



PATIENTS' PERCEPTION ON SERVICE QUALITY OF ESI HOSPITALS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU

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Abstract

ESI Scheme of India is a major multi-dimensional social insurance programme that has over the last six decades emerged as the largest social security setup in South-East Asia with its phenomenal growth in terms of geographical reach, demographic coverage, multi-faceted services and an infrastructure that has no parallel. The correlation analysis shows that the service quality dimension of empathy, tangible, assurance, reliability and responsiveness are positively and significantly correlated with patients' satisfaction of ESI hospitals. In order to improve the service quality, ESI hospitals should ensure that toilets/bathrooms and wards / rooms (sheets, floor) are clean and hygiene. Besides, ESI hospitals should made thorough investigations of the patient and enhance accuracy in lab reports and it should keep specialized and experienced doctors available. The hospital should have good facilities and doctors should perform their duties correctly and sincerely. In order to enhance the patients' satisfaction, ESI hospitals should improve admissions and discharge services, nutritional services and diagnostic services.

Key Words: Correlation, ESI Hospital, Patients' Satisfaction, Service Quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Employees' State Insurance (ESI) Act of 1948 was the first social insurance measures introduced in India encompasses certain health related eventualities that the workers are generally exposed to, such as sickness, maternity, temporary or permanent disablement, occupational disease or death due to employment injury, resulting in loss of wages or earning capacity-total or partial.

The provisions made in the Act to counterbalance or negate the resulting physical or financial distress in such contingencies are, thus, aimed at upholding human dignity in times of crisis through protection from deprivation, destitution and social degradation while enabling the society the retention and continuity of a socially useful and productive manpower. The scheme, engineered to suit health insurance requirements of employees, provides full medical care to insured persons and their dependents, as well as, cash benefits to compensate for loss of wages or of earning capacity in different contingencies.

ESI Scheme of India is a major multi-dimensional social insurance programme that has over the last six decades emerged as the largest social security setup in South-East Asia with its phenomenal growth in terms of geographical reach, demographic coverage, multi-faceted services and an infrastructure that has no parallel. Despite all the endeavours made by the Corporation for the effective functioning of the ESI Scheme in the country, public discernment of the Corporation has not been very positive. Therefore, the present research is attempted to study patients' perception on service quality of ESI hospitals in Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu.

2. METHODOLOGY

Among the different districts in Tamil Nadu, the Coimbatore district has been purposively selected for the present study. The 600 patients of ESI hospitals have been selected for the present study by adopting random sampling technique and the data and information pertain to the year 2014-2015. In order to examine the socio-economic profile of patients of ESI hospitals, the frequency and percentage analysis have been carried out. The mean and standard deviation have been worked out for patients' perception on service quality of ESI hospitals and patients' satisfaction about ESI hospitals. In order to examine the socio economic profile of patients and their perception on service quality of ESI hospitals, the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) has been employed. The correlation analysis



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has been applied to study the relationship between service quality dimensions of ESI hospitals and patients' satisfaction.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Socio-Economic Profile of Patients of ESI Hospitals

The socio-economic profile of patients of ESI hospitals was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table – 1, Socio-Economic Profile of Patients of ESI Hospitals

Socio-Economic Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	383	63.83
Female	217	36.17
Age Group		
15 – 25 years	95	15.83
26 – 35 years	221	36.83
36 – 45 years	201	33.50
46 – 55 years	51	8.50
56 – 60 years	32	5.34
Educational Qualification		
Primary	142	23.67
Secondary	158	26.33
Higher Secondary	183	30.50
Diploma	50	8.33
Graduation	33	5.50
Post Graduation	34	5.67
Designation		
Manager	88	14.67
Supervisor	185	30.83
Worker	283	47.17
Clerk	25	4.17
Accountant	19	3.16
Monthly Income		
Below Rs.3,000	76	12.67
Rs.3,001 – Rs.6,000	154	25.67
Rs.6,001 – Rs.9,000	181	30.17
Rs.9,001 – Rs.12,000	125	20.83
Rs.12,001 – Rs.15,000	64	10.66

The results show that about 63.83 per cent of patients of ESI hospitals are males and the rest of 36.17 per cent of patients of ESI hospitals are females. It is clear that about 36.83 per cent of patients of ESI hospitals belong to the age group of 26 – 35 years followed by 36 – 45 years (33.50 per cent), 15 – 25 years (15.83 per cent), 46 – 55 years (8.50 per cent) and 56 – 60 years (5.34 per cent). The results indicate that about 30.50 per cent of patients of ESI hospitals have the educational qualification of higher secondary followed by secondary (26.33 per cent), primary (23.67 per cent), diploma (8.33 per cent), post-graduation (5.67 per cent) and graduation (5.50 per cent). It is apparent that about 47.17 per cent of patients of ESI hospitals are workers followed by supervisors (30.83 per cent), managers (14.67 per cent), clerks (4.17 per cent) and accountants (3.16 per cent). It is observed that about 30.17 per cent of patients of ESI hospitals belong to the monthly income of Rs.6,001 – Rs.9,000 followed by Rs.3,001 – Rs.6,000 (25.67 per cent), Rs.9,001 – Rs.12,000 (20.83 per cent), below Rs.3,000 (12.67 per cent) and Rs.12,001 – Rs.15,000 (10.66 per cent).



3.2. Patients' Perception on Service Quality of ESI Hospitals

The patients' perception on service quality of ESI hospitals was analyzed and the results are hereunder presented.

3.2.1. Empathy Dimension

The patients' perception on empathy dimension of ESI hospitals was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table- 2, Patients' Perception on Empathy Dimension of ESI Hospitals

Empathy Dimension	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Doctors have genuine concern about patients	3.69	1.01
Doctor care their patients	3.68	0.81
Staff and nurses care the patient	3.63	0.91
Hospital put their best efforts to provide comfort to patients	3.62	0.95
Hospital is neat and clean	3.76	0.73

The results show that the patients of ESI hospitals are agreed with doctors have genuine concern about patients, doctor care their patients, staff and nurses care the patient, hospital put their best efforts to provide comfort to patients and hospital is neat and clean.

3.2.2. Tangible Dimension

The patients' perception on tangible dimension of ESI hospitals was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table – 3, Patients' Perception on Tangible Dimension of ESI Hospitals

Tangible Dimension	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Hygienic conditions at hospital	3.91	0.48
Waiting facilities for attendants and patients	3.71	0.76
Healthy environment at hospital	3.76	0.67
Cleanliness of toilets / bathrooms	3.42	1.11
Cleanliness in wards / rooms (sheets, floor)	3.44	1.08
Lab and pharmacy facilities within the hospital	3.74	0.64

The results indicate that the patients of ESI hospitals are agreed with hygienic conditions at hospital, waiting facilities for attendants and patients, healthy environment at hospital and lab and pharmacy facilities within the hospital, while, they are neutral with cleanliness of toilets / bathrooms and cleanliness in wards / rooms (sheets, floor).

3.2.3. Assurance Dimension

The patients' perception on assurance dimension of ESI hospitals was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table – 4, Patients' Perception on Assurance Dimension of ESI Hospitals

Assurance Dimension	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Doctor's expertise and skills	3.73	0.64
Thorough investigations of the patient	3.42	0.99
Doctors almost make right diagnoses	3.69	0.71
Doctors go for expert opinion in critical cases	3.67	0.71
Accuracy in lab reports	3.40	1.08
Special attention to emergency patients	3.62	0.83

It is observed that the patients of ESI hospitals are agreed with doctor's expertise and skills, doctors almost make right diagnoses, doctors go for expert opinion in critical cases and special attention to emergency patients, while, they are neutral with thorough investigations of the patient and accuracy in lab reports.



3.2.4. Reliability Dimension

The patients' perception on reliability dimension of ESI hospitals was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table – 5, Patients' Perception on Reliability Dimension of ESI Hospitals

Reliability Dimension	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Specialized and experienced doctors are available	3.32	1.08
The hospital has good facilities	3.44	1.03
The ambulance service is available for 24 hours	3.76	0.87
Doctors are performing their duties correctly and sincerely	3.42	1.13
The blood bank is available in the hospital	3.69	0.73

It is clear that the patients of ESI hospitals are agreed with the ambulance service is available for 24 hours and the blood bank is available in the hospital, while, they are neutral with specialized and experienced doctors are available, the hospital has good facilities and doctors are performing their duties correctly and sincerely.

3.2.5. Responsiveness Dimension

The patients' perception on responsiveness dimension of ESI hospitals was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 6.

Table – 6, Patients' Perception on Responsiveness Dimension of ESI Hospitals

Responsiveness Dimension	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Doctors / staff efficiently respond to the patients	3.68	0.70
Doctors / Staff are willing to help / facilitate the patients	3.30	1.17
Hospital gives the immediate treatment in the case of emergency	3.73	0.64
Hospital has simple procedure for admission	3.32	1.09
Doctors monitors the health of patients regularly	3.70	0.70

It is apparent that the patients of ESI hospitals are agreed with doctors / staff efficiently respond to the patients, hospital gives the immediate treatment in the case of emergency and doctors monitors the health of patients regularly, while, they are neutral with doctors / staff are willing to help / facilitate the patients and hospital has simple procedure for admission.

3.3. Socio Economic Profile of Patients and Their Perception on Service Quality of ESI Hospitals

In order to examine the socio economic profile of patients and their perception on service quality of ESI hospitals, the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) has been employed and the results are presented in Table 7.

Table – 7, Difference between Socio Economic Profile of Patients and their Perception on Service quality of ESI hospitals

Particulars	F-Value	Sig.
Gender and Service Quality	10.772	.001
Age and Service Quality	3.252	.012
Educational Qualification and Service Quality	14.041	.000
Designation and Service Quality	35.586	.000
Monthly Income and Service Quality	4.882	.001

The F-value of 10.772 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant difference between gender of patients and their perception on service quality of ESI hospitals. The F-value of 3.252 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant difference between age group of patients and their perception on service quality of ESI hospitals. The F-value of 14.041 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant difference between educational qualification of patients and their perception on service quality of ESI hospitals. The F-value of 35.586 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant difference between designation of patients and their perception on service quality of ESI hospitals. The



F-value of 4.882 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant difference between monthly income of patients and their perception on service quality of ESI hospitals.

3.4. Patients' Satisfaction about ESI Hospitals

The patients' satisfaction about ESI hospitals was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 8.

Table -8, Patients' Satisfaction about ESI Hospitals

Patients' Satisfaction	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Admissions and Discharge Services	3.25	0.45
Nursing Services	4.21	0.32
Physician Services	4.32	0.23
Nutritional Services	3.21	0.47
Diagnostic Services	3.37	0.45
Accommodations / Physical Facility	4.35	0.42
Emergency Services	4.63	0.21
Health Information Materials	4.38	0.48
Outcomes of Care	4.71	0.15
Aftercare Instructions	4.32	0.37

The results show that the patients of ESI hospitals are highly satisfied with emergency services and outcomes of care, while, they are satisfied with nursing services, physician services, accommodations / physical facility, health information materials and aftercare instructions. Besides, they are neutral with admissions and discharge services, nutritional services and diagnostic services.

3.5. Relationship between Service Quality Dimensions of ESI Hospitals and Patients' Satisfaction

The relationship between service quality dimensions of ESI hospitals and patients' satisfaction was analyzed by employing correlation analysis and the results are presented in Table 9.

Table- 9, Relationship between Service Quality Dimensions of ESI Hospitals and Patients' Satisfaction

Particulars	Empathy	Tangible	Assurance	Reliability	Responsiveness	Patients' Satisfaction
Empathy	1.00					
Tangible	0.15	1.00				
Assurance	0.11	0.57**	1.00			
Reliability	0.20**	0.58**	0.59**	1.00		
Responsiveness	0.13	0.59**	0.62**	0.64	1.00	
Patients' Satisfaction	0.52**	0.53**	0.54**	0.59**	0.57**	1.00

Note: ** indicates significance at one per cent level.

The results show that the correlation co-efficient between empathy dimension and patients' satisfaction is 0.52, which is moderately and positively associated with each other at one per cent level of significance.

The tangible dimension and patients' satisfaction is moderately and positively correlated with each other with the value of 0.53, which is significant at one per cent level of significance.

The results indicate that the correlation co-efficient between assurance dimension and patients' satisfaction is 0.54, which is moderately and positively associated with each other at one per cent level of significance.

The reliability dimension and patients' satisfaction is moderately and positively correlated with each other with the value of 0.59, which is significant at one per cent level of significance.



The results show that the correlation co-efficient between responsiveness dimension and patients' satisfaction is 0.57, which is moderately and positively associated with each other at one per cent level of significance.

The analysis reveals that there is a significant and positive relationship between service quality dimensions of ESI hospitals and patients' satisfaction. Hence, the null hypothesis of there is no significant relationship between service quality dimensions of ESI hospitals and patients' satisfaction is rejected.

4. CONCLUSION

The foregoing analysis reveals that majority of the patients of ESI hospitals are males and most of the patients of ESI hospitals belong to the age group of 26 – 35 years. Majority of the patients of ESI hospitals have the educational qualification of higher secondary and most of the patients of ESI hospitals are workers. Besides, Majority of the patients of ESI hospitals belong to the monthly income of Rs.6,001 – Rs.9,000.

Among empathy dimension, the patients of ESI hospitals are agreed with doctors have genuine concern about patients, doctor care their patients, staff and nurses care the patient, hospital put their best efforts to provide comfort to patients and hospital is neat and clean.

Among tangible dimension, the patients of ESI hospitals are agreed with hygienic conditions at hospital, waiting facilities for attendants and patients, healthy environment at hospital and lab and pharmacy facilities within the hospital, while, they are neutral with cleanliness of toilets / bathrooms and cleanliness in wards / rooms (sheets, floor).

Among assurance dimension, the patients of ESI hospitals are agreed with doctor's expertise and skills, doctors almost make right diagnoses, doctors go for expert opinion in critical cases and special attention to emergency patients, while, they are neutral with thorough investigations of the patient and accuracy in lab reports.

Among reliability dimension, the patients of ESI hospitals are agreed with the ambulance service is available for 24 hours and the blood bank is available in the hospital, while, they are neutral with specialized and experienced doctors are available, the hospital has good facilities and doctors are performing their duties correctly and sincerely.

Among responsiveness dimension, the patients of ESI hospitals are agreed with doctors / staff efficiently respond to the patients, hospital gives the immediate treatment in the case of emergency and doctors monitors the health of patients regularly, while, they are neutral with doctors / staff are willing to help / facilitate the patients and hospital has simple procedure for admission.

The patients of ESI hospitals are highly satisfied with emergency services and outcomes of care, while, they are satisfied with nursing services, physician services, accommodations / physical facility, health information materials and aftercare instructions. Besides, they are neutral with admissions and discharge services, nutritional services and diagnostic services

The correlation analysis shows that the service quality dimension of empathy, tangible, assurance, reliability and responsiveness are positively and significantly correlated with patients' satisfaction of ESI hospitals.

In order to improve the service quality, ESI hospitals should ensure that toilets / bathrooms and wards / rooms (sheets, floor) are clean and hygiene. Besides, ESI hospitals should made thorough investigations of the patient and enhance accuracy in lab reports and it should keep specialized and experienced doctors available. The hospital should have good facilities and doctors should perform their duties correctly and sincerely. Meanwhile, doctors / staff should be willing to help / facilitate the patients and ESI hospitals should have simple procedure for admission of patients. In order to enhance the patients' satisfaction, ESI hospitals should improve admissions and discharge services, nutritional services and diagnostic services.



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