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# Perception of urodynamics from the patient's perspective: a qualitative study

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## INTRODUCTION

- Lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS) are prevalent in the general population. These symptoms can be related to urologic and non-urologic conditions, including different types of vesical dysfunction (2).
- The urodynamic study is an invasive procedure used to evaluate the lower urinary tract function and as follow up after the use of different therapeutics for these symptoms when is indicated (3).
- Different studies have suggested that almost half of the patients who require this procedure experience uncomfortable sensations in both physical and emotional aspects mainly due to its invasiveness (5,6).
- It is important to understand cultural and educational factors that influence general satisfaction with the procedure.
- The aim of the present study is to describe patients' experiences related to discomfort, anxiety and shame during urodynamics

## METHODS

- Data was collected through a semi-structured survey in which two open questions were included about shame and anxiety related to procedure, as well as possible reasons to experience these feelings.
- Participants were recruited from the Urodynamic Unit at Fundación Santa Fe de Bogotá Hospital between January and February 2022.
- Baseline demographic data were collected including age, sex, education level and employment status.
- Surveys and semi-structured interviews were performed after the urodynamic study concluded. These interviews were conducted by one research in order to understand the patients' experience of the urodynamic study.
- The survey and interview covered five aspects aimed at understanding the study experience, including discomfort, shame, anxiety, overall satisfaction and education received before the procedure.

## RESULTS

Characteristic	n
Sex	
Male	8
Age median, (IQR)	54 (42-72)
Education	
Elementary	1
High School	0
Undergraduate	11
Graduate	3
Living arrangement	
Living alone	4
Living with spouse/family	11

- A total of 15 participants were included with a median age of 54 years old (IQR 42-72)
- Eight were male and 7 females
- Most of them had an undergraduate degree and lived with their families

## RESULTS

Table 2. Patients' experiences related to urodynamic study

	n=15
<b>Shame</b>	
Not ashamed	11
<b>Reasons to feel ashamed</b>	
Having a staff member from the opposite gender placing the catheter	1
Position	3
Number of people in the room	0
<b>Anxiety</b>	
Fear	2
Physiologic activation	0
Insecurity	1
No anxiety	12
<b>Discomfort according to VAS</b>	<b>5 (4.5 – 8)</b>

\* Reported as median and IQR

	Mode	Median	IQR
Discomfort according to VAS	5	5	4.5 - 8

Theme 1: information received

Examples	
	"I found similarities between what I was explained about the procedure and what I felt." Male, 79
	"Yes, it was very similar to what my doctor told me." Male, 85
	"It is different to what I thought it was taking into account the information given to me previously, but the staff was very nice to me." Female, 50
	"It is very similar. Every part of the process is explained during the procedure which is very reassuring. The person who does the exam is very good at his job." Female, 42
	"It is exact to what they had explained before. You know, I even thought it was going to be worse." Male, 66

- Despite perceiving the procedure as an uncomfortable one, patients were receptive to it.
- Females perceived less discomfort than males and were willing to repeat the procedure
- Some participants expressed the importance of having access to information about the procedure before it was held.

Theme 2: overall experience

Examples	
	"It is uncomfortable specially after the procedure because there is a constant peeing sensation. Also, there is a little bit of discomfort in the urethra because of the catheter. The rectal catheter was very uncomfortable. Overall, I thought it was worse. I understand that this is the only way to do the exam." Male, 42
	"It was a very uncomfortable procedure but well, it must be done right? If I am told that I must go through this again I wouldn't want to." Male, 43
	"Being inside that room was very annoying, it was not a nice experience." Female, 72
	"The procedure went fine; my incontinence was reproduced in the room. It is very important to determine what is causing my symptoms. It is a bit uncomfortable, but it is more important to be able to have a diagnosis." Male, 60
	"Although the procedure is very uncomfortable, the staff made it easier to be in there. It would be important that the doctor who does the procedure explains the findings. Even if he is not my doctor." Female, 50
	"It was very uncomfortable; it was not nice to have a woman connecting me all those catheters." Male, 43

## CONCLUSIONS

- This study provides insight into the patient's experience on the urodynamic study.
- Subjects evaluated were both male and female which allows a better understanding of different perceptions between genders.
- Being able to understand these experiences allows a better communication of the procedure dynamics.
- It is important for a discussion with the patients regarding their perceptions and expectations on the study. It can also guide discussions around better clinical practices and standards of care in centers where these studies are conducted.
- New strategies to explain different procedures must be developed in order for patients to have a better understanding.

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