AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PATIENTS' SATISFACTION TOWARDS HEALTHCARE SERVICES OF SELECTED MULTI SPECIALTY HOSPITALS IN TRICHY

Dr. N. Shaik Mohamed  
Research Adviser,  
PG & Research Department of commerce, Jamal Mohamed College, Trichy-20

D. Heena Kausar  
Research Scholar & Head of Department of Commerce (CA)  
Annai Vailankanni Arts & Science College, Thanjavur - 7

ABSTRACT

Healthcare is one of India’s largest sectors, in terms of revenue and employment, and one can well witness the sector to expand rapidly. With the fast growing purchasing power, Indian patients are willing to pay more to avail health care services of international standard. In the era of globalization and heightened competition, it has been observed that delivery of service is imperative for Indian healthcare providers to satisfy their indoor as well as outdoor patients. Hence, it is essential to be aware of how the patients and patient parties evaluate the health care service. Such an understanding facilitates hospital administration to enhance quality of service and satisfy patients to a great extent as well.

This paper focuses on the measurement of patient satisfaction on the healthcare services provided by the hospitals. In this regard, a review of concepts related to healthcare primary & supportive services, factors influencing the patients’ satisfaction has been considered to investigate and the same is analysed in measuring patient satisfaction in health care sector in today’s competitive environment.

Key words: Hospital, Patients, Patients Satisfaction, Multispecialty Hospitals, Emergency services, ICU, Operation theatre and Supportive services.


1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

On the basis of the rationale behind this study, the following Objectives have been determined.

- To Study the inpatients personal profile in the Study area.
- To know the factors influencing patients for selecting the hospitals.
- To identify the level of satisfaction on the primary services of the selected multi-specialty hospitals in the Study area.
Dr. N. Shaik Mohamed and D. Heena Kausar.” An Empirical Study on Factors Influencing the patients Satisfaction towards Healthcare Services of Selected Multi Specialty Hospitals in Trichy.” - (ICAM 2016)
paramedical staff, nurses and technicians, supportive and administrative workers to the people suffering from physical, mental and social ailments.

A Multi-Specialty Hospital is a place where treatment for all kinds of illness is done in a one hospital. In this area all types of services like emergency services, General medicine, pediatrics & neonatology, x ray, pathology, cardiology, physiotherapy, operation theatres and a minimum of 200 to 500 bed facility is available. At this hospital 200 members can take treatment at a time.

A hospital service is a term that refers to medical and surgical services and the supporting laboratories, equipment and personnel that make up the medical and surgical mission of a hospital or hospital system.

Patient Satisfaction is best defined as a patient’s evaluation of (aspects of) a healthcare service based on the fulfillment of their expectations. It is good to bear in mind that evaluation is in the active domain and describes favourable or unfavourable feelings toward the services. This means that people hold certain beliefs about health care and the healthcare system, which forms the basis of the relation between certain attributes and aspects of health care. Although it has been put forward that patient satisfaction is the sum of the evaluation and the expectations that we hold (also called belief strength), this has not been shown in empirical studies. It is stressed that expectations should be studied better to get more insight into patient satisfaction.

7. EMERGENCY SERVICES
The branch of medicine that deals with the initial treatment of medical conditions caused to patients trauma or sudden illness. Emergency Service is a immediate medical care to the patients with illnesses and injuries by the medical practitioner that constitutes a medical emergency. Emergency medical services may also be locally known as: first aid squad, emergency squad, rescue squad, ambulance squad, ambulance service, life squad. The goal of most emergency medical services is to either provide treatment to those in need of urgent medical care, with the goal of satisfactorily treating the presenting conditions, or arranging for timely removal of the patient to the next point of definitive care. Emergency medical services exist to fulfill the basic principles of first aid, which are to Preserve Life, Prevent Further Injury, and Promote Recovery.

8. INTENSIVE CARE UNIT
Intensive care units cater to patients with severe and life-threatening illnesses and injuries, which require constant, close monitoring and support from specialist equipment and medications in order to ensure normal bodily functions. They are staffed by highly trained doctors and nurses who are specialist in caring for seriously ill patients. ICU’s are also distinguished from normal hospital wards by a higher staff-to-patient ratio and access to advanced medical resources. Common conditions that are treated within ICUs include ARDS, trauma, multiple organ failure and sepsis. Patients may be transferred directly to an intensive care unit from an emergency department if required, or from a ward if they rapidly deteriorate, or immediately after surgery if the surgery is very invasive and the patient is at high risk of complications.

9. OPERATING DEPARTMENT PRACTITIONERS
Operating department practitioners (ODPs) are an important part of the operating department team working with surgeons, anesthetists and theatre nurses to help ensure every operation is as safe and effective as possible. ODPs provide high standards of patient care and skilled support, alongside medical and nursing colleagues during peri-operative care. The ODPs role involves the application of theory to practice in a variety of clinical settings.

Supportive Services are the services rendered to the patients in addition to healthcare services (lifesaving). It includes the services of Paramedical staff like Nurses, pharmacist, technician services (Laboratory, ECG, Scan, X-ray etc.) and the services of Non-paramedical staff like administrative staff services, sterilization services(instruments, Clothes, Gloves etc.) food & beverage services (supply of bread, meals, milk, boiled eatables etc.), Housekeeping services and ambulance services.

10. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
On the basis of the rationale behind this study, the following Objectives have been determined.

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13.7. GVN Hospital

Dr. G. Viswanathan Speciality Hospital situated in main centre part of Trichy Town. It started its service tin 1983 and received special award from the chief minister of Tamilnadhu for the better services rendered in curing cancer. The hospital is specialized in giving treatment for Cancer. When one looks into the history of the city of Tiruchirappalli, the name of the founder Dr. G.Viswanathan of Srirangam is engraved as one of the pioneers who brought modern medicine to the door steps of common men. The Patients did not consider him merely as a doctor who attend to their sickness. To them he was also a trusted mend & councilor. As for as the poor is concerned he not only give free treatment but also rendered financial help also when it is needed. He truly reflected Long Fellow’s description in character, in manner, in style and in all things. Due to his untiring service he become a legend in the Medical History. The torch lighted by the founder is still carried on by the hospital.

13.8. Mission of GVN
The motto of the hospital from the time of its origin was to serve and to help the Poor.

13.9. KMC Specialty Hospitals (India) Ltd.
Provides inpatient and outpatient hospital services in India. The hospital offers services in the areas of neurosurgery, cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, orthopedics, plastic and reconstructive surgery, gynecology, and neonatology, as well as nephrology, including renal transplants. The company also engages in the retail sale of pharmaceutical products. Formerly known as Seahorse Hospital Limited, KMC Specialty Hospitals (India) Ltd. was incorporated in the year 1982.

The motive of this Hospital is
- To import, buy, and hire all kinds of diagnostic and therapeutic equipment’s in the field of medicine.
- To run medical centres owning conventional and non-conventional medical equipment’s and to impart training and conducting training programmes for such centres.
- To serve the ailing poor citizens by rendering medical attention on healthcare in utilizing equipment’s owned or operated by the company.
- To form medical trusts and foundations for rendering medical aids and for owning and operating medical equipments to cater to the needy and ailing citizens.
- To carry out services as Consultants in the field of medicine subject to such regulations as the Government or Indian Medical Council may prescribe in this regard.

13.10. Maruti Hospital Tiruchirapalli Pvt. Ltd.
Owns and operates a healthcare facility. The company was incorporated in 1997 and is based in Tiruchirapalli, India. As of December 6, 2008, Maruti Hospital Tiruchirapalli Pvt. Ltd. operates as a subsidiary of Vasan Health Care Group. Maruti Hospital is frontline Super specialty Hospital well known for Poly Trauma & Emergency Care in this part of Tamilnadhu. Hospital is situated at the heart of Trichy access by Road, Rail & Air. Hospital provides Specialist &Super specialist consultants in all branches of medicine.

14. RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

14.1. Personal Back Ground
- 46 percent of the respondents studied are Male and 54 percent of them are female.
- 28 percent of them are aged above 55 years.
- 27 percent of them studied are Illiterates.
- 47 percent of the patients residents belongs to urban areas, 33 percent of them are from rural areas and rest 19 percent of them are from Suburban areas.
- 28 percent of respondents are employed in Private concern.
- 72 percent of the respondents are married.
14.2. Social Impact on the Respondents

- 33 percent of them fall in Rs. 10001 – Rs. 20000 income earning group

14.3. Health Impact on the Respondents

- 32 percent of the respondents admitted as emergency case in the hospital.
- 49 percent of them stayed for less than 10 days in hospital.
- 34 percent of the respondents are unaware of health insurance and rest 66 percent of them insured their life under health insurance schemes.
- 34 percent of them consider the Cost of Care as normal and bearable.
- 35 percent of the respondents opined neutrally satisfied with the Overall services of these hospital.
- 54 percent of the respondents visited the hospital for regular treatment.
- 48 percent of the patients stated friends & relatives as the source of knowing the hospital.

15. HEALTHCARE SERVICES

15.1. Doctors Services:

- 39% of the respondents are satisfied with the doctor’s availability in the hospital during the working hours.
- 34% of the patients opined Doctors services as professional.
- 31% of the patients accepted that the doctors replied for their queries.
- 33% of the patients opined that doctor refers best quality medicine.

15.2. Emergency Services:

- 37% of the respondents state that the medical aid facility is available round the clock.
- 40% of the patients accepted that an immediate emergency service is provided for the patients admitted.
- 48% of the respondents are dissatisfied due to non-availability of Best lifesaving drugs.

15.3. Intensive Care Unit Services:

- 29% of the respondents accepted that adequate & trained staff is available to take care of ICU.
- 30% of the patients opined that doctors regularly visit the hospital.
- 28% of the respondent states that machines in ICU functions properly.
- 26% of the respondents’ agreed to the availability of adequate number of beds.

15.4. Operation Theatre Services:

- 31% of the respondents support to the availability of neat and bacteria free pre-anesthesia room in operation theatre.
- 33% of the patients accepted that all essential infrastructure facilities are present in the operation theatre.
- 30% of the sample studied exhibits that mini laboratory service is available inside the operation theatre.

15.5. Out Patients Department Services:

- 28% of the patients viewed that Health checkup for outpatient is done on token order system.
- 28% of the patients informed that Patients general body checkup including height, weight, Blood Pressure is done in every visit to OPD.
15.6. General Ward:
- 31% of the patients are dissatisfied with the limited availability of beds in this ward.
- 23% of the respondents are neutrally satisfied with the space available in between the wards.
- 30% of the samples studied are dissatisfied with the cleanliness & hygienic condition of toilet rooms.

16. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

16.1. Services of Paramedical staff

16.1.1. Nurses
- 27 percent of the respondents opined neutrally to the service attitude of Nurses.
- 23 percent of them are satisfied with the nurse’s responses for their queries.
- 27 percent of the respondents state that the services of Nurses are prompt and personalized.
- 28 percent of them are satisfied with the professional services of nurses.

16.1.2. Pharmacist
- 26 percent of the respondents accepted that pharmacist issues medicines as per doctor’s prescription.
- 29 percent of them are satisfied with the proper dosage information given by the pharmacist.
- 28 percent of the respondent opined that computerised bills are issued in the pharmacy.

16.1.3. Technician (In charge of Laboratory, ECG, Scan, X-ray Etc.)
- 45 percent of the respondents accepted that adequate & skilled personals are appointed for Technical services.
- 31 percent of them opined that physician control present over the technical reports.
- 30 percent of the respondents opined neutrally satisfied with the timely receipt of computerised reports.
- 64 percent of them state that regular sterilization of all materials and equipments are done in hospitals.

16.2. Services of Non-Paramedical Staff

16.2.1. Front-line staff
- 29 percent of the respondents are satisfied with the service attitude of Administrative Staff.
- 23 percent of them are satisfied with the time taken for giving the responses by the Administrative staff to the queries of patients.
- 54 percent of them opined as the bill details are not understandable.
- 26 percent of the respondents agreed that historical records of patients are maintained.
- 25 percent of them are satisfied with the case histories references made by doctor during the patients visit.

16.2.2. Housekeepers
- 42 percent of the respondents referred dissatisfied with the laundry services of private hospitals.
- 33 percent of the patients indicates that change of bedspread was done at the time of admission.
- 35 percent of the sample studied are neutrally satisfied with services of housekeepers.

16.2.3. Ambulance Services
- 32 percent of them accepted and satisfied on the timely availability of ambulance services.
- 30 percent of them are neutrally satisfied with immediate treatment given to the patients in the ambulance.
17. STATISTICAL RESULTS

Reliability Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.967</td>
<td>.968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The data was tested for its reliability and Cronbach's Alpha was 0.968

Factors of choice influencing the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>weightage</th>
<th>Rank</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cost of services</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Closeness to home</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Name &amp; Fame of hospital</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Access to insurance</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Modern Equipment Facility</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Doctors Specialty services</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Best treatment</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17.1. Inference

The above table pinpoints the factors influencing the respondents for selecting the hospitals. Among the various factors Best treatment influenced most and first with the mean score of 3.43 followed by Name & Fame of hospital influencing the patient respondents at 3.46 mean score. Next the hospital is closeness to home influenced the patients with 3.92 mean score and the cost of care of services influenced them at 4.08 mean averages. The Modern Equipment availability in the hospital influenced the patients at 4.28 mean, Doctors Specialty services in care of patients also influenced with 4.37 mean averages and finally Access to insurance influenced the patients at 4.47 mean averages.

Chi Square Test Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Calculated Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Table Value</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Gender &amp; Overall satisfaction on services</td>
<td>8.838</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Residential status &amp; Overall Satisfaction of Services</td>
<td>60.687</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Education qualification &amp; Hospital visited</td>
<td>111.660</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Health Insurance &amp; Hospital visited</td>
<td>253.066</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Number of Days stayed &amp; Cost of Care</td>
<td>82.825</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17.2. Inference

- There is insignificant relationship between Gender of the respondents and overall satisfaction of the selected multispecialty hospitals services.
- There is significant relationship between Residential status of the respondents and overall satisfaction of the selected multispecialty hospitals services.
- There is significant relationship between Education qualification of the respondents and the selected multispecialty hospitals visited by the respondents.
- There is significant relationship between the health insurance support and the selected multispecialty hospitals visited by the respondents.

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The Regression analysis presented in the above table exhibits that Correlation as 0.571, \( R^2 \) as 0.326. The Anova table results in (0.000) significance. Among the dependent factors cost of care influenced most. There is weak positive relation among the dependent and independent factors. Thus a regression result among these factors is good.

### ANOVA: Overall satisfaction on hospital services & factors influencing for selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>df</th>
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<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<td>2812.752</td>
<td>743</td>
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<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>58.290</td>
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<td>14.572</td>
<td>4.407</td>
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<td>743</td>
<td>3.306</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closeness to Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>9.142</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.286</td>
<td>.617</td>
<td>.651</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name &amp; Fame</td>
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<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
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<td>Access to Insurance</td>
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<td>Between Groups</td>
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<td>Between Groups</td>
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<td>Doctors Specialty</td>
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<td>4.805</td>
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<td>Best Treatment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
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<td>Within Groups</td>
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<td>3597.102</td>
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</table>

### INFERENCE

- The differences in the mean of samples based on the Overall satisfaction towards the hospital services and the differences in the mean of samples based on the cost of care influencing the patients for selecting hospital are Significant.
- The differences in the mean of samples based on the Overall satisfaction towards the hospital services and the differences in the mean of samples based on the hospital selection due to closeness to home are Significant.
- The differences in the mean of samples based on the Overall satisfaction towards the hospital services and the differences in the mean of samples based on name & fame of the hospital influencing the patients selection are Significant.
- The differences in the mean of samples based on the Overall satisfaction towards the hospital services and the differences in the mean of samples based on selection of hospital that access to insurance are Significant.
- The differences in the mean of samples based on the Overall satisfaction towards the hospital services and the differences in the mean of samples based on the modern equipment availability influencing them on selection are Significant.
The differences in the mean of samples based on the Overall satisfaction towards the hospital services and the differences in the mean of samples based on the doctors specialty services influencing hospital selection are Significant.

The differences in the mean of samples based on the Overall satisfaction towards the hospital services and the differences in the mean of samples based on the best treatment influencing the patients for selection of hospital are Significant.

19. SUGGESTIONS
The current study recommends the following few remedies to the hospital management and to the Government.

- The special training programs initiating the human relationship must be arranged once in a year for all paramedical staff members that emphasis a good relationship exist among staff and patients.
- To avoid the frustrations of medical staff the hospital procedures should be curtailed and it should be ensured by the authorities.
- The eminent people with professional management experience should be invited to participate in hospital management. Because a corrupt head of an institution does not and cannot object on the corruption of his/her subordinates.
- Supervision by senior physicians for proper functioning of laboratory, radiology and pathology facilities may allow thorough medical work up of patients.
- The hospital must also maintain a high level of hygiene and sanitation facilities in all aspects of practice.
- The hospital can create the awareness programs in educating the rural area population about the effect of using the banned products.
- The Government can adhere to the strict action in banning the products that affect public’s health.
- The seller can be imprisoned or fined heavily in case of selling the products that affect public’s health.

20. CONCLUSIONS
This research study examined the factors of choice influencing the patient’s satisfaction towards the healthcare services of the selected multi-specialty hospitals of Trichy. The study was analysed on the basis of various dimensions namely personal, demographic and social impact factors, healthcare primary services and services of paramedical and non-paramedical staff. The study showed the good result on the healthcare services rendered to the patients. The suggestions regarding training program, clear & legitimate bill preparation, curtailing the hospital process, a separate room for Case history record maintenance, and ensuring good housekeeping services are forwarded to the management of Multispecialty Hospitals. The hospital must understand the weak areas and plan for better delivery of services to the patients. Worker should remember that Patients have rights, privileges, responsibilities and duties under which they seek and receive health care services. Quality medical care is the degree to which health services are consistent with current professional knowledge and has increased likelihood of achieving the desired health outcomes. Thus the study is a valid and internally reliable tool for assessing patient satisfaction on the healthcare services.

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