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A STUDY ON PATIENT WAITING TIME IN THE PHARMACY IN ONE OF THE MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS IN CHENNAI.

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Abstract :
This study investigates patient waiting times in a hospital pharmacy using Time and Motion Study methodology. The research aims to identify factors contributing to delays in the prescription dispensing process and to propose strategies for optimizing workflow, enhancing efficiency, and improving patient satisfaction. Data was collected on key stages of the dispensing process, and analysis revealed several areas for potential improvement. The findings highlight the impact of factors such as prescription volume, staffing levels, and process inefficiencies on waiting times. Proposed strategies to mitigate these issues include the implementation of electronic prescription systems, staff optimization, and improved communication protocols.

***Key Words*:** Waiting time, quality assurance, and outpatient pharmacy

1.INTRODUCTION

Improving patient outcomes and experience requires efficient healthcare delivery. Waiting times for patients are a key measure of service quality in pharmacies and have a direct effect on medication adherence and patient satisfaction. Long wait times can put patients' health at risk by causing annoyance, discontent, and even medication desertion.

An established methodology for analysing work processes, identifying inefficiencies, and developing improvement methods is time and motion studies. In order to identify bottlenecks and suggest workable alternatives to improve workflow and service delivery, this study uses time and motion analysis to assess patient waiting times in the multispecialty hospital pharmacy.

2. REVIEW LITERATURE

1. According to Fahrurazi, F. E., Ibrahim, N. H., Mafauzy, N. M., & Wan Ismail, W. N. A). Factors affecting waiting time in Outpatient Pharmacy at Hospital

2. According to Kusumowardhani, D., & Ilyas, Y. Waiting time of pharmacy service as an indicator of patient satisfaction: A systematic review. The 6th International Conference on Public Health.

3. According to Leemanza, Y., & Kristin, E. Effectiveness of Wait Time Targets and Patient Satisfaction Feedback in Decreasing Wait Times for Prescription Services in an Outpatient Pharmacy. This study demonstrated that setting specific wait time targets and providing feedback on patient satisfaction significantly reduced prescription service wait times by 17% for compounded prescriptions and 37% for non-compounded prescriptions.

The main objectives of the study are

1.To calculate the typical wait time that customers endure at the drugstore.

2. To determine the main reasons behind medicine dispensing delays.

3.To make useful suggestions for cutting down on wait times and enhancing service effectiveness.

3 .METHODOLOGY

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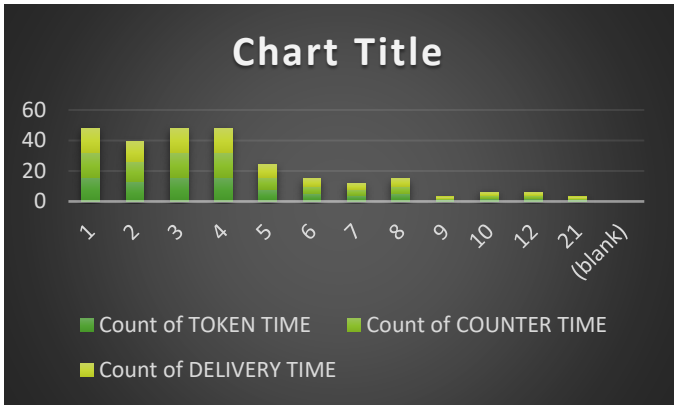
In order to assess patient waiting times in the multispecialty hospital pharmacy, this study used a descriptive research approach. The time required for each step of the prescription distribution process—from patient arrival to medicine collection—was observed and documented using time and motion study methodologies. To record differences in waiting times, data was gathered both during and after peak hours. After the data was gathered, it was examined to find bottlenecks, evaluate the effectiveness of the workflow, and identify the causes of delays.

4.ANALYSIS

Table -:

No. of prescription	Count of TOKEN TIME	Count of COUNTER TIME	Count of DELIVERY TIME
1	16	16	16
2	13	13	13
3	16	16	16
4	16	16	16
5	8	8	8
6	5	5	5
7	4	4	4
8	5	5	5
9	1	1	1
10	2	2	2
12	2	2	2
21	1	1	1

CHART



MAJOR FINDINGS

1.The Average Waiting Time Varys Significantly Depending on the workload, staffing, and intricacy of the prescription, patients usually have to wait 10 to 30 minutes.
2. Major Delays Occur During Peak Hours
Peak hours, such weekends, after holidays, and evenings, have greater wait times.

3. Prescriptions in electronic form Shorten Wait Times: Pharmacies that receive electronic prescriptions are able to produce drugs more quickly, which results in lower wait times for patients.
4. Longer lines are caused by understaffing.
One of the main reasons for service delays and elevated patient annoyance is inadequate staffing.
5. Patient Satisfaction Increases with Effective Communication
Even if the actual wait time is not lowered, providing patients with clear updates and information about anticipated wait times lowers their level of unhappiness.

SUGGESTIONS

1.Establish Prescription Electronic Systems
To reduce processing delays, encourage physicians to deliver prescriptions electronically.
2. Provide Online Requests for Refills
To expedite service, let patients use a mobile app or the internet to seek medication refills.
3. Present Text Message Alerts
To avoid making patients wait at the pharmacy, text them when their medicines are ready.
4. Make the Most of Staffing During Busiest Times
To effectively manage the workload during peak hours, schedule extra technicians and chemists.
5. Establish Lanes for Express Pickup
Set up a distinct counter for expedited pickups, particularly for prepaid prescriptions or refills.
6. Make an Automation Technology Investment
Reduce manual labour and expedite prescription preparation by utilising robots and automated dispensing devices.

CONCLUSION

The length of time patients must wait in the pharmacy has a significant impact on both patient satisfaction and the general standard of care. High patient volumes, personnel shortages, complicated prescription procedures, and ineffective communication are frequently the causes of lengthy wait times. However, waiting times can be greatly decreased by employing techniques including introducing electronic prescriptions, streamlining staff schedules, utilising queue management systems, and enhancing patient communication. Pharmacies may improve patient experiences, increase operational efficiency, and guarantee safer, quicker medicine delivery by taking care of these issues.

REFERENCES

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