

AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE AND PREFERENCE TOWARDS ALLOPATHIC MEDICAL CENTERS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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Abstract

The present study aims at analyzing the awareness level of patients towards allopathic medical centers in Coimbatore city. Patient's awareness level is the key element for the success of health care industry. An unaware patient might not utilize the services of health care industry effectively. The Health care sector comprises of different types of medical treatments like Allopathic, Ayurvedhic, Naturopathy, Siddha, Unnani, Homeopathy, etc. This paper concentrates on awareness level of allopathic medical centers. Allopathic is the most chosen system of medical practice which treats disease by the use of remedies which create effects different from those produces by the disease beneath treatment. The study has been carried out by employing questionnaire as data collection tool. This paper contemplates more on awareness level towards medical services, physical facilities and fees charged by the medical centers.

Key words: Awareness, Medical Center, Medical Services, Preference.

1. INTRODUCTION

The healthcare industry is one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries. Currently, Government spends 1.15% on the healthcare industry of the Gross Domestic Product. It is expected that public health spending would be increased to 2.5% of the GDP by 2025; the sector expects a higher allocation from the Government's Budget. Medical care forms a colossal part of a nation's economy. The release of health care services from primary care to secondary and tertiary level of care is most visible part of any health care system, both to users and the general public. There are many ways of providing health care in the Modern World. The place of creating awareness and delivery of services may be in the home, the community, the work place or in health care centers. The most common way is face- to -face relationship would help both the patients and service provider to create better awareness level towards medical services.

2. OVERVIEW OF MEDICAL CENTER

Medical Center may perhaps refer to as Hospital or Clinic or Large Complex of Medical Facilities or Medical Institutions. A Medical Center is a health care service institution which provides various types of treatment to the patients with specialized medical aids, nursing support and medical equipments. Presently, Medical Centers are highly employed by professional physicians, surgeons, nurses and other allied medical practitioners for serving the community with medical services. Patients may visit the Medical Centers just for general check up, diagnosis; treatment or therapy and then they leave the center. Those patients are called as inpatients. Some patients might stay overnight or for a week or for a month and get admitted to get cure from their illness. They were termed as Inpatients. Normally Medical Centers are distinguished based on the facility factors such as functionality, size, location, ownership and specialization.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Awareness, Knowledge and Preference of the respondents are important components of the healthcare industry. An unaware patient might not avail right medical service from the medical centers. In this regard we would like to identify the awareness level of patients towards allopathic medical centers. This paper aims at identifying the awareness levels of respondents towards allopathic medical centers.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To know the demographic profile of the respondents.
- ❖ To examine the preference level of the respondents.
- ❖ To identify the awareness level of the respondents

5. RESEARCH DESIGN

Depending upon the sources employed, the data has come from actual observations. Under simple random sampling, a sample of 56 respondents has been selected for this study. Questionnaire is used as the tool for data collection. Statistical tools used for this study are percentage analysis, rank analysis and weighted average score analysis.

6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Alyah M. Almoajel (2012) the study entitled "Hospitalized Patients Awareness of Their Rights in Saudi Governmental Hospital" aims to find out the level of awareness of patients' privileges among hospitalized patients. This study found that Patients' rights, is recently introduced term in health awareness of human rights has been on the rise. Excellence care of patients means satisfaction with facilities given by the hospital. As health amenities, food nourishment, sanitations and clean

drinking water and medication given in time by the nurse, also satisfaction of the hospital environment, availability of foodstuffs supply, post-operative care facility and cleanliness are also considered.

- Ibrahim G. Badran (2015) “Knowledge, attitude and practice the three pillars of excellence and wisdom: a place in the medical profession” in his article reveals that knowledge, attitude and practice compose a chord of interactive part characterized by vitality and inimitable interdependence. Emphasis is laid, for each constituent of the chord, on the value of decent conduct in raising the application of the factor in real life to a peak. Extraordinary treatment is given to numerous significant factors that can influence or organize the route of practice in the medical profession. We deem in depth the conglomerate of information, education, communication and human resources development; the socio humanistic fundamentals of practice; recent technologies and technology transfer systems; ecological factors; and the competence of science and technology for forecasting and assessment.
- Bhavana B Bhat , N Udupa and two others (2019) conducted a study on “Assessment of knowledge and attitude of patients on herbal medicine use in Udupi region, Karnataka, India” . The study results indicate a need to conduct educational and awareness programs by AYUSH, The Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy on herbal medicines and adverse drug reactions in order to minimize untoward effects caused by herbal medicines.

7. ANALYSIS AND DATA INTERPRETATION

Table No. 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Profile	Classification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	31	55%
	Female	25	45%
Age	Up to 20 years	3	5%
	21 - 40 years	23	41%
	41 - 60 years	27	48%
	Above 60 years	3	5%
Educational Qualification	Illiterate	0	0%
	Primary School Level	9	16%
	Higher Secondary School Level	9	16%
	Undergraduate Level	21	38%
	Postgraduate Level	5	9%
	Professional Level	10	18%
Occupational Status	Others	2	4%
	Agriculturist	3	5%
	Business	9	16%
	Employee	17	18%
	Professionals	5	9%
	Retired Person	0	0%
	Student	9	16%
	Housewife	10	30%
Marital Status	Others	3	5%
	Married	45	80%
Family Status	Unmarried	11	20%
	Nuclear	39	70%
Family Size (in numbers)	Joint	17	30%
	Below 3	4	7%
	3 to 5	39	70%
Monthly Family Income (in Rs.)	Above 5	13	23%
	Up to 20000	14	25%
	20001 - 40000	15	27%
	40001 - 60000	10	18%
Area of Residence	Above 60000	17	30%
	Rural	17	30%
	Semi – Urban	16	29%
	Urban	23	41%

The above table discloses the demographic profile of the respondents such as gender, age, educational qualification, occupational status, marital status, family status, family size, monthly income and area of residence. The frequency value mentioned in bold determines the maximum number of respondents responded for each demographic questions.

Table No. 2. Name of medical center

Medical Center	No. of Respondents	Percentage
KMCH	15	27%
PSG	13	23%
GKNM	11	20%
Andal	3	5%
Government	3	5%
KGM	3	5%
L and L	2	4%
Ramakrishna	2	4%
Royal Care	2	4%
Venkateswara	2	4%
Total	56	100%

The above table reveals the medical centers that have been preferred by the respondents for this piece of writing. Most of the respondents (27%) prefer the Kovai Medical Center and Hospital for availing medical services.

Table No. 3. Respondents Longevity with the Medical Center

Longevity	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 3 years	7	13%
3-5 years	14	25%
6-8 years	13	23%
Above 8 years	22	39%
Total	56	100%

This table shows the details of how long the respondents know the medical centers. Most of the respondents (39%) are having knowledge about the medical centers for above 8 years.

Table No. 4. Medium of Awareness

Medium	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Advertisement	3	5%
Friends & Relatives	50	89%
Other Patients	3	5%
Total	56	100%

The above table describes the medium through which the respondents came to know about the medical centers they prefer. Majority of the respondents (89%) considered for this study have been referred by Friends and Relatives.

Table No. 5. Reason for preferring the Medical Center

Factors	Total Score	Rank
Faith	324	4
Service Quality	313	6
Brand name	341	3
Cost	265	9
Easy Access	273	8
Longevity	241	10
Family Doctor	321	5
Multi Specialty	378	1
Facility	276	7
Popularity	352	2

The above table corresponds to the reason for preferring the medical centers and availing medical services from those centers. According to the ranking table, it could be found that the Multi Specialty is highly preferred by the respondents and ranked as I. Longevity is least preferred by the respondents and ranked as 10.

Table No. 6. Awareness Level towards Medical Treatments

Factors	Fully Aware	Aware	Not Aware	Score	Rank
General Medical	29	25	2	139	1
Gynecology	35	12	9	138	2
Pediatrics	19	20	17	114	7
Neurology	14	33	9	117	5
Urology	4	28	24	92	14
Gastrology	14	27	15	111	9
Dermatology	12	36	8	116	6
ENT	20	28	8	124	3

Ophthalmology	8	23	25	95	13
Orthology	7	30	19	100	12
Physiotherapy	20	26	10	122	4
Psychology	18	20	18	112	8
Dentistry	15	24	17	110	10
Hemorrhoids	9	17	30	91	15
Oncology	13	19	24	101	11

This table bears out the awareness level of respondents towards the medical treatments rendered by the medical centers. According to the above table, it could be found that most of the respondents are fully aware about the medical treatment General Medicine and ranked as 1. At the same time it is found to be the respondents are least aware about the treatment Hemorrhoids and ranked as 15.

Table No. 7. Awareness Level towards Facilities available in the Medical Center

Factors	Fully Aware	Aware	Not Aware	Score	Rank
Ambulance	25	29	2	135	4
Blood bank	20	34	2	130	8
Pharmacy	30	26	0	142	1
Laboratory	18	35	3	127	11
Scanning and X-Ray	30	23	3	139	2
ICU	27	24	5	134	5
Bed and Room	19	37	0	131	7
Medical Insurance	21	26	9	124	12
Data Maintenance	19	24	13	118	14
Canteen	29	22	5	136	3
Health Plan	23	26	7	128	10
Domiciliary assistance	23	3	30	105	15
Critical Care Areas	22	21	13	121	13
Communication	22	29	5	129	9
Parking	22	32	2	132	6

The above table gives an idea about the awareness level of respondents towards the facilities available in the medical centers. From the above table it could be found that the respondents are highly aware about the availability of pharmacy in the medical centers. At the same time they are least aware about the Domiciliary Assistance facilities offered by the medical centers.

Table No. 8. Awareness Level towards Medical Fees

Factors	Fully Aware	Aware	Not Aware	Score	Rank
Registration fee	45	11	0	157	1
Consulting fee	43	13	0	155	2
Laboratory fee	36	12	8	140	3
Medicine fee	29	22	5	136	4
Therapist fee	30	16	10	132	7
Nursing fees	30	17	9	133	6
Ambulance rent	30	12	14	128	8
Room rent	33	13	10	135	5
Diet rate	20	12	24	108	10
Housekeeping	29	10	17	124	9

This table explains the awareness level of respondents towards different types of medical fees charged by the medical centers. According to the above table it could be found that majority of the respondents are fully aware about the Registration fees fixed by the medical centers. As per the analysis made for this study it is also found that the respondents selected for the study are that much are about the Diet rate fixed by the medical centers.

8. SUGGESTION

According to this study, the medical centers can take some inventiveness to showcase the various treatments provided by them. Most of the respondents are not aware about some of the facilities rendered by the medical centers. So, those centers may have some of the alternatives to make the public aware about their medical services. Even though, if they were aware about services the respondents are not having knowledge about the charges fixed by the medical centers. This could be considered by the medical centers and take a few initiatives.

9. CONCLUSION

It could be concluded from this study that the respondents mostly prefer the popular medical center with multispecialty attribute for availing medical services. Most of the respondents are aware about the medical treatments provided by the medical centers. Nearly every respondent selected for the study were aware with reference to the variety of facilities offered

by the healing centers to their patients. Majority of respondents are fully aware about the different types of fees charged by the medical centers. A well aware personality may have the high level of knowledge about the services rendered by the medical centers in their locality and can avail the better qualitative services eventually.

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