

## **A Analysis The Effects Of Service Quality On Patient Satisfaction**

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### **Abstract**

*The present study examines the effect of service quality on patient satisfaction in the health sector located in India. Service quality is considered to be as one of the significant factor to keep people safe and health from diseases. The study has been carried out by employing questionnaire as data collection techniques. The results of the study reveals that the most important factor that impact on service quality dimension is tangible and empathy, so these are the most important factors of SERVQUAL model that impact on service quality. Results showed that respect enhances patient's satisfaction the most though all dimensions for service quality have significant and positive effects on patient satisfaction.*

**Key elements:** *Service quality, Dimension, Empathy and Patient.*

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### **I. Introduction**

In the last three decades, there has been incrementing the interest internationally in the quality of health care services, as standards of living have transmuted and there is an ordinate dictation for better medical care to amend lifestyles. Amending the quality of medical care accommodations has become a primary concern for patients so in order to provide better accommodation to patient's service quality has become increasingly paramount for hospitals in reverence of gratifying and retaining patients. As Quality of Life is badly affected in health care services more than of any other service sector so health care providers that fail to understand the importance of delivering service quality and customer satisfaction may be inviting a possible loss of patients. Patients are becoming more and more conscious about the quality of health care accommodations provided by hospitals. Consumers of health care accommodations have exceptionally higher prospects and authoritatively mandate a high caliber of precision, reliability, responsiveness and empathy from accommodation providers. Service quality is defined as the difference between customer perceptions and their expectations, according to customer quality is satisfactory if performance meets with expectations. We can also identify about satisfaction from the feedback of customers. Satisfied customers shows long term relationship with their service provider which result in higher level of compliance that leads to better health outcomes. Customer satisfaction is an important aspect for service organizations and is highly related to service quality.

When service quality improves, the probability of customer satisfaction increases. Increased customer satisfaction leads to behavioral outcomes such as commitment, customer retention, and creation of a mutually rewarding relationship with the service provider and the user, increased customer tolerance for service failures and positive word-of-mouth advertising about the organization.

The main objective of this paper is to determine factors that influence on customer satisfaction that is intricate but we are going to simplify it by applying scientific study. In this study, we are going to identify the customer satisfaction on the health sector, there is limited literature that related to this topic in Indian context; we are going to fulfill this gap by contributing in limited Indian literature by applying empirical methodology.

### **Measure of Service Quality**

Ducker (1991) defines service quality as what the customer gets out and is willing to pay for rather than "what the supplier (of the service) puts in". Hence, service quality is often "conceptualized as the comparison of service expectations with actual performance perceptions" (Kara, Lonial et al. 2005). Service science literature often relies on SERVQUAL as an instrument to measure quality of service provided. SERVQUAL scale was developed based on a marketing perspective with the support of the Marketing Science Institute. Previous research confirms its use as applicable to healthcare environment. For a thorough analysis of SERVQUAL see Nyeck et al. (2002). SERVQUAL principle primarily relies on a gap model.

### **II. Review Of Literature**

**Anderson and Fornell (1994)** stated that the hospitals and other healthcare providers assume an important role in this fast growing service sector. Quality service provision, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty has recently been emerging as important parameters for both researchers and practitioners in Turkey. For example, customer satisfaction is considered (1) amongst the main inducers of profitability, and (2) an important performance measure for firms, industries, and national economies.

**Press et al. (1991)** indicate that improved customer satisfaction can help hospitals in cost reduction by resulting in fewer complaints. In addition, “patient satisfaction is a dominant concern that is intertwined with strategic decisions in the health services”.

**Trinh et al. (2000)** defined the consumer’s satisfaction, choice of service provider and service quality evaluation are influenced by the expectations of the consumer. Most healthcare consumers, namely patients, also have certain expectations about the service they demand prior to their visit to the hospital or clinic.

**Wang et al., (2004)** hospital service level, different services such as the admission, meals, nursing services, discharge, etc. each are considered as one transaction and the satisfaction resulting from these processes and services can be deemed as satisfaction at transaction level. Accordingly the satisfaction resulting from the whole care process and the services provided during the patient’s hospitalization period can be considered as overall satisfaction. According to marketing researchers’ arguments, since the overall satisfaction is a function of the sum of transactional satisfactions and reflects the customer’s feelings about the overall performance of an organization, so it would be more fundamental and useful in predicting the post-purchasing behaviour of the customer.

**Limitations**

This study has focused on the quantitative findings, however, in order to get better results, it should be improved using qualitative data. Evaluation of the services by the patient is a subjective process and using a quantitative tool like questionnaire cannot reflect all the patient’s judgments. Using qualitative methods, therefore besides the quantitative methods in the future studies could provide better understanding of the relationship between the service quality and the patient’s satisfaction.

**Study Design**

This study was carried out in the year 2021 and the study target population was patients hospitalized in Tamil Nadu city private hospitals from which we selected 8 general hospitals for studying. The sample size in this study was 969 patients who were questioned on the day of discharging from hospital. Patients were selected consecutively and all the discharged patients were interviewed during the study period. The study aims were explained to the patients and they were assured of confidentiality of their personal information. As for the illiterate patients, a trained interviewer helped in filling out of the questionnaire.

**Objectives**

- To study the service quality is the most important predictor of patient satisfaction.
- To investigate the impact of the service quality in the hospital industry.
- To examine the overall satisfaction of patients in hospital industry.

**Data Analysis**

The success of hospital industry largely depends on the high quality of services. Service quality is the ability to provide professional required and customer expected application of business. There are so many factors behind high quality of services. The previous chapter has been elaborately discussed method adopted for this study. This chapter explains the detailed analysis and discussion.

**Table 1 Opinion towards patient satisfaction**

Statements	Mean	S.D	C.V
The service of the hospitals are close to my expectation	4.87	1.71	0.35
It was a right and wise decision to choose the current hospitals service provider	4.76	1.4	0.30
My overall satisfaction on using the service of the bank is very high	4.51	1.61	0.35

Source: Primary data computed

Table 1 indicates the respondent opinion towards customer satisfaction of the hospitals. Customer satisfaction has been measured with the three statements.

Respondent are asked to rate their satisfaction level for each statements. Mean and standard deviation values are calculated for each statement. Mean values are ranged between 4.87 to 4.51. It is noted that the respondents are highly rated that the services of hospitals are close to their expectation (4.87). The opinion about the right and wise decision to choose the current hospitals service provider is found to be a mean value of (4.76). The calculated co-efficient variation value indicates that the respondents are having similar level opinion towards that they made wide decision to be part of the hospitals. The customers are having satisfaction with the service of the hospitals. Because, they are doing the service as close to be customer expectation. Customers are also felt that they made wise decision towards the selection of the hospitals. The hospitals have to improve the

service level continuously. There is no guarantee that what is excellent service today is also applicable for tomorrow. To survive in the competitive banking industry, banks have to develop new strategies which will satisfy their customers. That is why service marketing and hospital marketing are important areas in the marketing literature.

**Table 2 Service quality and customer satisfaction**

Service Quality	Customer Satisfaction	
	r-value	p-value
Tangibility	0.225	0.001*
Reliability	0.327	0.001*
Responsiveness	0.442	0.001*
Assurance	0.359	0.001*
Empathy	0.533	0.001*

Source: Primary data computed, \*significant at one percent level

Table 2 explains the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction.

H0: There is no relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction.

In order to examine the above stated hypothesis, Pearson correlation, is applied. It is observed that the service quality dimensions, empathy has secured highest r-value (0.533) with customer satisfaction followed by responsiveness (0.442), assurance (0.359), reliability (0.327) and tangibility (0.225). The secured r-values are lies between 0.533 and 0.225. However, the r-values are found to be positive and also significant at one percent level. It shows that service quality dimension is positively and significantly related with customer satisfaction. Hence, the stated hypothesis is rejected. Here, empathy having higher level of correlation value than the other service quality dimension. Hence it is found empathy is having the strong relationship with customer satisfaction.

**Table 3 Effect of service quality on customer satisfaction**

R-Value	R-Square Value	Adjusted R- Square Value	F-Value	P-Value
0.747	0.558	0.552	85.914	0.001*

Service Quality	B	Std. Error	Beta	t- Value	P-Value
Constant	1.832	0.959	–	1.910	0.057
Tangibility	-0.026	0.041	-0.023	-0.633	0.527 (NS)
Reliability	0.046	0.033	0.057	1.387	0.166 (NS)
Responsiveness	-0.014	0.042	-0.017	-0.332	0.740 (NS)
Assurance	0.058	0.042	0.059	1.381	0.168 (NS)
Empathy	0.142	0.037	0.199	3.810	0.001*

Source: Primary data computed \*significant at one percent level; Ns - Non - significant

Table 3 explains the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction.

H0: Service quality dimension are not influenced the customer satisfaction.

In order to examine the above stated hypothesis, multiple linear regression has been applied. Here, the service quality dimensions namely tangibility, reliability, responsibility, assurance, and empathy are considered as independent variables and customer satisfaction is treated as dependent variable. Further, the analysis has been done. From the model summary, the p-value is found to be (0.001), which is significant at one percent level. It shows that the independent variables, such as tangibility, reliability, responsibility, assurance, and empathy are significantly influenced the customer satisfaction. Hence the stated hypothesis is rejected. Further the r-square value is found to be 0.558. It is inferred that the service quality dimensions, are influenced at 55.8 percent level on the customer satisfaction. The standardized co-efficient beta value indicates the relative importance of predictors of customer satisfaction is expressed by the equation. Customer satisfaction = 1.832+0.142(Empathy)

This equation is explained that the empathy is having positive impact on customer satisfaction. It shows, to have one unit increase in customer satisfaction, the empathy has to be increased by 0.142. It is clearly

indicates that the service quality dimension are having significant effect on the customer satisfaction. However, empathy is the predictor of customer satisfaction.

### **Managerial Implication**

Getting the customer feedback relating to service quality and customer satisfaction helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses of hospitals. Because, customer complaints and compliments are the core that form the feedback. It is useful to hospital management to investigate service quality attributes having both negative and positive contributions and to pay more attention to the negative attributes. This study helps the hospitals to frame strategies for improving service quality which increases patient behaviour.

It is pertinent that all the components in a service quality program be strictly followed and implemented effectively. Tangibility, Reliability, responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy, Customer Satisfaction are all equally important. Doctors should not only focus on the hospitals objective of profits and gains, but must also look into the needs of the customers as well. As a matter of fact, the doctors should recommend extensive customer-relations training programs for all the frontlines and doctors. Market perception and customer expectation can change rapidly from time to time.

### **III. Conclusion**

As expected, this study also found a strong relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction. But when service quality is studied as a multidimensional construct, provide invaluable tips for managers and decision-makers as well. Study of service quality as a multidimensional construct makes clear the effective areas of service quality in establishing patient satisfaction. Thus, managers can focus their quality improvement efforts on areas of service quality that have greater impact on patient satisfaction. The present study indicated that service's costs, service delivery process and interaction with the patient had the most important positive effects on the overall satisfaction. For the hospital managers, this study emphasizes on the need for observing the tariffs and preserving high standards in the service provisioning process. The managers and owners of private hospitals must define rational prices in relation to the service quality. As regards to process quality, they must decrease the waiting time for the visits, hospitalization and surgery operations so that the services are delivered as fast as possible. Also strengthening the interpersonal aspects of care and communication skills of doctors, nurses and staff should be emphasized.

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