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Patient satisfaction at a specialised outpatient clinic for people with work-related respiratory complaints

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Introduction

- In Germany, the case-management of workplace-related respiratory complaints is regulated by the statutory accident insurance system.
- Therefore, the suspicion of an occupational disease has to be reported.
- In about 3000 cases per year an obstructive respiratory disease is reported as a suspected occupational disease (Deutsche Gesetzliche Unfallversicherung, 2021).
- From a (occupational) medical point of view, it is desirable to diagnose and evaluate workplace-related respiratory complaints as early as possible.
- Prompt initiation of appropriate protective or therapeutic measures may ease the course.

Aim

To evaluate patient satisfaction as an indicator for assessing process quality of a specialised case-management for work-related respiratory complaints.

Material & Methods

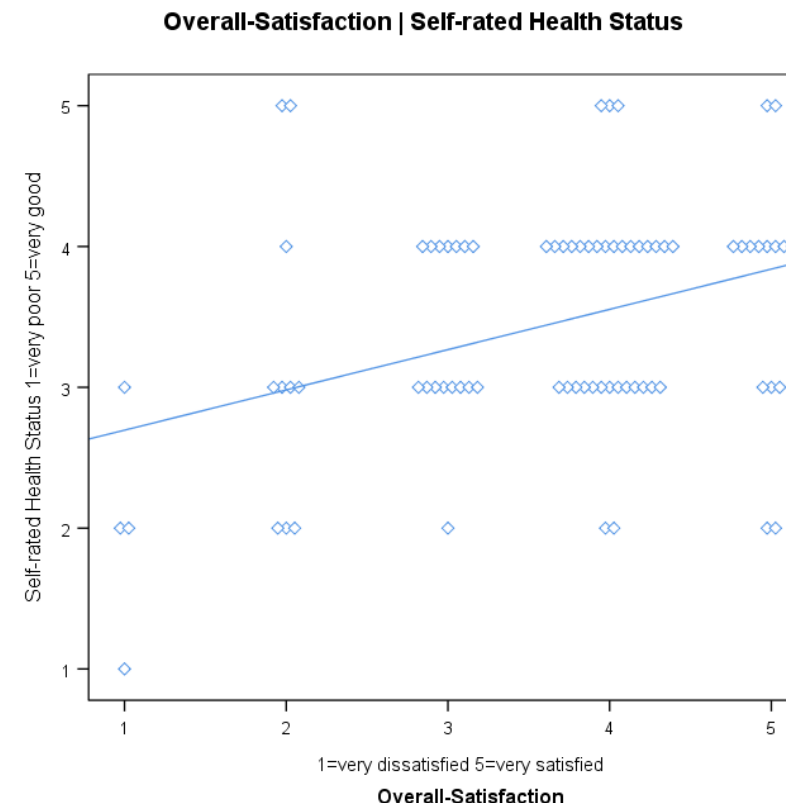
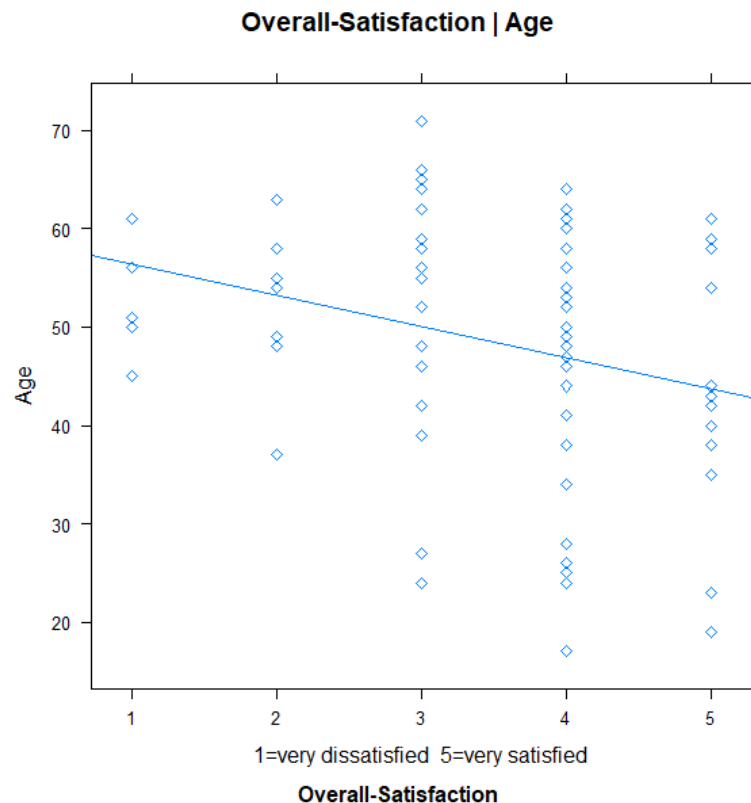
- Data were collected between July and December 2020 by paper/pencil-questionnaires.
- Using qualitative interviews conducted in advance, we developed questions on satisfaction with organisation, information, facilities, and medical examination (positive ethics vote).
- Response: 86 patients of the specialised clinic for occupational respiratory complaints (between 2012 and 2019) send back the questionnaire (46%).
- Measures for reliability-analysis and hypothesis testing were calculated with R.
- We performed Mann-Whitney-U-Test for differences in overall-satisfaction regarding sex.
- Via Pearson correlations we examined the relationship between overall-satisfaction with age and self-rated health status.

Variables

- Satisfaction:
How satisfied are you with the medical consultation overall?
5-point Likert-scale: *1 = very dissatisfied, 5 = very satisfied*
- Self-Rated health status:
St. George's Respiratory Questionnaire (SGRQ) (Barr et al., 2000).
Please pick one response to show how you describe your current health:
very good (5) good (4) acceptable (3) poor (2) very poor (1)
Note: we inverted the answering options

Results

- All scales reached satisfactory to very good reliability (Cronbach's α : .72 - .95) (Schermmelleh-Engel & Werner, 2012).
- Regarding sex, we found no differences in evaluation of over-all-satisfaction ($p = .5953$).
- We can state significant relationships between overall-satisfaction and age with a small, negative effect ($r = -.27^*$) as well as self-rated health status with a moderate, positive effect ($r = .36^{***}$). Both relationships can be seen in the graphs below.



Limitations & Conclusion

- We used cross-sectional data for testing relationships. Further causal interpretations must be done with caution.
- All study variables were measured via self-reports → Common method bias might have led to social desirability. To avoid socially desirable responses, participants were assured strict anonymity (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Conclusion

- The results indicate that increasing satisfaction with the consultation should be a goal among patients at older ages.
- In a further analysis, one could investigate the dependency relationships between age, health status and patient satisfaction.
- In addition, comparability with similar research should be promoted in further studies.

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