

Individual assignment 3 - Ethnography

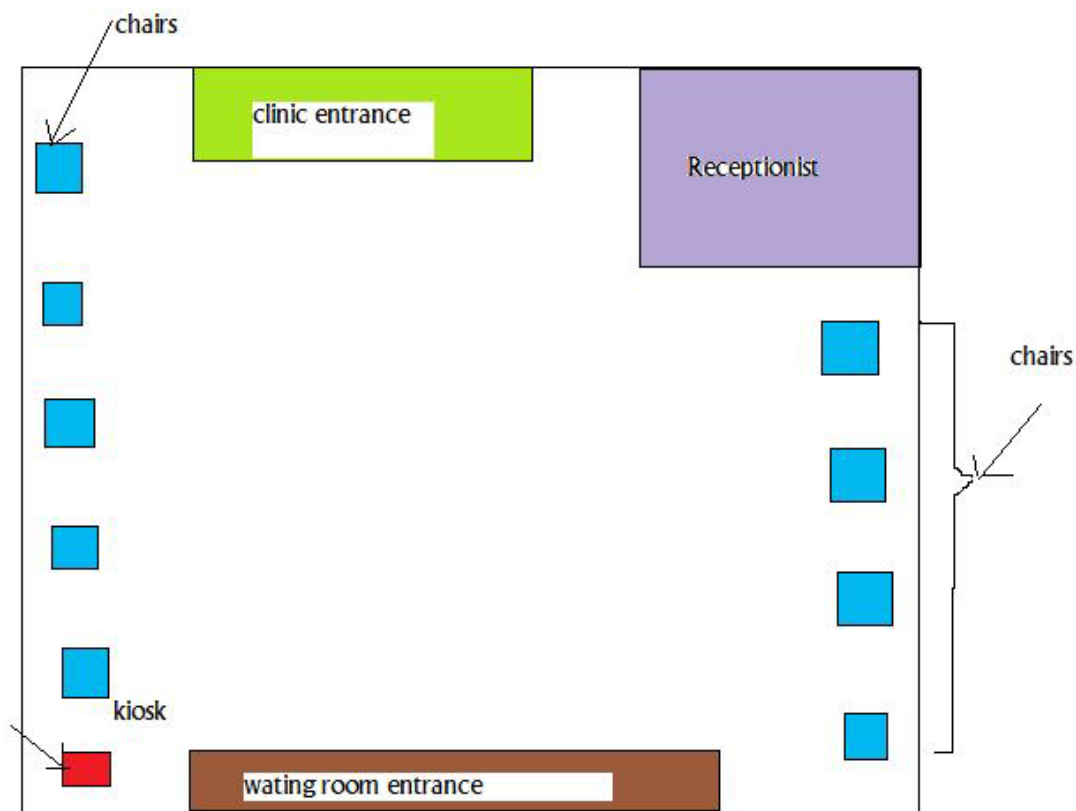
Aim:

To revolutionize the waiting room Geriatric Ambulance Practice at Boston Medical Center. In order to do this we were supposed to do ethnography study of older adults in the waiting room for 1 hour.

Observation:

I visited the Geriatric clinic on Thursday i.e. 1st October along with my colleague Mayuresh between 10 am and 11 am. Since it was early morning the clinic was busy. The waiting room had approximately 15 chairs. There were some health magazines on the table next to the chairs. There were flyers on the wall regarding health session information, flu shots, and healthcare plan for senior adults. There was touch screen kiosk set up in the corner of the waiting room. Music was played from FM radio in the waiting room.

Waiting room Layout:



Patients:

There were approximately 7- 8 patients at that time in the clinic. The approximate age of the patients was 65 to 90 years old. 3 of the patients were accompanied by their family members i.e. wife or son. Most of the patients used a walking stick. One patient approximately in his 80's was on wheel chair. An elderly gentleman was skimming through the health magazine. Another patient was going through magazine names. One gentleman in his 40's was solving puzzle on his book and cell phone.

Artifacts:

Magazines, touch screen kiosk, health information pamphlets, phone etc.

Receptionist:

The reception was busy receiving calls and scheduling patient appointments. She used to take patients inside the clinic by calling out their names. The receptionist desk also had some health information papers which patients normally skimmed through when they were scheduling their next appointment at the reception desk.

Process:

When the patients arrive at the clinic they talk to the receptionist and let her know of their appointment. After waiting for approximately 15 - 45 minutes the receptionist takes them inside to see the doctor. At times even the doctor calls out patient names and takes them inside. The patients get their blood pressure checked and come out and sit in waiting room. After waiting for some time they again go inside to see the doctor. After they are done seeing the doctor the patients wait at reception desk to schedule their next appointment.

Interviews:

I along with my colleague Mayuresh interviewed 2 patients in the waiting room area.

One gentle man approximately 70 years of age was being accompanied by his wife. When I asked him about his waiting room experience he said it was nice as it served the purpose. He was given a wrong appointment date by the reception. On computer the date was entered correctly as September 30th but on the receipt he got from the receptionist the appointment date was of October 1st. When I asked him about the average waiting time he smiled and said "*Normally it is 5-10 minutes. But today it's going to take long. Let's see if they can squeeze me in*". I asked him about his thoughts on setting up an application on touch screen kiosk in the waiting room for patients. He didn't appreciate that idea but when I said what if it had feature where patients could schedule appointments so that the situation of wrong appointment dates could be avoided. He kind of liked that idea and said he would definitely use such kiosk.

When I asked his wife about her waiting room experience she said the music was too loud which youngsters would like. She would prefer some soft instrumental

music instead. Also she said that the waiting room was recently shifted for second to third floor and the clinic never send them any notice about the change. According to her normally the clinic sends notices to patients or calls them to inform of any change in the clinic. Also the direction signs to the new waiting room were very small which she and her husband found difficult in reading them so they got lost while finding the new clinic.

Another middle age man approximately 45 years old was waiting while his father was inside seeing the doctor. He was solving puzzle on the book. When we asked his waiting room experience compared to older waiting room he said *"This room is more spacious, less wait time, has better staffing and better equipment comparatively"*.

He said he normally carries his puzzle book and ipod when he waits for his father in the waiting room. Initially when we asked him what if we set up software on touch screen kiosk which had puzzle games on it, he dint like that idea and said he prefers his own personal book. But when we then told him the puzzle on book is for one time use but on kiosk you can get different game every time. He liked that idea and said he would definitely try puzzle solving games on touch screen kiosk.

We then asked him whether his father will use the kiosk for puzzle solving. He said *"My father won't use it. He is 93 years old. He can solve puzzles on paper but puzzles on computer is too advanced for him"*

Conclusion:

I feel patients in Geriatric waiting room were initially skeptical about using the touch screen kiosk, but when we convinced them about the advantages of such application they really liked the idea and said they would definitely use the kiosk. From the ethnography study I felt we could design application through which senior adults and their family members could schedule doctor's appointment, play games or select their favorite music.