A Study On Service Quality Among the Primary Healthcare Centres In Madurai District

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Ref id:114252

ABSTRACT

Quality is considered as one of the important factors in differentiation and excellence of services and it is a basis of competitive advantage so that its understanding, measuring, and developing it are important challenges for all health care industry. The objective of this research is to examine the service quality influence on Primary health care centre in Madurai, service quality measures are based on some of the dimensions of the SERVQUAL, in this study four dimensions namely responsiveness, empathy, reliability and tangible were considered. The research is purely based on primary data, the data has been collected by 100 respondents by using structures questionnaire. The data has been analyzed by using one anova test and chi-square test.

Key words: service Quality, patient satisfaction, health care,etc

INTRODUCTION

India has been witnessing an increasing concern regarding the quality health care services especially after globalisation and liberalization policies. With the increase in urbanization and standard of living of the people, the awareness on health care services also increases. The consumer's expectation on the quality in health care services is increasing at a faster rate. Service quality has been shown to be an important element in the consumer's choice of hospitals (Lynch and Schuler, 1990). Quality in health care is defined as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs (Korwar, 1997). Health care service quality is giving patients what they want (patient quality) and what they need (professional quality), and doing so using fewest resources, without error, delays and waste, and within higher level regulations (management quality; Overtreit, 1992). The health care deals with different services such as hospital services, diagnosis services, physician consultancies and some other emerging fields. In the present study, the focusing services are all health care services together.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Shaikh et al. (2008)25 for a year between 2004 and 2005 March at a secondary level hospital in Karachi of Pakistan. For this, data was collected on a quarterly basis through SERVQUAL tool, with interviews and it

was taken on 1533 patients and found 34.4% of patients were satisfied with the medical services offered by the secondary level hospitals. Apart from this they also conducted workshops towards the quality improvement based on the results of the four phases. This in turn within a year resulted in the improvement of patient's satisfaction level from 34.4% to 82.0 %(over a year).

The Egyptians hospitals service and its quality were tested by Mohamed **M. Mostafa (2005)35** through this paper. For this they considered both public and private hospitals.SERVQUAL model was adopted for the study. Across-sectional questionnaire survey carried out in 2005 took a random sample of 332 patients from 12 hospitals of Egypt was chosen. Factor analysis revealed three factor solutions and did not support the five factor model of SERVQUAL. The three factors were empathy, tangibles and reliabilityconfidence.In all the mentioned three factors the private hospitals have lesser gaps when compared with public hospitals. Patients may have a multifaceted set of significant viewpoint that cannot be confined in the opinion poll.

The Pain Treatment Satisfaction Scale (PTSS) was to assess patient satisfaction for those receiving treatment for either acute or chronic pain. The initial questionnaire of the study by **Evans C.** et al. **(2004)45** included a comprehensive literature review and interview swith patients, physicians and nurses in the United States, Italy and France. After initial items were created, psychometric validation was performed on the participating patients.Analyses on this survey included principal components factor analysis tests of reliability, clinical validity, and confounding. All dimensions except medical care discriminated well according to pain severity. The PTSS survey has been proven a valid and comprehensive instrument to assess and evaluate satisfaction with treatment of painbased on independent modules that have demonstrated satisfactory psychometric performance.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

India is becoming one of the important countries which provide the quality medical services at cheaper rate. It attracts many foreign patients to India. Even, it is not at a reachable level to the people living in India especially people with lower middle income and poor people. Some hospitals are not following any ethical values in the medical profession. So these incidents namely reluctance of public hospitals influence the patients attitude towards the hospitals in a negative way. The service quality in public hospitals is declining whereas the service quality in private hospitals is increasing .but the problem is whether these are at the expected level of the patients or not. Hence, the present study focuses on this aspect

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The medical profession has broadened its horizon globally and India is no exception. The emphasis is not only to provide specialized services more efficiently and effectively, but also to maintain the quality of overall services.In view of changing needs of customers, changing world, changing life style and technological innovations, the market has become customer service oriented. Therefore, in service delivery and services management the service quality has become an essential need in this competitive environment. As the physiological contentment of the people got satisfied; there is a demand for more satisfaction.

Human's desire to live long has resulted in special healthcare services like health and fitness clubs, multispecialty hospitals, nursing homes etc.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Health care service have a distinct position among other services due to the high risky nature of services and the general lacks of expertise possessed by consumers. A better understanding of how consumers evaluate the quality of healthcare will help administrators and service providers, in determining and improving the weaker aspects of their health care delivery system. With continuous monitoring of patient perceptions and improvements based on patient feedback. The quality of care and patient satisfaction will improve. The present study has made an attempt to evaluate the service quality in primary healthcare centres as per the view of the patients.

OBIECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To study the service quality of primary healthcare centre in Madurai district.

2. To measure the level of patient satisfaction towards the primary healthcare centres in   Madurai city.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The validity of any research depends on the systematic method of collecting data and analyzing the same in a sequential order. In the study use of primary data . For collecting primary data, the field survey technique was consumers in the study area first-hand information pertaining prevailing practices for service quality in this area were collected from three hundred fifteen sample respondents who were chosen by convenience sampling method. The tools used for analysis are percentage analysis,T-test,ANOVAand chi-square

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The respondents of 44% of male respondent and 56% of female respondent while 24% 0f respondents age is below 25,25% of age is between 26 and 35, 24% of age is between 36 and 45,15% of age is between 46 and 55, & 12% of respondent age are above 55. further 26% of respondents educational qualification are PG, 21% are UG, 10% qualification are others, 23% are DIP/IT & 20% of respondents qualification is below +2. While 24% of respondents occupations are professionals, 24% are business man, 15% are home makers, 25% are from IT service and 12% of respondent's occupations are others.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

T-TEST FOR GENDER AND LESSER WAITING TIME

Null hypothesis – Ho: There is no significant difference between male and female with regards to lesser waiting time.

Alternative Hypothesis –H1: There is significant difference between male and female with regards to lesser waiting time.

The p-value is 0.000 and it is less than 0.5(5% level of significance), so we accept the   alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis at 5% level of significance. It is conclude that there is no significant difference between male and female with regards to lesser waiting time.

ANOVA FOR AGE LEVEL AND GOING INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION

Null hypothesis – Ho: There is no significant difference between age level and going individual attention.

Alternative Hypothesis –H1: There is significant difference between age level and going   individual attention.

The p- value is 0.000 and it is less than 0.05 (5% level of significance), so we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis at 5% level of significance. It can be conclude that there is significant difference between age level and going   individual attention.

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS FOR AGE AND CONSISTENCY OF SERVICE

Null hypothesis – Ho: There is no association between age and consistency of service

Alternative Hypothesis –H1: There is association between age and consistency of service

The 'p' value that is Pearson chi-square test reads a significant level of 0.000 at 5%   level of significance. This value of 0.000 being less than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is association between age and consistency of service

SUGGESTIONS

1. The hospital management should establish a customer cell which has to reveal their customer expectation and perception on their service quality periodically.

2. They can update their facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs of their customer.

3. The hospitals are advised to focus not only on the service quality alone but also the level of education among the customers is growing at a faster rate. They are expecting the service quality at par with the international standard.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that level of expectations by the patients are not yet fulfilled by the service provider. The perception on service quality in healthcare centre has a significant impact on the patient's satisfaction. Finally the study concluded that the primary healthcare centres should take serious steps to enrich their

service quality according to the level of expectation of their customers .The healthcare centres should consider the problematic service quality to reduce the patients unrestness towards their service.

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