

“A Comparative Study to Assess the Attitude of People toward Seeking the Health Services Provided by the Government and Private Health Facilities in Amravati City”

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Abstract

Aims: The aims of this study were to assess the attitude of peoples toward seeking health services provided by the government and private hospitals in Amravati city.

Research Methodology: This community-based study was conducted in the selected urban community of Amravati city in the state of Maharashtra. A total of 60 adult populations in the urban community setup selected by Simple Random Sampling. The data were collected using five points Likert Attitude Scale. Which have 36 attitude statements, the data were analyzed by applying descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: The findings of this study indicated that the empirical findings are evidence that the respondents have a positive attitude toward both the health facilities. However, it inclined toward private hospitals as compared to government. The reason stated was due to less waiting time, the quality of health services, and customer satisfaction. They are and lacking of awareness regarding governmental health scheme. Hence, the study suggests that the government hospital need to create awareness regarding various health schemes which is beneficial and affordable to the public, so they can easily seek the health services also improve service quality and reduce the waiting time. In this study, there is no association of their attitude with the selected demographic variables.

Conclusion: Providing health services to their people is the responsibility of state government through health care delivery system. Health services are provided by various agencies. Public and Private sectors are important health agencies in India. These agencies have their own strength and weakness in service delivery. However, both have their own importance.

Keywords: Attitude, community people, government and private hospital, health-seeking services

INTRODUCTION

The health sector in India is characterized by a government sector that provides publicly financed and managed curative, preventive, and primitive health services from primary to tertiary level throughout the country free of cost to the people and a fee-levying private sector that plays a dominant role in the provisioning of curative care.

The provision of healthcare by the public sector is a responsibility shared by the state government, central government, and local governments in India. General health services are the primary responsibility of the states, with the central government focusing on medical education, drugs, population stabilization, and disease control. The National Health Programs of the central government are related to reproductive and child health and to the control of major communicable diseases. Besides, it also contributes significantly to state health programs. While, the private sector in India has a dominant presence in all the submarkets, including medical education and training, medical technology and diagnostics, pharmaceutical manufacture and sale, hospital construction and ancillary services, and, finally, the provisioning of medical care.

Access this article online

Website: <http://innovationalpublishers.com/Journal/ijnmi>

ISSN No: 2656-4656

DOI: 10.31690/ijnmi.2020.v05i04.006

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Health has been declared fundamental human rights. Health is, on the one hand, a highly personnel responsibility and, on the other hand, a major public concern. It thus involves the joint efforts of the whole the individual, the community, and the state to protect and promote health. Purpose of health services is to improve the health status of the population. Goal to be achieved has been fixed in terms of mortality and morbidity reduction, increase the expectation of life decrease in population growth rate improvement in nutritional status, provision of basic sanitation, health manpower requirements and resources development, and certain other parameters such as food production, literacy rate, and reduce the level of poverty.^[1]

India has a plurality of health care with different systems of medicine delivered by government and local bodies in hospitals and clinics. Public hospitals provide 60% of all hospitalizations, while the private sector provides 75% of all routine care.^[2]

In recent years, due to increased awareness and expectations of patients and health services customers from health-oriented organizations, paying attention to quality has become an essential issue. Today, patients pay more for their health and undoubtedly want to get more quality services because they are aware of the opportunity cost.^[3]

In Ramez's study to evaluate the quality of services provided at public and private hospitals of Bahrain, the results showed that patients were unsatisfied with services in both private and public hospitals; however, the quality of services in private hospitals was better than in public ones; in all dimensions of the study, except for empathy, a significant difference was observed.^[4]

Karekar *et al.* (2015) conducted the study on comparison of service quality between Private and Government Hospitals: Results showed that private hospital is delivering a better quality of services to their patients as compared to government hospital.^[5]

About 5% of the Indian government's annual expenditure goes toward healthcare. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), most of the healthcare expenditure in India – which averages \$75 per capita – comes from the private spending of households.^[6]

However, public hospitals in India are known for low-quality treatment, long waiting period, long distance, inconvenient location, and inadequate facilities in public hospitals.^[7] Hence, private care was preferred due to easy accessibility even in night, quick relief, and individual attention.^[8]

While working in the community, researchers were aware of their health problems, health beliefs, health practices, and their health attitude of the people. Majority of the clients who have health problems prefer private hospitals, the reason they prefer private hospital because of less waiting time, quality services, cleanliness, and respect from the health workers; thus, they

are satisfied with the services provided by private hospitals comparing to the government hospitals.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To assess the attitude of people toward seeking health services provided by government health facilities
2. To assess the attitude of peoples toward seeking health services provided by the private health facilities
3. To compare the attitude of people toward services provided by the private health facilities
4. And government health facilities
5. To find out the association of attitude with selected demographic variables of the people.

Hypothesis

1. Null hypothesis H_0 : There is no significant difference between attitude of people toward the services provided by private and government health facilities in Amravati city
2. Alternative hypothesis H_1 : There is a significant difference between attitude of people toward the services provided by private and government health facilities in Amravati city.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This community-based study was conducted in selected urban community of Amravati city in the state of Maharashtra. A total of 60 adult populations in the urban community setup selected as a sample by simple random sampling. The data were collected using five points Likert Attitude Scale which content 36 attitude statements. The data were analyzed by applying descriptive and inferential statistics.

STUDY RESULTS

Section-1: demographic profile of the respondents

Among the 60 respondents, majority (56.70%) were female and (43.30%) were male. As far as age of the participants is concerned, 23.30% were in the 16–20 years, 16.70% were in the age group of 21–25 years, 13.30% were in the age group of 26–30 years, 28.30% were in the age group of 31–35 years, and 18.30% of the people were in the age group of more than 36 years. As far as their education was concerned, majority (35%) respondents studied up to secondary, 25% educated up to primary level, and 18.30% up to higher secondary, only 16.70% were graduate and very few (5%) were post-graduate. About 66.70% were Hindus, a few (1.70%) of them were Christian and other religions, 8.30% of them were Muslim, and 21.70% of people were Buddhist. As far their employment was concerned, majority (38.30%) of them were self-employed and 35% were unemployed out of which 3.30% of the people were in government services, 15% of them were private service, and 8.30% of them was working on daily wages. Their income (71.70%) monthly family income of up to Rs. 10,000, (15%) Rs 11,000–20,000, (8.30%) Rs. 21,000–30,000, (3.30%) Rs.

31,000–40,000, and (1.70%) of them had monthly family income above Rs. 40000. The attitude mean score toward private hospital was (61.15) and government hospital (58.5) which showed an inclined toward private hospitals. There was no association of attitude with the selected demographic variables of the participants.

Section-2: Assessment of level of attitude of people toward the seeking health services provided by the government and private health facilities

This section deals with the assessment of the level of attitude of people toward seeking health services provided by government and private hospital in Amravati city. The level of attitude score is divided under the following heading of poor, average, good, and excellent [Tables 1-3].

Table 1 indicated that majority (70%) reported a good attitude followed by which (26%) showed an excellent attitude and very few (3.33%) reported average attitude scores toward seeking government health facilities. Mean attitude score was 58.50 ± 6.80 and mean percentage of attitude score was 68.82 ± 8.01 .

Table 2 indicated that majority (90%) reported a good attitude and very few (3.33%) reported excellent and (6.67%) average attitude scores toward seeking the services from private health facilities. Mean attitude score was 61.15 ± 5.88 and mean percentage of attitude score was 64.36 ± 6.19 .

Table 3 showed the overall mean positive attitude score of people toward government and private health facilities was 67.06 ± 6.93 and negative attitude mean score was 57.45 ± 6.41 . Range of positive attitude score was 46–82 and negative attitude it was 41–69. This indicated that people have a positive

attitude toward seeking health services from private as well as government hospitals.

Section-3: Comparison of attitude of people toward the seeking health services provided by the government and private hospital in Amravati City

This section deals with the comparison of the attitude of people toward the seeking health services provided by the government and private hospital in Amravati city.

The null hypothesis stated as follows;

H_0 : There is no significant difference between attitude of people toward the services provided by private and government hospitals in Amravati city.

The null hypothesis was tested statistically with a comparison of mean and standard deviation of attitude score. The levels of attitude of people toward the seeking health services provided by the government and private hospital were compared. Significance of difference at 5% level was tested with Student's unpaired " t " test and tabulated " t " value is compared with the calculated " t " value. Furthermore, the calculated " P " values are compared with acceptable " P " value, that is, 0.05 [Table 4].

Table 4 shows the comparison of the attitude of people toward seeking health services provided by government and private health facilities. Mean, standard deviation, and mean difference values are compared and Student's unpaired test was applied at 5% level of significance. The tabulated value for $n=120-2=118$ degrees of freedom was 1.98. The calculated " t " value, that is, 2.28 is higher than the tabulated value at 5% level of significance for the overall attitude score of people which is a statistically acceptable level of significance. Hence, it is statistically interpreted that the comparison of attitude score of people toward seeking health services provided by government and private hospitals was effective. Thus, the H_1 is accepted and H_0 was rejected. The mean positive attitude score of private hospital (61.15) is greater than the government health facilities (58.5), which indicated the inclined of their attitude toward private health facilities.

Table 1: Attitude of the people toward the seeking health services provided by government health facilities ($n=60$)

Level of attitude	Score range (%)	Level of attitude	
		No of people	Percentage
Poor	0–25	0	0
Average	26–50	2	3.33
Good	51–75	42	70
Excellent	76–100	16	26.67
Minimum score		42	
Maximum score		73	
Mean attitude score		58.50±6.80	
Mean % attitude Score		68.82±8.01	

Table 2: Attitude of the people toward the seeking services provided by private health facilities ($n=60$)

Level of attitude	Score range (%)	Level of attitude	
		No of people	Percentage
Poor	0–25	0	0
Average	26–50	4	6.67
Good	51–75	54	90
Excellent	76–100	2	3.33
Minimum score		47	
Maximum score		76	
Mean attitude score		61.15±5.88	
Mean % attitude score		64.36±6.19	

Table 3: The overall attitude score of the people toward seeking the health services provided by government and private health facilities ($n=60$)

Types of attitude	Mean	SD	Range
Positive attitude	67.06	6.93	46–82
Negative attitude	57.45	6.41	41–69

Before calculating the attitude score, the scoring key was decided as below. Negative attitude-1–50%. Positive attitude 51–100%

Table 4: Comparison of attitude score of people toward seeking health services provided by government and private hospital ($n=60$)

Overall	Mean	SD	Mean difference	t -value	P -value
Govt. Hospital	58.50	6.80	1.65±1.66	2.28	0.024
Pvt. Hospital	61.15	5.88			S, $P<0.05$

Section-4: Association of the level of attitude of people toward the seeking health services provided by private and Government Health Facilities with their demographic variables

In this study, there is no association of their attitude with the selected demographic variables.

DISCUSSION

Patient satisfaction is a set of attitudes and perceptions of patients toward health services. Patient satisfaction is a multifactorial concept. Diverse variables are used to analyze patient attitude, positive or negative, about the hospital services.^[9]

In this study, findings indicated that people have a positive attitude toward both the health facilities. However, the mean positive attitude score of the private hospital (61.15) was greater than the government health facilities (58.5), which indicated the inclined of their attitude toward private health facilities.

Health seeking behavior of people is dependent on the perception of people regarding the quality of health care services in health centers. In spite of living near govt. hospital people tend to go to a private hospital because according to them there are problems of cleanliness and hygiene, unawareness regarding govt. schemes and stated govt. hospitals are not patient-friendly, they have to wait for a long time and people think that they are not given any personal attention. The healthcare experts and other healthcare authorities should work together for increase the awareness of the public about the side effects of self-medication if used inappropriately and help people to make the right decision related to the health problems.

The health behavior of a particular person depends on their beliefs and attitude is sufficiently supported with external factors. The present study was conducted among 60 community peoples who are living in urban community area of Amravati city. The data were collected using Attitude Scale (Likert Scale) which content 36 items. This study result showed that attitude mean score of private hospital is 61.15 and government hospital mean score is 58.5.

A health education program is needed to increase awareness of the use of medicines among the general population and to enable them to make the right decisions relating to health problems. People should be made aware regarding Govt. schemes such low-cost drugs at Govt. hospital, low-cost investigations and less fees or charges in Govt. hospitals, this was similar to the findings from other studies.^[10]

The present study also stated that health service quality is very important. The government hospital services need to improve service quality so that the peoples will prefer more government hospital services as compared to a private hospital; this was similar to the findings from other studies.^[5,10,11]

While India is one of the preferred destinations for medical tourism, which implies that some our hospitals can provide world-class treatment at relatively lower costs, we also have hospitals which are understaffed, have insufficient facilities, no medicines, and may not even be able to provide a bed or an ambulance to a patient. For example, rural India contains 75% of the total population but only around 30% of the country's hospitals, hospital beds, and doctors. Imagine the sheer burden put on those rural health facilities and doctors because of this (Pragya Pranjali-2018).

CONCLUSION

The empirical findings are evidence that the respondents have a positive attitude toward both the health facilities. However, it inclined toward private hospitals as compared to government. The reason stated was due to less waiting time, the quality of health services, and customer satisfaction. They are and lacking of awareness regarding governmental health scheme. Hence, the study suggests that the government hospital need create the awareness regarding various health schemes which is beneficial and affordable to the public so they can easily seek the health services also improve service quality and reduce the waiting time.

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How to cite this article: Adhau P, Sonawane N. "A Comparative Study to Assess the Attitude of People toward Seeking the Health Services Provided by the Government and Private Health Facilities in Amravati City." *Int J Nurs Med Invest*. 2020;5(4):66-69.