

Appraisal of Patient Satisfaction in Shija Hospital and Research Institute, Manipur, North-East India

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Abstract- Hospitals occupy such an important place in the modern world. The changing pattern of hospital will result in dominance of “consumers” as against “providers”. The successful hospital is one, which provides good patient care services. Patient care is not only curing and managing the patients’ disease, it is about caring patients through different functional areas such as nursing, food, and nutrition, patients’ safety, pharmacy etc. the hospitals are much like other organizations but it has some special features like individual care, emergency service and it cannot make many mistakes because it may cause life threatening conditions. Thus, it can be said that to satisfy patients and their attendants is highly significant in hospitals.

Index Terms- Hospital, patient satisfaction

I. INTRODUCTION

The modern age can be called as the “Age of Consumers” (Ghuman, n.d.). In today’s cutthroat competition the consumer is considered as the king. Many policies of various organisations are aimed at keeping the consumers happy and satisfied. It is very important for each and every organisation to keep its consumers satisfied in order to maintain its competitiveness in the market. Not only does this help the organisation to maintain the size of its share in the market, it might even help to increase the size of its share. It might also be instrumental in increasing the overall market size. This helps in increasing the overall profitability of the organisation. It also helps the long-term survival prospects of the organisation. Kotler, 2003 says that, “Consumers when viewed on the macro level exhibit similar traits. However, when we take a closer look and come down to the micro-level, we find that the consumers vary as compared to one another on one aspect or the other based on the variety of attributes”.(as cited in Ghuman, n.d.)

In the present business scenario of cutthroat competition, customer satisfaction has become a prime concern of each and every kind of industry.

Today’s healthcare market has become consumer-driven. Patients are better informed and know more about health and medical services. They have become cost-conscious and demand high quality care at reasonable price. With its stringent standards that must be maintained in today’s consumer-driven healthcare market, the focus is now on the employees of modern hospitals to provide satisfaction to the consumers.

As a result, hospitals and other healthcare organizations have been experimenting with a variety of workplace innovations

designed to assist them in recruiting and retaining high skilled employees, enhancing the delivery of care, and reducing workforce and operational costs.

A hospital is a crucial organisation and stands unique and comparable to any other organisation. It is unique and special because it deals with life and death of the patients. In a hospital, the demand now is for devoted doctors, prompt and accurate diagnostic facilities, quality nursing and a good support service (Ramanujan, 2009, pp 25).

According to American hospital Association, “A hospital is an establishment that provides, through an organised medical professional staff, permanent facilities that include inpatient beds, medical services and continuous nursing services, diagnosis and treatment for patients”.

Today, a hospital is a place for the definition and treatment of human ills and restoration of health and well-being of those temporarily deprived of these. A large number of professionally and technically skilled people apply their knowledge and skill with the help of complicated equipment and appliances to produce quality care for patient. The excellence of the product – the *raison d’être* for a hospital, therefore, depends on how well the human and material resources are applied to promote patient care.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Quality and satisfaction are intertwined in theory, practice, literature, etc. Probably, there is no opposite beliefs or views in this regard and thus these two areas got significant importance in research. Even different standards have been set to test the quality provided in product or services and to test the degree of customer satisfaction level as well.

Jha (2001) – The inventions and innovations in the field of medical sciences have considerably transformed the perception of quality expected by a large number of patients and attendants. The development of infotech and its transformation into knowledge technology has played a positive role in increasing and aggravating the levels of expectations.

Kotler (2003) – Satisfaction is a person’s feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product’s perceived performance or (outcome) in relation to his or her expectation.

Sardana (2003) – It is the satisfaction level only which propel patients to choose the same hospital next time and latter on transform patient satisfaction into patient loyalty.

Sardana (2003) – A number of dimensions have been suggested in literature that influence satisfaction vis-a-vis health

care quality and these include physician care, nursing care, supporting staff behaviour, convenient visiting hours, availability of emergency aid and food, room, characteristics and treatment. Sharma & Chahal (2004) – Overall doctors, nurses, management, facilities and cleanliness are the major factors which affect satisfaction.

Apte (2005) – A high quality hospital service comprises not only on the diagnosis, treatment and surgery, but also the nursing, the hospital environment including hygienic ward maintenance, the quality of food supplied to the patients and accompanying relatives and the uniforms and dresses.

Choi et al (2005) – Gender, education, age, income, profession are important factors for studying the perception of customers as health needs vary according to these factors and also because their intensity in moderating the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty.

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the meaning of patient satisfaction.
2. To highlight the factors satisfying the patients in SHRI.
3. To draw conclusions and give suggestions.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The primary data has been collected from 30 patients using structure non-disguised questionnaire. The patients were drawn using non-probability sampling design based on quota-cum-convenience sampling method. The collected data has been tabulated and analysed using simple percentage test.

V. PROFILE OF MANIPUR

The North East of India constitutes the seven 'sister' states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. North East India is mostly hilly; it has plains on both sides of the river Brahmaputra and the Himalayan range around it. The flora and fauna of this region is numerous and varied. The region accounts for 7.8% of the total land space of the country. The region is of strategic importance for the country on account of the fact that nearly 90% of its borders form India's international boundaries.

Manipur one of the seven sisters of north-east India, has a geographical area of 22, 327 sq.kms which constitutes 0.7 percent of the total land surface of India. Ninety percent of the total geographical area of the state i.e., 20,089sq.kms is covered by hills, and the remaining area is a small valley covering only 2,238sq.kms and accounting for only one-tenth of the total area of the state. The state of Manipur splits up naturally into two tracts viz. the hills and the dales. The hill comprises of five districts namely (i) Senapati; (ii) Tamenglong; (iii) Churachandpur; (iv) Chandel; and (v) Ukhru, while the valley consists of four districts viz. (i) Imphal East; (ii) Imphal West; (iii) Bishnupur; and (iv) Thoubal. According to 2011 census the total population of Manipur is 27,21,756, of which male and female are 13,69,764 and 13,51,992 resp.

Health care delivery in Manipur is mainly provided through the government, private practitioners and private industries.

VI. SHIJA HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE (SHRI)

Shija Hospital is an ISO 9001:2008 certified private health institute in Manipur providing advanced healthcare technology with humane touch. Recognised for holistic approach, personal touch and technological advancement, Shija Hospital has been successful, to a great extent, in bringing highly needed medical technology in the region. Shija Hospital located at environment friendly Langol, Imphal-West is 180 bedded, fully computerized having five modern operation theatres and 18 bedded fully functional ICU with all the latest life supporting equipments. The hospital currently has 460 trained and dedicated staff. Shija hospital is today a multi speciality healthcare institute which is working towards changing the healthcare landscape of South East Asia.

Who are Patients?

Hospitals sell performance and patients are their main customers. A patient is any person who received medical attention, care, or treatment by a physician or medical professional (Porkodi, 2010). Health consumer, health care consumer or clients are other names for patient, usually used by governmental agencies, insurance companies, and for patient groups.

Patient care is not only curing and managing the patients' disease but caring about their physical, mental and emotional self. Patient care also means guiding the patients through periods of great stress, which illness invariably brings.

Porkodi, 2010 says that, "total patient care is about empathetic listening, offering choices and above all, it means respecting the patients' choices and confidentiality, and attending patients' medical and non-medical needs and concerns".

Patients' Satisfaction:

When relating the hospital to the systems model of inputs and outputs, we observe that the inputs in a hospital are the patients, the staff, the regulators and the community which are primarily related to the human aspects. The outputs are again in the form of better health of the patients and the community.

Good patient care depends on the competency, attitude and human approach of the staff, whether he is a doctor or a nurse, a nursing assistant, ambulance assistant, a ward sweeper. Apart from the treatment given, it largely depends on their dedication, sympathetic attitude and an efficient and prompt service provided by all the departments of the hospital. Failure on the part of one or few unscrupulous persons from any department may mar the beneficial effect of best treatment given by most competent doctor as in this case; the output will be a highly dissatisfied patient.

The patient, his friends and relatives see the hospital and judge it not through the intricacies of the treatment

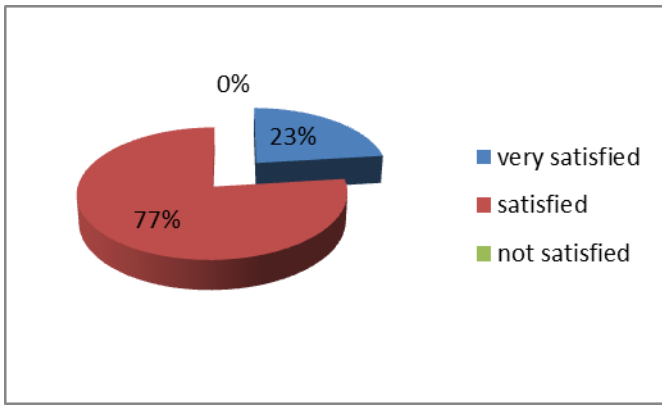


Figure 1 Physical Examination Conducted by the Physicians

being given or the elaborate investigations of the procedures done to the patient but through the sympathetic treatment of the

staff attending the patients, timely medicine, good palatable diet and clean surrounding. In the absence of these, the efficiency of the doctors alone cannot win the patient.

It is therefore essential that the patient present or potential gets the best possible attention from available resources and that these resources are organized and utilised within the framework of dynamic efficiency.

The experience of the patients with the hospital would reflect the satisfaction of the patients and the good service quality of the hospital. A satisfied customer not only becomes loyal to the hospital but also refers the hospital to his friends and relatives.

From the above figure 1 it is seen that majority i.e. 77 percent of the patients visiting the hospital are satisfied with the examination conducted by the doctor while only 23 percent are very satisfied with the doctors and 0 percent constitute not satisfied patients.

Table 1: PATIENTS' SATISFACTION LEVEL WITH THE GENERAL SERVICES OF THE HOSPITAL

Sl. No	Particulars	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
1	Direction to the hospital	-	33%	67%	-	-
2	Convenience of location	-	33%	33%	-	33%
3	Availability of parking space	33%	-	67%		
4	Proper sitting arrangement	-	67%	-	-	33%
5	Promptness of admission	-	67%	-	-	33%
6	General environment of the hospital	33%	-	67%	-	-
7	Maintenance of hospital	33%	-	33%	33%	-
8	Convenient office hour	-	33%	33%	33%	
9	Well-equipped units	33%	-	67%	-	-
10	Toilet facility	-	-	67%	33%	-
11	Canteen facility	33%	-	33%	33%	-
12	Cleanliness	-	33%	33%	33%	-
13	Security facility	-	-	33%	67%	-
14	Pharmacy	33%	-	67%	-	-
15	Availability of advance equipment	33%	-	67%	-	-

Primary source

The above table 1 studies the satisfaction level of patients on the general services of the hospital. It can be seen that the 33% patients feels that the direction to the hospital to be very good while 67% feels it to be only good. With regard to the general environment of the hospital 33% finds it excellent

however 67% of patients find it to be only good. 33% patients find the availability of well equipped units, advance equipments and pharmacy to be excellent however 67% finds it to be only good.

Table 2: PATIENTS' SATISFACTION LEVEL WITH THE SERVICES OF THE HOSPITAL STAFF

Sl. No	Particulars	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
1	Easy access to specialists	67%	-	33%	-	-
2	Waiting time for consultation	-	67%	-	33%	-
3	Explanation of procedure	100%	-	-	-	-
4	Information of medication	-	67%	-	33%	-
5	Response to nurse call	33%	33%	-	33%	-
6	Helpfulness of the staff	33%	33%	-	33%	-

Primary source

The above table 2 studies the satisfaction level of the patients with the services of the staffs. It can be seen that 100% patients feels that the explanation of procedure to be excellent. In respect to easy accessibility to specialist 67% finds it to be excellent while 33% finds the service to be only good. With regard to waiting time and information of medication 67% patients find the services to be very good while only 33% finds it to be fair. The percentage of patients is equally distributed between excellent, very good and fair for response to nurse call and helpfulness of the staff.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

The study reveals that the main factors for majority of the patients choosing the hospital are the performance of the hospital and the availability of specialists' services. It is also observed in the study that though the patients consider the prices of the hospital to be high, they are more concerned about good treatment and quality services. And they are inclined to recommend the hospital to their friends and relatives.

Today's market has become customer driven and healthcare market is no exception. Patients are better informed and they know more about healthcare services. They want to be involved in the medical care process. For this reason they make their own decisions. They shop and select the best hospital. They choose their doctor or change him or her if they are not satisfied. The customers desire to try the newness of the alternative because some of them had a better location, offer wide range of services and had newer infrastructure in place. Consumer research has shown that patients have several alternatives available to them in the selection of the hospital. Here are some suggestive measures to improve patient satisfaction in hospital and thereby attracting and retaining more patients.

1. The hospital should strive to improve their medical, paramedical and administrative staff performance by imparting them need-based training.
2. It should establish continuous dialogue with their patients.
3. It should set up the patients' feedback mechanism.
4. It should organize mass contact programmes.
5. It should introduce peak time efficiency routine.

6. It should arrange for complementary customers' services.
7. The medical, paramedical and administrative staff should work as a team towards total patient satisfaction.
8. Focus should be on the patients' needs so as to add value and offer benefits to the patients.

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