

A STUDY OF PROCESS FLOW IN OUT – PATIENT DEPARTMENT TO IMPROVE PATIENT WAITING TIME

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Introduction

- OPD (Outpatient) service is one of the essential services in hospitals
- First point of contact between patients and hospital staff.
- Do not require a bed or to be admitted overnight care.
- To increase the OPD to IPD conversion this service has a great importance.
- OPD waiting time is one of the most vital indicator of patient satisfaction.
- According to the study, on average, only 5% of dissatisfied customers complain about the service. Others simply go over to the competitor (Marketing white book (2016) India report on the Healthcare sector).

Problem Statement

- It has established that, 8 – 19% of OPD patients need hospitalization (source: International Journal of Community Medicine and Public Health Patel R *et. al.*, Int. J. Community Med Public Health., 2017 Mar;4(3):857 – 863)
- OPD waiting time is an important indicator of patient satisfaction.
- Queuing is one of the major challenges for OPDs in healthcare services which leads to decrease IPD and surgical conversion.

Problem Justification

- Confusion among patients about their time.
- Consultant not arriving at the right time.
- Arriving of the patient before or after scheduled time.

Research Question

What are the factors leading to an increase turn-around time in OPD?

Objectives

- Identify the root causes which lead to delay in consultation process.
- Map the process and identify wastes in the process.
- Provide waste free process that can improve in patient waiting time.

Methodology

Research Design:

- Observational and descriptive study.

Setting of the Study:

- The study includes patients who are attended in OPDs in hospital for consultations.

Duration of the Study: 4 months (From 1st February, 2020 – 3 April, 2020)

Sampling Technique: Convenient sampling technique.

Sample Size:

- Minimum 500 from the secondary database.

Statistical Tools:

- MS Excel for calculation of average TAT.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Both sex and age of patients
- Incase of pediatric patients, response was noted from their attendant.

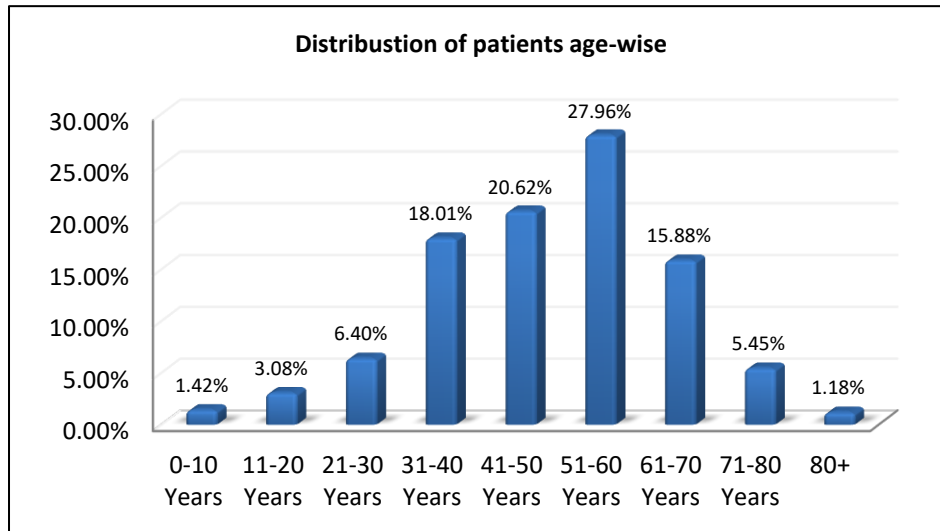
Exclusion Criteria:

- Emergency patients.
- Patients who refused to provide response.

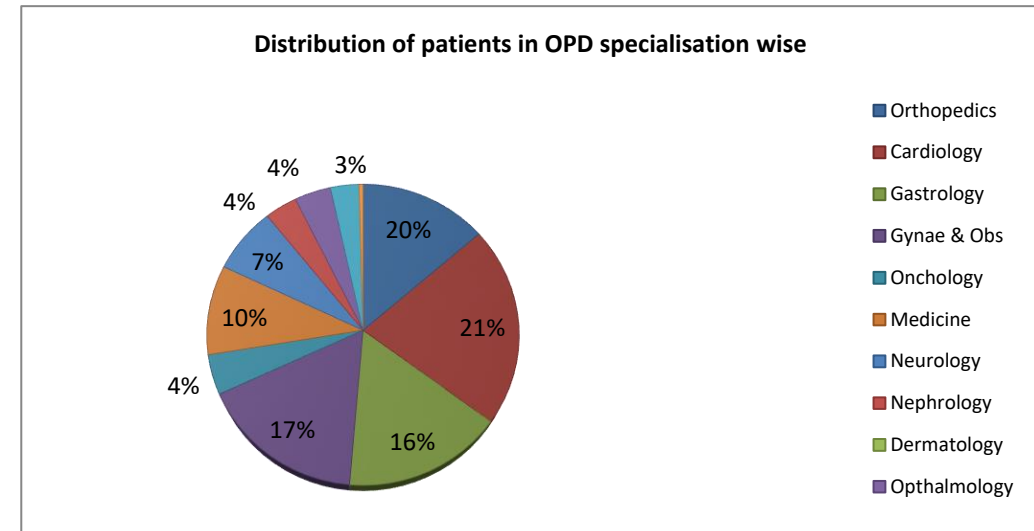
Study Plan:

- The Secondary data was collected from the hospital database
- The cause of increased waiting time was asked to the patients and the staffs through the focused group interview

Results and Discussion

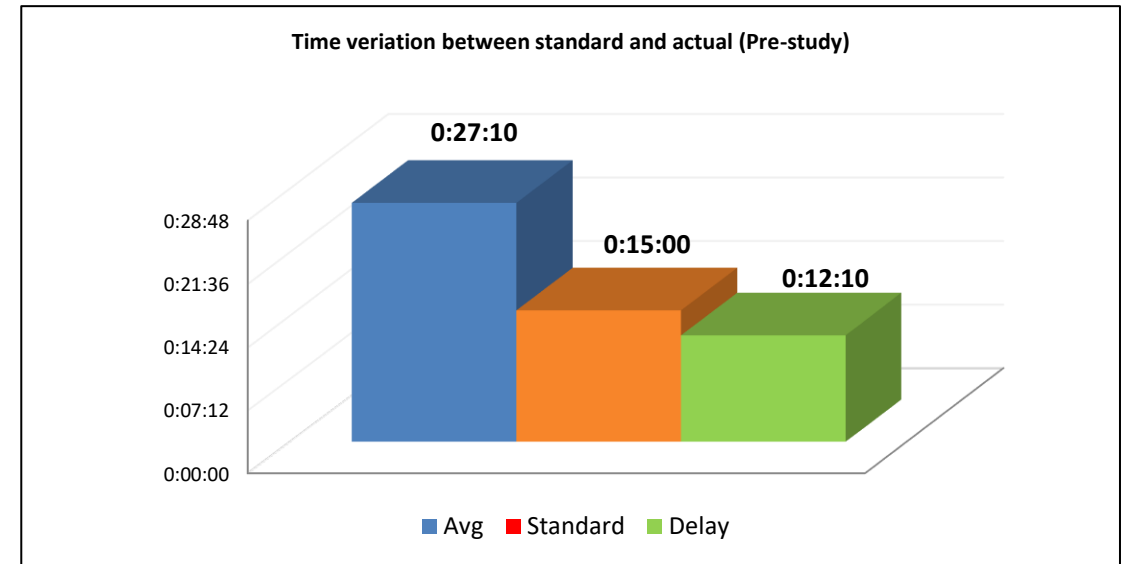
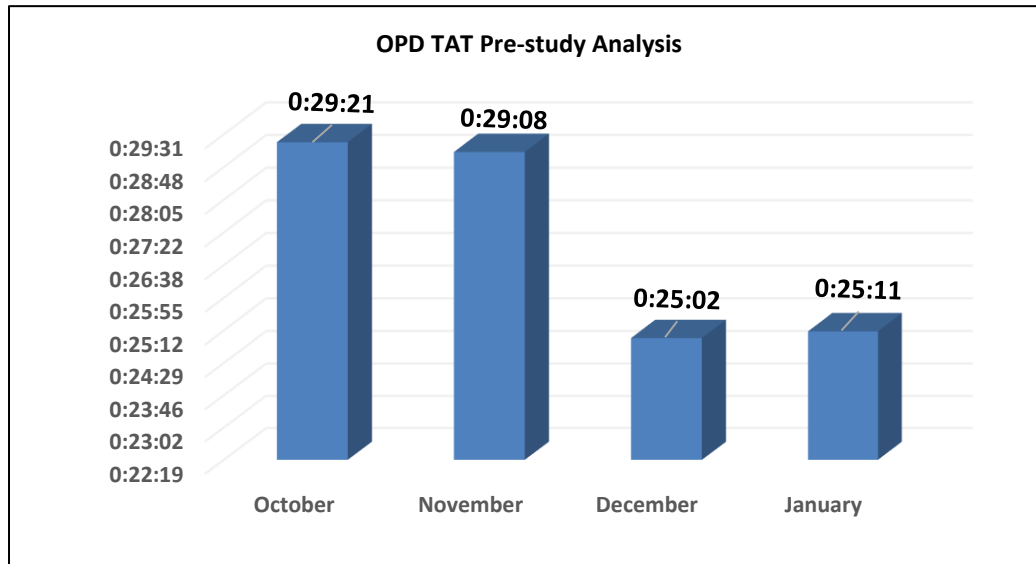


- Data shows out of 422 patients, majority of the patients attending the OPDs belong to 30 – 60 years of age group (66.59%) followed by 60 – 70 years of age group (15.88%).



- Around 90.09% patients attending OPD are consulting in Orthopedics, Cardiology, Gastrology, Gynaecology & Obstetric and medicine department.

Average TAT Compare With the Standard Time as per Hospital Benchmark



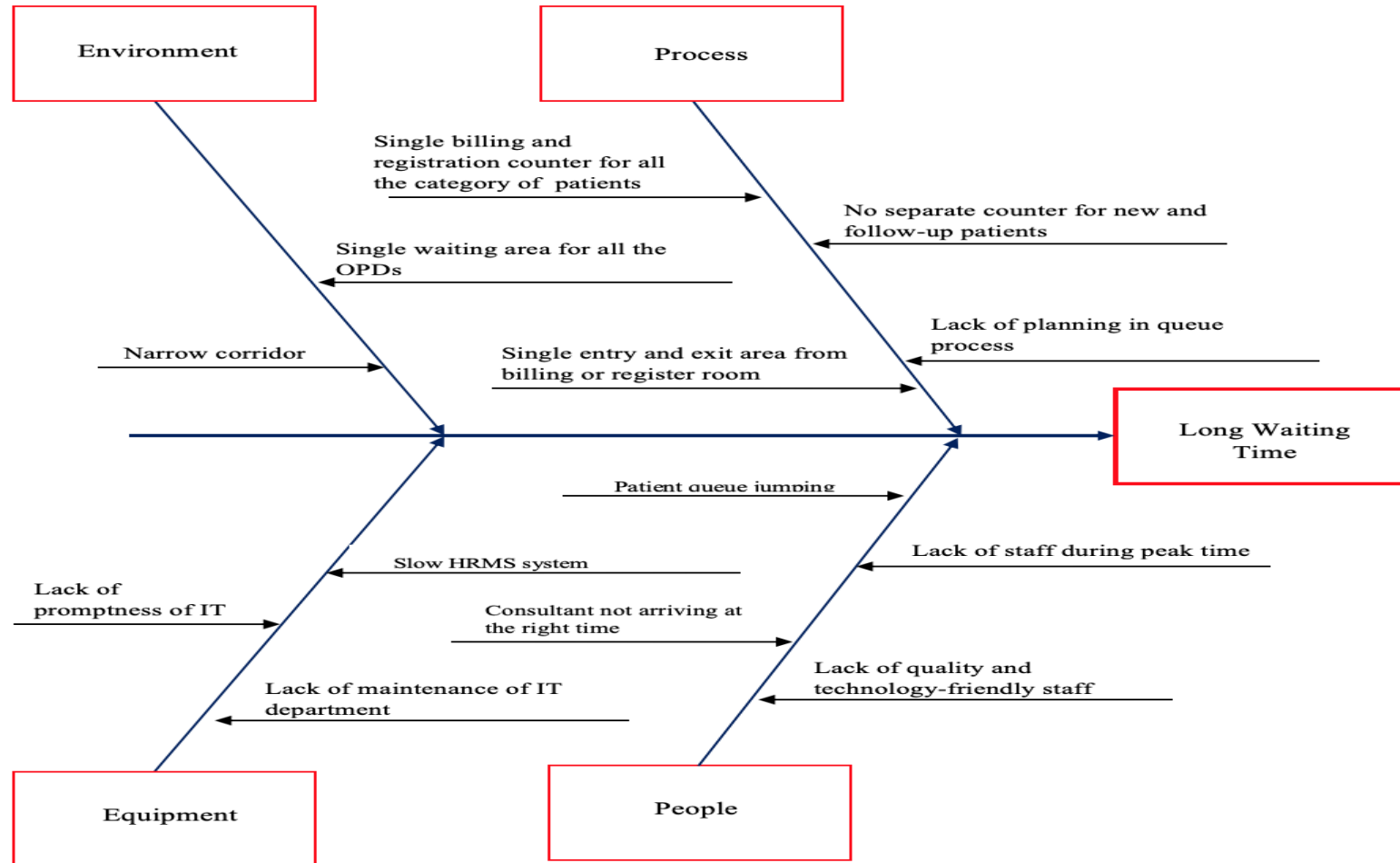
- The TAT of OPD waiting was average 27:10 minutes.
- In October, November, December, and January the TAT of waiting were 29:21 minutes, 29:08 minutes, 25:02 minutes and 25:11 minutes, respectively.
- The standard waiting time has been set by the organization is 15 minutes. Therefore, delay from the standard waiting time is around 12 minutes.

Results and Discussion

Time	Count of Patients	Percentage
9 AM – 12 PM	317	52%
12 PM – 2 PM	160	26%
2 PM – 4 PM	81	26%
5 PM – 6 PM	52	9%

- Most of the registration were done between 10 AM to 2 PM.
- Especially, maximum crowding happened in registration desk between 11 AM to 2 PM.

Root Cause Analysis

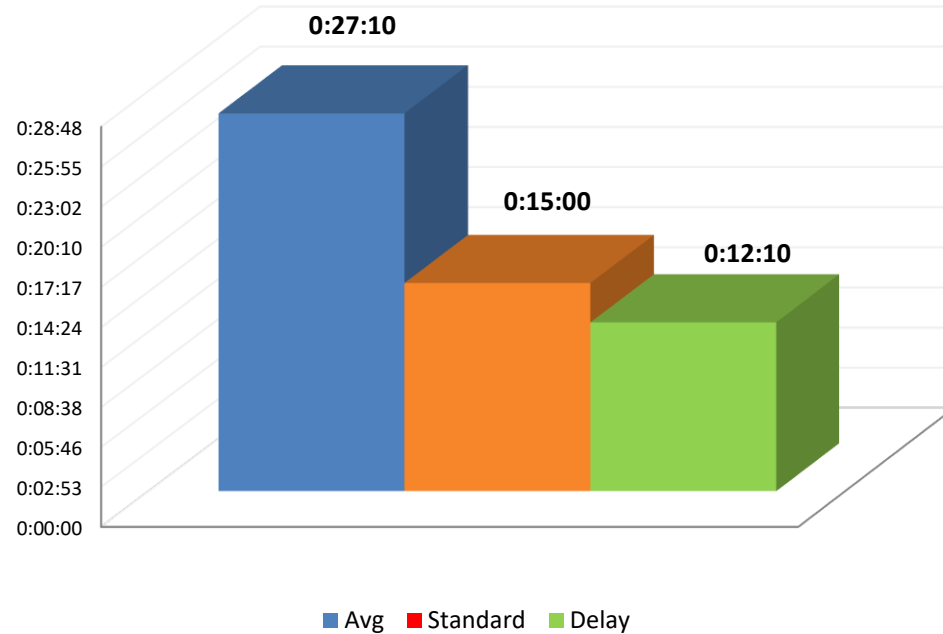


Pilot Study:

- Minimum two staffs were present during the rush hour, especially between 11 AM to 2 PM.
- Totally separate waiting area for cardio patients, as a high percentage of patients came for cardio consultation.

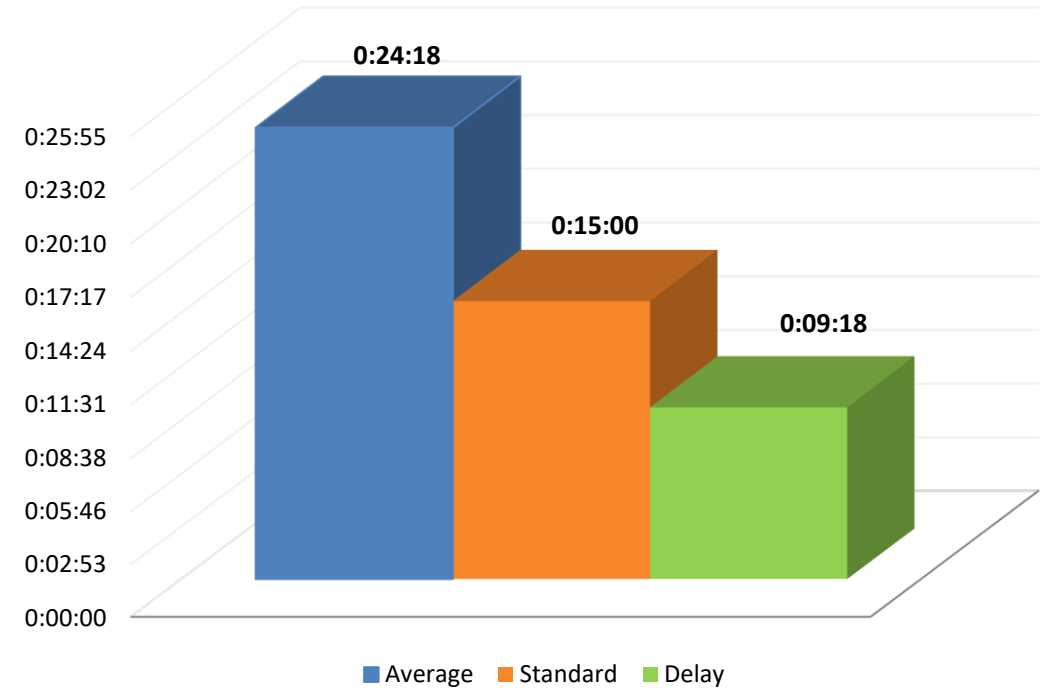
Pre-study Analysis

Time variation between standard and actual (Pre-study)

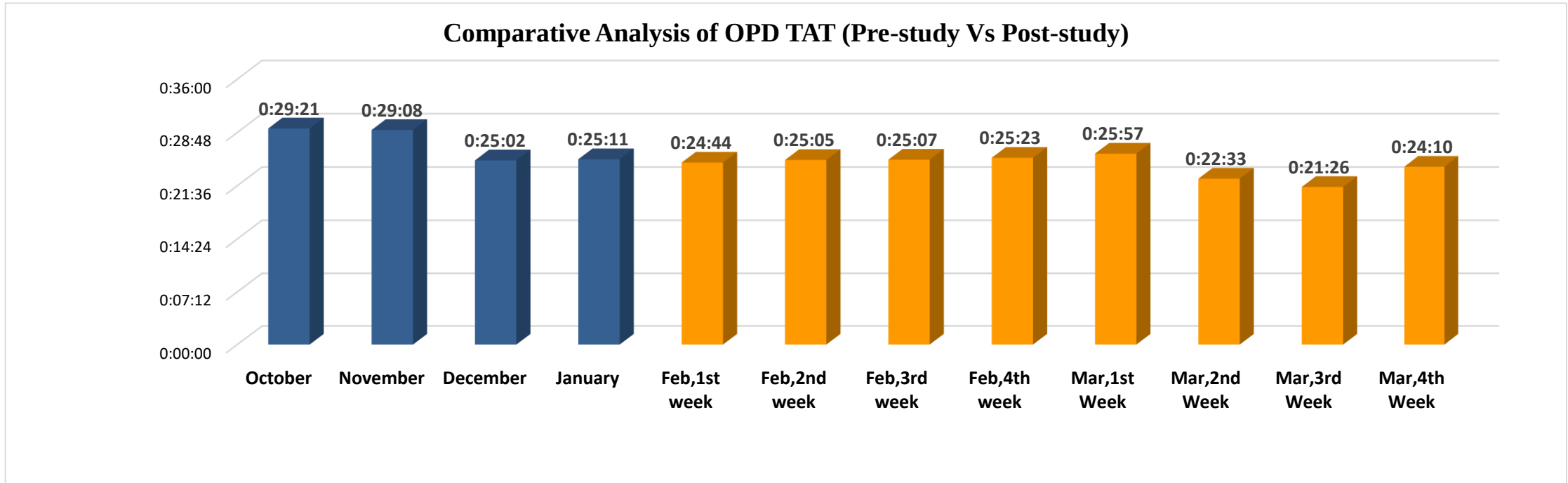


Post-study Analysis

Variance between actual and standard time (Post-study)



Comparative Analysis



Before doing the pilot Study the average patient waiting time was 27 minutes
After the pilot study the average waiting time is 24 minutes which is shown in orange bar. The average time is improved by 3 minutes. However, it is still below 9 minutes of standard waiting time.

Conclusion

- This study is focused towards the improvement of patient waiting time in OPD patients of Shalby Multispecialty Hospital, Jabalpur unit.
- The average waiting time was 27 minutes during the period of October to January.
- After, taking necessary steps it was reduced to average 24 minutes.

Recommendations

- A separate cardiac OPD including patients waiting area along with registration desk and diagnostic facilities can be set up to utilize the free floor space in the hospital.
- Introduction of quarterly staffs training program to improve the service.
- Small beverage stall in the patients waiting area can be installed.

Acknowledgement

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Thank You