

The Proportions of Patients Who Saw Their Physicians Operating Mobile Phones or Tablets during Their Consultations at an Outpatient Department of One Hospital

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Background and Objective: Nowadays, there are some physicians who use the mobile phones and tablets (mobile phones) during their consultations which make patients dissatisfied. This states that patients may have bad attitudes on the use of mobile phones in physicians. This objective of this study was to study the proportions of patients who saw their physicians operating mobile phones during their consultations at an outpatient department of one hospital.

Method: This was a descriptive study at the General practice's outpatient department of a hospital. A total of 150 patients who were waiting for the consultations at general practice's outpatient department was sampled into 127 patients by consecutive sampling method. A self-administered questionnaire was developed which included 1) Demographic information 2) patients who did or did not see their physicians operating mobile phones. 3) patients' attitudes and thoughts regarding physicians operating mobile phones and 4) patients' opinions regarding physicians using more mobile phones during consultations in the future. SPSS v.17 was used to analyze the frequency, percentages, interquartile range and 95%CI.

Results: One hundred and thirty one patients out of a total of 140 invited participated in the survey, producing a response rate of 93.6%. The study showed that 38.1% (95%CI: 29.6, 47.2) of patients saw physicians operating mobile phones during their consultations. Patients' attitudes to the physicians' use of mobile phones were fair (61.2%) and 16.3% were dissatisfied. 53.0% of the patients thought that physicians used their mobile phones just for the consultations and 86.0% of the patients agreed that physicians should not take long time on mobile phones if they needed to use them.

Conclusion: One third of patients at the outpatient department of one hospital saw their physicians operating mobile phones during the consultations and their attitudes toward physicians' use of mobile phones were fair.

Keywords: Outpatient Department, Patients, Physicians, Operating, Mobile phones, Tablets

