



PERCEPTION OF IPOH RESIDENTS TOWARDS GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE FACILITIES AND THEIR PREFERENCE

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INTRODUCTION

Primary care is a model of care that supports first-contact, accessible, continuous, comprehensive and coordinated person-focused care [1]. Broadly, primary health care institutes can be divided into two in terms of authority, which are the government health care institutes and the private health care institutes [2].

Healthcare is important in people's daily lives, and it needs to be improved in every step of the way for people to get the best service. Every citizen has a right and choice to go to whichever healthcare facility they want, whether it is a public or private health facility [3]. Therefore, this study is initiated to find out what are the preferences of Ipoh, Perak citizens of healthcare services and their perception towards both public and private healthcare centers. Apart from that, based on the results, the healthcare centers can use them to revise and improve their services.

OBJECTIVES

General Objectives

- To assess the perception and preference of the residents for government and private primary healthcare facilities.

Specific Objectives

- To determine the sociodemographic factors of Ipoh residents.
- To assess the perception of Ipoh residents towards government and private primary healthcare.
- To determine the preference of Ipoh residents between government and private primary healthcare.
- To relate the sociodemographic factors and perception of Ipoh residents towards government and private primary healthcare.
- To relate the sociodemographic factors and preference of Ipoh residents between government and private primary healthcare.

METHODOLOGY

Study Type

Cross-sectional study (convenience sampling method)

Duration of Study

19/1/2023 until 30/1/2023.

Sampling and Sample Size

Three hundred and twenty-nine 329 participants of age group between 18 to 65 years participated in this study with their consent.

Inclusion Criteria

- Malaysian and Non-Malaysian citizens
- Residents of Ipoh who agreed to join this study

Exclusion Criteria

- Patients who were terminally ill and require advanced treatment
- Subject who refused to participate in this study
- The inverse of any of the inclusion criteria

Data Collection Tool

Data was collected using online questionnaires (Google Form)

Ethics Approval

UniKLRCMP/MREC/2022-2023/MBBSYR2-SSM-282

RESULTS

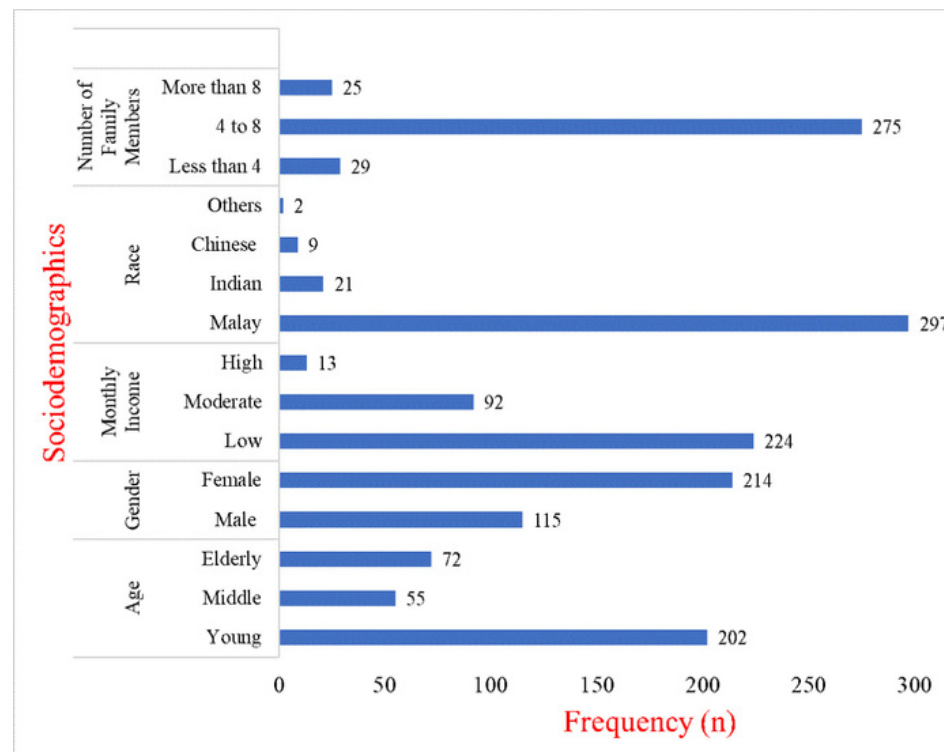


Figure 1: Socio-Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Table 1: Perception of Ipoh residents on Facilities/Services, Efficiency and Cost of Treatment in healthcare

	Mean ± SD	t	p-value
Facilities	1.712 ± 0.507	61.180	<0.001
Efficiency	1.405 ± 0.459	55.512	<0.001
Cost of Treatment	1.201 ± 0.350	62.221	<0.001

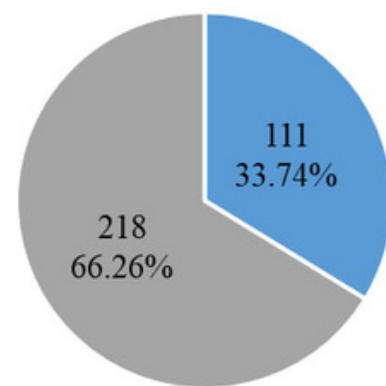


Figure 2: Preference of Ipoh Residents towards Government and Private Primary Healthcare Institutes

Table 2: Association of sociodemographic factors with perception .

Perception and Sociodemographic factors	Chi-square (X ²)	P-value
Perception on facilities/services - Age	7.057	0.029*
Perception on efficiency - Age	10.199	0.006*
Perception on efficiency - Monthly income	8.578	0.035*
Perception on clinic selection - Races	9.330	0.009*
Preference of participants for public and private clinics - Age	8.779	0.012*

Statistical Tests Applied

SPSS version 22.0 was used to analyse the data. p<0.05 was considered significant

- Sociodemographic factors are expressed as frequency.
- Student t-test was applied to determine the significance of perception on healthcare facilities, efficiency and cost of the treatment
- Chi-square test was used to determine the association of sociodemographic factors with perception

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DISCUSSION

- Mostly, the respondents were from young age [202 (61.40%)] than middle and elderly age
- Females [214 (65.05%)] responded more than males
- Majority of respondents had low income [224 (68.09%)]
- Malay 297 (90.27%) responded more than Indian, Chinese and others
- Most of respondents had 4 to 8 members in the family. (Figure 1)
- Majority agreed that private healthcare institutes provide better services, facilities efficiently despite high cost of treatment except for the doctors' competency and patient communication which is good in government healthcare institutes. This is similar to the study in Malaysia in 2020 [4]. Residents perception on facilities, efficiency and cost treatment towards private healthcare facilities were highly significant (p<0.001) (Table 1).
- About 218 (66.26%) preferred private healthcare institutes than government healthcare institutes, 111 (33.74%) (Figure 2)
- Age is associated with the perception on healthcare services and facilities in terms of good Doctor-Patient relationships, hygienic environment, adequate personal attention and facilities provided. Monthly income and race are associated with the efficiency of the healthcare facilities. (Table 1)
- Age is associated with the perception on clinic selection which is due to patient's comfortability of patients with doctors, outmost care given by doctors, confidence in doctors' competency. Age and monthly income and races had impact on the friendliness and confidence in doctors' competency. Monthly income is associated with the clarity given regarding patient's health conditions and outmost care given by doctors. Primary healthcare institutes' efficiency showed significant changes among races.(Table 2) This result is in line with study in 2012 and 2018 [5][6].
- None of the sociodemographic influences the perception on the treatment cost.
- Public's preference for either government or private primary healthcare facilities changed based on age whereas gender, monthly income, and race. (Table 2)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Ipoh residents favored private healthcare facilities or services for its efficiency offered with quality care, though the cost of treatment is high. The sociodemographic factors such as age, monthly income and races were associated with the perception, which might have influenced their preference towards government or private healthcare facilities. It is recommended that the government facilities can be improved in terms of their doctor-patient relationship, facilities and services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Sincere appreciation and gratitude towards:
1) All respondents involved in the research process
2) UniKL RCMP for permitting to conduct the study

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