A Study on Relationship of Patient Satisfaction with the Services Provided by Corporate Hospitals

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INTRODUCTION

Earlier, hospitium was the concept of hospitality as a divine right of the guest and a divine duty of the host. The term ‘Hospital’ is derived from the word Hospitium and the meaning of the term ‘Hospital’ has been changed tremendously, especially in deriving the satisfaction levels of the patients in modern times. Broadly defined, the purpose of the hospital is to apply appropriate health technologies and care services to meet the health needs of the population. Intervening between the hospital and the community it serves in an economic and political environment that is having an increasing impact on hospital services. The social environment, such as community attitudes, is not only important, but also simplifies the model. Now a day’s hospital is considered as a patient-focused center instead of provider-focused centers. Hospital management, therefore, is responsible for the effective and efficient delivery of such services in keeping with the constraints and opportunities of the social, economic and political environment.

In service economy, customers are more critical and keen towards quality services and demand higher standards. In this changed environment, a patient becomes the focal point to all the parties. Patients, the only reason for hospital’s existence, need services which are reasonably accessible and readily available at all times. Patients especially in long stay need someone who will listen when they want to talk. The hospital is an organization which must strive for maximum patient satisfaction and has to provide patient oriented service.

As mentioned earlier the primary function of a hospital is patient care. The patient is the ultimate consumer to the hospital. Hence, patient satisfaction should be the main goal of a hospital. It is one of the yardsticks to measure the success of service that it produces. The effectiveness of the hospital relates to provision of good patient care as intended. The patient satisfaction is the real testimony to the efficiency of hospital performance.

Satisfaction augments the patient confidence to face the problems of diseases. In this context, it becomes imperative to know which parameters may increase the patient satisfaction. As the hospital serves all the members of the society, the expectations of the users differ from one individual to another, because everyone carries a particular set of thoughts, feelings and needs.

Review of Literature

Several studies undertaken on patient satisfaction, some studies probed patient satisfaction and attitudes toward the physical environment.

Kelly and Hurst in Health Care Quality Indicators Project Conceptual Framework Paper states that, one such method that is accepted globally is given by Donabedian which describes indicator as being structure, process or outcome in nature (Donabedian, 2003; Donabedian,1980).

Structure indicators are based on healthcare system that constitutes of doctors and paramedic
staff, training, equipment collectively. The health care system and the individuals in society and their interaction constitute Structure (Van Driel et al., 2005).

Process indicators of quality refer to the things done to and for the patient by practitioners in the course of treatment. Process relates to interaction between the patient and health care provider (Van Driel et al., 2005).

Patient Satisfaction is the actual measure of clinical services that are being offered. The main interaction between Health Care System and Patients is measured by selecting following Key Process Indicators (Kelly et al., 2006)

Thompson (1962) studied on patient satisfaction with 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.

Huseby (1969) studied on the patient satisfaction concerning hospital accommodation, focusing on the design of patient units.

Evans (1960) conducted an investigation in ten tuberculosis hospitals to study the relationships among ward stratification, patient alienation, and patient response to the hospital situation.

Blum (1962) studied about some of the factors in the hospital settings associated with extreme patient dissatisfaction.

S. 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 variables found to be related to patient satisfaction and staff satisfaction with hospital clinic services.

From the above discussion it can be said that the patient satisfaction is a matter of high fluid and difficult to assess how and when the patients get satisfied by the services of the hospitals in the changed scenario.

Need for the Study

After a thorough review of literature, it is found that the patient satisfaction plays a vital role in the growth of corporate hospitals, despite hectic marketing strategies. It is envisaged that the patient satisfaction is based on the Doctors care, nursing personnel concern and later the amenities provided by the health care institutions. Hence, the researcher felt the need of taking up a study on patient satisfaction regarding various services being offered by two select reputed corporate hospitals.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
1. To find the satisfaction levels of the patients of select corporate hospitals regarding the services provided
2. To measure the relationship of satisfaction and the services of the two select corporate hospitals.

Concept of Satisfaction

Satisfaction results from customers’ good experiences. According to (Westbrook 1981), satisfaction is a state of recognition to feel appropriate or inappropriate experience for the sacrifice adequately or an emotional response which is not only affected by the whole market, but also affected by products’ characteristics, service, and seller when shopping or doing similar behavior. Oliver (1997) discusses satisfaction as al psychological state which is about the expectation for feelings and experience from shopping behavior.

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 forms certain expectations may be about the nature and performance of service,
the costs and efforts to be incurred before obtaining the service benefits, the social benefits or costs accruing to the consumer as a result of the purchase. Once patients come to the hospital and experience the facilities, they may become either satisfied or dissatisfied.

**Marketing and Patient Satisfaction**

The successful marketing starts with a clear understanding of the organization’s marketing mix. Marketing mix is the blending of the four elements of marketing namely, product or services planning, pricing, distribution and promotion to satisfy the needs of the chosen consumer segments. The product must ultimately achieve satisfaction of the wants and needs of the identified groups or consumers. Promotion consists of various promotional tools such as advertising, publicity, public relations and word-of-mouth aimed at promoting goods and services move from the producer to the ultimate consumers. The successful distribution is one, which involves reaching the right goods or services, at the right place, at the right time and at the minimum cost.

The choice of ingredients that a hospital combine to offer a service that would satisfy the needs or wants of a patient is referred to as the marketing mix of hospital services. In hospital patient is the centre of the marketing mix, and his satisfaction is of paramount importance. In marketing, a service or a concept, there is an exchange relationship. Something is transferred away and a price is paid in return. If the patient is satisfied he comes back to purchase the service again, and a satisfied patient refer others, because word of mouth advertising is more effective than formal marketing program.

The ingredients of marketing mix are in hospitals service/product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence and process.

What service is hospital offering to patients? Is they meeting consumer needs?
What price the services offering to the patients? Is it affordable to patients?
How the hospital is promoting or communicating information regarding services to patients? Is it reaching target segments?
How the hospital is making the service available to the patients i.e. what is the time and place convenience of the service to patients?
By whom the services are delivering to the patients? Is they receiving and treating the patients well?
How the hospital physically exhibiting the services to the patients i.e. at what physical environment the services are delivering to the patients?
How the hospital is organizing the interactions process between the service provider and patient i.e. what is the process involved facilitating efficient participation in service production and consumption?

The solution for questions has the direct influence on patient satisfaction levels.

In hospital services marketing the most important element is the patient who utilizes the services. He is the center of the total package. In point of fact, the starting place for effective marketing is the consumer. In other words, the emphasis in marketing is not centered on things. It is largely concerned with people and their wants. Successful marketing in hospitals concentrates on value for their services that satisfy the consumers. Marketing will not succeed if it does not bring about consumer (patient) satisfaction and keep the smile on his face.

**Methodology**

**Secondary Data:** The data pertaining to the two corporate hospitals is obtained from sources such as Journals, Brochures, Records and Internet etc..

**Primary Data:** The data related to patient satisfaction and the services being provided to the customers (patients) is collected through a structured questionnaire.
Sample Design: Sampling Technique ;Probability Sampling (Exit sampling)
Sample Size: 430
Population :2200
Sampling Units : In patients of Apollo Hospital & Yashoda Hospital
( Apollo : 210 ; Yashoda : 220)

Limitations of the study

1. The study is only confined to in-patients and hence the word ‘patient’ is referred to ‘inpatient’ only.
2. The researcher has adopted the exit sampling method; hence there is a chance of getting biased statements, because the service is subjective. (viz., the opinion may be inconsistent, very often)
3. Analysis is done based on hypotheses, while making comparison of patient satisfaction of select hospitals.
4. Though the sample size is appropriate, it may not resemble the highest accuracy.

Scale: 5- Completely Satisfactory 4 – Somewhat satisfactory 3- Neutral 2- Somewhat dissatisfactory 1- Completely dissatisfactory

Table: 1 (APOLLO HOSPITAL; N=210)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reception services</td>
<td>4.1619</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Admission services</td>
<td>3.8429</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Emergency services</td>
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<td>0.9973</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Diagnostic services</td>
<td>3.7381</td>
<td>1.0109</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Doctor services</td>
<td>3.7905</td>
<td>1.1604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>House surgeons /other doctors services</td>
<td>3.6429</td>
<td>1.0959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nursing staff services</td>
<td>3.7381</td>
<td>1.0062</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Services of ward boys</td>
<td>3.5238</td>
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<td>Hygiene and sanitation</td>
<td>3.6619</td>
<td>1.0578</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Ward /room accommodation comfort</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Food and drinks services</td>
<td>3.6905</td>
<td>1.0068</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Dispensary services</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Equipment for treatment</td>
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<td>Privacy in treatment (examination etc)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Protection of my dignity (care, concern and respect)</td>
<td>3.7000</td>
<td>1.1794</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretations from TABLE 1 (APOLLO HOSPITALS):
1. It is found that majority of the respondents felt highly satisfied regarding the Reception services of Apollo Hospitals.
2. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the Admission services of Apollo Hospitals.
3. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the Emergency services of Apollo Hospitals.
4. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the Diagnostic services of Apollo Hospitals.
5. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the Doctor services of Apollo Hospitals.
6. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding House surgeons/other doctors services of Apollo Hospitals
7. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the Nursing staff services of Apollo Hospitals
8. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the ward boys services of Apollo Hospitals
9. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the hygiene and sanitation services of Apollo Hospitals
10. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the ward room accommodation services of Apollo Hospitals
11. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the food & drinks services of Apollo Hospitals
12. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the dispensary services of Apollo Hospitals
13. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the billing services of Apollo Hospitals
14. It is found that majority of the respondents felt highly satisfied regarding the services related to discharge and leaving of Apollo Hospitals
15. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the services of equipment for treatment in Apollo Hospitals
16. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the services of privacy in treatment of Apollo Hospitals
17. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the services of protection of dignity (care, concern and respect) in Apollo Hospitals

Table 2: (YASHODA HOSPITAL; N=220)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Statements</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Admission services</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Emergency services</td>
<td>3.9682</td>
<td>0.9834</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Diagnostic services</td>
<td>3.7409</td>
<td>0.9729</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Doctor services</td>
<td>3.8409</td>
<td>1.1108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>House surgeons /other doctors services</td>
<td>3.6227</td>
<td>1.0738</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Nursing staff services</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Services of ward boys</td>
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<td>0.9833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Hygiene and sanitation</td>
<td>3.7227</td>
<td>0.9865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ward /room accommodation comfort</td>
<td>3.6682</td>
<td>0.8654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Food and drinks services</td>
<td>3.6636</td>
<td>1.0294</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Dispensary services</td>
<td>3.7955</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Billing services</td>
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<td>1.0487</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Services relating to discharge and leaving</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Equipment for treatment</td>
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<td>1.0027</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Privacy in treatment (examination etc)</td>
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<td>1.1374</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Protection of my dignity (care, concern and respect)</td>
<td>3.7591</td>
<td>1.1643</td>
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</table>

INTERPRETATIONS FROM TABLE2 (YASHODA HOSPITAL):
1. It is found that majority of the respondents felt highly satisfied regarding the Reception services of Yashoda Hospitals.
2. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the Admission services of Yashoda Hospitals.
3. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the Emergency services of Yashoda Hospitals
4. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the Diagnostic services of Yashoda Hospitals
5. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the Doctor services of Yashoda Hospitals
6. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding House surgeons/other doctors services of Yashoda Hospitals
7. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the Nursing staff services of Yashoda Hospitals
8. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the ward boys services of Yashoda Hospitals
9. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the hygiene and sanitation services of Yashoda Hospitals
10. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the ward room accommodation services of Yashoda Hospitals
11. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the food & drinks services of Yashoda Hospitals
12. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the dispensary services of Yashoda Hospitals
13. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the billing services of Yashoda Hospitals
14. It is found that majority of the respondents felt highly satisfied regarding the services related to discharge and leaving of Yashoda Hospitals
15. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the services of equipment for treatment in Yashoda Hospitals
16. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the services of privacy in treatment of Yashoda Hospitals
17. It is found that majority of the respondents felt satisfied regarding the services of protection of dignity (care, concern and respect) in Yashoda Hospitals

Table 3: Comparison of Patient Satisfaction towards the services of select Corporate Hospitals

<table>
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<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Statements</th>
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<th>S2²</th>
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<td>Reception services</td>
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<td>Emergency services</td>
<td>0.9994</td>
<td>0.9716</td>
<td>1.0287</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Diagnostic services</td>
<td>1.0268</td>
<td>0.9508</td>
<td>1.0799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Doctor services</td>
<td>1.3530</td>
<td>1.2394</td>
<td>1.0917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>House surgeons /other doctors services</td>
<td>1.2068</td>
<td>1.1584</td>
<td>1.0418</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nursing staff services</td>
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<td>1.0572</td>
<td>0.9622</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Services of ward boys</td>
<td>0.9970</td>
<td>0.9713</td>
<td>1.0265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Hygiene and sanitation</td>
<td>1.1244</td>
<td>0.9776</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ward /room accommodation comfort</td>
<td>0.8823</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Food and drinks services</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Billing services</td>
<td>1.2149</td>
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<td>1.0998</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Services relating to discharge and leaving</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Equipment for treatment</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Protection of my dignity ( care, concern and respect)</td>
<td>1.3976</td>
<td>1.3618</td>
<td>1.0263</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTERPRETATIONS

1. There is no significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Reception services.
2. There is a significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Admission services.
3. There is significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Emergency services.
4. There is a significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Diagnostic services.
5. There is a significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Doctors services.
6. There is a significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the House surgeons/other doctor services.
7. There is no significant difference of the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Nursing staff services.
8. There is a significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the services of ward boys.
9. There is a significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Hygiene and sanitation services.
10. There is a significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the ward room/accommodation comforts services.
11. There is no significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Food & drinks services.
12. There is a significant difference in the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Dispensary services.
13. There is a significant difference of the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Billing services.
14. There is no significant difference of the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the Services relating to discharge and leaving.
15. There is a significant difference of the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the equipment of treatment services.
16. There is no significant difference of the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the services of providing privacy in treatment.
17. There is a significant difference of the patient satisfaction of the two corporate hospitals regarding the protection of dignity (care, concern and respect).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. It is found that the majority of the respondents of both the select corporate hospitals felt either highly satisfied or satisfied and only a negligible percentage of the patients observed to be dissatisfied over the services provided to them.
2. It is evident that there is no significant difference in patient satisfaction levels regarding the services of Reception, Nursing staff, Food & drinks, discharge & leaving, and providing privacy in treatment.
3. It is found that there is a significant difference in patient satisfaction regarding the services of Admission, Emergency, Diagnostic, Doctors, House surgeons/other doctors, ward boys, Hygiene & sanitation, ward room/accommodation comforts, Dispensary, Billing, Equipment of treatment, protection of dignity etc.,

Suggestions in Brief:

1. To overcome the differences on a whole of the corporate hospitals, it is suggested that the admission process, diagnostic services, billing services should be expedited, so that the patients get higher satisfaction levels.
2. More care should be emphasized in providing the services like emergency, hygiene & sanitation, ward boys, comforts in rooms, protection of dignity etc.,

3. Doctors and para medical staff ought to be further maintained good intimacy with the patients and provide a feel of guarantee over their problems, so that the patients can get rid of their severe ailments also.

4. It would be better to adopt Yoga practices for the staff members (both medical & para medical) for enhancing concern towards the patients and also for their self restraint from the emotions, which in turn enable for deriving more satisfaction of the patients.

Conclusion

The study is taken for finding out the patient satisfaction regarding various services offered by the corporate hospitals and the differences if any exist in the select hospitals. The researcher found that almost all the services are similar, except a few which caused for lower degrees of satisfaction, but not the dissatisfaction. It could be better to furnish that the patients satisfaction in both the hospitals is high and moderate and only a negligible stands for dissatisfaction. Hence, the researcher would like to conclude with a positive sense of hope that the satisfaction levels of the patients geared up with the services of the corporate hospitals.

References

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16. Dean E. Farley and Christopher Hogan (1990), Case Mix Specialization in the Market for Hospital Services’, Health services research: Vol.25; Dec-1990; p757-783.


