



## A STUDY ON PATIENT'S PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION TOWARDS VALUE -ADDED SERVICES PROVIDED BY HOSPITALS IN ERODE DISTRICT

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### Abstract

Patient satisfaction is a scale to assess the services offered by the healthcare system. It depends on quality of clinical services provided, availability of medicine, behavior of doctor and other health staff, cost of services, hospital infrastructure, physical comfort, emotional support and respect for patient preferences. This study aims to analysis the patients' perceptions and expectation when seeking treatment in healthcare sector. The main focus of the study is to measure the patients' satisfaction in healthcare service provided by the three groups of hospitals (private Hospitals, Hospitals Run by trust and Government hospitals). In these hospitals, 150 respondents (private Hospital (50), hospitals Run by trust (50) and Government hospitals (50)) were selected by Convenience sampling technique to collect the primary data through Questionnaire. Data was entered and analyzed simple percentage and Gap score analysis in SPSS. The finding of the study shows that the private hospitals are performing better in providing service quality and give satisfaction according to the needs of the patients. Prompt attention to patients' expectations, enhancing responsiveness of health care system and Consideration of patient's perceptions is of utmost importance to increase patient satisfaction outcomes. Most of the patients were found to be satisfied, yet there were some shortcomings in the quality of care. Inadequate staff and lack of commitment towards patient care were foremost reasons.

### Introduction

**“Health and Happiness are the two great blessing of life”**

The Healthcare is facing unparalleled challenges in an increasingly customer oriented environment. Knowledge about the patients' perception towards health care quality is one of the most important steps towards introducing reforms in the health care sector. Against a background of growing consumerism, satisfying patients has become a key task for all healthcare activities. Satisfaction in service provision is increasingly being used as a measure of health system performance. It has been realized that in order to have a better competitive advantage or best practice in the healthcare industry patient's perception for quality has to be measured deeply and the quality strategies should be set according to these analysis and findings. Health care services have a distinct position among other services due to the highly involving and risky nature of services and the general lack of adequate knowledge possessed by patients. Defining the patient satisfaction as multidimensional evaluation of various aspects of healthcare received in a specific episode, proposes that the processes by which patient experiences were transformed into “evaluations” of the service were complex. In the past, the hospitals were considered as alms houses. They were set up as charity institutions especially for the poor and weaker section of the society. The healthcare industry in recent years has restructured its service system in order to survive in a suitable environment resulting from maturation of the industry, reduced funding and increased competition. The restructuring has focused on finding effective ways to satisfy the needs and desires of the patients.

### Review of Literature

Kashinath et al (2010)<sup>1</sup> in a study **“Factors Affecting Patients' Satisfaction among those attending an Outpatients' Department of a Dental College in Tumkur City- A Survey”** attempt to know the attitude of patients' attending the OPD in various aspects. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted amount people attending the OPD and they were requested to fill the questionnaire which contained 15 questions to assess the area which needs to be rectified. The 60% of respondents felt waiting period was more for treatments such as Root Canal Treatment , Crown and bridge etc and suggested to have sign boards or directions .over all patients' satisfaction was good but based on the statistics; areas which had void can be corrected by implementing the suggestions.

RajinderSingh (2010)<sup>2</sup>in this paper **“Patients' Perception towards Government Hospitals in Haryana”** explained that hospital marketing is a specialized field that deals with connecting patients', physicians and hospitals. Patients' now days are more aware and more quality conscious than before. It stands to reason that a high level of quality, which can translate into patients' satisfaction, is important for a hospital. Consumer satisfaction is important to the hospital because it is generally assumed to be a significant determinant of repeated health service seems to have been largely ignored by health care providers in developing countries. The important reasons to visit government hospital are less charges, geographical

proximity, recommended by their friends or relatives .patients' are found to be dissatisfied with the doctors checkup. Perceptions, especially about service quality, might shape confidence and subsequent behaviors of patients' with regard to choice of hospitals.

### Objectives of the Study

- To study the socio-economic lifestyle pattern of selected respondents in Erode District.
- To analysis the patients' perceptions and expectation when seeking treatment in healthcare sector.

### Research Methodology

**Sampling Unit:** In this study, the sampling unit was healthcare centers in Erode district.

**Sample Selection and Sampling Size:** The study population consists of healthcares in Erode district. Total 150 patients were interviewed during the study period considering available resource and time.

Division	Taluks	Government Hospital	Private Hospital	Hospital run by Trust	Final sample in Taluk wise
Erode	Erode	80	90	75	<b>50</b>
Erode	Perundurai	40	35	50	<b>50</b>
Gobichettipalayam	Gobichettipalayam	30	25	25	<b>50</b>
<b>Final sample in Hospital wise</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>150</b>

**Sampling Design:** Convenience sampling technique has been used for the clear picture of the research.

**Data Gathering Method:** The data needed for analysis was gathered by using a self-administered questionnaire.

**Statistical tools and Techniques:** Percentage analysis and Gap score analysis has been used for this study.

### Results and Discussion

#### Simple Percentage Analysis

**Table No.1, Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Particulars	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	94	62.7
	Female	56	37.3
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
Age(Years)	Up to 25 years	22	14.7
	26-34 years	30	20
	35-44 years	55	36.7
	45-60 years	28	18.6
	above 60 years	15	10
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
Marital Status	Married	96	64
	Unmarried	54	36
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
Educational Qualification	Illiterate	4	2.7
	school level	71	47.3
	degree level	30	20
	Others	45	30
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>
Occupation	Agriculture	13	8.7
	Employee	54	36
	self employed	21	14
	Professionals	5	3.3
	Others	57	38
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
Annual Income(Rs.)	Up to 25000	26	17.3
	25001-50000	96	64
	above 100000	28	18.7
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

The demographic features of patient's were analyzed and the results are presented in Table.No.1. The results indicate that about 62.7 % (N=94) of the patient's are males while the rest of 37.3% (N=56) of the patient's are females. The analysis of the age of the patient's reveal around 14.7% (N=125) of patient's belong to below 25 years of age. Similarly 20% (N=30) of patient's belong to 26 - 34 years and 36.7 % ( N=55) of the patient's belongs to 35-44 years of age. Around 18.6% (N=28) of patient's belong to below 45-60 years. Only 10% (N=15) of the patient's are from above 60 years of age group. From the table it show that about 64% (N=96) of the patient's are married while 36%(N=54) of the patient's are unmarried. The educational qualification of the patient's indicate that 2.7% (N=4) of the patient's are illiterate while 47.3% (N=71) of the patient's are school level. Similarly 20% (N=30) of patient's are degree holders, only 30% (N=45) of the patient's are from various courses like professional courses, diploma etc. In the term of occupation in the study, 8.7% (N=13) of the patient's are farmers, while 36% (N=54) of the respondents are Employees and 14% (N=21) of the patient's are self employed. Only 3.3% (N=5) are professionals, finally 38% (N=57) of the patient's are apart from the above jobs. Finally in term of Annual income,17.3 % ( N=26) are earning up toRs.25000, 64 % ( N=96) are earning 25001-50000 and 18.7 % ( N=28) of the respondent are earning above 100000

### GAP Scores Analysis

The gap score analysis is to enable us find out how consumers perceive service quality in various hospitals and try to identify what dimensions of service quality they are satisfied with. According to Parasuraman et al., (1985, p.48) the higher (more positive) the **Perception(P)** Minus **Expectation (E)** score, the higher the perceived service quality and there by leading to a higher level of customer satisfaction. In this regard, the gap scores were calculated based on the difference between the consumers' perceptions and expectations of services offered by various hospitals.

**Table No.2, Difference Between Average Scores of Perception And Expectation of Respondents**

DIMENSIONS	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	GAP SCORE
Tangibility	2.785	150	0.69092	0.05641	0
Tangibility	2.785	150	0.69092	0.05641	
Reliability	3.019	150	0.55141	0.04711	-0.2263
Reliability	2.7927	150	0.4501	0.03845	
Responsiveness'	3.0755	150	0.83874	0.07114	-0.0377
Responsiveness	3.0378	150	0.71975	0.06105	
Assurance	2.7819	150	0.70128	0.05745	0.5772
Assurance	3.3591	150	2.05916	0.16869	
Empathy	3.4053	150	1.61751	0.13207	-0.7986
Empathy	2.6067	150	0.7662	0.06256	

**Table No.2.1**

	N	Correlation	Sig.
reliabilityE&reliability	150	-0.219	0.01
responsivnessE&responsivnessp	150	0.006	0.94
assuranceE&assurance	150	0.069	0.402
empathyE&empathy	150	0.366	0

**Table.No.2.2**

	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
reliability - reliability	.22628	.78434	.06701	.09376	.35879	3.377	149	.001
responsivnessE - responsivnessp	-.03777	1.10168	.09344	-.14700	.22253	.404	149	.687
assuranceE - assurancep	-.57718	2.12885	.17440	-.92182	-.23254	-3.309	149	.001
empathyE - empathy	.79867	1.51511	.12371	.55422	1.04312	6.456	149	.000



From the above tables reliability, assurance and empathy are statistically significant because the p-value is less than the level of significant (i.e.  $p < 0.05$ ).

Tangibility indicates medical equipment's and physical appearance of the hospitals. Reliability indicates doctor's promises and staffs interest in the services, whereas Responsiveness includes employee's willingness and response to the patient's needs. Assurance about safe in treatment and patient's confidence. Empathy includes caring of the patient's, kind and good manner of staffs while performing services.

In general, it was found that, customers' perceptions of service quality offered by various hospitals did not meet their expectations (all gaps scores the dimensions are negative). Dimensions that reported larger mean gaps were assurance (0.58) and Tangibility (0), While smaller mean gaps obtained were Responsiveness' (-0.03), Reliability (-0.22) and empathy (0.77). These values show that the perception of performance in various hospitals is less than the expected level of service quality. Thus, the overall services provided by the hospitals are satisfied by the patients with their service quality.

### Findings

- It is noted from the Percentage analysis that the majority of the respondents are males and majority belongs age group of 35-44 years and majority of the respondents are married, while, majority are having school level education and the majority of the respondents are Employees and earnings Rs.25001-50000 per annum.
- From the Gap Score analysis, it concluded that perception of performance in various hospitals is less than the expected level of service quality. In general, it was found that, customers' perceptions of service quality offered by various hospitals did not meet their expectations (all gaps scores the dimensions are negative). Hence for the factor "Reliability" it is concluded that the respondents expectations were not fulfilled yet, since more number of patient's are visiting the hospital and the respondents expects the doctor and nurses still more to be performed in all the areas concerning "Responsiveness" and it is observed that the respondents expects still more to be performed in all the areas concerning "Assurance".
- The private hospital is performing better in providing service quality compared to Hospitals Run by trust and the patients who underwent treatment in Government hospitals are less satisfied with service quality and infrastructure facilities.

### Suggestions

- The selected hospitals should improve performance of their medical, paramedical and administrative staff by imparting them need-based training.
- Employees should be motivated to be friendly with the patient's & visitors.
- The hospital management should set up the patient's feedback mechanism.

### Conclusion

The research study has identified different demographic variable affecting their perception towards service delivery system of the hospitals. Young and middle-aged males from poor socio-economic class and rural set up were least satisfied. These groups need more focus while planning and managing the health care system. With the growth of health care facilities, it is important to assess the quality of services delivered by these establishments. The research was conducted to identify the key service quality factors of the hospitals that affect patients' satisfaction and assess how patients rate the service quality dimensions of the hospitals. It concluded that the private hospital is performing better in providing service quality and to increase their satisfaction according to the needs of the patients. Compare to private Hospitals, patients are less satisfied with the overall performance with Hospitals run by trust and Government Hospital. Hospital should keep on improving their service qualities in the five factors namely Promptness, Individualized attention, Communication, Service procedures & Trustworthiness, Dedication.

### References

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