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AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON USER SATISFACTION IN CORPORATE HOSPITALS**DR. T. SREENIVAS****PROFESSOR****DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES****RVR & JC COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING****GUNTUR****DR. U. SRINIVASA RAO****PROFESSOR****SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES****SSN ENGINEERING COLLEGE****ONGOLE****ABSTRACT**

Patient satisfaction is one of the sensitive indicators in determining the effectiveness of service delivery in hospitals. The hospitals must strive for maximization of stake holders. Satisfaction and has to give patient focused service. The study focus on comparing the health care services of two cardiology based corporate hospitals in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. The data for the study was collected through a questionnaire comprising of two parts. In first part an attempt has been made to elicit the information on socio economic background such as age, sex, education, nativity, profession, income of the patients to assess the background of the patient. In second part comprising 57 items related to important parameters which determines satisfaction levels of the patients like Admission Process, comfort facet, information on food facilities, level of care taken by the concerned, working of business office and Discharge Procedures. The instrument is tested for its reliability and validity. A sample of 500 respondents, 250 from APOLLO and 250 from CARE were selected randomly for the study. The collected data is analyzed by applying descriptive and inferential statistical techniques such as means, standard deviation. One way ANOVA tests, wherever applicable while testing the hypothesis that the perceptions of patients are indistinguishable with respect to the performance indicators. It is found from the hypothesis testing that, except in few aspects, in majority of the cases satisfaction levels were not found significantly varying in two hospitals. It is concluded that the perceptions of the patients on the performance in two hospitals are not significantly varying. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted.

KEYWORDS

Influencing factors, patient Satisfaction, service quality, service economy, service providers.

INTRODUCTION

In service economy, customers are more critical and keen towards quality services and demand high standards. The primary function of a hospital is patient care. The patient is the ultimate consumer to the hospital. The dictionary meaning of patient is 'one who suffers' or 'it's having medical care'. But it does not cover the current usage; two distinct meanings can be drawn from the word patient. One way it can be understood as the person who is ill and is accepting a sick role. On the other hand it can be implied as an individual who is on the list of the doctor who accepts responsibility for his medical care. In the words of Henderson the concept of patient is described as when you talk to a patient, you should listen first to what he wants to tell, secondly for what he does not want to tell, finally for what he cannot tell. Satisfaction results from customers good experiences.

Patient Satisfaction is defined in terms of the degree to which the patient's expectations are fulfilled. It is an expression of the gap between the expected and perceived characteristics of a service (Lochoro, 2004). Measuring Patient Satisfaction depends on using the accurate measures because it comprises of standards that incorporate dimensions of technical, interpersonal, social, and moral aspects of care (Kane et al., 1997). Patient form certain expectations may be about the nature and performance of service, the costs and efforts to be expended before obtaining the service benefits, the social benefits or costs accruing to the consumer as a result of the purchase. Once patient come to the hospital and experience the facilities, he/she may then become either satisfied or dissatisfied. There are several determinants which influence the satisfaction level of the end user. They include demographic variables and expectations and others. However, there is no direct relationship between level of expectation and level of satisfaction. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction refers to emotional response to the evaluation of service, consumption, experience.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Several studies were undertaken on patient satisfaction. In one recent study done by Francis Sudhakar (2012)¹ conceptualized that the value of marketing revolve around a concept of educating patients, providers, payers and employers in the unique manner in which the health care organization can legitimately maximizing patient encounters. Mamimaran (2011)² has concluded as the hospital administrators should improve the intangible aspects, up to date technological requirements in order to create a good image and service rendered by the hospitals to the patients. Marni Reisberg (1996)³ said that patients are to be treated with respect and caring they deserve. Ramaiah Itumalla (2011)⁴ identified patient interactions, timely services and supply of medicines as the major factors affecting quality of service at the hospitals. Akojiam (2007)⁵ opined younger patients tend to have higher satisfaction and patient satisfaction level tended to decrease with increase in educational levels. Jawahar (2007)⁶ added that the patients are satisfied with the guidance, logistic, arrangements, support services, nursing care, doctors consultation etc. Krishna Dipankar (2006)⁷ opined that better staff and physician interpersonal skills, facility infrastructure, and availability of drugs have the largest effect in improving patient satisfaction at public health facilities. Andrabi Syed Arshad (2012)⁸ concluded that health CARE delivery can be improved more and more once the organization measures the delivery of quality of care on an ongoing basis and continually make changes to improve the processes. Yoger Pai (2011)⁹ summarized that the nursing services, housing services, medical services, food and beverage services are having greater impact on patient satisfaction level. Yousef Hamoud Aldebasi (2011)¹⁰ mentioned in his article that patient satisfaction is one of the most sensitive indicator of the quality of their services. Mufti Samina (2008)¹¹ said that patient satisfaction surveys should become a regular outcome monitoring feature in all the hospitals. In-service training programs for nurses, with special emphasis on communication are need of the hour and should become a routine exercise. Prahlad Rai Sodami (2010)¹², in his study, he concluded that if doctors and other staff are courteous to patient, this satisfaction levels will be high though they have fewer facilities. Kasinath (2010)¹³ said that having signboards, explaining the treatment procedures will built a good rapport with the patient. But targeting in reduction in complaints is not a sign of improvement. Sudhakar et al. (2012)¹⁴ in their study tried to correlate the patient satisfaction and the Quality of Service the hospital is providing and also tried to quantify the gap between the expected quality and perceived treatment. Thompson (1962) studied on patient satisfaction on room accommodation. The author concluded that there was need for all three types of room accommodations in order to meet both clinical needs and patient preferences. Another study of patient satisfaction desires concerning hospital accommodation, focusing on the design of patient units, was carried out by Huseby (1969). Evans (1960) conducted an investigation in ten tuberculosis hospitals and studied the relationships among ward stratification, patient alienation, and patient response to the hospital situation. Some of the factors in the hospital setting associated with extreme patient dissatisfaction were

studied by Blum (1962). Miller (1963) investigated the relationships between patient satisfaction, patient CARE, and nurses' role perceptions in a voluntary teaching hospital. Caplan and Sussman (1966) examined the relative importance of a number of variable found to be related to patient satisfaction and staff satisfaction with hospital clinic services. Thus the subject of patient satisfaction is evergreen topic and very fluid. It is very difficult to tell how and when people are satisfied. As soon as the patient enters the hospital, he creates something in his mind regarding services. It may be good or bad, so it is imperative that adequate facilities are to be provided in the hospital premises.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the effectiveness of service delivery in selected cardiology based hospitals.
- To compare the perceptions of patients of sample hospitals.
- To suggest suitable measures to improve the effectiveness of service delivery in corporate hospitals.

HYPOTHESIS

- 1) The perceptions of the patients are indistinguishable with respect to the performance indicators of APOLLO.
- 2) The perceptions of the patients are indistinguishable with respect to the performance indicators of CARE.
- 3) The hospitals that serve with quality standards gain better patient satisfaction.

SELECTION OF SAMPLE HOSPITALS

The researchers have selected two different hospitals in Hyderabad city for study. They are APOLLO of Jubli hills and CARE of Banjarahills.

METHODOLOGY

In this study the word 'patients' refers to 'in-patients' and their opinions have been sought in sample hospitals. It is taken in view of the in-patients spend more time in the hospitals than the out-patients and they have a lot of exposure and access to the hospital environment and treatment. The socio economic background of the patients has been delineated to know the status of an individual and background information of the patients. The present study is compiled based on opinions of the respondents from the questionnaire that was administered in APOLLO and CARE hospitals. Patients were taken on the basis of bed strength. Sample was finalized by using stratified random sampling. In APOLLO 300 respondents were taken for study but 250 response sheets were used for final analysis. Out of 290 patients at CARE who were taken for the study, only 250 were taken for final analysis. Factors such as age, sex, education, nativity, profession, income etc. are considered. The distributed Questionnaire consists of two parts. Part-1 is on socio-economic information of the patients. Part-2 consists of statements regarding satisfaction levels of patients on services offered. A five degree scale (Summated Scale) was used. It contains the columns of strongly agree, agree, can't say, disagree, strongly disagree of the respondents with the given statement. The instrument was tested by author for its reliability and validity. The parameters like Admission Process, comfort facet, food facilities, and Care facet taken by the concerned, functioning of Business office, Discharge procedures were taken for Analysis.

ANALYSIS

Table No. 1 presents the information pertaining to the socio-economic factors of the patients.

TABLE NO. 1: SOCIO – ECONOMIC INFORMATION OF SAMPLE PATIENTS

Sl.No	Particulars		APOLLO		CARE		Total	
			Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
1	Age	Below 30 yrs (A)	32	12.80	53	21.20	85	17.00
		31 – 50 yrs (B)	176	70.40	147	58.80	323	64.60
		Above 50 yrs (C)	42	16.80	50	20.00	92	18.40
		Total	250	100.00	250	100.00	500	100.00
2	Sex	Male	112	44.80	156	62.40	278	55.60
		Female	138	55.20	94	37.60	222	44.40
		Total	250	100.00	250	100.00	500	100.00
3	Education	Below 10 th class (A)	12	4.80	17	6.80	29	5.80
		10 th To Degree (B)	151	60.40	137	54.80	288	57.60
		Above Degree (C)	87	34.80	84	33.60	171	34.20
		No Formal Education (D)	-	-	12	4.80	12	2.40
		Total	250	100.00	250	100.00	500	100.00
4	Nativity	Rural	118	47.20	121	48.40	239	47.80
		Urban	132	52.80	129	51.60	261	52.20
		Total	250	100.00	250	100.00	500	100.00
5	Profession	Govt. employee	82	32.80	73	29.20	155	31.00
		Private employee	29	11.60	31	12.40	60	12.00
		Business	118	47.20	121	48.40	239	47.80
		Others	21	8.40	25	10.00	46	9.20
		Total	250	100.00	250	100.00	500	100.00
6	Income (P.M)	Below Rs.25,000 (A)	42	16.80	22	8.80	64	12.80
		Rs.25,001 – Rs.50,000 (B)	112	44.80	122	48.80	234	46.80
		Rs.50,001 – Rs.1 Lakh (C)	53	21.20	67	26.80	120	24.00
		Above Rs.1 Lakh (D)	43	17.20	39	15.60	82	16.40
		Total	250	100.00	250	100.00	500	100.00

DISCUSSION AND INFERENCE

In the above table, age wise classification is explained under three heads. Class A- below 30 years, class B- 31-50 years and class C- above 50 years. Majority respondents in two hospitals fall under class B followed by C and A. It is observed that majority (nearly 60%) of the respondents are male. Educational background of the respondents in sample hospitals were furnished in 4 classes i.e. class A – below 10th class, class B- 10th to degree, class C- above degree and class D- no formal education. Majority of the respondents are in class B, followed by class A. Very low percentage of respondents is in class D. From the above table, it is observed that urban respondents are more than rural. It indicates that, the people residing in surroundings of the hospital are being attracted. In case of CARE, no much variation is found between rural and urban. From the information related to respondents' profession, it can be concluded that most of the patients in both the hospitals are from business followed by Govt. employee and private employee categories. When researchers probed into the income levels of the respondents, it is noticed that the majority respondents in APOLLO are belongs to class B i.e. income between Rs.25, 001 – Rs.50, 000 per month, followed by C-class, D-class and A-class. In CARE, the majority respondents belong to class-B i.e. between Rs.25, 001 – Rs.50, 000, followed by C-class, D-class and A-class.

To find the performance and user satisfaction in sample hospitals an attempt has been made to elicit the opinions from patients. The important areas covered include admission process, comfort levels, food facilities, Care facet taken by the concerned in the hospital, and discharge procedures. Now let us the survey results.

PERCEPTIONS OF PATIENTS TOWARDS THE ADMISSION PROCESS

The survey on admission process reveals the following facts. For statement, the hospital is providing admission within short time, among the 250 respondents in each hospital, the 50.20% of respondents strongly agreed in APOLLO and in CARE the percentage is only 39.60%. For the statement, the hospital is considering necessary documents before starting treatment, 60.8% in APOLLO and 70.4% in CARE have agreed. 46.20% of the respondents in both, the hospitals have opined they got admission in both the hospitals within a short time. In APOLLO, majority respondents mentioned that they got assistance while they have admitted. For the statement, recommendations are needed for getting admission in to the hospital 20% has strongly agreed in case of APOLLO and the percentage is only 10% as in CARE.

Mean and S.D values of patient’s perceptions towards admission process are presented below:

TABLE NO. 2: MEAN AND S.D OF PATIENTS PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ADMISSION PROCESS N=500 (250+250)

Sl.No	Statement	APOLLO		CARE	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	This hospital is providing admission with in short time.	1.50	0.50	1.80	0.87
2	The assistance to get admission in this hospital is good.	2.10	1.37	2.31	1.20
3	This hospital is following simple methods for collecting information from patients.	2.19	0.98	2.00	0.89
4	This hospital fee is nominal for admission.	2.00	0.89	2.48	1.19
5	This hospital conducting necessary tests before treatment.	2.38	1.27	2.48	1.11
6	This hospital charging extra fee for admission on holidays is reasonable.	2.30	1.27	2.69	1.09
7	The hospital admitted you as inpatient without any strong reason.	3.59	1.42	3.69	1.09
8	Recommendations are needed to get admission in this hospital.	4.50	0.50	4.20	0.87

5 Point Scale: 1-strongly agree.....5-strongly disagree

Discussion: The analysis on the perceptions of patients towards admission process of the APOLLO is as follows. ‘Providing admission with in short time’ (Mean=1.50), ‘assistance to get admission is good’ (2.10), ‘following simple methods for collecting information’ (2.19), ‘nominal fee for admission’ (2.00), ‘conducting necessary tests before treatment’ (2.38), ‘charging extra fees for admission on holidays is reasonable’ (2.30), ‘admitted as inpatient without strong reason’ (3.59), ‘recommendations are needed to get admission’ (4.50). In CARE the observations are as below: ‘providing admission with in short time’ (1.80), ‘assistance to get admission is good’ (2.31), ‘following simple methods for collecting information’ (2.00), ‘nominal fee for admission’ (2.48), ‘conducting necessary tests before treatment’ (2.48), ‘charging extra fees for admission on holidays is reasonable’ (2.69), ‘admitted as inpatient without strong reason’ (3.69), ‘recommendations are needed to get admission’ (4.20).

Inference: From the above discussion it can be said that the majority patients in APOLLO said that they got admission without any difficulty in short span of time but low percentage of patients accepting same in CARE. The assistance while getting admitted and way of collecting information from patients, two hospitals are following simplified methods. On collecting extra fees for admission in holidays, majority of the patients in CARE opined as not reasonable. It is noticed that the APOLLO is admitting the patients as inpatients without strong reason and majority opined that recommendations are playing big role in getting admission. In nut shell, it is observed that the patients of two hospitals are satisfied towards admission process.

Perceptions of Patients towards the Comfort facet: Survey was conducted on the facilities and amenities being provided by the hospital to the patients. The following responses have been observed. On the issue of ‘providing accommodation immediately’ 250 respondents participated in the survey from each hospital, out of which the majority of respondents (30.40%) have strongly agreed in APOLLO and the percentage is 20.00% in CARE. On viewing the comfort of rooms in the hospital 30.00% in APOLLO and 29.80% in CARE have strongly agreed and 40.40% have agreed in APOLLO where as 50.20% in CARE. Regarding the hospital maintenance, 30.00% have strongly agreed in APOLLO, and 29.80% in CARE. A portion of survey was aimed at to know ‘whether the hospital atmosphere is pleasant to stay’, 30.00% strongly agreed in APOLLO and 29.80% in CARE. In the case of Doctors and nurses visit at regular intervals 29.60% strongly agreed in APOLLO and 40.00% in CARE and 40.40% agreed, whereas in CARE 50.00% agreed. The opinion about length of waiting time reveals that about 80% of the respondents felt comfortable in APOLLO and nearly 80% expressed satisfaction in CARE.

TABLE NO. 3: MEAN AND S.D OF PATIENT’S PERCEPTIONS ON THE COMFORT FACET N: 500 (250+250)

Sl.No	Statement	APOLLO		CARE	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	This hospital is providing accommodation immediately.	2.80	1.54	2.10	0.83
2	The special room is better than a bed at general ward in this hospital.	1.80	0.87	2.58	1.27
3	The rooms in this hospital are comfortable.	2.30	1.27	2.00	0.89
4	This hospital is maintaining rooms in hygiene conditions.	2.30	1.27	2.00	0.89
5	This hospital atmosphere is pleasant to stay.	2.30	1.27	2.00	0.89
6	Doctors and nurses visit at regular intervals in this hospital.	2.20	1.08	1.80	0.87
7	Doctors attend immediately on emergency conditions.	2.50	1.36	2.20	1.25
8	No other disturbance at the hospital premises.	2.30	1.27	2.00	0.89
9	You are satisfied with hospital for allowing relatives and visitors at any time.	2.30	1.27	1.80	0.60
10	You are not satisfied with hospital for allowing relatives and visitors at fixed timings.	3.70	1.27	4.20	0.60
11	Expenses in the hospital are moderate.	3.30	1.48	3.09	0.94
12	The length of waiting time is comfortable in this hospital.	2.19	1.23	1.90	0.94
13	A bed at general ward is better than special room in this hospital.	4.19	0.87	3.41	1.27
14	Special rooms are reasonably priced in this hospital.	1.80	0.87	2.58	1.27
15	You are satisfied with centralized patient services department in this hospital.	2.10	1.30	2.00	0.89

5 Point Scale: 1-strongly agree.....5-strongly disagree

Discussion: The Analysis on the perceptions of the patients towards comfort facet of the APOLLO is as follows: ‘providing accommodation immediately’ (Mean=2.80), ‘special room is better than a bed at general ward’ (1.80), ‘rooms are comfortable’ (2.30), ‘maintaining rooms in hygiene conditions’ (2.30), ‘hospitals atmosphere is pleasant to stay’ (2.30), ‘doctors and nurses visit at regular intervals’ (2.20), ‘doctors attend immediately on emergency conditions’ (2.50), ‘no other disturbance at the hospital premises’ (2.30), ‘satisfaction for allowing relatives and visitors at any time’ (2.30), ‘expenses are moderate’ (3.30), ‘length of waiting time is comfortable’ (2.19), ‘bed at general ward is better than special room’ (4.19), ‘reasonable prices of special rooms’ (1.80), ‘satisfied with centralized patient services’ (2.10). In CARE the findings are as follows: ‘providing accommodation immediately’ (2.10), ‘special room is better than a bed at general ward’ (2.58), ‘rooms are comfortable’ (2.00), ‘maintaining rooms in hygiene conditions’ (2.00), ‘hospitals atmosphere is pleasant to stay’ (2.00), ‘doctors and nurses visit at regular intervals’ (1.80), ‘doctors attend immediately on emergency conditions’ (2.20), ‘no other disturbance at the hospital premises’ (2.00), ‘satisfaction for allowing relatives and visitors at any time’ (1.80), ‘expenses are moderate’ (3.09), ‘length of waiting time is comfortable’ (1.90), ‘bed at general ward is better than special room’ (3.41), ‘reasonable prices of special rooms’ (2.58), ‘satisfied with centralized patient services’ (2.00).

Inference: The opinion of patients about the comfort facet of two hospitals indicating that the more number of respondents in two hospitals as satisfied on the issues of comfort of rooms, maintaining hygiene conditions in rooms, maintenance of pleasant atmosphere. It is observed that the special rooms are better than general wards in APOLLO but not in CARE. In APOLLO, most of the respondents are feeling that the expenses are moderate, opined they that the prices of special rooms are reasonable. On the issue of waiting time, most of the respondents are feeling comfortable in CARE. On the whole, it can be said that two hospitals are giving importance to comfort facet.

Perceptions of Patients towards the Food Facilities: For the statement food facilities being provided in the hospital is hygienic Among 250 respondents involved in the survey, 51 respondents i.e. with 20.40% strongly agreed to the statement in APOLLO and 73 respondents with 29.20% in CARE and 99 respondents with 39.60% agreed in APOLLO and 124 respondents with 49.60% in CARE. As regards the 'food that is provided in the hospital will be helpful for better recovery' 20.40% have strongly agreed in APOLLO and in CARE 73 respondents with 29.20%. In continuation, the opinions were sought from various respondents regarding the 'food being supplied in time' 19.60% strongly agree in APOLLO where as in CARE, the percentage is 30.40% and 60.40% agreed in APOLLO and in CARE 49.60% agreed to the statement. With regard to the 'proximity of the hospital canteen' 59.20% strongly agreed and 19.60% agreed on this aspect in APOLLO and 39.20% and nearly 40% in CARE.

TABLE NO. 4: MEAN AND S.D OF PATIENT'S PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS FOOD FACILITIES N: 500 (250+250)

Sl.No	Statement	APOLLO		CARE	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	The food that is provided in the hospital is hygienic.	2.60	1.28	2.00	0.89
2	The food that is provided in this hospital is helpful for better recovery.	2.60	1.28	2.00	0.89
3	You will receive food on time.	1.69	1.00	2.20	1.25
4	The way of serving food to patients is good.	1.90	1.22	1.90	0.94
5	You are satisfied with the hospital for providing good canteen facilities for your visitors and relatives.	2.30	1.42	1.80	0.98
6	The dishes served in the canteen are good and tasty.	2.60	1.50	2.40	1.20
7	The canteen is with in the proximity of the hospital.	1.79	1.17	1.90	0.95

5 Point Scale: 1-strongly agree.....5-strongly disagree

Discussion: The perceptions of the patients towards food facilities in APOLLO are given below: 'hospital food is hygienic' (2.60), 'food is helpful for better recovery' (2.60), 'receive food on time' (1.69), 'way of serving food to patients is good' (1.90), 'satisfied with the hospital for providing good canteen facilities to visitors' (2.30), 'dishes served in the canteen are good and tasty' (2.60), 'canteen is within the proximity of the hospital' (1.79). When the above analysis examined, it can be concluded that the respondents is having good impression on the food facilities. In the case of CARE the observations are - 'hospital food is hygienic' (2.00), 'food is helpful for better recovery' (2.00), 'receive food on time' (2.20), 'way of serving food to patients is good' (1.90), 'satisfied with the hospital for providing good canteen facilities to visitors' (1.80), 'dishes served in the canteen are good and tasty' (2.40), 'canteen is within the proximity of the hospital' (1.90). So the respondents in CARE are positively reacted towards the food facilities.

Inference: From the above, it can be concluded that most of the respondents in CARE are accepting that the food providing at hospital is hygienic and useful for better recovery. In two hospitals more number of respondents are opined that the food is received on time. It is observed that the way of serving food in APOLLO is better than the CARE. In conclusion, one can say that though there are some problems in arranging food facilities to the patients, on the whole, two hospitals are satisfying the patients with the food facilities.

Perceptions of Patients on CARE facet: For the statement 'arrangements to call the nurses in the hospital is satisfactory' 20.4% have strongly agreed in APOLLO 30.4% in CARE and 59.60% agreed in APOLLO and 49.8% agreed in CARE. For the statement, 'telephone facilities are good in the hospital' 39.20% strongly agreed and 40.40% agreed in APOLLO where as in CARE 39.60% strongly agreed and 39.60% agreed. On the subject 'hospital personnel's are cheerful' the respondents expressed strong agreement with 49.20% in APOLLO 50.40% in CARE. For the statement, 'hospital doctors and nurses showing patience in listening to the patients problems', Out of 250 respondents involved in the survey, 97 respondents with 38.80% have strongly agreed in APOLLO, In CARE, equal number of respondents expressed their satisfaction. For the statement, 'hospital doctors giving suggestions at the time of discharge for taking proper CARE after discharge' 58.80% strongly agreed in APOLLO and 30.00% in CARE. About 'cleanliness of the hospital', 75 respondents with 30.00% strongly agreed and 39.60% agreed in APOLLO 29.60% and 50.40% in CARE. For the statement 'friendly nature of the doctors, nurses and other staff of the hospital', the survey reveals that 49.20% strongly agreed and 20.4% agreed in APOLLO and 126 respondents with 50.40% strongly agreed and 29.60% agreed in CARE.

TABLE NO. 5: MEAN AND S.D OF PATIENTS PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS CARE FACET N: 500 (250+250)

Sl.No	Statement	APOLLO		CARE	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	The arrangements to call the nurses in this hospital are good.	2.31	1.20	2.30	1.28
2	Telephone facilities are good in this hospital.	1.90	0.94	2.10	1.03
3	Services are provided for relaxation is good.	2.20	1.47	2.51	1.29
4	Facilities provided in this hospital for calling nurses and doctors in emergency conditions are good.	2.31	1.20	2.30	1.28
5	This hospital personnel are cheerful and hospitable.	2.10	1.37	1.80	0.98
6	Hospital personnel explain about treatment that the patients going to adopt.	2.40	1.43	1.59	0.91
7	This hospital provides updated information about progress of patient's health regularly.	2.00	0.89	2.11	1.31
8	You're satisfied with hospital management for pleasant stay arrangements.	2.30	1.27	2.00	0.89
9	No facilities in this hospital for calling nurses and doctors in emergency conditions.	3.69	1.19	3.69	1.28
10	This hospital doctors and nurses showing patience for listening your problems.	2.20	1.33	2.11	1.31
11	This hospital doctors giving suggestions at the time of discharge for taking proper CARE after discharge	1.69	1.00	2.00	0.89
12	You're comfortable when the tests are being conducted in this hospital.	2.19	1.46	2.39	1.36
13	Physical therapy is being provided for speedy recovery in this hospital.	2.68	1.10	2.39	0.91
14	This hospital employees demand illegal gratification tips.	4.30	0.47	4.11	1.12
15	You're satisfied the cleanliness of the hospital.	2.20	1.08	2.00	0.89
16	This hospital is conducting unnecessary tests as a part of treatment.	3.61	1.27	3.52	1.11
17	You're satisfied with friendly nature of the doctors/nurses and staff of this hospital.	2.10	1.37	1.80	0.98

5 Point Scale: 1-strongly agree.....5-strongly disagree

Discussion: The details of the perceptions of the patients in APOLLO about the Care Facet are furnished as under - 'arrangements to call the nurses is good' (2.31), 'telephone facilities are good' (1.90), 'services provided for relaxation is good' (2.20), 'facilities for calling nurses and doctors in emergency conditions are good' (2.31), 'hospital personnel are cheerful and hospitable' (2.10), 'hospital personnel explain about treatment that the patients going to adopt' (2.40), 'doctors giving suggestions at the time of discharge' (1.69), 'physical therapy is being provided for speedy recovery' (2.68), 'satisfied the cleanliness of the hospital' (2.20), 'satisfied with friendly nature of the doctors/nurses and staff' (2.10). In CARE the results are - 'arrangements to call the nurses is good' (2.30), 'telephone facilities are good' (2.10), 'services provided for relaxation is good' (2.51), 'facilities for calling nurses and doctors in emergency conditions are good' (2.30), 'hospital personnel are cheerful and hospitable' (1.80), 'hospital personnel explain about treatment that the patients going to adopt' (1.59), 'provides

updated information about progress of patient’s health regularly’ (2.11), ‘satisfied the cleanliness of the hospital’ (2.00), ‘satisfied with friendly nature of the doctors/nurses and staff’ (1.80).

Inference: The perception of patients about Care Facet reveals that the two hospitals are getting majority respondents’ acceptance on behavior of hospital personnel. In providing updated information about the progress of patient’s health, CARE is having better support than the APOLLO. Further it is noticed that in CARE, limited number of respondents are complained that the staff demanding illegal gratification tips. Most of the respondents in APOLLO and CARE are satisfied with arrangements made for pleasant stay. Very nominal percentage of respondents said that there are no facilities to call the nurses in emergency conditions. In two hospitals, patients are happy on the doctors’ behavior and their friendly nature. Limited number of patients in two hospitals opined that the hospital conducting unnecessary tests.

Perceptions of Patients about the functioning of Business Office: For the statement ‘finalization of billing process is easy in this hospital’, 40.00% are strongly agreed in APOLLO 20.40% expressed the same opinion in CARE and 30.00% agreed in APOLLO and 50.40% in CARE. About the ‘information regarding the expenditure by the hospital in advance’ 101 respondents with 40.40% are strongly agreed in APOLLO where as 149 respondents with 59.60% expressed the same opinion in CARE. 49 respondents with 19.60% agreed in APOLLO and 73 respondents with 29.20% in CARE. The analysis of statement ‘billing procedure is complicated in this hospital’ reveals that 9.20% has strongly agreed and 20.4% have agreed in APOLLO and in CARE 10.00% strongly agreed and 9.6% agreed. A meager percentage of 0.40% expressed neutral opinion in APOLLO, and 9.60% in CARE. For the statement ‘procedure for grievance handling in this hospital is good’ the statement receives various responses. Out of 97 respondents with 38.80% have strongly agreed in APOLLO and the same percentage is maintained in CARE. 76 respondents with 30.40% have agreed in APOLLO and 40.80% has agreed in CARE. On the subject ‘overall satisfaction with the performance of the hospital business office’, 150 respondents with 60.00% have strongly agreed in APOLLO and in CARE only 75 respondents with 30.00% strongly agreed and 19.20% expressed their agreement in APOLLO and in CARE 48.80% have agreed.

TABLE NO. 6: MEAN AND S.D OF PATIENT’S PERCEPTIONS ABOUT FUNCTIONING OF BUSINESS OFFICE N: 500 (250+250)

Sl.No	Statement	APOLLO		CARE	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	Finalization of bill easy process in this hospital.	2.31	1.43	2.40	1.20
2	This hospital gives information regarding expenditure in advance.	2.40	1.43	1.59	0.91
3	Billing procedure is complicated in this hospital.	3.68	1.43	3.60	1.20
4	The procedure for grievance handling in this hospital is good.	2.20	1.33	2.11	1.31
5	This hospital staff is cooperative.	1.70	0.47	1.88	1.12
6	You’re satisfied with the overall performance of this hospital business office.	1.59	0.80	2.20	1.25

5 Point Scale: 1-strongly agree.....5-strongly disagree

Discussion: Means of the perceptions of the patients about the functioning of business office of APOLLO are: ‘finalization of bill easy process’ (2.31), ‘hospital gives information regarding expenditure in advance’ (2.40), ‘billing procedure is complicated’ (3.68), ‘procedure for grievance handling is good’ (2.20), ‘hospital staff is cooperative’ (1.70), ‘satisfied overall performance of the hospital’ (1.59). In CARE ‘finalization of bill easy process’ (2.40), ‘hospital gives information regarding expenditure in advance’ (1.59), ‘billing procedure is complicated’ (3.60), ‘procedure for grievance handling is good’ (2.11), ‘hospital staff is cooperative’ (1.88), ‘satisfied overall performance of the hospital’ (2.20).

Inference: From the above discussion, it can be said that the majority of respondents in APOLLO are accepting that the billing procedure is easy. In CARE, high percentage of respondents accepting that the hospital authorities are giving information about the expenditure of treatment. It is observed that the two hospitals have good grievance procedures. In APOLLO limited number of respondents complaining that the hospital staff is not cooperative. In essence, majority of respondents in two hospitals satisfied with the functioning of business office.

Perceptions of the Patients towards the Discharge Procedures: For the statement ‘the discharge procedure is simple in the hospital’ the following are the responses. 101 respondents with 40.40% in APOLLO and 74 respondents with 29.60% have strongly agreed in CARE. For the statement ‘there are some hassles while discharging’, 25 respondents with 10.00% strongly agreed in APOLLO, whereas 26 respondents with 10.40% in CARE. 51 respondents agree with 20.40% in APOLLO and 49 respondents with 19.60% in CARE. The analysis of statement on the subject of ‘taking long time to get discharge after the doctor concerned’ shows that 25 respondents with 10.00% has strongly agreed in respect of APOLLO and in CARE also the same was appeared. 26 respondents with 10.40% have agreed in APOLLO and in CARE it was 20.00%. For the statement ‘you will suggest the hospital to others’ 98 respondents with 39.20% have strongly agreed and 39.20% agreed in APOLLO and 39.60% in CARE strongly agreed and 49.20% have agreed.

Mean and S.D values of patient’s perceptions towards discharge procedures are given below.

TABLE NO. 7: MEAN AND S.D OF DOCTOR’S PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS DISCHARGE PROCEDURES N: 500 (250+250)

Sl.No	Statement	APOLLO		CARE	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	Discharging procedure is simple in this hospital.	2.60	1.29	2.50	1.37
2	There are some hassles while discharging.	3.38	1.29	3.49	1.37
3	It takes long time to get discharge after the doctor concerned.	3.40	1.20	3.59	1.19
4	You will suggest this hospital to others.	1.80	0.74	1.71	0.66

5 Point Scale: 1-strongly agree.....5-strongly disagree

Discussion: The perceptions of the patients towards discharge procedures of the APOLLO reveals the following: ‘discharging procedure is simple’ (2.60), ‘there are some hassles while discharging’ (3.38), ‘takes long time to get discharge after the doctor concerned’ (3.40), ‘suggest the hospital to others’ (1.80). In CARE, ‘discharging procedure is simple’ (2.50), ‘there are some hassles while discharging’ (3.49), ‘takes long time to get discharge after the doctor concerned’ (3.59), ‘suggest the hospital to others’ (1.71).

Inference: It is observed that the respondents are satisfied with the discharge procedures of the sample hospitals. The majority of the patients accepting that they will suggest these hospitals to the needy. It is observed that the discharge procedures in APOLLO is simple. In two hospitals very limited number of respondents complained that there are some hassles while discharging and also taking long time to discharge. On the whole it can be understood that the two hospitals having simple discharge procedures.

Patients Perspective towards effectiveness of service Delivery: Statistical Treatments Analysis: The six dimensions (Admission process, Comfort facet, Food Facilities, Care facet, Functioning of Business Office, Discharge procedures) entire are positively opinioned in two sample hospitals. The mean scores are in the range of 2.21 to 2.79 and 2.02 to 2.82 in APOLLO and CARE respectively. On a 5 point scale indicating performance of the hospital in six dimensions of the sample hospitals is agreeable. From the values given in the table the perceptions of the patients towards admission process; comfort facet, food facilities, care aspects, functioning of business office and discharge procedures reveal that the patients are giving importance to all the aspects in getting the satisfaction.

TABLE NO. 8: GRAND MEAN AND S.D N= 500 (250 + 250)

Sl.No	Particulars	APOLLO		CARE	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	Admission process	2.57	0.50	2.70	0.42
2	Comfort facet	2.53	0.69	2.37	0.41
3	Food Facilities	2.21	0.76	2.02	0.64
4	CARE facet	2.48	0.61	2.39	0.49
5	Business Office performance	2.31	0.64	2.29	0.54
6	Discharge procedures	2.79	0.66	2.82	0.57

5 Point Scale: 1-strongly agree.....5-strongly disagree

The responses from the patients on the performance are collected under six heads of items (satisfaction influencing factors) namely Admission process, Comfort facet, Food Facilities, care facet, Performance of Business Office and Discharge Procedures. The average scores across the patients for the questions are analyzed with the help of one-way ANOVA to know the distinction in the response between the performance indicators.

In order to find whether the perceptions of the patients are indistinguishable, the null hypothesis is framed as-

“The perceptions of the patients are indistinguishable with respect to the performance indicators of APOLLO hospital”

TABLE NO. 9: ANOVA OF PATIENT’S PERCEPTIONS ON EFFECTIVENESS OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN APOLLO

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.182	5	.236	.450	.811
Within Groups	26.777	51	.525		
Total	27.960	56			

Above table representing the ANOVA of patients opinion on effectiveness of service delivery like Admission procedure, Comfort facet, Food Facilities, Care Facet, functioning of Business Office and Discharge procedures in APOLLO hospital showing the level of significance or risk probability is greater than the .05, so the null hypothesis is accepted.

In order to find whether the perceptions of the patients are indistinguishable, the null hypothesis is framed as-

“The perceptions of the patients are indistinguishable with respect to the performance indicators of CARE”.

TABLE NO. 10: ANOVA OF PATIENT’S PERCEPTIONS ON EFFECTIVENESS OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN CARE

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.509	5	.502	1.042	.403
Within Groups	24.553	51	.481		
Total	27.062	56			

Above table representing the ANOVA of patients opinion on effectiveness of service delivery like Admission procedure, Comfort facet, Food Facilities, care facet, functioning of Business Office and Discharge procedures in CARE showing the level of significance or risk probability is greater than the .05, the null hypothesis is accepted.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE USER SATISFACTION

Customers in hospital are different: Hospital should identify that there is a big difference in waiting on a customer in a hospital and in any other organization. In hospital, the consumer is a sick person. Hospital staff often gives the impression that they are unmindful of the fact that many of the persons with whom they come in contact in their work are ill and worried. Often sick people act unnaturally. In unfamiliar surroundings, many of them are confused, state, tense, frightened and anxious. At this moment, a friendly, helpful and caring attitude, a kind word of greeting will not only be reassuring to patients, but also it enhance the image of the hospital. The patient immediately trust the caring hands of hospital staff and assuredly feel that there is no need to be afraid. If he receives this warmth and welcome feeling all the way, the patient will become public relation agent in the society by his word of mouth.

Hospitals should not be out of Touch With Society: At present, society and the hospitals are out of touch with each other and are not communicating each other. Hospital managements should convert hospitals into consumer-oriented. In doing patient driven hospital, one should remember the following:

- Purpose of Hospital:** Hospitals are created with the purpose of serving the needs of people. Their mission is to help patients to get well and stay well. Patients are the hospital’s reason for their existence.
- Clean and Hygienic Hospital:** A clean and hygienic hospital has a tremendous psychological impact on the patients and visitors. For this good housekeeping department is to be maintained. It also acts as a powerful public relations and marketing tool which has a direct relationship with the reputation and prestige of the hospital.
- Food Services:** Patients judge the hospital by the personal care and attention given to them when they are hospitalized or when they visit the hospital, and by the quality of food provided to them. It is the responsibility of the hospital to provide to patients and staff scientifically prepared and nutritious food, diet is to be prepared by keeping condition of the patient one should keep in mind that every patient is unique by nature.
- Linen Service:** Hospital should supply clean linen sufficient for the comfort and safety of the patient. It helps in maintaining a clean environment which lends an aesthetic significance to the patient. It is a vital element in high quality medical care. The other aspect of it is the personal appearance of staff who attends on patients. Pleasant, neatly dressed employees in fresh, neat uniforms give best impression not only to the patient but also to visitors.
- Emphasis on Professionalism:** Professionalism in a job is a combination of skill and high standards. Work itself, attitude towards work, beaviour, appearance are the important ingredients of professionalism. Relations is greatly impaired if staff are undisciplined and patients and visitors find them giggling, gossiping, engaged in conversation while patients are waiting, or occupy themselves with reading newspapers, magazines or story books, leave their place of work or crowd in one place away from their place of work. Hospitals should concentrate on increasing the professionalism in every act of their staff.
- Guest Relations:** Unlike in the earlier days when hospitals were judged by the quality of medical services they provide, they are now judge on the quality of service they give, i.e. personalized service rendered by courteous, caring and friendly staff. In this direction, all the staff is to be given orientation and training. Frequently staff is to be equipped with soft skills.
- Patient Guide:** one of the good public relations exercise which every hospital should carry out is the preparation of a patient information book, called patients and visitors guide.

CONCLUSION

A critical challenge for health services in developing countries is to find ways to make them more client-oriented. Customers who are not satisfied often do not come back and they may not recommend to others. The long-term survival of hospitals depends on loyal patients who come back or recommend the hospital to

others. There are various factors which influence customer's expectations of services. They include efficiency, confidence, helpfulness, personal interest, reliability. These are intrinsic factors. They influence the response of the hospital staff to the patient and his relatives. The study focuses on comparing the health care services of corporate hospitals. The collected data is analysed by applying descriptive and inferential statistical techniques such as means, standard deviation. One way ANOVA tests, wherever applicable while testing the hypothesis that the perceptions of patients are indistinguishable with respect to the performance indicators. It is found from the hypothesis testing that, in APOLLO performance indicators like Admission process, Comfort facet, Food Facilities, care facet, functioning of Business Office and Discharge procedures are equally strongly agreeable in the opinion of patients. Similarly the performance indicators for CARE also do not differ significantly i.e. in the opinion of patients the performance of both hospitals is equally satisfactory and strong.

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