

*Full Length Research Paper*

# The effect of the service level of Khraybet Al-Souq medical centers in Amman City on the satisfaction of beneficiaries

Hind Khalid Sarayrah

Al Balqa Applied University, Princess Alia University College

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## Abstract

The study aimed at identifying the satisfaction levels of beneficiaries from the services of the healthcare centers in khraibat Al- Souq which are associated with the internal and external environmental factors of the healthcare center. To achieve this purpose, the study used a regular random specimen with a fracture preview of 25% of the reviewers of the healthcare center on a day visit. Frequencies, percentages, arithmetic averages and standard deviations have been used together with t-test for a single specimen for analyzing the data and reach the desired results. The most important finding of the study was that the beneficiaries from the services of the healthcare centers in Khraibat Al- Souq reported that these services were far from their place of residence. Therefore, those who are responsible must take this into account because of the utmost importance of the distance and its relationship to the level of satisfaction with the recipient of the service. The results of the study showed that the level of satisfaction was high concerning the internal environment, systems and work procedures, "the evidence for this is that the results of t-test were high. As for peripheral health care offered by the health center, the level of satisfaction was low. Accordingly, the concerned authorities must pay attention to this aspect by regular comprehensive monitoring of the healthcare centers.

**Keywords:** Khraybet Al-Souq medical centers, satisfaction level, Amman city

## INTRODUCTION

Jordan has significantly developed in providing citizens with medical services during the second half of the twentieth century. This progression went along with the rapid growth of population, the economic development, and the largely growing size of Jordanian cities as a result of the internal migration. These services vary across and within different governorates. Furthermore, the number of clinics in Amman governorate rises more than its counterparts in Jordan. The total number of Amman's various types of clinics (primary, comprehensive, subsidiary, and maternity and childhood centers) are (161) centers whereas this number reached (8565) centers in the rest of the governorates. This means that Amman holds (19%) of the medical centers in Jordan (The Annual Report, The Ministry of Health, 2009).

People in charge of the medical field pay much attention to the level of medical services provided to people. Related literature indicates that many studies were conducted on the sufficiency of the medical services. For example, Carrin (1989) used more than 15 indicators to measure demands for medical services such as visiting a physician, staying at hospital, laboratory tests, taking x-rays images, medicine usage, and expenses on medical services.

Levels of medical centers in Jordan vary. They include categories as the primary medical care centers each includes a medical unit with one general physician, at least, a dentist, a legal nurse, a legal midwife. Each unit is also supported by a staff of a pharmacist, a nurse assistant, a laboratory technician, a health supervisor, an x-ray specialist in addition to an administrative and

**Table 1:** Distribution of the primary medical centers in the study area

Area	Number of centers	Name of center	Number of general physicians	Number of dentists	Number of nurses	Number of pharmacists
Khraybet Al-Souq	2	Khraybet Al-Souq	5	2	8	1
		Al-Taybeh	3	2	5	1

logistic staff. This category provides its services to gatherings of (2000-5000) people. These services include the following:

- 1- Treating card-holders patients and transferring whoever needs a specialist to the comprehensive centers or to hospitals.
- 2- Providing basic medicines.
- 3- Maternal and childhood care.
- 4- School health services.
- 5- Vaccination of communicable diseases.
- 6- Prevention and fighting endemic diseases.
- 7- Medical education.
- 8- Monitoring drinking water and sanitation.
- 9- Any other tasks required by the Ministry of Health.

The medical centers which were investigated in the study area belong to this category. **Table 1** shows the distribution of the primary medical centers in the study area.

**Table 1** indicates that the number of physicians in Khraybet Al-Souq was 8 representing (7.4%) of the total number of physicians who worked in the capital city - Amman (Ministry Of Health, 2004).

It was found that an average of (69) patients visit every general physician in Khraybet Al-Souq every working day (Statistics of Population Account, 2004 And the Ministry of Health, 2009).

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There are some previous research which investigated the satisfaction level of patients about the medical services provided to them. For example, Donabedian (1980) through related inquiry raised the issue of the ultimate goal of medical services remarking that it was to guarantee the physical and mental health of the patients. The researcher found that the satisfaction variable is an important element for the mental health of patients.

In the same context, Doreing (1983) investigated the beneficiaries' satisfaction about the medical services and attempted to identify their opinions about these services. The researcher concluded that the satisfied patient is more collaborated with the medical staff, and more acceptable to their recommendations and instructions

than the unsatisfied patient. This result was supported by Good and Alger (1991) who noted the difficulty of dealing with and treating the unsatisfied patient.

Another study was conducted to the attitudes of some patients towards the medical services provided to them by Al-Farazdaq Center for the primary medical care in Riyadh (Saeed 1987). It was found that here were no correlation between the age, sex and educational level of participants and the distance of their houses from these centers or the level of the utilization of such services. Results of the study also indicated that most participants were satisfied about the services presented for them.

Another study carried out by Saeed (1984) in Sudan to identify the factors which limit the citizen's utilization of the primary medical care services. The study found that that the greater the distance traveled by the patients to reach the location of the center, the less it was used as an indicator for their dissatisfaction about the service.

Tamamneh and Harahsheh (1995) investigated the effect of services level provided by Al-Mafraq Governorate medical centers on the beneficiaries' satisfaction. Results of the study found that there were some negative impressions of the participants towards the internal and external environment of the medical centers such as: the availability of amenities in the waiting halls, the cleanliness, medicine availability, and the understanding and dialogue between the patient and his doctor.

## Study Area

Khraybet Al-Souq follows Al-Quwaismeh's county which also includes Jawa and Al-Yadodeh. Administratively, it is divided into 18 neighborhoods which include the following districts:

- 1- Al Yadodeh.
- 2- Al Qeileyleh
- 3- Al Eman
- 4- Al Wafa'a
- 5- Al Hedaya
- 6- Ghamadan
- 7- Al Abrar
- 8- Qeba'a
- 9- Al Andalous
- 10- Al Taqwa
- 11- Al Ehsan

- 12- Assafa'a
- 13- Al Rabe'e
- 14- Al Forqan
- 15- Northern Jawa
- 16- Southern Jawa
- 17- Al Majd
- 18- Al Amal

The population of this area reached (86224) people in 2004 (The General Statistics, 2004) representing about (5%) of the population of Amman. Therefore, it is necessary to provide these increasing numbers of people with medical services because the primary health care is the key to carrying out goals as "Health for All" which was set by the International Health Association. Going along with this purpose, the Ministry Of Health in Jordan did its best to establish more primary medical centers in all regions.

### Significance of the Study

The importance of this study stems from its results which would indicate the real personal opinions and perceptions of beneficiaries from medical services provided to them by the local health authorities. Participants of this study are a representative sample to other similar areas in the capital city - Amman. The participants' responses can be considered an important indicator by which the efficiency and quality of these services can be assessed. Moreover, results of this study can be useful to those in charge of medical centers under investigation i.e. they can make use of such indicators to improve the services they provide to citizens.

Furthermore, citizens' satisfaction about health care they receive is one target of the formal medical centers. It is believed that a satisfied patient is more cooperative with the instructions of his/her physician than non-satisfied or less satisfied people. Of course, level of satisfaction can positively or negatively affect processes of diagnoses and treatments. Results of this study can also be useful to future related research through providing them with both the important information about the level of people's satisfaction regarding health care they receive and methods of analyzing people's perceptions and attitudes towards health services.

### Purpose and Questions of the Study

This study attempts to find out the real perceptions and opinions that reflect their level of satisfaction regarding health care they receive through medical centers of Khraybet Al-Souq area in Amman. More specifically, this study tries to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the demographic characteristics of the beneficiaries of the medical center services in the study area (Khraybet Al-Souq) ?
- 2- What is the satisfaction level of the beneficiaries about the services of medical centers related to the external and internal environmental factors of these medical centers?

3- What is the satisfaction level of beneficiaries about the services of medical centers related systems and procedures of work?

4- What is the level of beneficiaries' satisfaction about the services of medical centers related to the external medical care?

### METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the above mentioned purpose of the study, a systemic random sample representing 25% of the numbers of patients who were visiting the investigated medical centers on the same day was selected from the population of the study area. Participants were asked several questions using the interview method. The researcher also used statistical reports of the Ministry Of Health and the census data carried out by the Jordanian department of statistics in 2004. The interview model was used before conducting the study by the researcher on a sample from the population in order to establish an acceptable level of reliability. The instrument was also developed in light of related literature. To ensure its validity before conducting the study, the instrument was recommended by a group of experts in the field especially for consistency and suitability.

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this was to find out the effect of the services level provided by local medical centers on the satisfaction of the beneficiaries in Khraybt Al-Souq area in Amman. In order to achieve this purpose, a group of questions were addressed as mentioned above. The findings of this study can be presented in accordance with the questions order as follows:

#### Findings related to question one

Question one sought to find out the demographic characteristics of the beneficiaries of medical centers services in Khraybt Al-Souq. **Table 2** shows the distribution of the participants according to their gender.

**Table 2** indicates that (53.3%) of the participants were male beneficiaries, whereas the rest of the sample consisted of (46.7% ) female beneficiaries. As for the marital status of the, beneficiaries, **Table 3** indicates that (20%) of the participants were singles, (68.9%) of them were married, (6.7%) of them were divorced, and that (4.4) of them were widows. **Table 3** shows the distribution of the sample of the study in terms of their marital status.

The study also found that (4.4%) of the participants were illiterate, (20%) of them finished their preparatory education, (40%) of them completed their secondary education, (33.3%) had a university certificate, while only (2.2%) of them completed their higher studies. **Table 4** indicates this finding.

**Table 2:** The distribution of the study sample according to sex variable

Sex	Total number	Percentage
Male	24	53.3
Female	21	46.7
total	45	100

**Table 3:** Distribution of the participants according to their marital status.

Social status	number	Percentage
Single	9	20%
Married	31	68.9%
Divorced	3	6.7%
Widow	2	4.4%
Total	45	100%

**Table 4:** the distribution of the participants according to their educational levels

The educational level	number	percentage
Illiterate	2	4.4
Preparatory	9	20
Secondary	18	40
University	15	33.3
Higher studies	1	2.2
total	45	100

**Table 5:** The averages and the standard deviations of the study sample responses on the internal and external environment of the medical center

No.	paragraph	Average	Standard deviations
1.	The cleanliness of the medical center from its outside.	4.71	0.45
2.	The cleanliness of the medical center from it's inside.	4.68	0.46
3.	The availability of car parks within the medical center.	4.51	0.84
4.	The availability of amenities in the waiting rooms in the center.	4.59	0.58
5.	Sufficient number of water cycles (bathrooms).	4.33	0.95
6.	The availability and cleanliness of the bathrooms.	4.37	0.86
7.	The distance between the center and your residence.	3.95	1.4135

**Findings related to question two:**

In order to identify the satisfaction level of the beneficiaries of the medical centers services which are related to the internal and external environment of these medical centers, the averages and the standard deviations were calculated as Table 5 and 6 show. Table 5 shows the average and standard deviations of beneficiaries' satisfaction regarding a group of items related to the internal and external environments of the medical centers.

Table 5 indicates that the averages for the participants' responses on items of the internal and external environment for the medical centers varied between (3.95-4.71) points. The participants supported item no 1 "The cleanliness of the center from its outside" with the highest average of (4.71) points, whereas the lowest value was for item no. (7) "The distance between the center and the residence of the patient" with an average of (3.95) points.

T-Test was carried on one sample to identify the satisfaction level of the beneficiaries regarding the medical centers services

related with their external and internal environment factors. Table 6 shows the result of this test.

Table 6 indicates that the value of T statistical value reached 16.20 which is considered significant on the level 0.05 or less. Therefore, the satisfaction level of beneficiaries about the services of medical centers was high in terms of their external and internal environment.

**Findings related to question three:**

Question 3 tried to find out the level of beneficiaries' satisfaction about the medical center services which are related to the systems and procedures of work. Table 7 shows the averages and the standard deviations of the participants' responses in this regard.

Table 7 indicates that that the averages of participants' responses on the items of systems and procedures of work varied between (3.84-4.67). The participants supported item no 6. "The availability of vaccines in the medical center" with that highest value reached average of (4.67) points. The lowest value was for item no. 2 "transferring service to higher levels of medical care" with a 3.84 average".

**Table 6 :** Results of t- test.

Average	Standard Deviation	T-test	Significance
4.44	0.60	16.20	0.00

**Table 7:** The averages and the standard deviations of the participants' responses on the systems and procedures of work

No.	Paragraph	Average	Standard Deviations
1-	The length of the waiting period before entering the doctor's clinic or receiving medicine.	3.91	1.04
2-	Transferring to higher levels of medical care services.	3.84	1.20
3-	Regularity of medical appointments of the specialist doctor.	3.95	1.26
4-	The doctor's availability once visited.	4.47	0.97
5-	The time given to the patient by doctor to tell his medical history and the way the doctor listens.	4.55	0.88
6-	The availability of the vaccines in the center.	4.67	0.87
7-	Treating costs in the center.	4.64	0.71
8-	The availability of medicine in the pharmacy.	3.97	1.15

**Table 8 :** T-Test results regarding satisfaction of patients about medical centers in relation to systems and procedures of work

Average	Standard Deviation	T	Significance
4.19	0.72	11.03	0.00

T-Test was carried out to identify the patients' satisfaction level about the medical centers related the systems and procedures of work. Table 8 shows the results of T-Test.

Table 8 indicates that the satisfaction level of beneficiaries about the medical centers services which are related to the systems and procedures of work was high.

#### Findings related to question four

In order identify the level of satisfaction of the beneficiaries about the medical centers services which are related to the external medical care, the averages and the standard deviations were calculated as it is shown in Table 9.

Table 9 indicates that the averages of the participants' responses regarding the external medical care items ranged between (1.83-3.20) points with the highest value being for item no. 5 concerning *the participation of medical centers in providing medical education service to citizens* with an average of (3.20) points. Item no 1 "*Regular useful home visits done by the medical center*" was the least item agreed upon by the participants with an average of (1.83) points.

T-Test was carried out to identify the level of beneficiaries' satisfaction related with the external medical care. Table 10 shows the results of this test.

Table 10 indicates that the statistical (T) value reached (-3.86) which is indicative on level 0.05 or less. This means that that the satisfaction level of the beneficiaries about the services of medical centers which are related to the external medical care was low.

By calculating the averages of the participants' responses regarding the external and internal

environment of the medical center in Khrybit Al-Souq, it was found that beneficiaries were satisfied about the cleanliness of the medical centers. They also reported that services such as car parks and amenities were available. However, some participants referred to their concerns regarding the difficulty to reach the medical centers.

The least agreed upon item was no. 7 related to the length of distance participants have to move in order to reach the medical centers. Although identifying the participants' levels of satisfaction accurately is difficult, it cannot be denied, in normal circumstances, that distance from to medical centers plays a significant role in beneficiaries' satisfaction about the medical services. In other words, the less distant the patient need to travel to reach the medical center, the more satisfied he is, vice versa. This is particularly important in the study area as the ( Khraybit Al-Souq) where it people suffer from its low demographic condensation of about (17.3%) in 1994 according to Mesleh (1997). This percentage increased in 1994 to reach 62.4% due to the recent administrative distributions of the area. For example, Khraybit Al-Souq area consisted of only three districts (namely: Khraybit Al-Souq, Jawa and Al-Yadoudeh). However, each district, later on, have been further divided into more than one administrative part to reach a total of nineteen districts all of which follows the same administrative authority in Khraybit Al-Souq. The increase of districts was essentially due to the increase in the number of populations. Therefore, the ministry of health had to increase the number of medical centers that should be able to serve the increasing number of citizens in this area.



**Table 9:** The averages and standard deviations of the sample's responses on the external medical care

No.	Paragraph	Averages	Standard deviation
1-	Regular useful home visits done by the medical center.	1.83	1.41
2-	Does the medical center look for the environment pollution resources?	2.00	1.56
3-	Does the medical center check the public stores regularly?	2.54	1.56
4-	Does the center participate in spraying pesticides and post control?	2.11	1.63
5-	Does the center participate in providing medical education service for the citizens?	3.20	1.62

**Table 10:** T-Test Results.

Average	Standard	T	Significance
2.28	1.23	3.86-	0.00

In spite of the above mentioned discussion, one can conclude that the satisfaction level of the beneficiaries about the medical services provided to them was high. This is supported by the results of t-tests above.

As for the systems and procedures of work, the participants; responses indicted high level of satisfaction especially regarding the availability of vaccinations and specialists inside the centers and the suitability of financial costs. The least value was obtained by the item related to transferring patients to higher level of medical care. Therefore, it is important to follow up the services of these centers in terms of the importance for physicians to fully do their duties. These procedures may reduce transferring patients to higher level of medical facilities excluding serious cases.

Concerning the beneficiaries' satisfaction about the external medical care, results indicated that participants' highest level of satisfaction was focused on the item related to the medical centers' contributions in providing health education for citizens through health awareness programs, seminars, and lectures held in association with the Ministry Of Health. The interviewed beneficiaries reported the least level of satisfaction regarding the item of "regular and useful home visits done by the medical centers. Therefore, those in charge should activate these duties of medical centers through regular monitoring of centers' tasks.

In general, the satisfaction level of beneficiaries concerning the external medical care done by the medical center was low. the ministry of health should pay more attention to this aspect because people living in remote areas from the capital city of Amman need it in particular.

**The most Important Findings**

1. The study found that the participants (in Khraybit Al-Souq area) were not satisfied about the distance that needs to reach the medical centers. They reported that

the medical centers were relatively far from their residence. Since the relationship between the distance and the satisfaction level is an essential issue for beneficiaries, the Ministry Of Health should take this factor into consideration when it provides local districts with medical centers.

2. The beneficiaries' satisfaction regarding the external and internal environment of the medical center, and the systems and the procedures of work was high as T-Test indicated.

3. The beneficiaries' satisfaction regarding the medical care they received was low as it was indicated by T-Test results.

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