A Study on Patients’ Satisfaction in a Private Hospital of Indore

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the customer satisfaction level in a private health care hospital in Indore. Government of India had emphasized abundantly on the health care industry in the budget FY2018; as this sector directly effects the life of common man. The Indian Health care industry is divided into two sectors grossly; viz. Private Health care sector and Government (Public) Health Care Sector. Though the aims and potential objectives of both these sectors varies from each other including aberration in quality of care & customers satisfaction. This study essentially focuses on the difference in expectations and perceptions of customers inducing customer’s satisfaction level in a private hospital of Indore; and also reveals the attributed significance of 5 elements of Servqual Tool i.e. Tangibility, Responsibility, Responsiveness, Empathy & Assurance; through the eyes of the customers(A.Parasuraman et.al.,1988),(V.Zeithaml et.al,1991),(Berry et.al.,1988)[1][2][3]. The study encapsulates the analysis of needs of the customers, evaluation of their apprehension of perception of services with respect to their anticipatory expectations of the services rendered by the health care fraternity. The study is conducted on the substructure of Servqual toolkit given by Parasuraman, A. Zeithaml, V. and Berry consisting of 22 questions graduated with rating scale from 1 to 5 respectively in one of the renowned private hospital located in the midst of Indore city.(A.Parasuraman et.al.,1988),(V.Zeithaml et.al.,(1988)[3][4]

1. Introduction

Health care industry in India is one of the most dynamic and growing sectors in the service industry. The recent remarkable growth of the private health sector in India has come at a time when public spending on health care at 0.9% of gross domestic product (GDP) is among the lowest in the world and ahead of only five countries—Burundi, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sudan, and Cambodia. This proportion has fallen from an already low 1.3% of GDP in 1991 when the neoliberal economic reforms began.

Yet India ranks among the top 20 of the world’s countries in its private spending, at 4.2% of GDP. Employers pay for 9% of spending on private care, health insurance 5-10%, and 82% is from personal funds. As a result, more than 40% of all patients admitted to hospital have to borrow money or sell assets, including inherited property and farmland, to cover expenses, and 25% of farmers are driven below the poverty line by the costs of their medical care.

Despite the suspicions of the people who use the service that many private providers of health care perform unnecessary diagnostic tests and surgical procedures, Indians are choosing the private sector in overwhelming numbers. This is because the public alternative is so much worse, with interminable waits in dirty surroundings with hordes of other patients. Many medicines and tests are not available in the public sector, so patients have to go to private shops and laboratories.

Indore is one of the well-known two-tier cities in India which caters multidisciplinary health care services on a continuous basis. Health care in Indore has taken a giant leap of change in the past few years and now you have everything that you could possibly think of, when you search for good healthcare in this city. The days are long gone when people used to rush to the metros in order to get best treatments and that scenario has taken a completely new turn. The medical facilities that you get in Indore now are so world-class and comparatively at low prices that people from metros come to Indore in order to get the treatments done!

The study encapsulates one of the famous private hospitals of Indore having sound financial status and caters not only to the population of Indore belonging to various economic status but also to the population from the sub-urban and rural areas surrounding Indore. The hospital involved in the study is one among the leading multispeciality medical service provider of the city with best diagnostic and therapeutic facilities.

2. Review of literature

Dr. P. K. Jain, Dr. P.N. Mishra and Dr. D. N. Mishra (Professors- Devi Ahilya University, Indore,2010) in their study; Titled A study on health care industry in Indore (2010) stated that gender has no significant effect on customer satisfaction of patients. It was described by them that the younger, less educated, lower ranking, married, poorer health and high-service use were associated with lower level of satisfaction. The study had not considered the overall role of socio demographic variables on customer satisfaction of patients, as the socio demographic effect produced only a 1 percent variation. The study concluded that there is a significant difference in customer satisfaction level of public and private sector Hospitals. The patients of private hospitals have lesser differences between expectations and perceptions as compared to public hospitals. (Dr.P.K. Jain et.al.,2010)[5]. Sugandha Sirohi (PhD Scholar, Institute of Management Studies, DAVV, Indore, M.P.) and Rajendra Singh ( Director, School of Commerce, DAVV, Indore, M.P) in
their study; Titled- Service Quality Evaluation of Private Hospitals using SERVQUAL (2016) stated that patients’ satisfaction significantly depend on empathetic services such as nursing care, respectfulness and helpfulness of nurses and attentiveness of doctors to patients. The level of comfort in the ward also has a great influence on patient satisfaction. It was found that patients were highly satisfied with the basic amenities, timely medication and friendly hospital procedures and transparent billing system. It was found that patients were highly satisfied with the basic amenities, behaviour of doctors and staff of the hospital, timely medication, friendly hospital procedures and transparent billing system. Research findings demonstrated that the more a patient is satisfied the more he/she is expected to recommend the hospital to other patients who need healthcare services. (Dr. Sugandha Sirohi et al., 2016) [6].

Dr. Vivek Sharma (Professor-Institute of Management Studies, DAVV, Indore, India.) in his study; Titled - Measuring Service Quality in Private Hospitals in Indore City (2013) stated that customer satisfaction is best measured using SERVQUAL as a tool. The study concluded that age is not a determining variable of service quality as per the private hospitals of Indore city are concerned. The study also highlights the difference between perceptions and expectations of the customers regarding the services of the hospitals. There is an alarm for the hospital industry that the customer’s perception regarding services is not as per their expectations. The expectation of the patients is quite high in case of private hospitals. (Dr. Vivek Sharma, 2013) [7], Puay Cheng Lim (Manager, Healthcare Practices, Singapore) in his study; Titled- A Study of patient’s expectations and satisfaction in Singapore hospitals (2000) stated that hospital should realise the need to focus service quality as a means to improve their competitive position. They concluded that improvements are required across all the six dimensions; namely; tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and accessibility. (Puay Cheng, 2000) [8].

M Sadiq Sohail (Assistant Professor, Department of Management & Marketing, King Fahd University of Petroleum and minerals, Saudi Arabia) in his study conducted on the hospitals of Malaysia; Titled- Service Quality in Hospitals: More favourable than you might think (2003) stated that patient’s perceived value of the services exceed expectations for all the variables measured. (M. Sohail, 2003) [9], Hussein M. Al- Borie (The Research and Consultancy Institute, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and Department of Health Services and Hospital Administration, King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia) in his study; Titled- Patient’s satisfaction of service quality in Saudi hospitals: A Servqual Analysis (2013) stated that service quality influences the design of broader healthcare strategies for Saudi Arabian public & private hospitals. It demands to identify regional service quality consistencies and related inpatient demographics. (H. Borie, 2013) [10]. In this study along with identification of gap between expectations of healthcare services with respect to perceived services by the patients; an extension is put forth which accentuate the five core elements of servqual i.e., Tangibility, Responsibility, Responsiveness, Empathy, & Assurance; further more to emphasize and foreground the salient aspects of factors additionally.

3. Objective

The main objective of the study is to measure the gap between the expectations and perceptions of service quality of the patients and to identify the soul factors creating these gaps.

4. Methodology

A questionnaire was prepared to know the customer satisfaction level of the patients with reference to Parasuraman, A, Zeithaml, V. and Berry, L.L., "SERVQUAL: A Multiple- Item Scale for Measuring Consumer Perceptions of Service Quality". The tool used was SERVQUAL. On a 5-point scale (consisting of: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree) 22 questions were asked, in order to measure both perceptions and expectations [4]. The data was collected from the outpatient department of a leading private multispeciality hospital of Indore; using direct survey method. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in the hospital to collect the reasonable sample of respondents (In all 60 samples were collected). The screening of the respondent was such that representative sample of demographic variables: gender, age group and income bracket were collected. The respondents were selected on a convenient sampling basis. The score was measured by taking the difference of expectations and perceptions.

5. Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed through IBM-SPSS using data reduction factor analysis method followed by extraction of factor loading & determining Eigen value with percentage variance and finally optimizing Factor name.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q. NO.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Eigen value with % Variance</th>
<th>FACTOR NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Individual attention given</td>
<td>.813</td>
<td>3.927 with 17.848 %</td>
<td>TIME AND SAFETY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Timely execution of services as promised</td>
<td>.721</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Courtesy towards customers</td>
<td>.678</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Safe and timely medical treatment</td>
<td>.639</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Instil confidence in patients</td>
<td>.601</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Provision of prompt treatment</td>
<td>.529</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Provision of treatment as scheduled</td>
<td>.527</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Availability of modern looking equipments</td>
<td>.790</td>
<td>3.316 with 15.071%</td>
<td>APPEARANCE AND COMPASSION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Visually appealing materials associated with the service</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Provision of heart filled services 0.584
Willingness to help customer 0.533
Visually appealing physical facilities 0.528
Having sincere interest in solving patient’s problem 0.501
Employees effectively informing regarding the schedule of services 0.63
Employees have the knowledge to answer customers question 0.277
Employees providing prompt services to the customers 0.587
Accuracy of records maintenance 0.797
Convenient working hours 0.149
Emaculate employees 1.798
Availability of employees for solving customer problems 0.521

6. Suggestions

It is viable to say that in the era of globalization; competition has become a key issue in all sorts of industry along with service sector. Based on research study, it is suggested that patients perceived quality of service and level of satisfaction; both should be highly taken into consideration for increasing efficiency, effectiveness, efficacy, stability and promptness of the services rendered by the health care organizations to withstand the advancing competitive environment. With the increasing level of ailments and patient’s grievances, the hospital industry should prepare itself for facing prodigious and tedious task of ensuring rapid treatment and sound health without compromising with the dimensions of quality.

7. Managerial Implications

Servqual is one of the old but reliable tool for measuring quality in service sector. Servqual tool is well known not only for its dynamic nature but also due to its convenient implementation. Most of the significant aspects of a hospital services are multifaceted due to which measuring the quality of service provision becomes enormously difficult. Servqual tool helps to acclimatize with most of the activities of hospital as the service provider and aids in understanding and identifying the gap in patient’s expectations &perceptions; and determines the satisfaction gradients in a refined manner.

8. Limitations

The study is limited to multispecialty private NABH accredited hospital in one city, comparative studies between public and private healthcare organisations; single specialty
and multispecialty and super speciality hospitals; NABH and Non NABH accredited hospitals; multiple hospitals of single city or state or countries; Profit making and Non- Profit making organisations; various geographical locations can also be implemented. Also this is a brief fugitive study; similarly longitudinal study can also be conducted.

9. Conclusion

This study aimed at diagnosing the service quality based on the difference between patient’s expectations of service quality and their perception of the services received. Perceived quality is a significant element in influencing consumers values and satisfaction and in turn, is affecting consumers intention to opt for the service and purchase the same. In the present study, it was revealed that the main dimensions of perceived service quality in hospital were Tangibility, Responsibility, Responsiveness, Empathy & Assurance which are similar to SERVQUAL model along with Appearance & Compassion, Accessibility, Serviceable quality, Precision, Time And Safety, Proactiveness which overlaps the original SERVQUAL model. It was found that there was huge gap on Reliability, Responsiveness and Empathy services irrespective of demographic variables: gender, age group and income bracket.

References

     _SERVQUAL_A_multiple-
     _Item_Scale_for_measuring_consumer_perceptions_of_service_quality>


5. REFERENCES FOR REVIEW OF LITERATURE-


7. Sugandha Sirohi (PhD Scholar, Institute of Management Studies, DAVV, Indore, M.P.) and Rajendra Singh (Director, School of Commerce, DAVV, Indore, M.P) 'Service Quality Evaluation of Private Hospitals using SERVQUAL (2016) http://oasi.j.net/articles/2016/1875-1460004795.pdf


10. https://doi.org/10.1108/09526860010378735,
