

Survey of Physician-Patient Relationships in the South Asian Community in Boston

- A Project Funded by a Grant from CHNA 15.ORG to
- Saheli, Support and Friendship South Asian Women and Families
- June 2010

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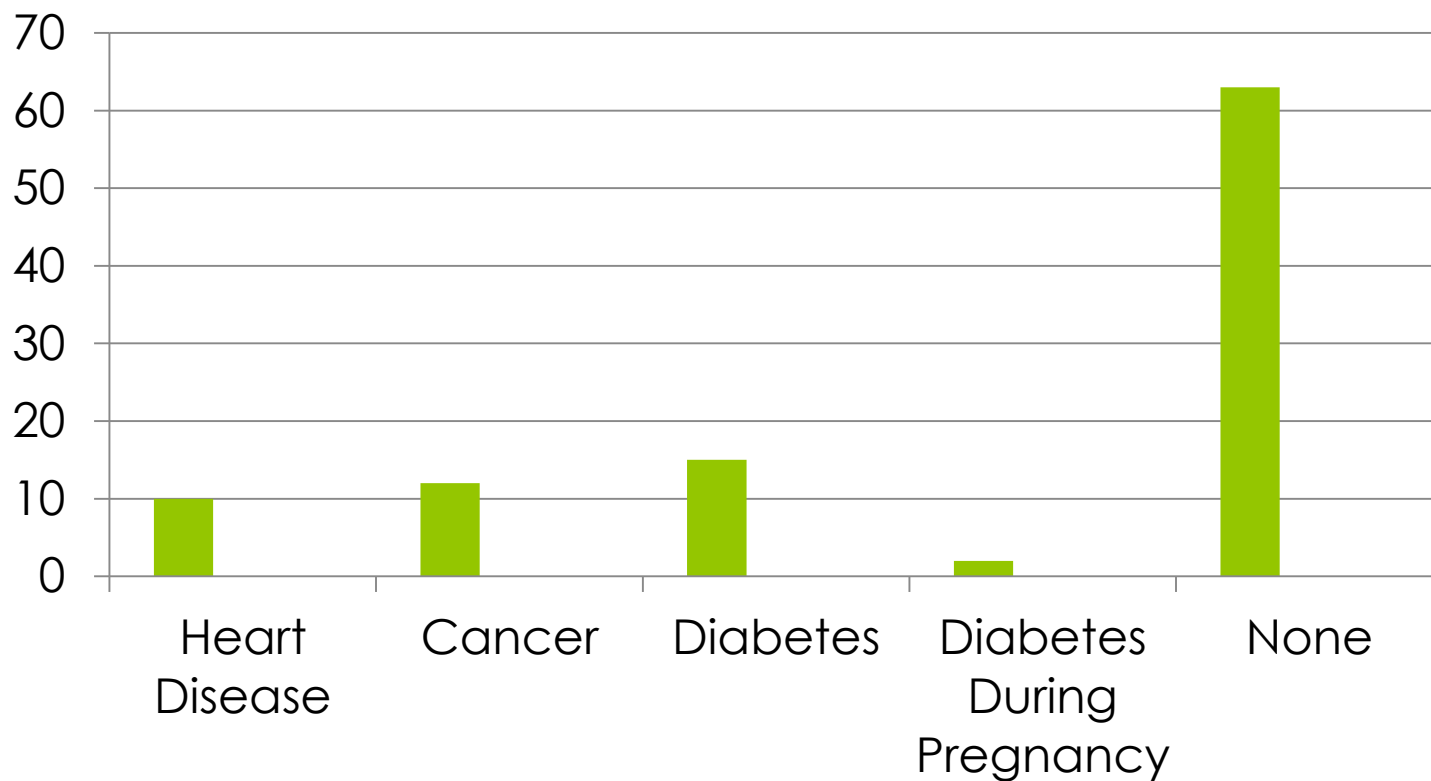
Saheli, undertook a study of doctor patient relationships in the South Asian Community in Boston in 2010. They explored:

- ❖ How South Asians rated the health care system--
- ❖ The community's satisfaction with doctor patient relationships
- ❖ The significance of diabetes as an emerging threat to the health of the community
- ❖ Gender differences among male and female patients and preferences for health care
- ❖ How patient satisfaction is related to doctor's communication styles.

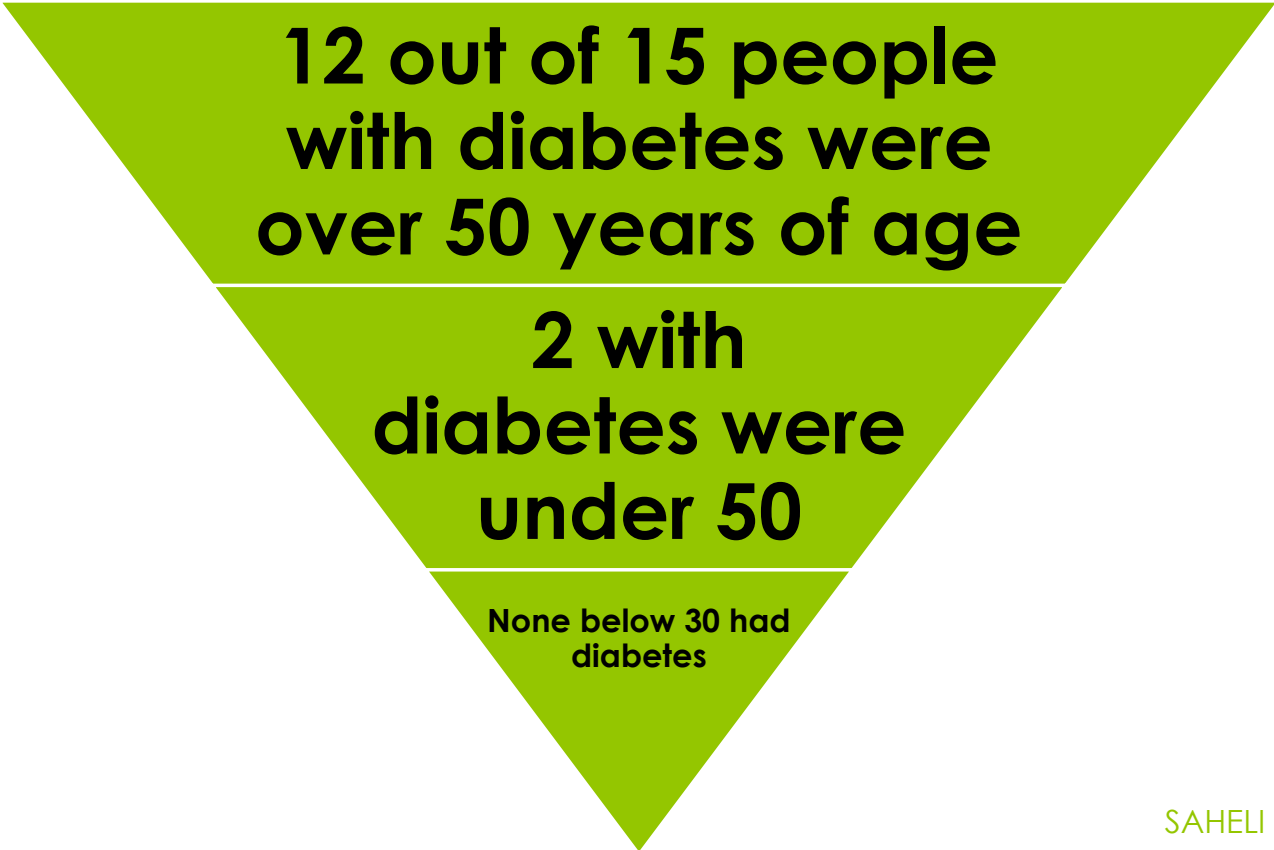
Survey Demographics

- Total Sample: 102 South Asian individuals. They responded online and on paper.
- Sex: Female: 66 Male: 35
- Age: 46 people 51-70 years of age and 42 people 21-50
- Education: 55% beyond 4 years of college education, less than 10% high school degrees
- Language: Majority of spoke 3+ South Asian languages, including English, Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali and Urdu.

Most Common Diseases Among South Asians, Boston



Diabetes and Age



**12 out of 15 people
with diabetes were
over 50 years of age**

**2 with
diabetes were
under 50**

**None below 30 had
diabetes**

Physician Preference

Race-Language

Physician's Race

- 39% chose Caucasian
- 25.2% chose South Asian
- 3.3% chose Mixed or Latino
- 2.5% chose African-American

Language Used

- 69.7% spoke to doctor in English
- 6.7% speak English & a South Asian language
- 3.4% speak only a South Asian language

Patient Satisfaction with Physicians

- **85%** felt physicians spent sufficient time with them
- **90%** felt doctors gave them a chance to ask questions and answered them clearly
- **84%** felt their physicians instructions were clear
- **71** people were very satisfied with their doctors quality of care
- **Not satisfied?????**

Information Sharing During Examination was more positively rated

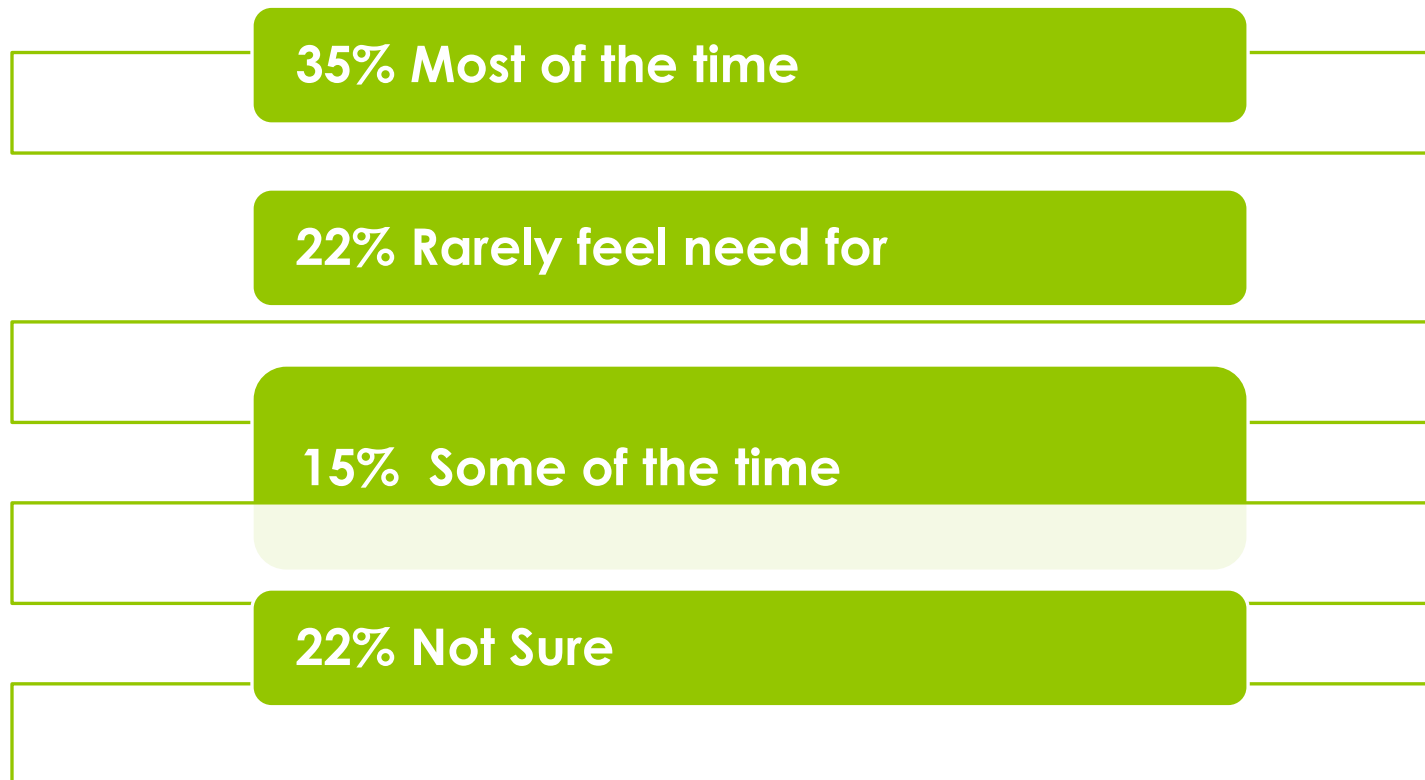
DOCTORS WHO GAVE

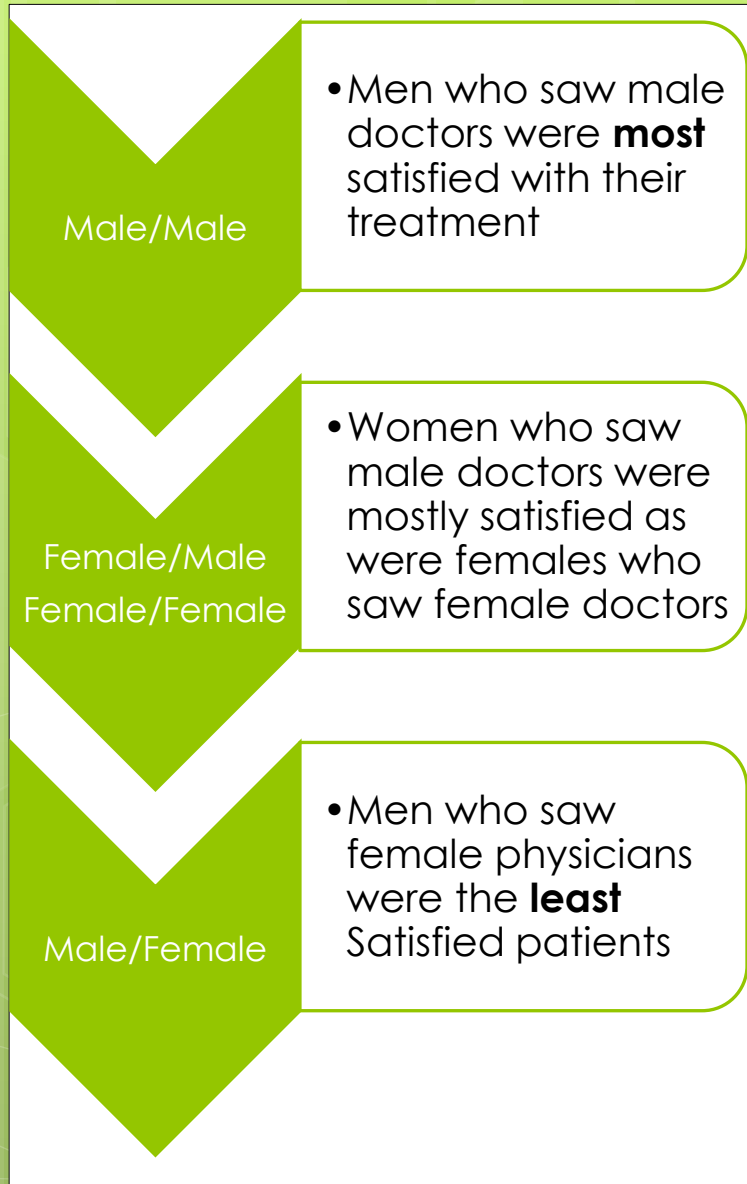
- Introduction to the causes of the problem
- Discussed patients history during physical examination
- Asked questions about life-style, socio-economic issues
- Assured them that they could be helped
- Gave patients a chance to ask questions
- Asked patients for details
- Listened carefully as patients spoke
- Confirmed or corrected patients information

- ❖ Doctor's Level of Information Provision
- ❖ Information Seeking from Patient
- ❖ Communication Skills, Small talk, Interest in family and culture
- ❖ Knowledge about South Asian diet, genetic makeup, and disease
- ❖ Understanding Patient's Concerns
- ❖ Time Taking History
- ❖ 'Informativeness'
- ❖ Discussion of Cause of the Problem
- ❖ Questioning
- ❖ Doctor Freely Informed Patient About Treatment Plan

Patient Satisfaction with Physician depended upon...

Preference for South Asian physician over any another race?





South Asian Gender Issues and Satisfaction

Why were male patients least satisfied with female doctors?
Cultural barriers/issues?

- ❖ **61%** of male patients saw male physicians
- ❖ **89%** of females saw female physicians

Behaviors of Female patients.. More anxiety



Communication with physician Does he/she write down instructions?

10 people in this survey requested an English language translator.

60% Received Written Instructions

Female physicians more likely to write instructions.

5% Do Not Remember

35% No Written Instructions

Do you trust your physician's treatment plan?

70% Most of the time



20% Some of the time



10% Rarely

- 70% felt better when they spoke to their doctor
- Most doctors shared ideas, engaged in small talk, tried to put patient at ease
- 20% felt doctor was too busy
- 25% felt that their doctor had little information or knowledge about South Asian culture, health, diet, etc.

Access: Is your physician available when you need him/her?

Only 48%
said Most
of the time



34% said
Some of
the time

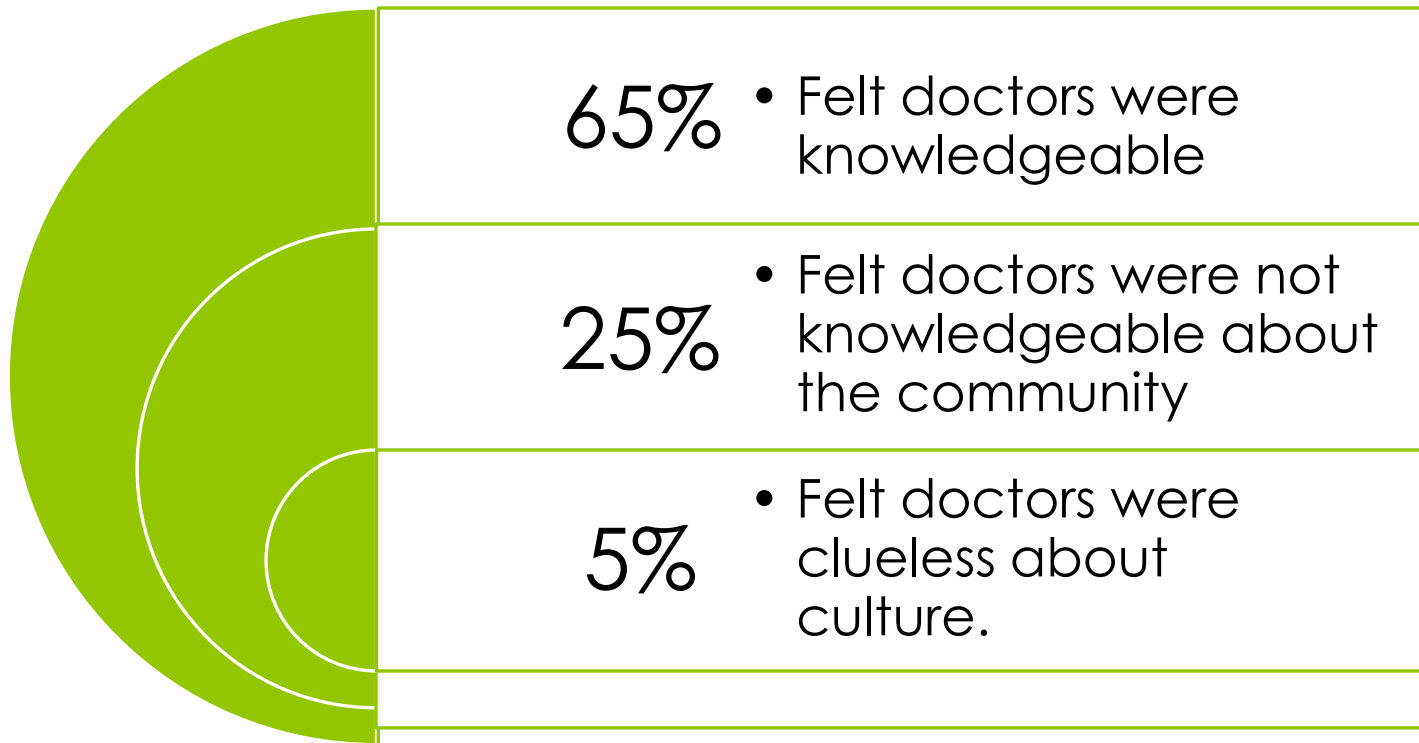


65% said
Staff Tries
to be
Helpful



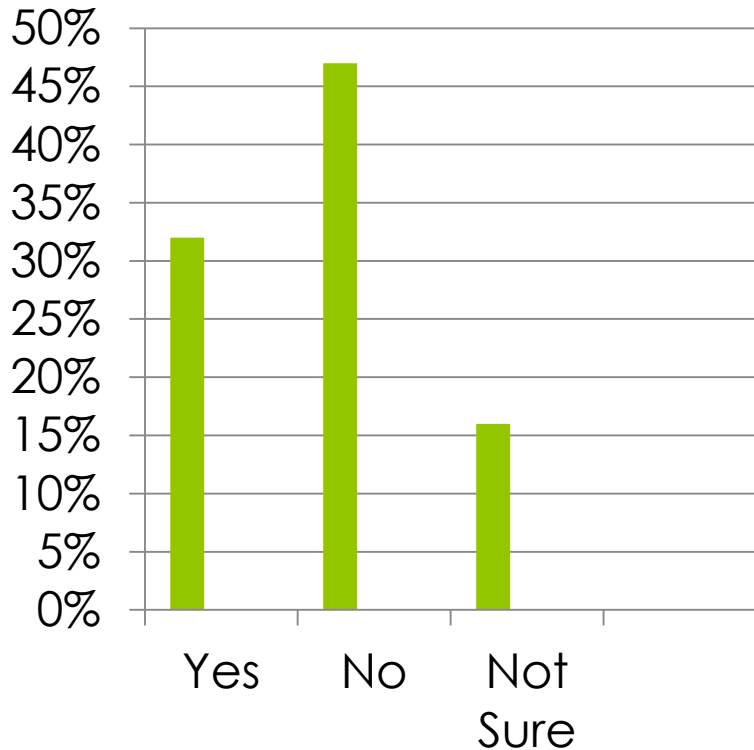
85% said
Staff
Understands
my concerns

Did your Physician Have Knowledge of South Asian Culture and Society

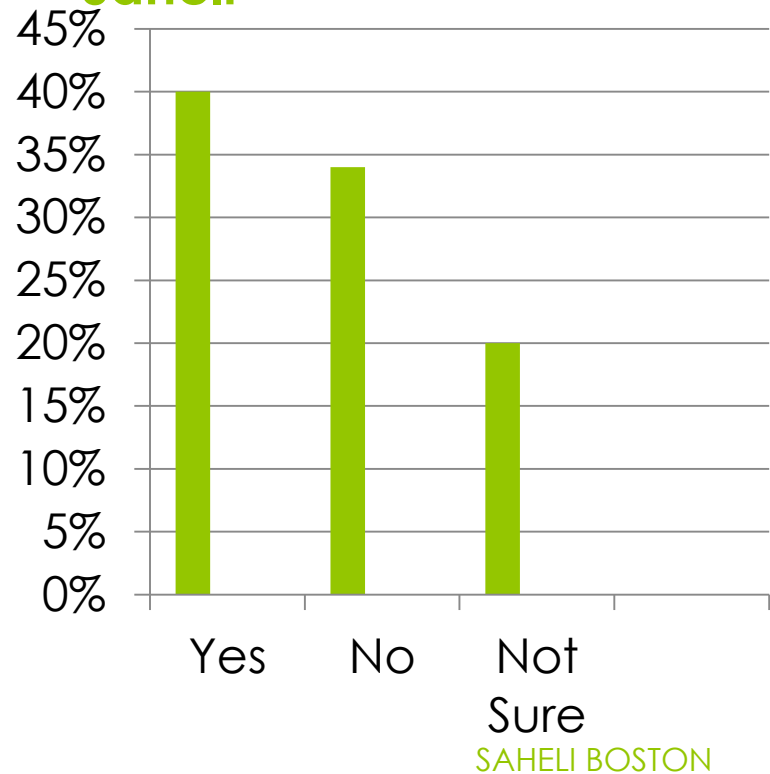


Need for Health Advocates

Is there a need for a
SA Health Advocate



Would you use a
health advocate from
Saheli



Conclusion

- ❖ The South Asian in Boston is generally satisfied with doctor patient relationships based on this sample
- ❖ Diabetes is an emerging threat to the health of the South Asian community living in the US despite higher levels of education and access to good care
- ❖ There are gender differences among male and female patients – sex of physician and communication styles
- ❖ Doctors differ greatly in knowledge of South Asian culture and in communicating with their patients
- ❖ Some older South Asians need language translators and health advocates.

If you have any questions, please write to sahelihelp@gmail.com

SAHELI BOSTON

Thank you