

A Study on Service Quality and its Impact on Patient's Satisfaction in Multi-speciality Hospitals

I. Shameem Banu ¹, Dr. A. Regina ²

¹ Ph.D. Scholar, Reg. No. P5861, P.G. & Research Department of Commerce

² Assistant Professor of Commerce

Sri S.R.N.M. College (Autonomous) (Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University),
Sattur 626203, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

Multi-specialty hospitals like other provider supply industry are trying to enhance their service more to make their patients happy with their services so that it survives to tell story in dynamic environment. Multi-specialty hospitals are striving hard to provide superior exceptional services to their patients so that one can get their satisfaction. The study also aims to find out the service quality of multi-specialty hospitals, which can be used to evaluate the quality of services of multi-specialty hospitals perceived by patients. In order to develop and maintain the services of multi-specialty hospitals, they should improve the quality of service to the patients which can create cordial relationship with the patients. Service quality is one of the more dynamic decisive issues in the marketing concept at present. The present research article is an attempt to measure the satisfaction level of patients and to identify the factors that drive the future growth of multi-specialty hospitals.

Keywords: Service Quality, Patients, Multi-specialty Hospital

1.1. Introduction

India's healthcare services industry has become a major driver of economic growth, with multi-national healthcare segments pooling their wealth on Indian soil due to the low cost of operation. In India, terms like health tourism, health care outsourcing and medical back office support are suddenly coming into vogue. Liberalization, privatization and globalization have also brought about unprecedented changes in the Indian healthcare industry.

India's hospital facilities have grown rapidly in the last fifty years. Times have changed and expertise has become the order of the day. However, hospitals small and large have realized that their survival depends on patient management. In addition, the degree of competition in the private healthcare industry has been increasing over the years. The challenging areas for the Indian private hospital amid stiff competition include increasing customer expectations, increasing customer relationship complexities, new trends and developments, greater mobility, faster development of new services, customers in a competitive environment and technology to cope. Upgrades included with modern management environment to meet the perceived satisfaction of the customers.

Healthcare is a patient-oriented service industry where patients or service users are in focus and patient service is the differentiating factor. The success and survival of a healthcare organization depends on the effectiveness and efficiency of the services it provides to its patients. Patients' satisfaction is the key to securing patient retention/loyalty and generating superior and long-term performance or optimizing long-term value.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study restrained to:

- (1) To assess the perceived service quality and patient's satisfaction of the Multi-specialty hospitals offering medical services.
- (2) To find out the patients expectation regarding service quality while getting treatment in Multi-specialty hospital.
- (3) To predict the effect of service quality on patient's loyalty in Multi-specialty hospitals.

1.3. Research Methodology

The research is exploratory in nature. It focuses on review of literature, Newspapers, Journals, Websites and other reliable sources.

1.4. Review of Literature

- (1) **Anusuya (2006)** in her research analyzed the level of satisfaction of patients and the quality of services provided by hospitals. It was stated that more attention should be given to quality in every area of patient care. The key and valuable asset is perceived as patient satisfaction, where health care providers understand and believe that success rests on valuing patients.¹
- (2) **Boyt and Brosky (2000)** were of the view that physicians should be fair, friendly, sympathetic and courteous towards patients under all circumstances. Workshops, counseling and training courses on human psychology can have a significant positive impact on the promotion of service quality of practitioners.²
- (3) **Devabakan and Akgarayli (2012)** revealed that the evaluated service quality in hospitals among the patients are interpersonal characteristics including respect, emotional support and cultural appropriateness; access to locations, waiting times, service hours and appointment delays and amenities including physical environment, food and furnishings³.
- (4) **Otani and Haris, (2005)** mentioned that patients prefer courtesy, patients' value, staffs' appropriate behaviour when they are availing health service. Staff willingness to help, ability to fulfill patient request, courteous manner, transmitting trust and confidence are important for patient satisfaction.⁴
- (5) **Choi et al., (2005)** found that the patient satisfaction is only affected by process characteristics. Satisfied patients are willing to return to the same provider and to recommend services to families and friends.⁵

1.5. Service Quality

- Services are deeds, process and performances which are not tangible things that can be touched, seen, felt but rather are intangible deeds and performance.
- Quality is of intangible based on perception. At the same time, it is one of the most difficult words to define properly.

- Service quality is a measure of how an organization delivers its services compared to the expectations of its customers.
- Service quality is a comparison of perceived expectations of a service with perceived performance.

1.6. Emerging Expectations in Multi-specialty Hospitals

Exploring patients' expectations is critical to ensuring the delivery of the highest quality healthcare. Patients' expectations are constantly increasing. Therefore, a satisfactory balance must be achieved between patient expectations, physicians' perceptions, and the priorities set by health care planners. Each patient who comes for consultation has expectations based on his/her understanding of the disease, cultural background, health beliefs, attitudes and level of understanding. Patient demographics and seizure characteristics also contribute to this. How far the physician's understanding reaches with the patient will also have an impact on the successful outcome of the consultation. Healthcare providers and hospitals have to pay a price for disgruntled patients and customers, thus investing some time to understand the issue is certainly worth some time.⁶

Some common expectations of patients include:

- Need to listen.
- The need to get clear explanations and directions about their condition.
- Will be treated by staff showing caring/concern/compassion.
- To be treated by employees who are professionals in their work.

Some examples of unrealistic expectations of patients would include:

- Want to discuss several key problems, all in one standard consultation.
- prescription given without consultation.
- Ability to call the doctor 24 hours a day for any problems.
- Thinking that the doctor will always know the exact diagnosis at the first consultation and start treatment immediately.

1.7. Suggestions

1. Firstly, multi-specialty hospitals must give due respect to patient values, preferences and expressed needs: this is important because many patients feel that they lose their identity and become “one of the cases” when they come to the hospital.
2. Secondly, patients feel vulnerable when they face illnesses and feel the need for competent and caring healthcare workers.
3. Finally, adequate information should be shared with patients and will include diagnostic, management, and even prognostic information. It is very relevant to enhance the understanding of the concept for self-care and personal health promotion. Patient safety guidelines also emphasize this aspect of care.

1.8. Conclusion

In this study, the researcher has attempted to analyze the level of satisfaction of patients and their attitude towards the perceived quality of services provided by multi-specialty hospitals. It is hoped that health care providers will pay greater attention to quality in every aspect of patient care, both medical and non-medical. Since patient satisfaction is a valuable asset of health care providers, understanding the patient and believing

he or she is most important goes a long way toward the success of every health care provider. Certainly, satisfied patients will return to the same provider and recommend services to families and their friends.

References

1. D. Anusuya, (2006), "A study on patient satisfaction and quality evaluation of healthcare services with reference to private MSH in Coimbatore district", PhD Thesis, Bharathiar University, Commerce, Coimbatore.
2. W. Boyt, A. Schi Browskey, (2000), "Obstetrical Care and Patient Loyalty", *Marketing Health Services*, 19 (Spring), pp. 13-19.
3. N. Devabakan, M. Akgarayli, (2012), "The usage of SERVQUAL scores for the Measurement of Quality of Perceived Service in Health Facilities and Implementation of Private Altimordu Hospital", *Journal of Institute of Social Sciences*, 5 (1), pp. 38-53.
4. K. Otani, L. Haris, (2005), "Different Integration Process of Patient Satisfaction among the Groups", *Healthcare Management Review*, 29 (3), pp. 188-195.
5. K.S. Choi, H. Lee, C. Kein, S. Lee, (2005), "The Service Quality Dimensions and Patient Satisfaction Relationship in South Korea: Comparison Across Gender, Age and Type of Service", *The Journal of Service Marketing*, 19 (3), pp. 140-149.
6. F. Lateef, (2011), "Patient expectations and the paradigm shift of care in emergency medicine", *Journal of Emergencies, Trauma, and Shock*, 4 (2), pp. 163-167.