

COMPARISON AND STUDY OF VARIOUS REVIEWS AND ARTICLES ON THE QUALITY OF SERVICE IN HOSPITALS

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Abstract

To survive and thrive in the hypercompetitive market today, quality has become the differentiating factor. In industry segments like health care, where the customer's involvement is high, it becomes the most dominating factor while making choices to avail any products or services. As the hospitals provide hope and relief to the distress people and helps in maintaining a healthy human capital, it always requires special attention by the key stakeholders. In India, provision of healthcare is the primary duty of the public sectors, supported by the private players in the recent times. But when it comes to the provision of affordable yet quality services to the people, somehow we are lagging far behind the developed nations. With more than a billion people, dynamic industry leaders, whole hearted support from the governments, infrastructures and comparatively stable economy, we have all the ingredients for success but it's a pity that many disheartening stories of healthcare failures are erupting day by day, pointing towards a paradoxical state. In this regard, we have tried to develop a framework for capturing the exact state of quality in healthcare services in the state of Odisha. A thorough review of various research works was conducted in this regard to find out the research gaps prevailing in the area. We have taken the reference of those studies done after the year 2000 to make the discussion more contemporary in nature. The attempt revealed some areas where further research can be carried on in order to make holistic improvements in healthcare sectors.

Keywords: *Healthcare, affordable, quality*

Introduction

To win the race of hares, one has to become a leopard. In this hypercompetitive era, we need to provide more than the basic amenities to customers in order to gain maximum share in the lucrative pie. After globalization, when the physical, financial and mental barriers are getting diminished between the countries, culture, and societies, we need to be competent enough to give all the global players a tough fight. In this regard, the concepts of high quality, customer satisfaction, relationship marketing, and competitive advantage come into play.

In the recent years, the hospital sector has become one of the fastest growing industries. As per National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) the current Indian health care market is worth around 100 billion US \$ and it will see a major growth in the coming years to get around 280 billion US \$ by 2020 at the Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 22.9 percent.

As the sector become lucrative, nos. of players are entering into the scene. Some of the significant factors that have contributed to the growth of health care industry in India can be listed as rising income levels, ageing population, growing health awareness, changing attitude towards preventive healthcare, availability of medical facilities, rise of the local insurance sector, least waiting periods for the international patients, easier visa formalities, emergence of private players, favourable investment opportunities provided by the Government, tax benefits etc. has established many growth prospects. Thus the health care sector has become a sunshine industry where the generation of revenue and creation of jobs have ample opportunities. The International Health care Research Centre and Global Healthcare Resources published the world medical tourism index in 2016, ranked India in position no 5 which covered almost 176 countries in the World which points towards a bright future ahead for the health care sector in the health tourism map of the world.

But we need to remember here that, being in the top 10 doesn't guarantee about the eternal position in the market. To survive and thrive in this volatile marketplace, we cannot always depend upon the conventional ways to manage and grow the business. We need to invent different innovative measures to effectively cater to the customers to gain advantage and sustain it over a period of time. The taste and preference of

customers have transformed greatly in the recent past with the change in market economies. In a country like India, the change from the centrally controlled economy, to open market happened during the 90s that made the customers more demanding over the years. As the nos. of competitors increased, the tolerance levels of the customers have decreased significantly. This change has also affected the emergency sector such as hospital business for which nowadays, we need to keep vigil in the market to observe and adopt any innovative way of customer service that will make us different than the others. Similarly, if we go through the recent news articles published in various electronic and print medias, many heart breaking news of infant / maternal mortalities, outbreak of deadly diseases like Plague, Dengue, Malaria, Chikungunya, Japanese encephalitis, social taboos, manhandling issues between doctors, medical staffs with the patients and their relatives, poor health care infrastructures etc. which points towards a very gloomy side of the story.

The paradoxical side is that, at one end we are anticipating to march ahead towards a bright future by attracting both fellow countrymen and outsiders where as at the other end we are increasingly getting failed in providing qualitative yet affordable healthcare provisions to the common men. The challenge is to provide healthcare facilities to more than a billion people where the basic and secondary healthcare scenario appears to be in a darker state. The major concern for any healthcare provider is to generate patient satisfaction which can only be achieved through quality that includes the technical and functional aspects. Technical quality is defined as the aptitude related knowhow (What is given?) and functional quality is the process of service delivery (How it is given?) (Gronroos, 1984; Andaleeb, 1998; Yousapronpaiboon & Johnson, 2013). Normally, the customers (Patients) are not well versed with the technical part of the healthcare services as that requires high levels of theoretical and practical knowledge but they always look towards the process of service delivery as they become the central part of it. Therefore the process of service delivery has to be optimized in order to make the gap between expectations and perceptions narrower (Bajpai, 2014). Due to globalization and related consumerism, service quality has become the critical success factors for the healthcare service providers as the patients' characteristics

have evolved over the years and now a days they don't take things for granted (Ramsaran & Roshnee, 2008). Thus, providing quality of highest standards and achievement of patient satisfaction are the foremost and decisive strategies for success in long run and achievement of profitability (Gilbert, Lumpkin, & Dant, 1992).

Problem Statement: When the discussion is on for health and wellness, India always comes to the centre stage with its 5000 years old civilization, knowledge about ancient medicine and other alternative health care forms like yoga and ayurveda. If we follow the Upanishads written thousands of years back, there is a verse "Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Niraamayaah, Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantu, MaaKashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet" which can be depicted as an desired phase to provide health, wellness and thereby happiness to all people of the world.

But unfortunately, after so many years and after many innovations, practices and hard works, we are still not reached to a position to offer the desired state of health services to the people. In India, especially after the Independence, things related to qualitative and affordable healthcare have taken the central attention and we have travelled northwards in terms of providing the basic and advance healthcare services. If we go through various literatures available in recent terms many fancy terms like Aadhaar integration, advance prediction of an outbreak, auto sutures, big data analytics, e-health, EHRs, EMRs, medical visas, m-health, promoting generic drugs, remote surgeries, robotic operations, use of ICT in healthcare, virtual clinics etc. comes to our attention which provides us the feel of progress at one hand. But the ground reality is that we are still not able to provide a decent quality of primary and secondary care to majority of Indians. In a country like India, we have many hospitals that belong to Government, Semi Government, Private, Corporate, and Trust owned structures. But more or less many common problems such as absence of proactive planning, absence of professional approaches, corrupt practices, dismal levels of coordination, exodus of highly trained employees, faculty practices in staffing & HR policies, higher rates of treatments, inadequate & unsatisfactory supply of medical supplies & drugs, inadequate growth prospective, inefficient public relation activities, irrational uses of drugs, irregular audits, minimal use of specialized people, naive uses

technology in health care & information systems, pathetic sanitary conditions, poor levels of quality control activities, substandard medical facilities as well as lack of continuing medical education, unproductive leadership, unrelated grouping of activities, unwanted political interferences etc. are prevailing across the different hospital types which provides the other and more darker side of the coin. (Gandy, 2005; Sathyamala, et al., 2005; Nandan, et al., 2007; Bhola, et al., 2008; John, et al., 2008; Kaushik et al., 2008; Rao, et al., 2009; Marriot, 2009; Yadav, et al., 2009; Baru, et al., 2010; Bajpai & Saraya, 2010; WHO, 2010; Rao, et al., 2011; HLEG, 2011; Muralidharan, et al, 2011; Jha, 2012; ACHR, 2011; Reddy, 2012; Bajpai, 2014;).

As the patient's characteristics have changed over the years, we need to transform the hospital sector from technical / knowledge centric to patient centric in order to serve the customers in a profitable manner (Ramsaran & Roshnee, 2008). Thus, providing quality of highest standards and achievement of patient satisfaction are the foremost and decisive strategies for success in long run and achievement of profitability (Gilbert, Lumpkin, & Dant, 1992). Therefore, the concept of customer satisfaction holds paramount level of importance for the hospitals. To enhance the customer satisfaction we need to reduce the gap between their expectations and perceptions and thereby generating more quality through our service offerings. More research and studies are required in this regard to explore the ground realities and provide a comprehensive picture of the whole scenario.

The idea is to understand the ground realities and build measures as suggested by the customers so that the dream of making a healthy and disease free society can become a reality.

Need for Research: In these globalized era, when the global health care sector is growing leaps and bounds. But the biggest challenge is to measure the service quality and built upon the loopholes in order to offer a consistent level of quality over a period of time. As in the healthcare industry, perceptions of the patients are the most important dimensions generating their satisfaction levels; it can mould their decisions towards availing services from any particular entity.

Recent Efforts (Review of Literatures): To understand the service quality and its various attributes and parameters, we have done rigorous review of various literatures available on internet.

To make the study more contemporary, we have taken only those studies conducted after the year 2000. (Detailed list given in Table no. 2 described below). During the preliminary stage, around 358 articles were shortlisted and reviewed which had any relevance to the topic of service quality in hospitals or healthcare. After conducting a detailed content analysis, 109 articles were shortlisted depending upon their relevancy.

Gaps found in the recent research activities: If we go through the above mentioned literatures, we can find some missing links which can be explained as follows. Since the end of the world wars, the concept of globalization has emerged and resulted in rapid developments throughout the world. Due to this, the concept of service quality has become very popular in the last 50 years. Over the years, many academicians and researchers have tried to measure the gap between the existing state and desired state, but still we need to go much ahead to achieve completeness in this field.

- If we culture the various literatures available, we can find that the perception levels of the customers greatly varies as per their genders, age, education levels, personal needs, social status, area / localities, and many others. Therefore, the gaps between the expectation and perception levels have to be tested in various social settings to find out the prevailing problems.
- In the studies conducted over the last decades, majorly the private sector hospitals have been emerged as the better hospitals in terms of providing quality healthcare. But some studies are there, where people have shown preferences towards the public hospitals in terms of quality, affordability and experienced doctors. Therefore it is required to get our views towards the entities of the public Vs private sectors and study the feedbacks of people towards them.
- Many other studies were found to provide dismal state of health care in many areas where neither the private nor public entities are providing quality as perceived by the patients. Therefore, this field requires more in-depth studies to provide any further statements.
- In developing countries like India, some studies have been conducted in order to find the relationship between service quality, patient satisfaction and behavioural intentions which are the cornerstones of success and that needs

to be explored further. Also the concept of service quality and its effect on customer satisfaction needs to be tested across various states, various social settings and especially the tier II and III cities which are fast emerging as the smart cities with promising future.

- As all people are different from each others, so as their tastes and preferences. In this line, studies conducted in the middle-eastern or asia-pacific region or any other places should not be generalized in Indian context or specifically in Odisha context. The uniqueness of services also plays an important role here.
- In a sizeable but backward state like Odisha, hardly any studies have been conducted to map the service quality which can be explored effectively.
- Last but not the least, we can say that, be it a private or public entity, the general quality of any should be improved to match with the requirements of people as they provide healthy human capital to a healthy society. Therefore we need to find out the expectations of the patients as well as know their feedbacks in this regard.

The ultimate goal is to obtain the state of nirvana through happiness, healthiness and goodness. Therefore, it's a high time for all of us to

Discussions

In the recent years, the research of service quality in the healthcare sector has received fair amount of attention. If we search for the various literatures available over internet, majority of these studies have been conducted in the developing regions like south-east Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh), middle-east Asia (Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt) and Asia-pacific regions (Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia) which shows the desperate attempt shown by these regions to match with the best (American & Europeans countries) in the business. As the services are basically intangible in nature, its quality parameters can only be felt by the customers. Therefore, it becomes more difficult for the service providers to constantly promote their entities in order to gain sustainable advantage over others.

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Table 1: 2016 MTI Competitive Ranking

Sl.	Countries	MTI Ranking	Sl.	Countries	MTI Ranking
1	Canada	76.62	9	Italy	69.50
2	UK	74.87	10	Colombia	69.48
3	Israel	73.91	11	Spain	68.29
4	Singapore	73.56	12	Japan	68.00
5	India	72.10	13	Panama	67.93
6	Germany	71.90	14	Costa Rica	67.67
7	France	71.22	15	Dominican Republic	67.58
8	South Korea	70.16			

Source: International Health care Research Centre and Global Healthcare Resources 2016

Table 2: Reviews of past articles published in recent years (In Chronological Order)

Sl.	Article	Author(s)	Year	Major findings / Outcomes
1	Service quality, patient satisfaction and loyalty in the Bangladesh healthcare sector.	Selim, A. Tarique, K.M. & Arif, I.	2017	Private hospitals were offering comparatively better quality than the public hospitals. Also, the age and marital status also affected the satisfaction levels.
2	Measuring quality performance between public and private hospitals in Malaysia.	Selim, A. Manaf, N.H.A. Islam, R.	2017	Private Hospitals were doing comparatively better in terms of quality and patient's satisfaction where as they were lagging behind the public sectors in terms of costs.
3	A Comparative Study of Service Quality on Patient Satisfaction Between Public Hospital in Johor Bahru, Malaysia	Rafidah, A. Nurulhuda, Y. & Suhaila,	2017	Public sector services are satisfactory but still needs to a lot to exceed the expectations of the customers.
4	Service Quality, Customer Value and Patient Satisfaction on Public Hospital in Bandung District, Indonesia	Surydana, L.	2017	Significant influence of service quality on customer satisfaction and factors like gender, age and social strata plays important roles.
5	Service Quality of Public Hospitals in Amhara Region, Ethiopia: Outpatient Perspective	Rani, D.L. & Demissie, Y.	2017	Public hospitals failed to match the expectation levels of the customers.
6	Relationship between Service Quality on Public Health Center and Patient Satisfaction	Akbar, F.H. & Jaya, M.T.	2017	The place of origin as well as attitude of nurses and support staffs plays major role in determining the perceptions of the customers and the hospitals scored low in terms of assurance and empathy.

7	Comparing the quality of nursing services between two public and private hospitals	Raadabadi, M. & Bahadori, M, Ravangard, R. & Mousavi, S.M.	2017	The qualities of private hospitals were relatively higher than the public hospitals and the quality of treatment as well as behaviour of staffs play important roles for patient satisfaction.
8	Impact of Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty: A Case Study in a Private Hospital in Indonesia	Jamaluddin, & Ruswanti, E.	2017	There was no direct impact of all dimensions of SERVQUAL except for the assurance factor. Also service quality was found to be affecting the customer loyalty.
9	Predictors of Patient Satisfaction with Quality of Healthcare in University Hospitals in Ghana	Ahenkan, A. & Aduo-Adjei, K.	2017	Direct & effective communication, empathy and tangibility aspects played major roles in getting customer satisfaction than other factors.
10	Evaluating service quality by fuzzy SERVQUAL: a case study in a physiotherapy and rehabilitation hospital	Behdioğlu, S. Acar, E. & Burhan, H.A.	2017	People were highly dissatisfied with the services with gaps existing across all five dimensions of the SERVQUAL scale.
11	Antecedents of Service Quality Gaps in Private Hospitals of Ahmednagar: A Critical Inquiry into the Hospital Attributes	Jaswal, A.R. & Walunj, S.R.	2017	The quality of private hospital was not up to the mark and the reliability criteria emerging as the most important followed by others for ensuring that.
12	Patient's perception on service quality of hospital,	Pillai, K.R. & Kumari, A.	2016	Quality is termed up by the feedbacks of patients as well as their reference groups. Similarly the definition of quality varies from person to person.
13	Service Quality in Public and Private Hospitals in Pakistan: An Analysis Using SERVQUAL Model	Nawaz, M. Bina, N. Mehwish, J. Junaid, A. & Madeeha, R.	2016	Though Private hospitals were better than the public hospitals, still both of them needed to improvise a lot in terms of amenities to cater the patients in a better manner.
14	Hospital Service Quality from Patients Perspective: A Case of Indonesia	Sandhyaduhita, P. Fajrina, H.R. Pinem, A.A. Hidayanto, A.N. Handayani, P. & Junus, K.	2016	There was a larger gap between the expectations and perception of patients and needed much improvements.
15	Comparison Quality of Health Services between Public and Private Providers: The Iranian People's Perspective	Alijanzadeh, M. Moosaniaye Zare, S. A. Rajaei, R. Mohammad Ali M.F.S. Asefzadeh, S. Alijanzadeh, M. & Gholami, S.	2016	Though private sector hospitals scored more in most of the parameters of service quality assessment, people normally preferred to visit the public sector due to acceptable quality and cost factors.

16	Patients' Satisfaction with Diagnostic Radiology Services in Two Major Public and Private Hospitals in Ghana	Kofi A.K. Antwi, W.K. Brobbery, P.K.	2016	Though both public and private sector hospitals were providing acceptable level of quality still the private sector hospitals had an upper hand than the public sector.
17	Healthcare facilities and patient's satisfaction in civil hospital Karachi: A tertiary care hospital in Pakistan	Shaikh, M.D.S. Shaikh, M.D.S. Murtaza, B. & Shaikh, S.	2016	Public hospitals were providing somewhat acceptable levels of quality though they failed to meet the expectation levels of the customers.
18	The Effect of outpatient service quality on patient satisfaction in teaching hospitals in Iran	Pouragha, B. & Zarei, E.	2016	Though it was public sector, the general perceptions of people towards the various services were found to be good which can be attributed to factors like costs, quality of physicians, environment & flow of information etc.
19	Private vs. Public Healthcare in South Africa	Young, M.	2016	Though the quality at private hospitals was found to be better than the public hospitals still people used to prefer the public entities due to availability of equipments.
20	Linking Service Quality, Patients' Satisfaction and Behavioral Intentions: An investigation on Private Healthcare in Malaysia	Aliman, N.K. & Mohamad, W.N.	2016	The dimensions of tangibility, reliability and assurance affected the customer satisfaction where as the other two dimensions of empathy and responsiveness had negligence effect on them. A strong relation between the service quality and customer retention was found.
21	Public-Private Partnership in Health Care: A Comparative Cross-sectional Study of Perceived Quality of Care Among Parents of Children Admitted in Two Government District-hospitals, Southern India.	Baliga, B.S. Ravikiran, S.R. Rao, S.S. Coutinho, A. & Jain, A.	2016	Tried to use the concept of partnership between private and public sector hospitals for offering superior services and found it to be working efficiently in generating customer satisfaction.
22	Patients' Expectations and Perceptions of Service Quality in the Selected Hospitals	Nadi, A. Shojaee, J. Abedi, G. Siamian, H. Abedini, E. & Rostami, F.	2016	None of the public hospitals were meeting with the expectation levels of the customers. Also the dimension of empathy was found to be the most important followed by others like tangibility, responsiveness, assurance and reliability.

23	Measuring patients' healthcare service quality perceptions, satisfaction, and loyalty in public and private sector hospitals in Pakistan	Shabbir, A. Malik, S.A. Malik, S.A.	2016	None of the hospitals were matching the expectation levels of the customers. Comparatively private sector hospitals were better than the public hospitals.
24	A study on patient's perception towards service quality of private hospitals in Coimbatore city	Thangaraj, B. & Chandrasekar, M.R.	2016	Studied the service quality in private hospitals and found them to be better. Also the use of technology as well as infrastructural development plays an important role.
25	A proposed framework for service quality dimensions in health sector with special reference to Jammu and Kashmir	Zarger, A.S. & Lala, M.F.	2016	Found the factors of quality of staffs and costs of treatment to be the important parameters.
26	The Measurement of Perceived Service Quality of Patients in the Government Districts Hospital in Eastern Uttar Pradesh	Kaushal, S.K.	2016	Public sector hospitals were found to be providing satisfactory levels of quality as perceived by the patients.
27	Services quality in emergency department of Nemazee Hospital: Using SERVQUAL model	Gholami, M. Kavosi, Z. & Khojastefar, M.	2016	There were significant gaps found between the expectation and perception of people visiting to public hospitals. Adequate facilities, reduce waiting time, improvement of behaviour of doctors are the key factors.
28	Patient's perceptions about the service quality of public hospitals located at District Kohat	Aman, B. & Abbas, F.	2016	Tried to assess the public hospitals and found that though people trust them and visit them often they were failing to provide the required levels of empathy.
29	Patient Satisfaction in Public and Private Hospitals in Cyprus	Chari, F. Jelastopulu, E. Sapountzi-Krepia, D. Kaitelidou, D. Konstantakopoulou, O. Galanis, P. & Charalambous, G.	2016	Comparatively the private sector hospitals were perceived as better service providers than the public sector. But the public sector hospitals were slowly catching up them with support from the local government. Also the gender and marital status were found as key variables.
30	Comparison of Service Quality between Private and Government Hospitals: Empirical Evidences from Yavatmal City, Maharashtra	Karekar, P. Tiwari, A. & Agrawal, S.	2015	Tried to differentiate between Private and Public Hospitals and found the Private hospitals to be better in terms of quality offerings.

31	A case study of patient satisfaction in zonal hospital of Udaipur	Jain, J. & Soni, H.	2015	Age and gender factors played pivotal role in describing the satisfaction of patients.
32	Patient's Satisfaction Towards the Quality of Services Offered in Government Hospitals in Western Districts of Tamil Nadu	Dheepa, T. Gayathri, N. & Karthikeyan, P.	2015	Measured the quality levels in public hospitals and revealed that though the customers were somewhat satisfied with the hospitals still there existed a huge gap of improvement.
33	The Quality of Health Services in Bechar Public Hospital Institution	Belaid, H. Bouchenafa, A. Barich, A.E. Maazouzi, K.	2015	Tried to Map the service quality in public hospitals and realized a larger gap was existing between the expectations and perceptions. Also the factors of empathy, tangibility and responsiveness were comparatively lower in public hospitals.
34	Determinants of Patient Satisfaction on Service Quality dimensions in the Nigeria Teaching Hospitals	Amole, B.B. Oyatoye, E.O. Kuye, O.L.	2015	Public Hospitals there were found to be fulfilling the expectation levels of the customers. Also, the empathy factor played a crucial role.
35	Policy Effects on the Quality of Public Health Care: Evaluating Portuguese Public Hospitals' Quality through Customers' Views	Fonseca, J.R.S. Ramos, R.M.P. Santos, A.M.P. & Fonseca A.P.S.S.	2015	Tried to assess the service quality of public hospitals and found that the male and wealthier people preferred the quality where as the females and deprived section doesn't like the quality that much.
36	Empirical Study on Patient Satisfaction and Patient Loyalty on Public Hospital in Bandung, Indonesia	Juhana, D. Manik, E. Febrinella, C. & Sidharta, I.	2015	There existed the GAP between the expectations and perception levels of customers visiting the public hospitals.
37	Service Quality toward Patient Satisfaction the Moderating Role of Time and Efforts in Public Hospitals in Tripoli, Libya	Ibrahim, Y. Aljoudimi, Rejab, I.B. & Mohamed, Z.B.	2015	Time and efforts given by the doctors and staffs were least impactful for customer satisfactions. Factors like assurance, empathy, respect, and convenience of access played major roles.
38	An Empirical Study of the Impact of Service Quality on Patient Satisfaction in Private Hospitals, Iran	Zarei, E. Daneshkohan, A. Pouragha, B. Marzban, S. & Arab, M.	2015	Tried to assess the service quality of private entities and found that factors like costs of treatments, waiting time and interpersonal skills plays important role in generating patient satisfaction.

39	Patient Satisfaction evaluation on Hospitals; Comparison Study between accredited and non accredited hospitals in Jordan	Ajarmah, B.S. & Hashem, T.N.	2015	Patients were receiving acceptable levels of service quality from both hospital types where as comparatively the accredited hospitals are perceived to be better than the non-accredited types in terms of tangibility aspects followed by others like empathy, responsiveness, assurance, and reliability.
40	Interaction effect of perceived service quality and brand image on customer satisfaction	Hamid, A.A. Ibrahim, S.B. Seesy, A.S. & Hasaballah, A.H.A.	2015	Though the Private hospitals were providing acceptable levels of services still they need to do more in terms of providing quality of highest degrees. Also factors like tangibles, responsiveness and empathy play major roles than the other two parameters of the SERVQUAL scale. Also the interpersonal interactions play a major role in determining the quality.
41	Service quality perceptions and patient's satisfaction: A comparative study of a Public and a Private Sector Hospital in Pakistan	Nasim, K. & Januja, S.Y.	2014	Neither of the public not private hospital types were matching the levels of quality expected by the customers. Public sectors have renowned doctors and experienced staffs but lacked in discipline, timeliness and cleanliness where as private hospitals are having their own problems like irresponsible staffs, insensitive behaviour shown by the staffs etc.
42	Comparing Patients' Satisfaction Towered Service Quality of Public and Private Hospitals in Bahrain	Ramez, W. S.	2014	non-significant differences were found between private and public hospitals.
43	Measuring customer service in a private hospital	Bisschof, C. & Clapton, H.	2014	Although the customers were just satisfied with the hospital services quality, the management needed to focus more upon tangibility, empathy and inter-personal relationships between the customers and staffs.
44	Post Behavioral Perceptions of the Service Quality in a Service Setting; Private Hospitals in México.	Ramírez, F.C.S. & Pineda, M.D.S.	2014	The tangibility aspect is the major influencer of generating satisfaction and the facilities have to be upgraded on a regular basis. Also to include the patients in the decision making process

45	Perceived Service Quality in Healthcare Organizations and a Research in Ankara by Hospital Type	Kayral, İ.H.	2014	Though the public sector hospitals were perceived at par with the private sector, in terms of physical facilities, they were lagging comparatively than the private players.
46	Measuring Service Quality Dimensions: an Empirical Study of Private Hospitals in Jaffna District, Sri Lanka	Sritharan, V.	2014	Reliability of the hospitals was found to be the most important parameter followed by others such as tangibles, assurance, empathy and responsiveness and on a overall basis more negative feedbacks were obtained from the patients.
47	The Impact of Service Quality Dimensions on Patient Satisfaction, Repurchase Intentions and Word-of-Mouth Communication in the Public Healthcare Industry	Kitapcia, O. Akdogan, C. Dortyol, I.T.	2014	Empathy followed by assurance dimensions were the major parameters of service quality. Also there exist a strong bond between quality, satisfaction and word-of-mouth communication.
48	Service Quality and Its Impact on Patient Satisfaction: An Investigation in Vietnamese Public Hospitals	Cong, N.T. & Mai, N.T.T	2014	Though the public hospitals were offering acceptable levels of quality, still they need to do a lot to improve. Also the factors of tangibility, accessibility and attitude of the staffs were found to be the key differentiators of service quality.
49	Patient's perception of reputation and image – private and public hospitals	Cinaroglu, S.	2014	The Private hospitals were found to be offering better quality than the public hospitals. Also the tangibility factor is the most determining dimension while opine towards service quality.
50	Healthcare Services Quality in Malaysian Private Hospitals: A Qualitative Study	Sarwar, A.	2014	Though the private hospitals were providing acceptable levels of quality, still they need to do a lot to sustain in long run. Also factors like quality of drugs, empathy and round the clock services were the key factors that can generate satisfaction.
51	Development of HospitalQual: A Service Quality Scale for Measuring In-patient Services in Hospital	Itumalla, R. Acharyulu, G.V.R.K. & Shekhar, B. R.	2014	The quality of medical treatments, nursing services, support services, administration, safety of patient, communication and hospital infrastructure etc. were the major attributes of generating customer satisfaction.

52	A Comparison of Service Quality between Private and Public Hospitals in Thailand	Yousapronpaiboon K. & Johnson W.C.	2013	Found the private sector hospitals offering better quality than the public hospitals. Also both of them needed to improvise upon their levels.
53	A Cognitive Analysis of Influencing Factors towards Urbanites' Healthcare Satisfaction in Bhubaneswar	Rout, N.R. & Bhagat, R.B.	2013	A wider gap between the expectation and perception levels in public sector hospitals was found. Though improved, the private sector also needed to do a lot in order to compete at a global scale.
54	Measuring service quality in Public Sector using SERVQUAL: A case of Punjab Dental Hospital, Lahore.	Mukhtar, H. Saeed, A. & Ata, G.	2013	Found manageable levels of quality in healthcare offerings. Still needed to improve upon parameters like responsiveness and cleanliness.
55	A comparative study of factors affecting customer satisfaction in private and public sector hospitals in Tehran.	Khosravi, A. & Anvari, A.	2013	Comparatively the private sector hospitals were found to offer significantly better quality than the public hospitals. Also factors like behaviour of doctors and staffs, stringent HR policies, use of latest technologies, equipments, and getting regular feedbacks etc. were found to be the key parameters for generating satisfaction.
56	Assessment of service quality dimensions in healthcare industry A study on patient's satisfaction with Bangladeshi private Hospitals	Rahman, M.R. & Kutubi, S.S.	2013	Private hospitals were found to offer better quality of services than the public hospitals. Still they needed to improvise upon their states to generate customer satisfaction.
57	Service Quality, Customer (Patient) Satisfaction and Behavioural Intention in Health Care Services: Exploring the Indian Perspective	Murti, A. Deshpande, A. & Srivastava, N.	2013	Tried to map the relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions and found them to be varying between person to person, place to place and culture to culture.
58	Patient Satisfaction with Nursing Care in Public and Private Hospitals	Sharma, S.K. & Kamra, P.K.	2013	Satisfaction scores in Private Hospitals were comparatively higher than the public hospitals. However the satisfaction scores varies as per the age, gender, religion, educational status and occupation etc.

59	Hospital service quality and its effects on patient satisfaction and behavioural intention	Amin, M. & Nasharuddin, S.Z.	2013	Service quality had a significant relationship with patient satisfaction. Though both the private and public sector hospitals were offering adequate levels of quality, they were required to pay more attention to the aspects of overall service quality offered.
60	The Impact of Health Service Quality on Patients' Satisfaction over Private and Public Hospitals in Jordan: A Comparative Study.	Zamil, A.M. & Areiqat, A.Y.	2012	Levels of patient's satisfaction in private entities were better than the public hospitals. Also the gap in terms of responsiveness dimension was found to be wider between the two.
61	Comparative Performance of Private and Public Healthcare Systems in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Systematic Review	Basu, S. Andrews, J. Kishore, S. Panjabi, R. & Stuckler, D.	2012	The theory of superior quality offered by the private hospitals over the public entities were not proven readily rather the private sector were lacking in various areas which needs to be improved
62	The usage of SERVQUAL scores for the Measurement of Quality of Perceived Service in Health Facilities and Implementation of Private Altinordu Hospital	Devabakan, N. & Akgarayli, M.	2012	Factors like location, waiting times, respectful conversation, food and furnishing etc. can affect the satisfaction levels of the customers across hospital types.
63	Patient Satisfaction – A Comparison between Public & Private Hospitals of Peshawar	Khattak, A. Alvi, M.I. Yousaf, M.A. Shah, S.Z.A. Turial, D. & Akhter, S.	2012	Though the private hospitals were providing better levels of qualities than the public sector hospitals, still both of them needed to do a lot and especially reducing the waiting period before treatment.
64	Service quality of private hospitals: The Iranian Patients' perspective.	Zarei, A. Arab, M. Froushani, A.R. Rashidin, A. & Tabatabaei, S.M.G.	2012	Significant gaps were found between the expectation and perception level and factors like gender, education level, previous experience, insurance coverage, average length of stay, and health conditions of the patients etc. played important role in determining the perception of the customers.

65	Factors Affecting Provision of Service Quality in the Public Health Sector: A Case of Kenyatta National Hospital	Wanjau, K.N. Muiruri, B.W. & Ayodo, E.	2012	The general levels of quality of healthcare services in Kenya were found to be below the expected levels. Factors like lower levels of employee trainings, least use of technology, insufficient funds allocations, ineffective communication etc. were contributing for the reason.
66	Measurement of Service Quality In Healthcare Organization	Amjeriya, D. Malviya, R.K.	2012	The quality was found to be not up to the mark as well as factors like empathy and regular communication with the patients are most
67	Patient Experience of Nursing Quality in a Teaching Hospital in Saudi Arabia	Momani, M.A. & Korashy, H.A.	2012	The hospital was not matching levels of expectations rather lagging in terms of parameters like caring behaviour, nursing competency / technical care, information sharing etc.
68	Service Quality At Hospital– A Study Of Apollo Hospital in Mysore	Arun Kumar, G. Manjunath, S.J. Chethan, K.C.	2012	In general the quality of the private hospital was found to be good where as there were some parameter like empathy where the hospital was lagging
69	Effects of Service Quality Dimensions on Customer Satisfaction and Return Intention in Different Hospital Types	Calisir, F., C.A. Gumussoy, A.E. Bayraktaroglu & Kaya, B.	2012	The parameters of service quality vary from different hospital types. In case of Private empathy plays an important role where as in public hospitals, the responsiveness is more important.
70	An assessment of service quality of private hospitals in Pakistan: A Patient perspective	Irfan, S.M. Ijaz, A. & Shahbaz, S.	2011	The Private hospitals were found to offer acceptable levels of quality. Also hygienic conditions, cleanliness, hospital environment and availability of the lab and pharmacy facilities etc. were found to have a positive impact on the service quality
71	Comparison of Service Quality between Private and Public Hospitals: empirical evidences from Pakistan	Irfan, S.M. & Ijaz, A.	2011	Private hospitals were found to offering better quality than the public hospitals. These can be attributed to overburden public sector, lack of funds and interest of government in developing healthcare infrastructure etc.

72	High performance work systems: the gap between policy and practice in health care reform	Leggat, S.G. Bartram, T. & Stanton, P.	2011	There existed a gap between the policy and practice; i.e. between words and works. Implementation of high performance work systems were faulty for which the difference between expectation and perception was prevailing.
73	The impact of hospital brand image on service quality, patient satisfaction and loyalty	Wu, C.C.	2011	Etiquette and behavioural training were important in terms of building the hospital brands
74	Adapting the SERVQUAL scale to hospital services: an empirical investigation of Patients' Perceptions of Service Quality	Brahmbhatt, M. Baser, N. & Joshi, N.	2011	Normally negative feedbacks were obtained for the various healthcare service providers. Also the feedbacks systems and grievance handling procedures were found to be the most important factors for generating satisfaction.
75	Do patients' perceptions exceed their expectations in private healthcare settings?	Suki, N.M. Lian, J.C.C & Suki, N.M.	2011	Gaps were between the expectations and perception levels of customers. Also the waiting time, empathy and responsiveness of the staffs were found to be important parameters for service quality but were missing there.
76	Measuring perceived quality of health care services in India	Narang, R.	2010	Three types of hospitals were compared where the tertiary care hospital was performing poorly compared to the medical university and missionary. Also in terms of accessibility and competent doctors for women neither of the hospitals scored much.
77	Service Quality in Private Hospitals in Turkey	Havva Çaha	2010	Though people provided positive feedbacks about the private hospitals, but they were not entirely satisfied with the services. Longer waiting time and unavailability of competent workforce were the reasons for the same.

78	Quality differentials and reproductive health service utilisation determinants in India	Anand, S. & Sinha R.K.	2010	Comparatively the private hospitals were scoring more in terms of availability of doctors, waiting time, cleanliness, privacy & dignified treatment where as the public hospitals were scoring higher in terms of affordability and experienced doctors.
79	Health care service quality: A comparison of public and private hospitals	Yeşilada, F. & Direktör, E.	2010	Comparatively the private hospitals were doing well in providing the service quality than the public sector hospitals. Similarly the dimensions of reliability, empathy and tangibles were found to be the determinants of quality.
80	Measuring Indian Patients' Satisfaction: a case of Private Hospitals	Ali, S.S. & Ahmed, F.	2010	Comparatively the private hospitals are marginally better. But when compared with the global levels, they were not in the scene. Also the perception about quality varies according to social standard and age of the respondents.
81	Measuring perceived service quality for public hospitals (PubHosQual) in the Indian context	Aagja, J.P. & Garg, R.	2010	Found the sorrow state of public healthcare entities as well as developed a five point scale namely admission, medical service, overall service, discharge process, and social responsibility to measure the quality.
82	ESI Scheme a Waste, Fear Junior Executives	Vaidyanathan, K.	2009	In general the qualities of public hospitals were bad comparative to the private hospitals and people were reluctant to visit them.
83	Service quality in health care: a challenge for both public and private hospitals	Alev, K. Gulem, A. Gonca, G. & Burcu Guneri, C.	2009	service perceptions of the private hospital's inpatients were significantly more positive than the public hospital inpatients on all dimensions but still both of them needed to go much ahead than the current state.
84	Patient perceived dimensions of total quality service in healthcare	Duggirala, M., Rajendran, C. & Anantharaman, R.N.	2008	Identified some key parameters like interaction quality, process of clinical care and administrative procedure which if catered well can enhance the patient satisfaction in both public and private hospitals.

85	Patient satisfaction in a Riyadh Tertiary Care Centre	Alaloola, N.A.	2008	Patients were satisfied with some provisions like types of rooms, temperature maintained, cleanliness, support services where as dissatisfied with other parameters like process of healthcare, non-responsiveness of the doctors etc. and demanded for a balancing offering.
86	Gearing service quality into public and private hospitals in small islands: Empirical evidence from Cyprus	Arasli, H. Ekiz, E.H. & Katircioglu, S.T.	2008	Empathy, giving priority to the needs of inpatients, relationships between staff and patients, professionalism of staff, food and the physical environment were found to be the key parameters. And Neither of the hospital types were offering quality services as desired by the customers.
87	ESI Scheme a Waste, Fear Junior Executives	Menon, P.K.G.	2007	The public hospitals were offering dismal quality in comparison to the private hospitals.
88	Comparison of Services of Public, Private and Foreign Hospitals from the Perspective of Bangladeshi Patients	Siddiqui, N. & Khandaker, S.A.	2007	The foreign hospitals were found to be offering better quality than the private followed by public hospitals.
89	Quality management in a healthcare organisation: a case of South Indian hospital	Manjunath, U. Metri, B.A. & Ramachandran, S.	2007	Relatively the private hospital performed well in various parameters of measuring quality. Still it possessed ample areas of improvement.
90	Measuring tangibility and assurance as determinants of service quality for public health care in South Africa	Jager, J.D. & Plooy, T.D.	2007	Tried to measure effects of the tangibility & assurance dimensions in public hospitals and found them to be the negligible factors affecting quality. Rather safety, cleanliness were regarded as important. Also for the inpatients and outpatients the measures of quality differs.
91	Comparing public and private hospital care service quality in Turkey	Taner, T. & Antony, J.	2006	Comparatively the services of private sectors were perceived higher than the public sector hospitals. Private hospitals scored higher in terms of cleanliness, prompt service offerings and support services where as the public sector scored well in terms of costs and experienced doctors.

92	Choosing between public and private or between hospital and primary care: responsiveness, patient-centredness and prescribing patterns in outpatient consultations in Bangkok	Pongsupap, Y. & Van Lerberghe, W.	2006	The gap between private and public sector hospitals were marginal. Though considered better than the public hospitals, the private sector hospitals were costlier and found to prescribe for costlier drugs and unnecessary tests.
93	Public trust in health care in the Netherlands: a performance indicator?	Schee, E.V.D. Groenewegen, P.P. & Friele, R.D.	2006	As the customers were normally satisfied with the healthcare initiatives, there was a considerable public trust upon the healthcare sector
94	Comparative quality of private and public health services in rural Vietnam	Tuan, T. Dung, V.T.M. Neu, I. & Dibley, M. J.	2005	Public sector hospitals were relatively ahead of the private sector in terms of providing quality health care in the rural areas.
95	An empirical study of patients' expectations and satisfactions in Egyptian hospitals	Mostafa, M.M.	2005	Relatively the private hospital performed well in various parameters of measuring quality. Also the quality perception was varying as per the age and education levels of respondents.
96	The impact of nursing care and other health care attributes on hospitalized patient satisfaction and behavioural intentions	Otani, K. & Kurz, S.	2004	The nursing care, behaviour & courtesy shown by the staffs, their willingness and ability to perform duties were preferred by the patients and worked as major attributes to generate customer satisfaction and loyalty.
97	The relationships between service quality, customer satisfaction and buying intentions in the private hospital industry	Boshoff, C. & Gray, B.	2004	Found the quality of private hospitals to be satisfactory more in terms of tangibility, assurance & empathy. Similarly service quality is directly related to customer satisfaction and thereby customer loyalty.
98	Quality and comparison of antenatal care in public and private providers in the United Republic of Tanzania	Boller, C. Wyss, K. Mtasiwa, D. & Tanner, M.	2003	In terms of tangibility & inter-personal skills, both the private and public hospitals were good but in terms of technical quality, they were lacking.
99	Service Quality In Hospitals: More Favourable than You Might Think	Sohail, S.M.	2003	The Public hospitals were offering at par quality in their offerings as like the private sector and with the help / subsidies of the government they were readily providing good quality healthcare services to the customers.
100	Gap Analysis of Patient Meal Service Perceptions	Hwang, L. Eves, A. & Desombre, T.	2003	food properties, interpersonal service, and environmental presentation, with a high reliability were the key factors of determining quality.

101	Comparing the quality of private and public hospitals	Jabnoun, N.M. & Chaker, M.	2003	A narrow gap was found between the service quality of private and public sector hospitals.
102	Factors Influencing Private Health Provider's Technical Quality of Care for Acute Respiratory Infection among Under five Children in Rural West Bengal, India	Chakraborty, S. & Frick, K.	2002	Found the private hospitals to be lacking in terms of quality as the people working there were lacking in competency and knowledge.
103	Measurement of patient satisfaction in a public hospital in Ankara	Tengilimoglu, D. Kisa, A. & Dziegielewski, S.F.	2001	The qualities of the public hospital services were found to be somewhat satisfactory. Also the level of satisfaction was found to be varying as per the age and education levels of the customers.
104	Report on the Status of Children and Women	Arab League	2001	Many of the public hospitals in the middle eastern countries were not upto the mark while offering quality in hospital services and also they were lacking in terms of providing adequate training and using modern equipments.
105	Note on ESI Scheme in Kerala Region	Nair, S.	2000	Due to quality issues even the government employees were not keen in availing various services there.
106	Note on ESI Scheme in Kerala Region	Prasad, K.	2000	The Public enterprises failed to attract patients due to lack of equipments and insufficient people to handle the patients.
107	Public and private hospitals in Bangladesh: service quality and predictors of hospital choice	Andaleeb, S.S.	2000	As the private hospitals were not getting subsidies, they were directly dependent upon the income from the patients and in turn offering better services to them in comparison to the public hospitals.
108	Perceptual gaps in understanding patient expectations for health care service quality	O'Connor, S.J. Trinh, H.Q. & Shewchuk, R.M.	2000	Identified the quality of interactions as an important factor of generating customer satisfaction. Also found that the patient's interaction with administrative staffs were more fruitful than the technical staffs like doctors and nursing staffs.
109	Comparing the services and quality of public and private clinics in rural China	Meng, Q. Liu, X. & Shi, J.	2000	Both the hospital types are almost equally perceived by the patients in terms of service quality and acceptable levels of services were offered by them.

(Source: Authors' collection of articles published between the years 2000 to 2017)

Table 3: Origin countries of the research

Sl. No	Country of Study	Sl. No	Country of Study
1	Algeria	17	Mexico
2	Australia	18	Netherlands
3	Bahrain	19	Nigeria
4	Bangladesh	20	Pakistan
5	China	21	Portugal
6	Cyprus	22	Saudi Arabia
7	Egypt	23	South Africa
8	Ethiopia	24	Sri Lanka
9	Ghana	25	Taiwan
10	India	26	Tanzania
11	Indonesia	27	Thailand
12	Iran	28	Turkey
13	Jordan	29	UAE
14	Kenya	30	UK
15	Libya	31	USA
16	Malaysia	32	Vietnam

(Source: Authors' collection of articles published between the years 2000 to 2017)

Figure 1: Growth of Hospital Sector in India