

## LINKAGE BETWEEN SERVICE QUALITY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES: AN EMPIRICAL FOCUS

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### ABSTRACT

Service quality and patient satisfaction have become critical for any healthcare organization seeking to carve out a competitive edge. Consumer satisfaction is a fundamental requirement for healthcare service providers. To understand the factors affecting patient satisfaction, researchers have explored various service quality dimensions considered by patients when evaluating the healthcare quality, such as physician's expertise, convenience, degree of concern shown by the physicians and other medical staff and physical facilities. To analyze the level of patient satisfaction on basic service quality factors, a study was conducted in private and government hospitals in Kanyakumari District which are rendering services both to in and out patients simultaneously. The descriptive study was conducted using an interview schedule. Using T- statistics, the level of difference between private and the Government hospitals patients' has been computed and the impact of basic service quality factors on patients' satisfaction have been analyzed with the help of multiple regression analysis. Overall, the patients are perceiving reliability and empathy in a positive way in both the hospitals. Establishing a patient oriented healthcare system and improving it based on patients' perception may enhance not only the level of satisfaction but it leads to loyalty and retention to the same service provider again and again.

**KEY WORDS:** Service quality, health care, Consumer satisfaction,