STUDY ON PATIENT'S PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION TOWARDS VALUE -ADDED SERVICES PROVIDED BY HOSPITALS IN ERODE DISTRICT

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Abstract
Patient satisfaction is an important both to medical (health) care providers, the patients (consumers) themselves and other third party stakeholders in the medical care industry. Measuring the quality of intangible service products has become a great challenge for managers and administrators in the health services industry. Patient satisfaction or dissatisfaction is a complicated phenomenon that is linked to patient expectations, health status, and personal characteristics as well as health system characteristics .This study aims to find out the awareness level of the patients and level of satisfaction towards health care services offered by the hospitals in Erode District. The main focus of the study is to measure the patients' satisfaction in healthcare service provided by the three groups of hospitals (private Hospitals, Hospitals Run by trust and Government hospitals). In these hospitals, 1207 respondents (private Hospital (644), hospitals Run by trust (170) and Government hospitals (393)) were selected by Convenience sampling technique to collect the primary data through Questionnaire. Data was analyzed by using Chi – square and factor analysis. The finding of the study shows that the respondents who have degree level education have more aware about hospitals. Few aspects like Space, Ventilation, Lifting service, Drinking water, Display boards for direction, Diagnostic services, charges for diagnostic services, etc shows decreasing trends. So, hospitals should focus on increasing the satisfaction level of patients.

Keywords: Health care, Service quality, Awareness, Patient satisfaction.

Introduction
"Attention to health and self confidence are the greatest treasure of the life".
The Health care industry is an aggregation of sectors within the economic system that provides goods and services to treat patients with curative and preventive care. India's healthcare service industry has turned out to be a major driver for economic growth. The multi-national healthcare segments are investing their funds on Indian soil. In India, terms such as health tourism, healthcare outsourcing and medical back office support are suddenly gaining impetus. Liberalization, privatization and Globalization also have brought unprecedented changes in the Indian healthcare industry. India's hospital facilities have been rapidly growing in the last fifty years. Further, the degree of competition in the private healthcare industry has been increasing over the years. The areas of challenging for the Indian private hospital on the face of stiff competition are increasing customer expectation, increasing customer relationship complexities, new trends and developments, greater mobility, faster development of new services, customers in competitive environment and upgradation of technology to cope up with modern management for providing satisfaction to customers. Patients' satisfaction is an important and commonly used indicator for measuring the quality in healthcare. Patients' satisfaction in health care service is mainly dependent on the duration, efficiency of care, empathetic and communicative by the health care providers. Patients are the customers and as customers, they have the right to choose where to go for their medical care. Patients are easier to serve if they feel their needs are being met. It is favored by a good doctor-patient relationship.

Review of Literature
Rizwan and samreen (2011)[1] in their study "**Assessing the Service quality of some selected hospitals in Karachi based on the SERVQUAL model**" explored the dimensions of the SERVQUAL model which are significant determinants of service quality, in terms of patients' satisfaction, in the selected hospital of Karachi .For this purpose, data were collected from 252 outpatients' visiting three selected hospitals each from public sector, private sector and semi-public sector. The technique of factors analysis is used to extract the important factors on the basis of responses obtained from patients'. Factors analysis resulted in five factors .the key findings of his study are the regression models obtained for all three hospital these model have the predicators that are statistically significant determinants of the patients' satisfaction for each hospital.

Abdullah Sarwar (2014)[2] in his article "**Healthcare services quality in Malaysian private hospitals: A Qualitative study**" attempted to narrow this gap by conducting a qualitative study to gain insight into quality of healthcare services in the Malaysian private hospitals, as perceived by the patients. This interview-based study was conducted between November 2013 and January 2014. A sample of 14 patients was randomly selected for interview, from three major Malaysian private hospitals including Kuala Lumpur Pantai Hospital, Prince Court Medical Centre, and KPJ Ampang Puteri Specialist

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Hospital. Interview data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire designed based on the literature review. However, the findings of this study may not perfectly represent the whole population as it has been conducted on a limited sample size; hence, they cannot be generalized. Thus, future studies need to be conducted in different healthcare centre's to compare the results.

Objectives of the Study
) To find out the awareness level of the patients towards health care services in Erode District.
) To ascertain patients' level of satisfaction when seeking treatment in healthcare sector.

Research Methodology
Sampling Unit: In this study, the sampling unit was healthcare centers in Erode district.
Sample Selection and Sampling Size: The study population consists of healthcares in Erode district. Total 1207 patients were interviewed during the study period considering available resource and time.

Table No. 1, Distribution of the Sample Respondents

No.	Type of Hospitals	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Collected	Biased	Final sample size
1	Private Hospital	850	770	126	644
2	Hospital run by a Trust	200	193	23	170
3	Government Hospital	450	435	42	393
	Total	**1500**	**1398**	**191**	**1207**

Sampling Design: Convenience sampling technique has been used for the clear picture of the research.
Data Gathering Method: The data needed for analysis was gathered by using a self-administered questionnaire.
Statistical tools and Techniques: Chi-Square test and factor analysis has been used for this study.

Result and Discussion
Chi-Square Test
Educational Level And Awareness About Number Of Multi- Specialty Hospitals In Erode.

Table.No.1

Crosstab				
		Awareness about the number of multi specialty hospitals in Erode		Total
		Yes	No	
Educational Level	Illiterate	0 (0%)	35 (100%)	35
	School level	267 (47%)	298 (53%)	565
	Degree Level	185 (72%)	71 (28%)	256
	Other	51 (15%)	300 (85%)	351
Total		503	704	1207

It is evident from the above table that the Illiterate has no aware about multispecialty hospitals, patients of school level education have 47% of awareness about multispecialty hospital, degree level educated patients have 72% awareness and others have 14% of awareness about multi specialty hospitals.In order to find the relationship between the Educational Level of the respondents and their level of awareness towards hospital service the following hypothesis was framed and tested with the help of Chi- square test.

Hypothesis
H0: There is no association between Educational Level and Aware multi specialty hospitals in Erode.
H1: There is association between Educational Level and Aware multi specialty hospitals in Erode.

Table.No.2

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	344.180[a]	3	.001
N of Valid Cases	1207		

Source: computed

From the square tests table we revealed that the Pearson chi-square significant value is less than the level of significant (i.e. $p<0.05$) so we can reject our H0. Hence we concluded that there is association between Educational Level and Aware multi specialty hospitals in Erode.

One-Way ANOVA Test
The One-Way ANOVA procedure produces a one-way analysis of variance for a quantitative dependent variable by a single factor (independent) variable. Analysis of variance is used to test the hypothesis that several means are equal. This technique is an extension of the two-
Sample t test.

Hypothisis
H0: There is no association between Educational Level and level of satisfaction of the patients.
H1: There is association between Educational Level and level of satisfaction of the patients.

Table.No – 1, ANOVA test for education and level of satisfaction of the patients

Level of Satisfaction	Educational Status				
	Illiterate (n=35) Mean(standard deviation)	School level (n=565) Mean(standard deviation)	Degree Level (n=256) Mean(standard deviation)	Other (n=351) Mean(standard deviation)	p-value
Location of the hospital	3(1.1)	3.3(0.97)	3.2(0.99)	3.06(1.01)	0.003
Adequacy of the space and seating facilities	2.6(1)	3.06(1.04)	3.14(1.14)	2.98(0.99)	0.02
Parking facilities	3.2(1.3)	2.84(1.17)	2.7(1.07)	2.89(1.27)	0.057
Upkeep and cleanliness of the hospital	3.4(1.4)	2.78(1.32)	2.31(1.13)	2.9(1.35)	<0.001
Display boards for directions to various departments	2.6(1.4)	2.22(1.35)	1.86(1.25)	2.36(1.38)	<0.001
Waiting room for the relatives	2(1.6)	2.13(1.1)	2.23(1.04)	2.22(1.14)	0.428
Ventilation facilities	2.2(0.8)	2.73(0.97)	2.91(1.06)	2.97(1.08)	<0.001
Adequacy of lift services	1.8(1.2)	2.63(1.3)	2.63(1.11)	2.7(1.3)	0.001
Drinking water and bore well water facilities	1.4(0.5)	2.58(1.37)	2.74(1.26)	2.56(1.28)	<0.001
Uninterrupted power supply	2.4(1)	2.82(1.22)	2.8(1.29)	2.98(1.19)	0.024
Toilet facilities	3(1.1)	2.81(1.11)	2.61(0.95)	2.86(1.08)	0.019
Hospitality reception employees	3(1.1)	2.8(1.34)	2.7(1.22)	2.88(1.23)	0.26
Appointment / Token system	2.6(1.2)	2.62(0.97)	2.75(0.92)	2.68(0.99)	0.359
Procedure for admission	2.8(1.9)	2.91(1.42)	3.14(1.21)	2.92(1.38)	0.117
Availability of the rooms for in-patients	3(1.7)	3.16(1.25)	3.17(1.12)	3.04(1.23)	0.412
Physical surroundings of the room	2.6(0.8)	2.85(0.99)	2.78(0.91)	2.77(1.03)	0.354
Hot water facilities	2.4(1)	2.86(1.07)	2.83(0.95)	2.84(1.12)	0.099
Prevention from mosquitoes	1.8(1)	2.6(1.16)	2.72(0.96)	2.6(1.11)	<0.001
Television facilities	2.4(1.4)	3.18(1.33)	3.37(1.21)	3.04(1.36)	<0.001
Charges for room rent	3.2(1.3)	3.18(1.1)	3.01(1.16)	3.05(1.25)	0.191
All the medical diagnostic services (X-ray, Scan, Physiotherapy etc)	4.2(0.4)	3.22(1.32)	2.67(1.25)	3.16(1.39)	<0.001

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Charges diagnostic services	3.6(1.2)	2.64(1.36)	2.48(1.22)	2.76(1.24)	<0.001
Availability of doctors	3.6(0.8)	3.55(0.82)	3.58(0.73)	3.5(0.81)	0.041
Knowledge of the doctors	3(1.1)	3.19(0.98)	3.08(0.83)	3.14(1.04)	0.038
Consulting time spent by the doctors	2.2(1)	2.64(1.09)	2.94(1.07)	2.77(1.26)	<0.001
Explanation of the disease	3(0.6)	2.96(0.89)	3.19(0.91)	3.09(1.08)	0.012
Treatment method offered by the doctors	2.4(0.5)	2.49(1.09)	2.77(1.27)	2.78(1.19)	<0.001
Politeness & Courteous behavior doctors	2.4(0.5)	2.51(0.91)	2.66(1.08)	2.58(1.1)	0.018
Charges for consulting and treatment of doctor	3.2(1.9)	3.13(1.36)	3.3(1.27)	3.28(1.4)	0.024
Availability of sufficient nurses	2.6(1.4)	3.08(1.4)	3.23(1.35)	3.24(1.44)	0.026
Efficiency and knowledge nurses	3(1.3)	2.98(1.06)	2.77(0.95)	3.08(1.13)	0.006
Treatment speed and skills of nurses	3(0.6)	2.98(1.22)	3.11(1.31)	2.79(1.15)	0.013
Response of services when approached	2.2(0.4)	2.96(1.09)	3.25(1.09)	2.78(0.97)	<0.001
Politeness & courteous behavior of nurses	2.2(1.2)	3.17(1.44)	3.42(1.41)	3.04(1.4)	<0.001
Nursing charges	2.4(1)	3.41(1.34)	3.66(1.28)	3.36(1.33)	<0.001
Availability of medical store in the hospital premises	2.6(0.5)	3.59(1.19)	3.75(1.17)	3.28(1.06)	<0.001
Availability of medicine which doctors prescribed	3.2(1.2)	3.26(1.07)	3.23(1.01)	3.12(1.05)	0.025
Billing procedure	3.4(1.2)	2.7(1.37)	2.62(1.28)	2.68(1.36)	0.015
Availability of sufficient medical store employees	3.2(0.8)	2.76(1.3)	2.61(1.21)	2.88(1.2)	0.01
Availability of laboratory and usage	3.8(1.5)	3.38(1.28)	3.23(1.14)	3.22(1.32)	0.024

Source: computed

From the ANOVA tests table we revealed that significant value is less than the level of significant 5%. So we can reject our H0. Hence we concluded that there is association between Educational Level and Level of satisfaction of the patients.

The above table shows association between level of satisfaction and educational status. Many aspects of level of satisfaction were statistically significant between the groups of educational status. Few aspects like Space, Ventilation, Lifting service, Drinking water, Display boards for direction, Diagnostic services, charges for diagnostic services, etc shows decreasing trends. However, neither of the groups recorded the high level of satisfaction as the mean score is not more than 4 in any aspects which show hospitals should focus on increasing the satisfaction of patients.

Findings
) It is noted that Degree level education of the respondents has attained maximum level of awareness towards multispecialty hospitals. From the Chi Square analysis, we concluded that there is association between Educational Level and Aware multi specialty hospitals in Erode.
) Many aspects of level of satisfaction were statistically significant between the groups of educational status. Few aspects like Space, Ventilation, Lifting service, Drinking water, Display boards for direction, Diagnostic services, charges for diagnostic services, etc shows decreasing trends. It shows that hospitals should focus on these factors to increase the satisfaction level of patients.

Suggestions
- The hospital management should organize health clinics and medical camps in nearby schools and colleges to create awareness among public.
- The hospital management should improve their service quality by paying keen attention towards patient's health care. So, this leads to increase the patients' satisfaction at the maximum level.
- The hospital management should set up the patient's feedback mechanism.

Conclusion

The present study reveals that the patients have adequate awareness towards hospital, so that service provider must take every step forward by fulfilling the demands and expectation of the patients. The majority of the people selected a particular hospital on account of its better service attributes like politeness, helpfulness, reliability and patient's friendly approach of the staff. Though the overall measurement of the patient's satisfaction, many of the selected health care service features has been satisfied by the patients and hospitals should focus on few aspects to increasing the satisfaction level of patients.

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