such in our article. The purpose of our pilot study was to ascertain the role of this modality in imaging decision making for established hepatic focal lesions.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I read with great interest the article on 'Patient satisfaction with services of the outpatient department' by Mohd Athar et al published in *Med J Armed Forces India* 2014; 70: 237–242.¹ Patient satisfaction as a marker of care outcome has been recognized and accepted and several services hospitals are recording and monitoring satisfaction data as routine procedure.

Various survey instruments are available in published literature and one study instrument has been developed and utilized by the authors in the present study. However, a question remains as to the applicability of this instrument in the entire AFMS and psychometric properties of the instrument utilized.

Case –mix adjustment is vital for valid comparisons to be made across hospital networks or with predetermined performance measures and the same would have added more value to the study.

There are doubts about point-of-service data collection adopted in the study, as objectivity of patient responses may be compromised by apprehensions among patient population in service hospitals due to absence of alternative service options. Follow-up survey via mail or telephone could have been

a better option for the study and may have yielded results with higher validity.

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Reply

Dear Editor,

We would like to thank the reader for the valuable comments on article titled "Patient satisfaction with services of the outpatient department".¹

The study instrument was developed based on the guidance taken from various validated instruments available in published literature and has a high Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of 0.96, thus indicating high internal consistency of the instrument. However, Principal Component analysis with

Varimax rotation would have added more validity to the instrument. The study team feels that the instrument is ready for use in the AFMS, but may be suitably modified as per the needs and situation of a particular hospital.

Case-mix adjustment is usually utilized to adjust for the variability and difference of intensity of cases being attended to in various wards or departments. Not utilizing the same for the study has been accepted as a limitation.

Exit interview as a valid consumer feedback collection method is frequently used in satisfaction surveys. Any fear or apprehensions of the respondents were taken off by commitment of the study team towards complete confidentiality and anonymity of responses. Then again, Mail or Telephonic surveys result in substantial loss of user responses, unless rigorously and continuously followed up, leading to a time consuming process. The reader will always have an option of utilizing his chosen method of data collection, but our method has led to 100% responses which is an ideal situation.

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