	Stratified & Proportionate Sampling	Long waiting times & facility hours affect prenatal visit retention.
Amare et al.	2022	Northwest Ethiopia	Cross-sectional (Community-based)	Socioeconomic status & accessibility barriers lead to care discontinuation.
Mihret et al.	2024	Northwest Ethiopia	Interpretive Description Approach	Dropouts influenced by factors across personal, community & system levels.
Dadi et al.	2021	Rural Ethiopia	National Survey Data Analysis	Early & regular ANC visits crucial to maintaining care continuity.

Methodology

RESEARCH DESIGN

Mixed-method approach: **Observational** and **Experimental**

Observational Study:
- Identifies reasons for patient dropouts
- Tools: Surveys, interviews, and patient records

- **Experimental Study**:
  - Implements targeted retention strategies
  - Evaluates effectiveness based on real-time feedback

STUDY SETTING &POPULATION

Conducted in a **maternity hospital** serving a diverse population

- Focus groups include:
  - Pregnant women
  - Gynecological patients
  - Fertility treatment seekers

📌 Sampling & Data Collection

All **newly registered patients** during the study period included

Methods used:

- Questionnaires
- Structured interviews
- Demographic & clinical record

📌 Analysis

Excel-based quantitative analysis

Inferential statistics used to identify dropout patterns

📌 Ethical Considerations

Written informed consent obtained from all participants

Ensured:

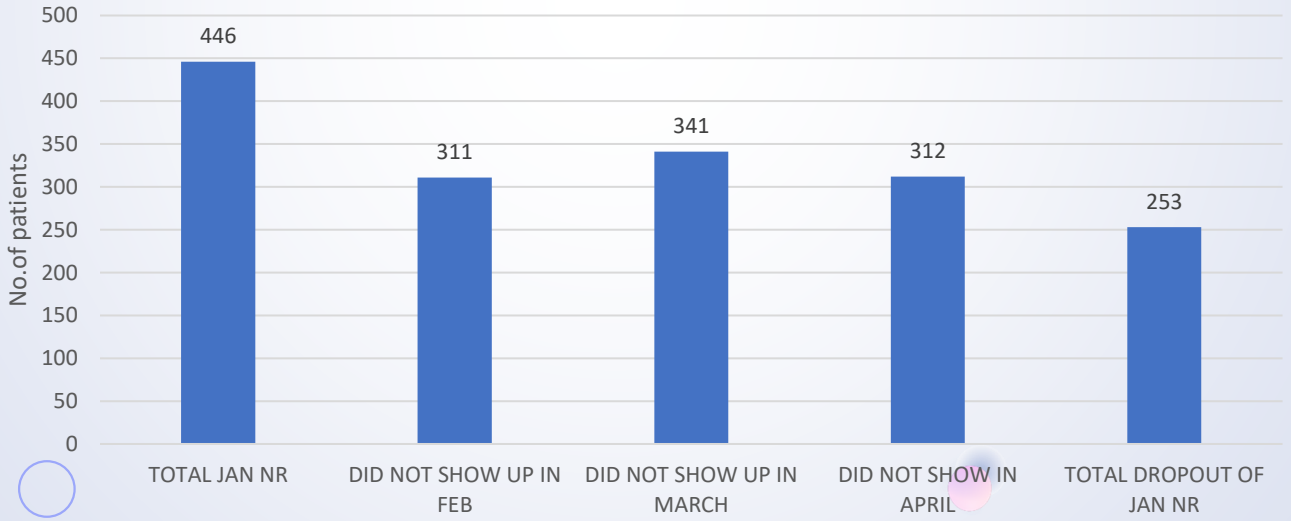
Voluntary participation

Data confidentiality throughout the study.

RESULT

QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT- JANUARY NR

TOTAL JAN NR	DID NOT SHOW UP IN FEB	DID NOT SHOW UP IN MARCH	DID NOT SHOW IN APRIL	TOTAL DROPOUT OF JAN NR (did not show up after Jan)
446	311	341	312	253

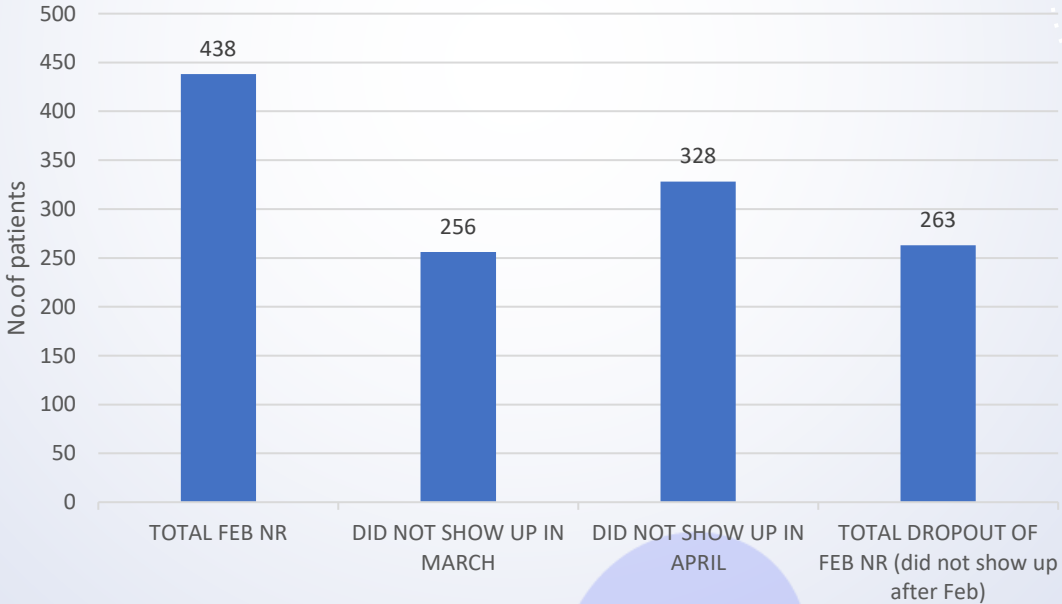


Percentage dropout in JAN= 56%

DROPOUT	NATIVE	OTHER HOSPITAL	MTP	FOUND SERVICE EXPENSIVE	OTHERS
253	120	42	4	68	19

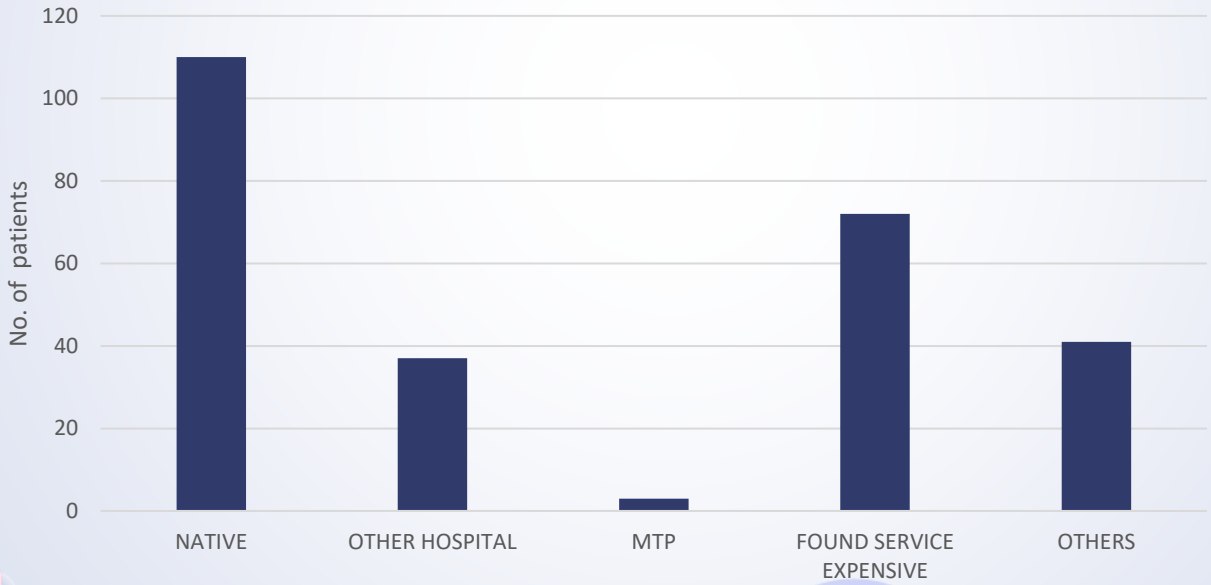
FEBRUARY NR-

TOTAL FEB NR	DID NOT SHOW UP IN MARCH	DID NOT SHOW UP IN APRIL	TOTAL DROPOUT OF FEB NR (did not show up after Feb)
438	256	328	263

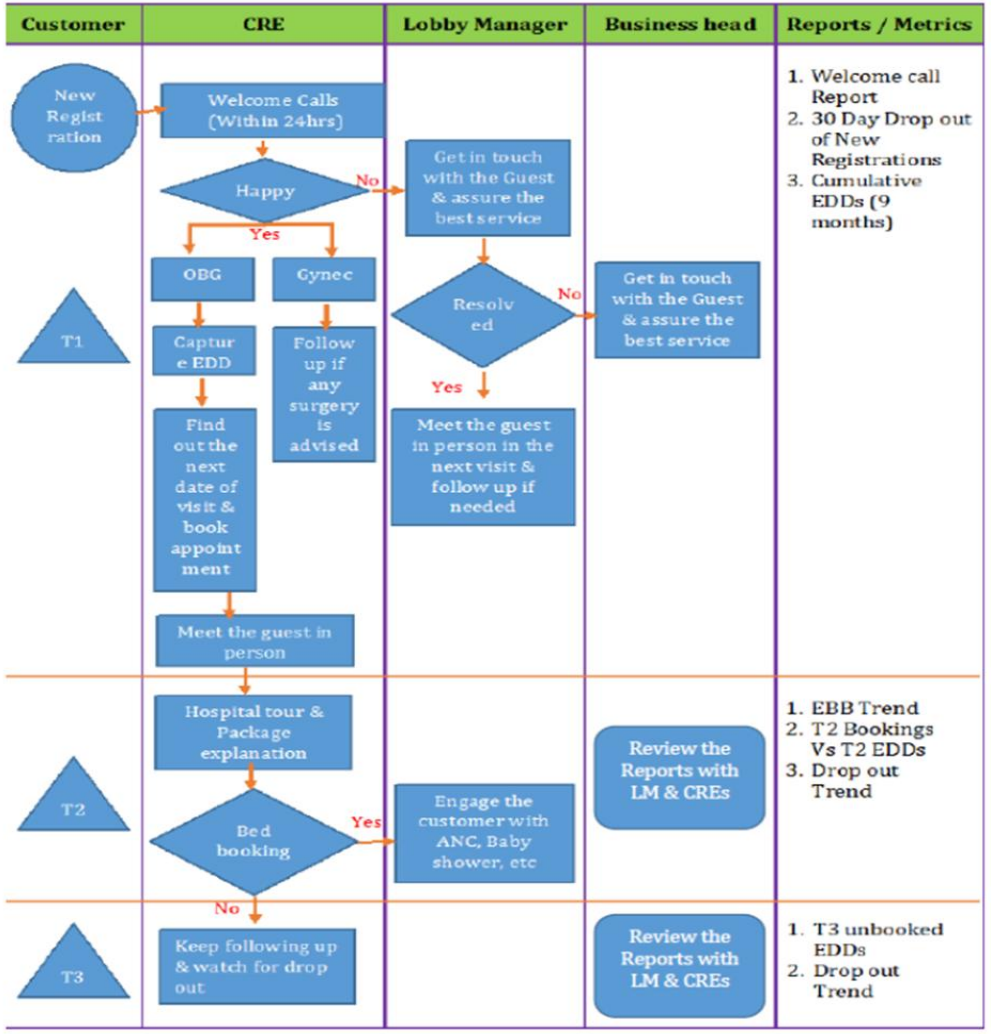


Percentage dropout in FEB= 60 %

DROPOUT	NATIVE	OTHER HOSPITAL	MTP	FOUND SERVICE EXPENSIVE	OTHERS
263	110	37	3	72	41



- Process for tapping each and every customer during and after the visit.



STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING DROPOUT DUE TO FOLLOWING REASONS-

- Patients moving to native place for delivery.

Native

- Patient moving to other hospitals.

Other Hospital

- Patients dropping out due to higher expenses.

Expenses

Addressing Dropouts Due to Cultural Practices-

In many parts of **southern India**, it is a traditional custom for the **paternal side of the family to bear the cost of the first delivery**. As a result, many expectant mothers return to their native place for childbirth, which can lead to patient dropouts.

To address this:

- The hospital first identifies the **relocation destination** of the customer.
- It then checks whether a **branch or partner hospital** is available in that region.
- If available, the hospital facilitates a **seamless transfer of the bed booking**.
- Additionally, a **15% discount on the final bill** is offered to encourage the customer to stay within the same hospital network.

This strategy respects cultural practices while promoting **brand continuity and patient retention.**

Addressing Dropouts Due to Financial Constraints-

To reduce patient dropouts arising from financial challenges, the hospital has introduced a value-based incentive strategy focused on affordable care-

- A bed booking amount of ₹8,000 is collected in advance from customers.
- This amount secures a confirmed IPD room reservation, with the room blocked according to the customer's expected date of delivery.
- The ₹8,000 acts as a deposit, which is fully adjusted in the final hospital bill at the time of delivery.
- Customers making this advance payment are entitled to an additional ₹5,000 discount on their final delivery bill.
- Furthermore, they receive coupons worth ₹4,000, redeemable for scans or blood tests, making essential diagnostics more accessible.

Dropouts Due to Patients Shifting to Other Hospitals

When a customer decides to move to another hospital, the hospital initiates a **follow-up call** to understand the reason behind the shift.

- If the reason is related to **dissatisfaction with a particular service**, efforts are made to **offer that service free of charge**, wherever feasible, in order to retain the customer.
- If the concern is **financial**, specifically related to the **final delivery bill**, the hospital may offer to **match the competitor's pricing**, provided it does not result in a financial loss to the hospital.

This personalized intervention aims to build trust, address patient concerns proactively, and maintain continuity of care within the hospital network.

CONCLUSION

- High dropout rates in maternity care significantly affect continuity of treatment and maternal health outcomes, especially in high-footfall hospitals.
- Patient retention is critical not only for clinical outcomes but also for financial stability and brand trust within the hospital ecosystem.
- Cultural sensitivity strategies, like seamless bed transfers and discounts for traditional relocation during delivery, respect patient preferences while retaining them within the network.
- Financial interventions, such as prepaid booking and bundled service incentives, have proven effective in reducing dropouts due to affordability issues.
- Personalized outreach and service recovery, including price matching and targeted follow-up, address shifting behavior to competitors and dissatisfaction.
- Ongoing monitoring and data-driven adaptation ensure that implemented strategies remain effective, responsive, and patient-centered, fostering long-term loyalty and better health outcomes

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THANKYOU!