Customer Perception on Hospital Services in Gwalior (A Comparative Study)

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Abstract

The hospital is being defined as an institution whose primary function is the provision of a variety of diagnostic and therapeutic services to patients, both in the hospital and in the outpatient clinics. A business which has a high service quality will meet customer needs whilst remaining economically competitive. Economic competitiveness is increased by improved service quality. The main objective of the study is to find out the awareness level of people for hospital services and to find out the impact of customer perception on customer satisfaction. The study being undertaken is exploratory and Descriptive in nature and sample size of study is 300. Patients, who will received treatment from government and private hospitals in Gwalior and have been admitted for a minimum of 3 days, were selected as respondents. Regression was applied to check the hypotheses and result shows that customer perception factors are having significant impact on customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Hospital, Service Quality, Customer Perception, Satisfaction, Patient

Introduction

Hospital is the place where an individual goes to get well. India medical facilities are developed by ages and now-a- days India has the capability to treat much kind of dangerous diseases. Hospitals are many types like government hospital, private hospital and single and multispecialty hospital, trust hospital which provides different kinds of facilities to the patients. Many kinds of functions are being provided by private and government hospitals like line services, supportive services, auxiliary services etc. Hospital is an integral part of a social and medical organization. **Development of Hospital Industry**

It is an umbrella organization under which many individual health care professionals provide some or all of their services. Now-a-days hospitals provide bio-social research; teaching and training facilities for doctors, nurses, Para-professionals, paramedical, pharmacists, etc. Operationally, hospital provides service to out-

patient, in-patient, and general wards, emergency, operation theatre, special wards, delivery suite and intensive care units.

World Health Organization (WHO) has enlarged the functional areas for modern hospitals. A hospital is considered as a social institution for delivery of healthcare and offering considerable advantages to both patients and the society. It is considered to be the place for the diagnosis and treatment of human ails and for restoration of health and wellbeing of those temporarily deprived of. A hospital as a social institution is responsible for protecting the interests of the society.

A quiet revolution is taking place in hospital administration in India. The private sector participation in health care is on the increasing pace because entrepreneurs and technocrats see immense opportunity for earning in this sector. The increasing demand, a variety of means to support the rendering of quality health care and the entrepreneurial spirit have given a boom to the Healthcare industry in India. The emergence of corporate hospitals in the Indian health care sector is a recent development. This trend has revolutionized the entire health care scenario in our country. So, the hospitals are functioning in a very competitive environment. Most of these hospitals are professionally managed. Their objective is to provide prompt, adequate, continuous and satisfactory services to the patient community because their main consideration is providing quality health care and also earning profits. With the fast growing purchasing power, our Indian patients are ready to pay more to avail best health care services which are of international standard. In the era of globalization and stiff competition, it has been observed that delivery of quality service is crucial for Indian healthcare providers to satisfy their indoor as well as outdoor patients. Hence, it is essential to be aware of how the patients evaluate the quality of health care service. Such an understanding facilitates hospital administration to increase the quality of service and satisfy patients to a great extent as well.

Customer Perception

Customer perception is an important component of relationship with the customers. Perceptions vary from person to person. Different people perceive different things about the same situation. But more than that, we assign different meanings to what we perceive. And the meanings might change for a certain person. One might change one's perspective or simply make things mean something else. The concept of customer perception does not only relate to individual customers in consumer markets. It is also valid in business to business situations.

Services Marketing

Service is an intangible product. A service product is a bundle of features and customer benefits. It is a package of a package of service elements in proper order in keeping with the needs and wants of the consumers with an intention to maximize customer satisfaction. Therefore, the basic service package includes three elements such as (a) Core service (b) Facilitating service and (c) Supporting service.

A service must evolve a service strategy in an integrated and coordinated way to exploit core competencies and gain competitive advantage. In other words, a strategy consists of a combination of competitive moves and business approaches to pleasure customers, compete successfully and achieve organizational objectives keeping in mind SWOT analysis.

Customer Satisfaction

Satisfaction implies complete fulfillment of one's needs. Every organization and everyone in the organization must strive to satisfy the current customer and create new customers. The most commonly used representation of customer satisfaction is referred to as the disconfirmation model. (Oliver, 1980) – The extent of satisfaction that a customer has with a service encounter is determined by the disconfirmation between the customer's expectations of performance and the actual perceived performance of the service.

Service quality

Service quality is a comparison of expectations with actual performance. A business which has a high service quality will meet customer needs whilst remaining economically competitive. Economic competitiveness is increased by improved service quality. This aim may be achieved by understanding and improving operational processes; Quick and systematic problem identification; establishing valid and reliable performance measures for service and measuring customer satisfaction and other performance outcomes. From the viewpoint of business administration, customer service is an achievement in service quality. It reflects at each service sector.

Review of Literature

Ratha K (2018) has work done on Patient's perception towards the private hospitals in Ramanathapuram Taluk. In This study reveals that people generally prefer private hospitals when they talk about timeliness, infrastructure, before and after time services, extra care, advance techniques etc. Hospitals industry today plays a big role in making the welfare of the public. Doctors come second after the God. So both organization should take care of their social responsibility towards the society first and profit afterward.
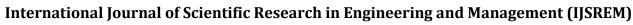
Subramania Bala Jeshurun and R. Karthi Keyan Karpagam (2017) have work done A Empirical Study on Customer Perception towards Multi Specialty Hospitals, Tamilnadu. The service firms should identify the customer perception of post and purchase behaviour in a case of particular services that satisfy a customer. In this study, find out the customer perception towards multi-speciality hospitals; the patients are satisfied with the services they got from the hospitals during the treatment. They are also satisfied with the overall service quality dimensions namely reliability, tangibility, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Most of the patients feel that the services are excellent. Customers actually looking forwards for the better service and experienced staff (Doctors and nurses) in the hospitals rather than seeing the convenience of travel and cost of their treatments.

Farzana Isla et al (2015) have done work on Perceptions of health care providers and patients on quality of care in maternal and neonatal health in fourteen Bangladesh government healthcare facilities. In this study results found that both parts qualitative and quantitative .qualitative part covers the perception of healthcare providers and support staff on quality care. And second parts covered the results of the quantitative method, where patients' satisfaction on quality of care was assessed through exit interviews. Also got that the quality of MNH care is poor in district and sub-district hospitals in Bangladesh because of a lack of healthcare personnel and logistic support, including equipment, essential drugs, and laboratory needs. This information could be used to strengthen the national-level policy for improving the quality of MNH care at the facilities.

Odgerel Chimed-Ochir (2013) analyzed patient satisfaction and service quality perception at district hospitals in Mongolia. 157 questionnaires were collected from three district hospitals in Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia. The statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, bivariate analysis and ordinal regression were used and found out that no significant relationship existed between ages, gender, occupation, education, self-reported health status, and the length of stay in hospital. The number of admissions into the hospital had a significant influence on patient satisfaction. Patient satisfaction significantly depended on empathetic services such as nursing care, respectfulness of nurses, helpfulness of nurses and attentiveness of doctors to patients and also the six sigma practices. The level of comfort in the patients' room also had a great influence on patient satisfaction.

Sarabjit Singh Shergill, Dr. Roshan Lal (2012) customer perception towards private nursing homes: A study of Punjab and Haryana. The highest expectation is regarding the availability of a well conversant and aware receptionist at the entrance of a nursing home. It is clear that service users from all categories wanted

that they shouldn't be bothered at the entrance. Most of them had bad previous experiences where they left much disturbed at the entrance. They clearly wanted that the person at reception must receive them properly, explain them about formalities and guide them for further processes. Service users expect that service provider's place should not lack hygiene and it must be neat and clean. Most of them were found well aware of advantages of hygiene and they reacted sharply in favour of high class hygiene in private nursing homes.

Irfan. S. M (2011) studied to compare the quality of healthcare services delivered by public and private hospital to gain patient satisfaction in Pakistan using SERVQUAL instrument. 320 samples were collected and mean, Standard deviation, mean square error and paired t-test were used and found out that private hospitals delivered better quality of services to their patients as compared to public hospitals. The private hospitals focused on their patients demands and developed themselves to provide maximum healthcare facilities to their patients.

Lee Pui-Mun (2009) studied to understand the important attributes of healthcare service that had impact on customer satisfaction. A questionnaire was served on 400 customers who had previous experiences in healthcare systems in Singapore. Intercept interviews were used to measure customer satisfaction levels using a Consumer Satisfaction Index (CSI) model which was based on a 10-factor construct. This study provided a benchmark on customer satisfaction towards healthcare industry in Singapore. A lot of improvement needed to happen in factors such as promptness, attitude, communication, consistency and knowledge. A generalization model on IT-enhanced service quality in healthcare was proposed to strengthen most of the deficiencies detected in the healthcare service.

Objectives of the Research study

1. To find out the awareness level of people for hospital services.

2. To find out the impact of customer perception on customer satisfaction.

Research Design

The study being undertaken is exploratory and Descriptive in nature.

Selection of sample

All those hospitals which are registered with competent government authorities such as District Medical Officer and those which have capability to admit patients for medical treatment are included in the universe. The list of hospitals in Gwalior having bed capacity of more than 100 is available with District Medical

Officer and from this sampling frame top hospitals having bed size more than 100 and those which have been operational more than 5 years are selected. The subjects of the study comprised of the discharged patients and their bystanders from different department of hospital within three months at the time of field work. Those recently discharged patients; whose minimum length of stay was more than three days were included in this study

Sample Size

The sample size of the study is fixed according to the average bed size in the selected hospitals and the average occupancy ratio of these hospitals. The sample size of 300 was selected. A total four hospitals were sampled purposively in city of Gwalior. A multistage and convenient sampling technique was adopted in choosing the sampled hospitals and respondents for the study. Two public and two private hospitals were sampled to avoid any bias in the investigation. A pilot study carried out was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.836 was realized indicating high internal consistency of the test instrument.

Population of study

Patients, who will received treatment from government and private hospitals in Gwalior and have been admitted for a minimum of 3 days, were selected as respondents. Hospitals Selected for the Study 1 Jaya Arogya Hospital (Government hospital), 2 Kamla Raja Hospital (Government hospital), 3 BIMR Hospitals, 4 Apollo Spectra Hospitals

Data Collection

The data would be collected through self-administered questionnaire. The responses will be recorded using a 7- point Likert scale from the patients or their bystanders group for the entire study. Where 7 were strongly agreed, 4 was neutral and 1 was strongly disagree. The questions will be taken from scale designed by KQCAH scale for hospital services. All the participants were informed regarding the purpose of the study. There are 75 items in the original KQCAH scale (op cit.), but the present study included only 60. We found fifteen more items are either redundant or with comparatively low factor loading the preliminary analysis and were dropped in the data processing stage.

Tools for Data Analysis

The data was analyzed through software IBM SPSS 23.0. Reliability of data was checked through Cronbach's Alpha. Multiple regression analysis was applied to check the hypotheses.

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Analysis

Table No. 1 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.868	70

It is shown by the given below table that the value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.868. This indicates that all the items in questionnaire are highly reliable.

H01: Customer Perception factors are not having positive and significant impact on Customer Satisfaction.

Table No. 2 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.856[a]	.732	.726	2.30264	1.888

a. Predictors: (Constant), Effectiveness meal, Information, Efficiency, Effectiveness & Continuity, Social Responsibility, Appropriateness, Respect and Caring
b. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Table No. 3 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4231.249	7	604.464	114.003	.000[b]
	Residual	1548.231	292	5.302		
	Total	5779.480	299			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction
b. Predictors: (Constant), Effectiveness meal, Information, Efficiency, Effectiveness & Continuity, Social Responsibility, Appropriateness, Respect and Caring

Table No. 4 Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.671	.804		2.078	.039		
	Respect and Caring	.368	.032	.942	11.434	.000	.135	7.394
	Effectiveness & Continuity	.202	.032	.344	6.225	.000	.300	3.335
	Appropriateness	.172	.034	.128	2.123	.005	.253	3.955
	Information	.136	.040	.142	3.379	.001	.517	1.934

Efficiency	.125	.056	.118	.437	.002	.538	1.860
Social Responsibility	.138	.042	.145	.905	.001	.375	2.667
Effectiveness meal	.260	.076	.234	3.430	.001	.196	5.090

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

R square value is .732, which indicates 73.2 % of variance in Customer Satisfaction is explained by independent variables. The F-ratio in the ANOVA table tests whether the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. The table shows that the independent variables statistically significantly predict the dependent variable, $F(7, 292) = 114.003$, $p < .0005$ (i.e., the regression model is a good fit of the data). Thus, our null hypothesis are rejected and indicates that Customer Perception factors are having positive and significant impact on Customer Satisfaction.

The non-standardized coefficients are used to develop the regression equation. The equation for regression analysis from the coefficient table above can be summarized as below:

$Y = a + bx1 + cx2 + error$

Customer Satisfaction = 1.671 + .368 (Respect and Caring) + .202 (Effectiveness & Continuity) + .172 (Appropriateness) + .136 (Information) + .125 (Efficiency) + .138 (Social Responsibility) + .260 (Effectiveness meal)

H02: Customer Satisfaction is not having positive and significant impact on Customer Loyalty.

Table No. 5 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.890ᵃ	.792	.689	2.95857	.152	53.445	1	298	.000	2.115

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Satisfaction
b. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty

Table No. 6 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	467.814	1	467.814	53.445	.000ᵇ
	Residual	2608.436	298	8.753		
	Total	3076.250	299			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty
b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Satisfaction

Table No. 7 Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1　(Constant)	7.138	.827		8.636	.000		
Customer Satisfaction	.762	.039	.790	7.311	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty

The result of regression analysis shows that the Value of F is 53.445, which are significant at 0% level indicating good model fit and value of t is 8.636, which are also significant at 0% level. R square value is .792, which indicates 79.2 % of variance in Customer Loyalty is explained by Customer Satisfaction. Thus, our null hypothesis will reject and this indicates that Customer Satisfaction is having positive and significant impact on Customer Loyalty.

The equation for regression analysis from the coefficient table above can be summarized as below: Y = a + bx + error

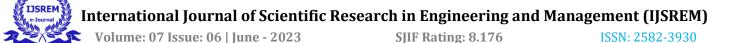Customer Loyalty = 7.138 + .762 (Customer Satisfaction)

Conclusion

The study concluded with the fact that customer perception factors are having positive and significant impact on customer satisfaction. The hospital services which is provided by hospitals created perception among customers, so customers attracted towards hospitals. The hospital management should focus on improvement of there services and should improve the factors like caring, effectiveness and appropriateness to create loyalty among patients. The study also shows that private hospitals are providing better services than government hospitals.

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