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Patients' satisfaction on service quality of government hospitals

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Abstract

This paper attempts to analyze the quality of services provided by Government hospitals in Thoothukudi district. The present scenario has favourably improved that health sector are almost engaged in all sectors.The objective of this research is to examine the service quality influence on patient satisfaction in Government hospitals of Thoothukudi district. The research is purely based on primary data. The data has been collected by 772 respondents by using structuredinterview schedule. The study shows high satisfaction with services however there is need for improvement of services in some areas where the patients showed dissatisfaction.

Keywords: Hospitals, Health sector, Service quality, Satisfaction.

I. Introduction

Hospital is a place where human illness is defined, diagnosed and treated for, whereby restoration of health and well being is made for those deprived of it temporarily. A large number of professionally and technically qualified people apply their knowledge and skill with the help of complicated equipment and appliances to produce quality care for patient (Goel, 1994)[1]. Today, the hospital is a place for diagnosis and treatment of human ills and restoration of health and well-being of temporarily deprived of patients. The foremost function of a hospital is to give proper care to the sick and injured without having social, economic and racial discrimination. In the past, the hospitals were set up as charitable institutions, specially for poor and weaker sections of the society. The foremost function of

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these hospitals was to take care of sick and poor of late, the hospitals are set up with the motto of serving all sections of society. In addition, some of them are set up in conducting and promoting medical education and research. (Mittal, 2014)[2].

II. Statement of the problem

In India, the health care services are provided by both private and public hospitals. Public hospitals consumed more investment on the infrastructural facilities and provision of free medical services. The people living with poor standard of living are preferring the medical services from the public hospitals because of their poor financial conditions. The feeling of free services among the patients is generating social responsibility and the responsibility to safeguard the public properties (Arun, 2011)[3].The primary function of a hospital is patient care. A hospital which provides good patient care and satisfies its patients' appears to have the ability to face competitive pressures. The patient satisfaction measures the success or failure of a service that the hospital produces. It is the real testimony to the efficiency of hospital administration (KuppuSwamy, 1975)[4]. In case of pure services, service quality will be the dominant element in customer evaluations.Therefore, the problem study in this research is to identify the ability of hospitals to provide satisfying levels of health services to the needs of patients' by Governmental hospitals in Thoothukudi district.

III. Objectives of the study

- To assess the patient's satisfaction about the quality of services in Government hospitals in Thoothukudi district.
- To evaluate patient's involvement in quality improvement.

IV. Hypotheses of the study

- Patient's satisfaction is not associated with the quality of services on health care services in Government hospitals at Thoothukudi district.

V. Research methodology

5.1 research design

This study has its own predetermined objectives and methodology, it is descriptive in nature. The study has made an attempt to explain the patients' satisfaction on service quality of Government hospitals in Thoothukudi district.

5.2 sampling design

By multi stage stratified proportionate random sampling method, respondents were selected from three taluks of Thoothukudi district from the view of patients both in urban and rural areas.The sample size of this study is 772. A well structured interview schedule was used to collect the relevant data. Interview schedule were distributed among the patients' acquiring heath care services from Government hospitals in Thoothukudi district.

5.3 sources of data

The present study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data is to be collected from the patients'acquiring treatment from Government hospitals in Thoothukudi district using structured interview schedule. Secondary data were collected through books, websites, published articles, magazines and journals.

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5.4 pilot study

A pilot study was conducted among 25 respondents. Based on the feedback of the pilot study, necessary modifications, additions and deletions were carried out. The final draft was prepared to collect the data.

5.5 framework of analysis

The selection of statistical tools was based upon the nature of data used and research objectives. The data were analysed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software package version 20. The applied statistical analyses are percentage analysis and One Way ANOVA analysis.

VI. Results and discussion

This section shows the analysis and interpretation of data used for the study.

Table 1: Hygienic conditions, basic amenities and infrastructural facilities at the hospitals

S.No.	Statements	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
1.	Wards/rooms	417 (54.0)	230 (29.8)	63 (8.2)	51 (6.6)	11 (1.4)
2.	Sitting arrangement/ waiting chairs	99 (12.8)	523 (67.7)	57 (7.4)	51 (6.6)	42 (5.4)
3.	Drinking's water area	327 (42.4)	214 (27.7)	92 (11.9)	77 (10.0)	62 (8.0)
4.	Toilets and bathrooms	155 (20.1)	372 (48.2)	104 (13.5)	93 (12.0)	48 (6.2)
5.	Treatment/dressing room	164 (21.2)	441 (57.1)	98 (12.7)	29 (3.8)	40 (5.2)
6.	Waiting Area	236 (30.6)	340 (44.0)	111 (14.4)	58 (7.5)	27 (3.5)
7.	Ventilation/lighting	241 (31.2)	375 (48.6)	83 (10.8)	50 (6.5)	23 (3.0)
8.	Security guard	144 (18.7)	438 (56.7)	83 (10.8)	61 (7.9)	46 (6.0)
9.	Trash cans	222 (28.8)	316 (40.9)	148 (19.2)	56 (7.3)	30 (3.9)
10.	Lift service	84 (10.9)	137 (17.7)	89 (11.5)	215 (27.8)	247 (32.0)
11.	Cleanliness of the floor	189 (24.5)	417 (54.0)	79 (10.2)	50 (6.5)	37 (4.8)

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12.	Information counter	216 (28.0)	315 (40.8)	87 (11.3)	111 (14.4)	43 (5.6)
13.	Air-conditioning/ electric fans	169 (21.9)	397 (51.4)	92 (11.9)	47 (6.1)	67 (8.7)
14.	Poster instructions	158 (20.5)	343 (44.4)	93 (12.0)	85 (11.0)	93 (12.0)
15.	Directory map	208 (26.9)	303 (39.2)	86 (11.1)	85 (11.0)	90 (11.7)
16.	Play area for children	91 (11.8)	146 (18.9)	113 (14.6)	273 (35.4)	149 (19.3)
17.	Canteen	149 (19.3)	369 (47.8)	108 (14.0)	69 (8.9)	77 (10.0)
18.	Ambulance services	295 (38.2)	360 (46.6)	50 (6.5)	35 (4.5)	32 (4.5)
19.	Spittoons and dustbin	182 (23.6)	365 (47.3)	121 (15.7)	69 (8.9)	35 (4.5)

Source: Primary data

It can be inferred from the above table that the respondents are satisfied towards sitting arrangement/ waiting chairs, treatment/dressing room, security guard, cleanliness of the floor, air-conditioning/electric fans, ventilation/lighting, toilets and bathrooms, canteen, spittoons and dustbin, ambulance services, poster instructions, waiting area, trash cans, information counter and directory map with 67.7, 57.1, 56.7, 54.0, 51.4, 48.6, 48.2, 47.8, 47.3, 46.6, 44.4, 44.0, 40.9, 40.8 and 39.2 per cent respectively. In it, the respondents are highly satisfied towards wards/rooms and drinking's water area with 54.0 and 42.4 per cent respectively. The respondents are dissatisfied towards play area for children with 35.4 per cent. On the other hand, the respondents are highly dissatisfied towards lift service with 32.0 per cent. It is noted from the analysis that majority (67.7 per cent) of the respondents are satisfied towards sitting arrangement/ waiting chairs in Government hospitals.

Table 2: Mean scores of hygiene and infrastructure in Government hospitals

Factors	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hygiene and infrastructure	772	76.00	19.00	95.00	69.86	16.13

Source: Primary data

Table 2 shows the mean and standard score of hygiene and infrastructure in Government hospitals. The level of patient's satisfaction on health care services for hygiene and infrastructure in Government hospitals ranged between 19.00 and 95.00 with amean score value of 69.86, standard deviation 16.13 and co-efficient of variance 76.00.

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Table 3: Factors determining the level of patient's satisfaction on the health care services in Government hospitals

S.No.	Factors	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	Registration	772	16.00	4.00	20.00	14.26	3.65
2.	Diagnosing	772	20.00	5.00	25.00	18.45	4.31
3.	Nursing	772	16.00	4.00	20.00	13.99	3.67
4.	Lab equipment services	772	16.00	4.00	20.00	13.52	3.61
5.	Emergency services	772	19.00	6.00	25.00	19.39	4.17
6.	Dietary services	772	24.00	6.00	30.00	21.32	5.38
7.	Medical store services	772	20.00	5.00	25.00	17.70	5.11
	Overall Results	**772**	**116.00**	**43.00**	**159.00**	**90.20**	**38.42**

Source: Primary data

The satisfaction level of patients' on health care services in Government hospitals indicated that the dietary services was given the first place (Mean=21.32, Standard deviation=5.38 and Co-efficient of variance=24.00) followed by emergency services (Mean=19.39, Standard deviation=4.17 and Co-efficient of variance=19.00), diagnosing (Mean=18.45, Standard deviation=4.31 and Co-efficient of variance=20.00), medical store services (Mean=17.70, Standard deviation=5.11 and Co-efficient of variance = 20.00), registration (Mean=14.26, Standard deviation=3.65 and Co-efficient of variance= 16.00), nursing (Mean=13.99, Standard deviation=3.67 and Co-efficient of variance= 16.00) and lab equipment services (Mean=13.52, Standard deviation= 3.61 and Co-efficient of variance=16.00) in the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and last place respectively.

Table4: Factors determining the level of patients' satisfaction on the health care services in Government hospitals - Correlation

Variables	Factors	Registration	Diagnosing	Nursing	Lab equipment services	Emergency services	Dietary services	Medical store services
Registration	Pearson Correlation	1	.736**	.601**	.622**	.661**	.695**	.630**
	Sig. value		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Respondents	772	772	772	772	772	772	772
Diagnosing	Pearson Correlation		1	.617**	.629**	.660**	.616**	.620**

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	Sig. value			.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Respondents		772	772	772	772	772	772
Nursing	Pearson Correlation			1	.644**	.577**	.646**	.690**
	Sig. value				.000	.000	.000	.000
	Respondents			772	772	772	772	772
Lab equipment services	Pearson Correlation				1	.627**	.695**	.717**
	Sig. value					.000	.000	.000
	Respondents				772	772	772	772
Emergency services	Pearson Correlation					1	.673**	.609**
	Sig. value						.000	.000
	Respondents					772	772	772
Dietary services	Pearson Correlation						1	.761**
	Sig. value							.000
	Respondents						772	772
Medical store services	Pearson Correlation							1
	Sig. value							
	Respondents							772

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 explains the relationship between patients' satisfaction on health care services in Government hospitals including registration, diagnosing, nursing, lab equipment services, emergency services, dietary services and medical store services using Pearson correlation. In this analysis, there exists a relationship among all the variables. It is observed that the value of correlation co-efficient between dietary services and medical store services shows the value 0.761 and it is significant at 1 per cent level which indicates a strong positive relationship between dietary services and medical store services. And also the co-efficient of correlation between registration services and diagnosing services shows a positive correlation (0.736) and it is significant at 1 per cent level. The value of correlation co-efficient between lab equipment services and medical store services shows a significant positive correlation (0.717) and it is significant at 1 per cent. Therefore, from the analysis, it is found that patients' satisfaction on health care services in Government hospitals have positive association with their level of satisfaction.

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Table 5: Area of residence and satisfaction level of patients' on the health care services – Independent samples t test

Factors	Area of residence	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value	Sig. value
Registration	Rural	246	14.3902	3.64582	0.670	0.503
	Urban	526	14.2015	3.64695		
Diagnosing	Rural	246	18.6179	4.09882	0.726	0.468
	Urban	526	18.3764	4.40075		
Nursing	Rural	246	14.4024	3.74229	2.138	0.330
	Urban	526	13.7985	3.61601		
Lab equipment services	Rural	246	13.4472	3.54609	0.380	0.704
	Urban	526	13.5532	3.64627		
Emergency services	Rural	246	19.3740	4.05754	0.078	0.938
	Urban	526	19.3992	4.22964		
Dietary services	Rural	246	21.3577	5.32017	0.147	0.883
	Urban	526	21.2966	5.41739		
Medical store services	Rural	246	17.6911	5.05985	0.022	0.983
	Urban	526	17.6996	5.14153		

*Significant at 5% level

Table 5shows the independent samples t test that compares the area of residence of respondents and their satisfaction level of patients' on the health care services. As per the acceptance of null hypothesis ($p > 0.05$), the registration, diagnosing, nursing, lab equipment services, emergency services, dietary services and medical services are not significantly associated with their level of satisfaction on the health care services. Therefore, area of residence of the respondents does not influence their satisfaction on health care services.

Table 6: Nature of treatment and level of patient's satisfaction on hygienic conditions, basic amenities and infrastructural facilities at the hospital – One way ANOVA

Nature of treatment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F value	Sig. value
Medical	352	69.23	16.49	6.756	0.001*
Surgical	90	70.48	15.76		
Emergency	206	73.36	15.06		
Maternity	124	65.40	16.07		
Total	772	69.86	16.13		

*Significant at 5% level

Table 6 shows the One Way ANOVA test that explores the influence of nature of treatment and level of patients' satisfaction on hygienic conditions, basic amenities and infrastructural facilities at the Government hospitals in the study area. Since, the p value 0.001

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is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5 per cent level of significance.It is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of patients' satisfaction on hygienic conditions, basic amenities and infrastructural facilities at the Government hospitals and nature of treatment in the study area.

Table 7: Improvements needed in Government hospitals

S.No.	Factors	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Emergency care	27	3.5
2.	Availability of various specialist doctors	14	1.8
3.	Utilization of new technology	8	1.0
4.	Well-equipped ICU	21	2.7
5.	Treatment	11	1.4
6.	Medicine facility	12	1.6
7.	Food facility	89	11.5
8.	Lab facility	33	4.3
9.	Ward facility	33	4.3
10.	Poster instruction	239	31.0
11.	Staff co-ordination	285	36.9
	Total	**772**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data

The above Table 7 explains about improvement needed in Government hospitals. 36.9 per cent of the respondents' opine that improvement in staff co-ordination is needed, 31 per cent of the respondents' opine on improvement in poster instruction, 11.5 per cent of the respondents' opine on improvement in food facility, 4.3 per cent of the respondents' opine on improvement in lab facility and ward facility, 3.5 per cent of the respondents' opine on improvement in emergency care, 2.7 per cent of the respondents' opine on improvement in well-equipped ICU, 1.8 per cent of the respondents' opine on improvement in availability of various specialist doctors, 1.6 per cent of the respondents' opine on improvement in medicine facility, 1.4 per cent of the respondents' opine on improvement in treatment and 1.0 per cent of the respondents' opine on improvement in utilization of new technology. It is found from the analysis that majority (36.9 per cent) of the respondents suggested improvement in staff co-ordination.

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VII. Findings of the study

- It is noted from the analysis that majority (67.7 per cent) of the respondents are satisfied towards sitting arrangement/ waiting chairs in Government hospitals.
- The satisfaction level of patients' on health care services in Government hospitals indicated that the dietary service was given the first place.
- It is found that patients' satisfaction on health care services in Government hospitals have positive association with their level of satisfaction.
- Area of residence of the respondents does not influence their satisfaction on health care services.
- It is concluded that there is a significant difference between in the level of patient's satisfaction on hygienic conditions, basic amenities and infrastructural facilities at the Government hospital and nature of treatment in the study area.
- It is found from the analysis that majority (36.9 per cent) of the respondents suggested improvement in staff co-ordination.

Viii. Suggestions and conclusion

The results of the present study put forth more emphasis on the fact that the satisfaction of the patients' tend to influence the acceptance and utilization of health care services in Government hospitals in Thoothukudi district.Thus, with the efforts directed towards improving the services being provided at the Government hospitals, the level of its utilization can be increased and infrastructure facilities and emergency facilities should increase in Government hospitals. The Government should adopt modern equipment and technology. Maintenance of clean environment in the hospital is very important for hospital personnel and patients; it creates a favorable impression in the minds of patients. There should be a sufficient number of spittoons at convenient places to maintain hygienic conditions. The study understood that it is not only infrastructure, efficient and qualified staff but the attitude of the administration and staff that makes an institution to be accepted by society.

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