

A Comparative Study on Patients' Satisfaction in Health care Service

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Abstract

Nowadays, patients' satisfaction is an integral part of hospital management across the world. The health care industry in recent years has restructured its service delivery system. The restructuring has focused on finding effective ways to satisfy the needs and desires of the patients. Patients' satisfaction is a basic requirement for healthcare provider because, the satisfaction related to quality of healthcare is provided by hospitals. The main focus of the study is to measure the patients' satisfaction in healthcare service provided by the two hospitals. In these two hospitals, a sample of 400 in- patients were selected to collect the primary data through SERVQUAL model and also Donabedian's framework was used to measure the patients' satisfaction. The finding of the study shows that the private hospital is performing better in providing service quality and give satisfaction according to the needs of the patients.

Keywords: Hospital, Satisfaction, Healthcare, SERVQUAL, Patient

1. Introduction

Nowadays, as people need to live without any illness, quality healthcare is crucial to any health system anywhere in the world. Many researchers have suggested that the quality health care service is ability to meet the patients' expectation (Pui-Mun Lee, 2006). Evans & Lindsay (1996) defined the quality of healthcare service as "all characteristics of the service related to its ability to satisfy the given needs of its customers". Service quality and patients' satisfaction are closely related. Service is an attitude formed by a long term overall evaluation of a hospital's performance. A survey of opinion of patients' regarding the healthcare service provided by hospitals is one of the main tools to measure the quality of service. Nowadays, the patients' satisfaction is an integral part of hospital management across the world. It has been accepted that the effectiveness of healthcare depends on the patients' satisfaction with the services provided by the hospitals. Supporting this view, many studies have been conducted and concluded that satisfied patients would only follow the advice given by the doctors, follow the information provided by the doctors and would continue using the services provided by the hospitals. (Andaleeb, 2000 and 2007).

As such, the examination of patients' satisfaction with regard to the services provided by two important hospitals could review the effectiveness of the hospital management. Therefore, this study is focused on the examination of patients' perceptions that significantly influence the overall satisfaction with healthcare services provided at the two hospitals in Salem city.

2. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to analyze the overall patients' satisfaction of select hospitals.

3. Methodology

The study covers two hospitals viz. Mohan Kumaramangalam Hospital (Public hospital) and Sri Gokulam Hospital (p) Ltd (Private hospital). A sample of 400 in-patients (each having 200 samples) is selected to measure the patients' satisfaction of service quality. Only the primary data were collected from in-patients of the two hospitals by using SERVQUAL model .It consists of 44 items each having two sections: One, the expectations of the patients from the hospitals and the other, the perceptions of the patients. Based on the theoretical knowledge gained by the researcher while surveying the literature, the null hypothesis has been formulated for the study such as "There exists no significant relationship between hospitals and the level of satisfaction". Further, the patients' satisfaction is calculated using the Donabedian's framework as the guiding principle, viz., the following 16 primary service quality sentinels covering all the principal attributes of hospital services, viz.,

1. Catering
 - a. Menu
 - b. Food quality
2. Hospital environment
 - a. Furniture
 - b. Cleanliness
 - c. General presentation
3. Professional and technical quality

- a. Nursing care
- b. Medical care
- c. Apparatus used
4. Patient amenities
 - a. Comfort
 - b. Privacy
 - c. Visiting hours
5. Service personalization
 - a. Confidentiality
 - b. Information given
 - c. Personal attention
6. Accessibility
 - a. Waiting list
 - b. Stay length

The patients are asked to give their score based on the five point scale, ranging from “strongly dissatisfied” to “strongly satisfied” on the level of satisfaction.

4. Findings and Results

Table 1 examines an analysis is made to study the overall satisfaction between private hospital and public hospital. In order to know the association between these hospitals and the overall satisfaction, Chi-square test is employed to test the hypothesis. It is found that most of the patients have medium level of satisfaction i.e., 70% in the case of public hospital and 97% in the case of private hospital. Comparatively almost all the patients have medium level of satisfaction in the private sector hospital. In order to ascertain whether the level of satisfaction is found at the same in both the hospitals, Chi-square test is adopted. Table 2 refers the test is highly significant and hence the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e., there is significant relationship between hospitals and the level of satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded that the satisfaction level varies from the public hospital to the private hospital. The perceptions of service as a component of satisfaction are higher in the case of private hospital as compared to public sector hospital.

Perceived service quality is closely related to satisfaction. A simple correlation analysis is made for each of the dimensions. In case the perceptions are higher, there will be high satisfaction and if the perceptions are found lower, then there will be low satisfaction. If the perception happens to be neutral, then the satisfaction is neither low nor high. In this section, correlation analysis is made to know whether the perception is related to satisfaction.

The table 3 presents correlation between perceptions score and satisfaction dimension-wise for the public hospital. The Co-efficients are not significant with respect to any of the dimensions. This shows that the perception does not influence satisfaction, i.e., the higher the level of perceptions, the lower is the satisfaction level and hence there is no correlation between the perceptions and satisfaction. When all the dimensions are put together, the Correlation between satisfaction and the perceptions are found to be not significant which shows that the patients are not satisfied with the low level of satisfaction with respect to all dimensions.

Correlation co-efficients are calculated in respect of the perceptions and the satisfaction in the case of private hospital and are presented in the table 4. It shows that the correlation co-efficients are found to be significant with respect to all dimensions except Tangibles dimension, which shows that the perceptions of service are higher. There is very good correlation between the perceived score and the satisfaction score in the case of dimensions Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy and also all dimensions. But in the case of Tangibles dimension, the perceived service is low and hence there is no significant correlation between the perceptions and satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded that the patients in the private hospital are fully satisfied with the service. It confirms the earlier finding that the quality of service as perceived by the patients is more than equal to that of the expected service.

5. Summary and Conclusion

The level of satisfaction associated with two hospitals reveals that the satisfaction varies from the private hospital to the public sector hospital. It is found that in the case of public hospital, there is no significant difference between satisfaction and the perceived service with regard to all dimensions and this is confirmed by using the simple correlation co-efficient. But in the case of private hospital, there is significant correlation between the perceived service and satisfaction with respect to all dimensions except Tangibles dimension and hence the perceptions of service quality are higher than the expected service. Therefore, the result shows that the private hospital is performing better in providing service quality according to needs of the patients.

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Table -1 Level of satisfaction between hospitals

Hospital	Level of satisfaction		Total
	Low	Medium	
Public	60(30%)	140 (70%)	200 (100)
Private	6 (3%)	194 (97%)	200 (100)
Total	66 (16.5%)	334 (83.5%)	400 (100)

(Figures in parentheses are percentages to total)

Table – 2 Level of satisfaction between hospitals-chi-square test

	Chi- Square value	df	“P” value	Result
Pearson Chi-square	52.912	1	0.000	Highly Significant

Table - 3 Simple correlation of each of the dimensions with satisfaction level (public hospital)

Dimension (Perception)	Simple correlation co-efficient	“P” Value	Result
1. Tangibles	0.020	0.780	Not significant
2. Reliability	0.096	0.175	Not significant
3. Responsiveness	0.127	0.073	Not significant
4. Assurance	0.046	0.515	Not significant
5. Empathy	0.091	0.198	Not significant
All Dimensions	0.097	0.172	Not significant

Table – 4 Correlation between perceptions and satisfaction for private hospital

Dimensions	Correlation Co-efficient	“P” value	Result
1. Tangibles	0.130	0.067	Not significant
2. Reliability	0.152	0.032	Significant
3. Responsiveness	0.212	0.003	Significant
4. Assurance	0.154	0.029	Significant
5. Empathy	0.184	0.009	Significant
All dimensions	0.207	0.003	Significant

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