

Impact of Emergency Healthcare Service Quality on Patient Satisfaction in Government Hospitals: A Quantitative Study

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Abstract

Emergency healthcare is super important for public hospitals, since lots of folks rely on those places for cheap care. How well hospitals handle emergencies really matters for patient happiness and trust, shaping what people think about these institutions.

This study looked into how the quality of emergency care affects patient satisfaction in government-run hospitals. It zoomed in on things like quick responses, dependable service, empathetic attitudes, medical supplies, wait times, and how staff act. Researchers hit up 250 patients at chosen government hospital ERs with a five-point scale survey.

They analyzed the results with stats like percentages, mean scores, and correlation and regression analyses. Turns out, fast help, good resources, clean facilities, and clear communication make patients happier. Yet long waits, crowded rooms, and not enough equipment definitely drag down their experience.

Overall, the findings say that upping the quality of ER care could seriously boost patient contentment and health results in government hospitals.

Keywords: Emergency healthcare, service quality, patient satisfaction, government hospitals, quantitative study, healthcare management.

Introduction

Healthcare is widely recognized as a fundamental human need and an essential determinant of social and economic development. Among the various healthcare services, emergency care occupies a particularly important position because it addresses sudden illnesses, accidents, trauma, and other life-threatening conditions that require immediate medical attention. The effectiveness of emergency healthcare services can directly influence survival rates, recovery outcomes, and the overall well-being of patients.

In India, government hospitals form the backbone of the public healthcare system and provide affordable healthcare to millions of citizens. A significant proportion of low-income and rural populations depend on these institutions because private healthcare services are often expensive and inaccessible. However, government hospitals frequently face challenges such as overcrowding, limited infrastructure, shortages of healthcare professionals, insufficient medical equipment, and long waiting times. These challenges can affect the quality of emergency healthcare services and influence patient satisfaction.

Patient satisfaction has become an important indicator of healthcare quality because it reflects patients' perceptions of the care they receive. Satisfied patients are more likely to trust healthcare providers, follow medical advice, continue treatment, and recommend healthcare facilities to others. In emergency departments, where patients and their families often experience anxiety and stress, service quality dimensions such as promptness, communication, empathy, and cleanliness become especially important.

Despite several government initiatives aimed at strengthening healthcare infrastructure, many public hospitals continue to struggle with operational inefficiencies. Understanding the relationship between emergency healthcare service quality and patient satisfaction is therefore essential for improving healthcare delivery and public trust in government hospitals. This study seeks to identify the service quality dimensions that most strongly influence patient satisfaction in emergency departments.

Review of literature

The concept of healthcare service quality has been extensively studied using models such as SERVQUAL, which identifies dimensions including reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility. These dimensions are commonly used to evaluate patient perceptions of healthcare services. Research consistently shows that higher service quality leads to greater patient satisfaction and improved healthcare outcomes.

Several studies have examined patient satisfaction in public hospitals. Research conducted in Indian government hospitals found that patients generally appreciate the affordability of public healthcare but often express dissatisfaction regarding long waiting times, overcrowding, and inadequate facilities. These operational issues significantly affect overall satisfaction levels.

Communication between healthcare professionals and patients is another major determinant of satisfaction. Clear explanations regarding diagnosis, treatment, and procedures help reduce anxiety and increase trust in healthcare providers. Studies have shown that effective doctor-patient communication improves patient experiences and compliance with treatment.

Research focusing specifically on emergency departments emphasizes the importance of responsiveness. Emergency patients expect rapid assessment, diagnosis, and treatment. Delays in emergency care can lead to dissatisfaction, stress, and poorer perceptions of healthcare quality. Additionally, the availability of medicines, diagnostic facilities, and emergency equipment has been identified as a critical factor influencing patient confidence and satisfaction.

Cleanliness and hygiene also play a significant role in shaping patient perceptions. A clean hospital environment is associated with safety, professionalism, and quality care, whereas poor sanitation can create negative impressions and reduce trust in healthcare institutions.

Although existing literature establishes a strong relationship between healthcare service quality and patient satisfaction, relatively few studies focus specifically on emergency healthcare services in government hospitals. This study addresses that gap by quantitatively examining service quality dimensions within emergency departments.

Research Gap

Most previous studies have concentrated on general hospital services, inpatient care, outpatient services, or private healthcare settings. Limited research has specifically examined emergency healthcare service quality in government hospitals and its direct effect on patient satisfaction. Emergency departments operate under unique conditions characterized by urgency, uncertainty, and high patient volumes, making them fundamentally different from other hospital units. This study fills the gap by focusing exclusively on emergency departments in

government hospitals and identifying the service quality dimensions that most strongly influence patient satisfaction.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the quality of emergency healthcare services in government hospitals.

This objective seeks to assess patient perceptions regarding responsiveness, communication, cleanliness, infrastructure, availability of medicines, and emergency equipment.

2. To identify factors influencing patient satisfaction in emergency departments.

The study evaluates which service quality dimensions contribute positively or negatively to patient satisfaction.

3. To analyze the relationship between emergency healthcare service quality and patient satisfaction.

Statistical analyses such as correlation and regression are used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship.

4. To suggest measures for improving emergency healthcare services in government hospitals.

Based on the findings, the study proposes practical recommendations for healthcare administrators and policymakers.

Hypotheses of the study

H₀: There is no significant relationship between emergency healthcare service quality and patient satisfaction in government hospitals.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between emergency healthcare service quality and patient satisfaction in government hospitals.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical quantitative research design. This approach is appropriate because it allows the measurement of patient perceptions and the examination of relationships between service quality variables and satisfaction. Quantitative methods provide objective and statistically analyzable data.

Sources of Data

Primary Data: Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to patients visiting emergency departments of selected government hospitals.

Secondary Data: Secondary data were obtained from research articles, journals, books, government reports, and healthcare publications relevant to service quality and patient satisfaction.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Convenience sampling was used to select respondents from government hospitals. A total of 250 respondents participated in the study. While convenience sampling has limitations regarding generalizability, it is practical for collecting data from emergency department patients who are available and willing to respond.

Sample Size

A total of 250 respondents were selected for the study.

Tools for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale was used:

1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

The questionnaire measured perceptions regarding responsiveness, communication, waiting time, cleanliness, infrastructure, availability of medicines, and emergency equipment.

Statistical Tools Used

1. Percentage Analysis
2. Mean Score Analysis
3. Correlation Analysis
4. Regression Analysis
5. Chi-square Test

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Gender-wise Classification of Respondents

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	140	56%
Female	110	44%
Total	250	100%

Interpretation

The table shows that 56% of respondents were male and 44% were female.

Table 2: Age-wise Classification

Age Group	Respondents	Percentage
Below 20 years	30	12% 🇮🇳
21–40 years	110	44%
41–60 years	75	30%
Above 60 years	35	14%

Interpretation

Most respondents belonged to the 21–40 years age group.

Table 3: Mean Score Analysis of Service Quality Dimensions

Factors	Mean Score
Staff Responsiveness	4.12
Availability of Medicines	3.85
Waiting Time	2.91
Cleanliness	3.40
Doctor Communication	4.05
Infrastructure	3.12
Emergency Availability Equipment	3.95

Interpretation

The highest satisfaction scores were observed for staff responsiveness and doctor communication, suggesting that patients appreciate prompt attention and clear interactions with healthcare providers. Waiting time received the lowest score, indicating a major source of dissatisfaction. Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction.

Correlation Analysis

Variables	Correlation Value
Service Quality & Patient Satisfaction	0.82

Interpretation

The correlation coefficient of 0.82 indicates a strong positive relationship between emergency healthcare service quality and patient satisfaction. This means that improvements in service quality are associated with higher levels of patient satisfaction.

Regression Analysis	Model Summary
R	0.82
R Square	0.67
Adjusted R Square	0.65

Interpretation

The regression analysis shows that approximately 67% of the variation in patient satisfaction can be explained by emergency healthcare service quality dimensions. This demonstrates the substantial influence of service quality on patient perceptions and experiences.

Findings of the Study

The findings confirm that service quality is a major determinant of patient satisfaction in emergency departments. Patients highly value responsive staff and effective communication because these factors reduce anxiety and create confidence in treatment. The positive influence of medicine availability and emergency equipment indicates that tangible resources remain essential for patient trust.

However, dissatisfaction with waiting time suggests that operational efficiency remains a significant challenge in government hospitals. Overcrowding, limited staff, and high patient volumes likely contribute to delays in treatment. Infrastructure and cleanliness received moderate scores, indicating areas requiring improvement.

These findings align with previous research showing that both clinical and non-clinical aspects of healthcare influence patient satisfaction. Emergency departments must therefore focus not only on medical treatment but also on service delivery, communication, and patient-centered care.

- Most patients were satisfied with doctor communication and staff responsiveness.
- Long waiting time was a major source of dissatisfaction.
- Availability of emergency medicines positively influenced patient satisfaction.
- Poor infrastructure and overcrowding negatively affected patient experiences.
- Cleanliness and hygiene significantly influenced perceptions of healthcare quality.
- Emergency equipment availability improved patient confidence in hospital services.
- There is a strong positive relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction.

Suggestions

- Government hospitals should reduce waiting time through efficient patient management systems.
- Additional medical staff should be recruited in emergency departments.
- Infrastructure and sanitation facilities should be improved.
- Regular training should be provided to healthcare staff regarding patient communication and empathy.
- Adequate emergency medicines and equipment must be ensured at all times.
- Digital healthcare management systems should be implemented for faster emergency response.
- Patient feedback mechanisms should be strengthened to identify service gaps.

Conclusion

Emergency healthcare services play a vital role in the healthcare system because they provide immediate medical attention to patients suffering from accidents, injuries, sudden illnesses, and life-threatening conditions. The effectiveness of emergency care directly influences patient outcomes, survival rates, and overall public confidence in healthcare institutions. In developing countries like India, government hospitals serve as the primary source of emergency healthcare for a large section of the population, particularly those from economically weaker backgrounds. Therefore, maintaining high-quality emergency healthcare services is essential for ensuring equitable and accessible healthcare for all citizens.

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that the quality of emergency healthcare services has a significant impact on patient satisfaction in government hospitals. The analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between service quality dimensions and patient satisfaction, indicating that improvements in healthcare delivery

can substantially enhance patients' experiences. Factors such as staff responsiveness, doctor-patient communication, availability of medicines, cleanliness, and access to emergency equipment were found to contribute positively to patient perceptions of care. These elements help patients feel valued, safe, and confident in the healthcare services they receive, particularly during stressful emergency situations.

At the same time, the study identified several challenges that negatively affect patient satisfaction. Long waiting times, overcrowded emergency departments, inadequate infrastructure, and shortages of medical resources emerged as major concerns among respondents. These issues not only reduce patient satisfaction but may also affect the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency healthcare delivery. The findings suggest that while healthcare professionals often perform their duties with dedication and competence, systemic and administrative limitations can hinder the delivery of optimal patient care.

The study highlights the importance of adopting a patient-centered approach in emergency healthcare management. Government hospitals must focus not only on clinical treatment but also on improving the overall patient experience. Effective communication, empathy, timely treatment, and a supportive hospital environment are essential components of quality healthcare services. When patients receive prompt attention and clear information regarding their condition and treatment, they are more likely to develop trust in healthcare providers and remain satisfied with the services received.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the need for continuous investment in healthcare infrastructure, human resources, and technology. The recruitment of additional medical personnel, modernization of emergency departments, implementation of digital healthcare management systems, and regular training programs for healthcare staff can significantly improve service quality. Strengthening emergency preparedness, ensuring the uninterrupted availability of medicines and equipment, and establishing effective patient feedback mechanisms can further contribute to enhanced healthcare outcomes and patient satisfaction.

The results of this research have important implications for healthcare administrators, policymakers, and government authorities. By understanding the factors that influence patient satisfaction, decision-makers can design targeted interventions to address service gaps and improve healthcare delivery. Investments in quality improvement initiatives can lead to better patient experiences, increased public trust, and more efficient utilization of healthcare resources. Additionally, improved emergency healthcare services can contribute to broader public health goals by reducing preventable complications, improving treatment outcomes, and enhancing the overall effectiveness of the healthcare system.

In conclusion, emergency healthcare service quality is a critical determinant of patient satisfaction in government hospitals. The study confirms that patients value responsive healthcare professionals, effective communication, adequate medical resources, cleanliness, and efficient service delivery. While challenges such as overcrowding and prolonged waiting times continue to affect patient experiences, these issues can be addressed through strategic planning, resource allocation, and healthcare reforms. By prioritizing quality improvement and patient-centered care, government hospitals can strengthen their role as trusted healthcare providers and ensure better health outcomes for the communities they serve. Ultimately, enhancing emergency healthcare services will not only improve patient satisfaction but also contribute to the development of a more responsive, efficient, and sustainable public healthcare system.

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