



Factors Affecting Customer Perception Towards Hospital Services In Gwalior

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Abstract

The main objective of the study is to find out the factors affecting customer perception in hospital industry. The study is exploratory and Descriptive in nature and sample size of study is 200 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. Factor Analysis was applied to explore the customer perception factors.

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

Introduction

The word 'Hospital' represents more than what we understand. It is not always understood in full. It cares for patients of all ages and all backgrounds, some appreciative and some disgruntled, some happy and some sad. It has doctors and nurses, cooks and cleaners, therapists and technicians, plumbers and ambulance drivers, clerks and administrators of different kinds, who interact with each other.

Government Health Sector

A public hospital, or government hospital, is a hospital which is government owned and is fully funded by the government and operates solely off the money that is collected from taxpayers to fund healthcare initiatives. The hospitals have well-maintained hygiene. The cost of treatment at government hospitals is relatively less than in private hospitals. Government medical schemes help underprivileged people to get treatment, sometimes free of cost from government hospitals. Government medical schemes help underprivileged people to get treatment, sometimes free of cost from government hospitals. Some of the best governments in India are AIIMS, DELHI, CMC, VELLORE, PGMER, CHANDIGARH and TATA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, MUMBAI.

Private Health Sector

The private health sector is a private concern offering a health service to patients on a medical aid or patients who can afford the private fees or specific fixed fees for certain procedures. Private health care offers an alternative to government run healthcare namely public health care system. Private health sector means the unit delivering health services where the staff delivering the service is employed by any other organization which is not a part of the government (National Department of Health, 2006).

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.

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

Dhyana Sharon Ross (2015) analyzed the factors influencing quality in healthcare and patient satisfaction and to study patient perception towards factors influencing quality and to assess the role of hospital administrators towards quality and patient satisfaction. 272 samples were collected, 208 from patients and attenders and 64 from hospital administrators using simple random sampling technique. Friedman test and chi-square test were used for statistical analysis. The study revealed that physical facilities were the most important factor on quality, followed by food and behavior of staff and admission procedure. The level of understanding on healthcare quality differed widely with highly experienced staff with more knowledge on healthcare quality. Quality improvement initiatives helped the administrators to work towards quality of the services.

Ahmed Rizwan Raheem (2014) studied to determine the patient satisfaction at in-patient departments of Private Hospitals in Karachi. Primary data was collected through survey method from 185 patients using interview technique and non-random, purposive and opportunistic sampling technique. Statistical tools such as mean, Standard Deviation, T-test and ANOVA were used to find out the significance of differences. The study concluded that the majority of the patients were satisfied with the services provided by the in-patient department

of private hospitals in Karachi. The factors such as patient ward services, food services, reception staff services and welfare services showed notable impact on the patients' satisfaction.

Saroj Kumar Dash (2011) carried out the study to examine the present system of customer care in Hospital and to analyze the factors which influence the customers to select the hospital and to study the competitive advantages in Greater Noida city. The primary data was collected from 200 respondents from 10 reputed hospitals through purposive stratified random sampling method. The data collected were analyzed through percentage, average, range, standard deviation weighted average and chi-square test. The research concluded that the 'doctors treatment', 'cleanliness' and 'nursing' were the main factors for choosing hospitals.

Halil Zaim (2010) studied to find out the important criteria for measuring service quality and customer satisfaction in the health care industry in Turkey. The relationship between customer satisfaction and Servqual measures were investigated for the study. Data for this study were gathered using a questionnaire that was distributed to 265 patients in 12 hospitals in Turkey. The techniques such as factor analysis and regression models were used to investigate the relationships. The results of the study confirmed that while tangibility, empathy, reliability and courtesy were significant for customer satisfaction; responsiveness and assurance were not significant for customer satisfaction.

Objectives of the Research study

1. To find out the key success factors for the growth of hospital service
2. To find out the factors affecting customer perception in hospital industry

Research Design

The study being undertaken is exploratory and Descriptive in nature. 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.

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 200 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.

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.

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 were neutral and 1 was strongly disagreeing. The questions will be taken from scale designed by KQCAH scale for hospital services.

Tools for Data Analysis

The data was analyzed through software IBM SPSS 23.0. The reliability and validity of the measures are tested. Reliability of data was checked through Cronbach's Alpha. Factor analysis was applied to explore the factors.

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Analysis

Reliability test was conducted using SPSS software and the reliability test measures are given below:

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.

Factor Analysis for Customer Perception Factors

Table No. 2 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.848
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	20045.088
	df	181
	Sig.	.000

The value of KMO is .848 which is greater than 0.5 so we can say that data is adequate as well as normally distributed. Hence the sample is adequate enough and suitable for factor analysis. The result of Bartlett test of chi square is 20045.088 with degree of freedom is 190 and level of significance is .000.

Table No. 3 Total Variance and Factor Loadings

Factor Name	Total Eigen Values	% of Variance	Items Converged	Factors Loads
Respect and Caring	9.663	15.586	The staff responded to my requests in a friendly way	.878
			Overall the staff was pleasant to deal with	.852
			The nurses in the hospital are caring and helpful	.822
			The staff were very friendly	.759
			The staff provided for my needs before i asked	.732
			Overall the hospital staff treated me with respect	.711
			The staff paid attention to me	.701
			When i had a complaint it was handled quickly	.698
			The staff had a positive attitude	.677
			The staff showed me where the things I needed would be	.666
			The staff was very reassuring	.654
			Overall, the staff respected my rights as a person	.633
			My needs were attended very quickly	.621
			My personal privacy was protected	.610
			I knew my caregivers name	.594
			I knew my caregivers name	.578
			I didn't have to wait for the things i needed	.560
Caregivers gave me information I needed	.555			
Effectiveness & Continuity	7.918	12.770	During discharged I was told about the necessary home care.	.874
			Overall the hospital staff did there jobs very well	.755
			All preparations for discharge were handled well	.747
			I was allowed to take part in decisions about my care	.707
			I was not left without care when i moved home	.676
			They told me all things I needed to know	.645
			Overall the staff seemed to care about my	.620

			condition	
			Overall the hospital staff was very professional	.616
			When I was in pain they tried to control it	.605
			I was able to stay in contact with hospital easily	.602
Appropriateness	6.256	10.090	Hospital was very clean	.810
			The facilities was very comfortable	.755
			Overall the services I needed were available	.685
			Overall the facilities was very good	.677
			There is a spacious parking facility	.645
			I did not have to fill out many forms at check-in	.630
			I was able to communicate with the staff	.624
			The hospital had everything I needed	.621
			I felt they really wanted me to get well	.598
			My personal items were taken care of well	.580
I felt that my needs were kept confidential	.566			
Information	4.583	7.391	The doctors gave me information i needed	.884
			Doctors informed me about the outcome of procedures	.795
			The doctors were available to me when needed	.750
			Overall, I was given all the information I needed	.735
			They told my family what they needed to know	.704
			Financial counselors gave me information I needed	.701
Efficiency	4.110	6.630	Overall my hospital bill was handled well	.787
			My bill was in line with the service provided to me	.770
			A staff member was available to explain my bill to me	.749
			Any complaint I had about the bill were handled well	.735
Social Responsibility	3.319	5.353	All medicines prescribed by the consultants are available in the hospital pharmacy, which are cost effective	.688
			Even if the cost of medical services in this hospital is comparatively higher, I will continue to have treatment in this hospital	.677

			In addition to providing excellent super specialty medical services, this hospital gives importance to social values	.601
			I am convinced that the hospital is delivering the service as promised	.598
			This hospital runs free dispensaries and conducts medical camp for the economically weaker section	.566
			This hospital encourages private/government partnership in general health care	.546
			I enjoy concessions and discounts in this hospital during treatment	.533
Effectiveness Meal	2.853	4.602	Overall the food services was very good	.774
			Taste of meal is good	.751
			Meals were served on time at the proper temperature	.744
			Dirty dishes were removed promptly	.723
			This hospital provides timely Medicare and resources for maintaining relationship with patients	.576

Description of factors analysis

Respect and Caring: This factor has emerged the most important determinant of Research total variances (27.840). Major elements of this factor include The staff responded to my requests in a friendly way, Overall the staff was pleasant to deal with, The nurses in the hospital are caring and helpful, The staff were very friendly, The staff provided for my needs before i asked, Overall the hospital staff treated me with respect, The staff paid attention to me, When i had a complaint it was handled quickly, The staff had a positive attitude, The staff showed me where the things I needed would be, The staff was very reassuring, Overall, the staff respected my rights as a person, My needs were attended very quickly, My personal privacy was protected, I knew my caregivers name, I didn't have to wait for the things i needed and Caregivers gave me information I needed.

Effectiveness & Continuity: This factor has emerged the most important determinant of Risk factor total variances (11.276). Major items of this factor constitute During discharged I was told about the necessary home care, Overall the hospital staff did there jobs very well, All preparations for discharge were handled well, I was allowed to take part in decisions about my care, I was not left without care when i moved home, They told me all things I needed to know, Overall the staff seemed to care about my condition, Overall the hospital staff was very professional, When I was in pain they tried to control it and I was able to stay in contact with hospital easily.

Appropriateness: This factor has emerged the most important determinant of Risk factor total variances (11.104). Major elements of this factor include Hospital was very clean, The facilities was very comfortable, Overall the services I needed were available, Overall the facilities was very good, There is a spacious parking facility, I did not have to fill out many forms at check-in, I was able to communicate with the staff, The hospital had everything I needed, I felt they really wanted me to get well, My personal items were taken care of well and I felt that my needs were kept confidential.

Information: This factor has emerged the most important determinant of Research total variances (10.490). Major elements of this factor include The doctors gave me information i needed, Doctors informed me about the outcome of procedures, The doctors were available to me when needed, Overall, I was given all the information I needed, They told my family what they needed to know and Financial counselors gave me information I needed.

Efficiency: This factor has emerged the most important determinant of Risk factor total variances (10.433). Major elements of this factor include Overall my hospital bill was handled well, My bill was in line with the service provided to me, A staff member was available to explain my bill to me and Any complaint I had about the bill were handled well.

Social Responsibility: This factor has emerged the most important determinant of Risk factor total variances (5.124). Major items of this factor include All medicines prescribed by the consultants are available in the hospital pharmacy, which are cost effective, Even if the cost of medical services in this hospital is comparatively higher, I will continue to have treatment in this hospital, In addition to providing excellent super specialty medical services, this hospital gives importance to social values, I am convinced that the hospital is delivering the service as promised, This hospital runs free dispensaries and conducts medical camp for the economically weaker section, This hospital encourages private/government partnership in general health care and I enjoy concessions and discounts in this hospital during treatment.

Effectiveness Meal: This factor has emerged the most important determinant of Risk factor total variances (10.433). Major elements of this factor include Overall the food services was very good, Taste of meal is good, Meals were served on time at the proper temperature, Dirty dishes were removed promptly and This hospital provides timely Medicare and resources for maintaining relationship with patients.

Conclusion

The present study comes out with the fact that there are seven factors which affect the customer perception towards hospital services these factors are Respect and Caring, Effectiveness & Continuity, Appropriateness, Information, Efficiency, Social Responsibility and Effectiveness Meal. Both government and private hospitals should design there business strategy considering these perception factors. The limitation of this study is that data is collected only from Gwalior district.

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