



Research article

**STUDYING THE PATIENTS' LOYALTY AND SATISFACTION STATUS REFERRED TO MEDICAL SCIENCES HOSPITALS OF YASOOJ**

ZYNAB ZARIN <sup>1</sup>, RAHIM OSTVAR <sup>2\*</sup>, IRAVAN MASOUDI ASL <sup>3</sup>

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**AUTHOR DETAILS**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Healthcare Management, Fars Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran.

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Social Determinants of Health Research Center, Yasuj University of Medical Sciences, Yasuj, Iran.

<sup>3</sup>PhD of Health Services Management, Associate Professor, Majlis Research Center, Tehran, Iran.

\*Corresponding author email:

rahimostovar@yahoo.com

**ABSTRACT**

The Goal of present research namely "Studying the patients' loyalty and satisfaction status referred to Medical Sciences hospitals of Yasooj "is given to the results obtained from the analyses done can reduce the patients' dissatisfaction resulting from the following mentioned issues and increases their loyalty to the hospitals. This research includes 7 hypotheses and the method of gathering data is questionnaire. The research questionnaire consists of two parts: the first part is related to the patients' satisfaction and the second on measures their loyalty. To analyze data, the software SPSS was used. The studies performed that there is a significant relationship between the patients' satisfaction and loyalty and the service status. Also, there is a significant relationship between the remaining hypotheses including the patients' age and gender and the service status. There is a significant relationship between the patients' age and their gender. There is also a significant relationship between the patients' loyalty and satisfaction with their residency.

**Keywords:** Loyalty, Satisfaction, Patient's age, patient's gender.

**INTRODUCTION**

The satisfaction of the healthcare service plays an important role to prevent and treatment diseases such that increasing the subjects' satisfaction results in improving them faster and better physically and mentally. Therefore satisfying the patients more and more causes them to perform correctly and timely their treatment guidelines and results in the fast progress of treatment and approaching the main goal of treatment that is the patients' improvement. It finally results in establishing loyalty and satisfaction in the patients and their attendants<sup>[1,2]</sup>.

The patients' satisfaction rate is an important criterion to evaluate the quality of health care and provide us with the important information in terms of meeting the clients' needs, values and expectations. The patients' satisfaction includes receiving the appropriate health-treatment services to provide their health and meeting their internal tendencies and needs. As an index to

study the quality of service provided during the recent decades, satisfaction has found a specific place (Moein zade. 2012)<sup>[3]</sup>. An efficient health system can approach its goal that is to provide the health of society only through providing the desired services. Evaluating this system requires evaluate its services. As any other institutions to success, the hospitals need to remain their customers and their loyalty. Indeed, the patients' loyalty results in reducing costs and increasing revenue for the hospital. In today's competitive market, the mouth to mouth advertising by the patients or their families is very important and valuable. The patients and their families' positive experiences from the hospital is valuable. actually the patients perception of the service received is valuable. Also, increasing the customers' awareness from the service provided by these organizations results in increasing their expectations such that the patients request for the more participation in their own treatment programs

(Dager et al. 2009)<sup>[4]</sup>. The patients who are satisfied the provided service level will refer to the same hospital or continue their treatment in the same hospital; hence, while they pay their costs of treatment service will produce the revenue for the hospital. Establishing loyalty in the patients, the doctors can increase the profit less than 5% to 25% (Syed Javadin & Kimasy, 2014). Since providing the service lower than the expectancy limit always results in reducing the validity and confidence of the customers and users of service from the service providers, the customers and clients' dissatisfaction and their negative advertising cause the loss and destruction of the related organization (Haghighi Kafash and Akbary, 2011)<sup>[5]</sup>.

**METERIALS AND METHODS**

the present research has been performed to study the patients' loyalty and satisfaction status in the Medical Sciences hospitals of Yasooj. Therefore, 7 hypotheses have been considered. Two inventories were used to gather the research data. The first inventory measures the patients' satisfaction and the second one measures their loyalty. The mentioned inventory take advantage of content validity. Table 1 shows the results of its reliability measurement. The statistical universe includes the patients hospitalized in the teaching hospitals of Shahid Beheshti and Imam Sajad in Yasooj. Our study case consists of 400 subjects. Finally, the gathered data was analyzed by the software SPSS.

1-Inventory reliability

Cronbach alpha	Components
0.769	Inventory of patients' satisfaction
0.812	Inventory of patients' loyalty

**RESULTS**

In this section to prove the research hypotheses Pearson test was used. According to this test results the significance level less than 0.05 demonstrates the significant relationship between two variables.

**Research hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1: there is a significant relationship between the patients ' satisfaction and the service status.**

**Table 2. Results of testing the research hypothesis 1**

		patients· satisfaction
Services status	Correlation coefficient	.197**
	Significance level	.000
	numbers	400

The above table shows there is a relationship between two variables of the patients' satisfaction and service status (due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive.

**Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between the patient's loyalty and service status.**

**Table 3. Results of testing the research hypothesis 1**

		patients' loyalty
Services status	correlation coefficient	.475**
	Significance level	.000
	numbers	400

Considering the above table, there is relationship between two variables of the patients' loyalty and services status (due to the significance level less than 0.05). It is noted that due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive.

**Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between the patients' age and services status.**

**Table 4. Results of testing the research hypothesis3**

		patients' age
services status	correlation coefficient	.912**
	Significant level	.000
	Numbers	400

Given to the above table. there is relationship between two variables of the patients' age and services status (due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive.

**Hypothesis 4: The patients' gender has a significant relationship with the service s status.**

**Table 5. Results of testing the research hypothesis 4**

		patients' gender
Services status	Correlation coefficient	.874**
	Significant level	.000
	Numbers	400

Considering the above table. there is relationship between two variables of the patients' gender and services status (due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive.

**Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between the patients' loyalty and their age.**

**Table 6. Results of testing the research hypothesis 5**

		patients' loyalty
patients' age	Correlation coefficient	.307**
	Significant level	.003
	Numbers	400

According to the above table. there is relationship between two variables of the patients' age and the customers ' loyalty(due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive.

**Hypothesis 6: There is a significant between the patients' gender and loyalty**

**Table 7. Results of testing the research hypothesis 6**

		patients' loyalty
Patients' gender	Correlation coefficient	.633**
	Significant level	.000
	Numbers	400

The above table shows that relationship is between two variables of the patients ' gender and loyalty (due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive.

**Hypothesis 7: There is a significant relationship between the patients' satisfaction and loyalty with their residency.**

**Table 8. Results of testing the research hypothesis 7**

		patients' loyalty	Satisfacti on
Residency	Correlation coefficient	.626**	.453**
	Significant level	.000	.000
	numbers	400	400

According to the above table there is relationship between two variables of the customers' loyalty and residency (due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive. Also there is relationship between two variables of the customers' satisfaction and residency (due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive.

**DISCUSSION**

Results show that there is a relation between patients' satisfaction and the quality of services(due to less than the significance level of 0.05). It should be noted that due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive. Also, there is a relation between these two variables; the patients' devotion and the quality of services. Between the patients' age and the quality of services there is a positive relation due to the value of correlation ratio. Furthermore, results show that 58% of people who are older than 40 years old were satisfied with the quality of services. So we can say young people have more expectations from welfare, health care included. (due to less than the significance level of 0.05)

There is a relation between the patients' sex and quality of services (due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive. In addition, result show 74% of men were satisfied with the quality of services

while only 26% of women were satisfied. This difference between the satisfaction of men and women is justifiable due to the cultural background of more attention to men and priority of offering services to men, in the studied province.

According to the results we can say that due to different expectations between men and women the amount of informed satisfaction is different. In addition, there is a relation between these two variables; patients' age and patients' devotion to services (due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive.

Results indicate that 46% of people who are older than 40 years old have more devotion to the received services. According to these results we can say that in this age category because of stronger probability of catching diseases the devotion to health care services is more important and due to the probability of catching diseases these people prefer to have proper health services in order to have more confidence in their health. There is a relation between patients' sex and their devotion to health care services (due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive. Furthermore, results show that 54% of men and 46% of women inform their devotion to the health care service due to the received services. According to these results we can say that men are more satisfied with health services and this point affects the probability of men devotion to health care services.

There is a relation between patients' devotion and their living location (due to less than the significance level of 0.05). Due to the value of the correlation ratio this statistical relation is positive.

Also results show that 23% of patients who live in cities informed devotion to services. 34% of patients who informed their satisfaction with and devotion to services were from the country and 43% were nomads. According to these results we can say the inaccessibility of nomads to health care services causes their satisfaction and devotion to services when receiving health care services at hospitals. Also because of limited accessibility in the countryside compared to cities, villagers have more satisfaction and devotion to the received services.

Making suggestions to the managers and planners of the hospitals dependent on Medical Sciences of Yasooj -Considering the confirmation of the research hypothesis based on the significant relationship between the customers' satisfaction and the services provided by the hospital. It is recommended to the managers of the hospitals in where the present research has been performed to increase the patients' satisfaction through establishing some educational courses for the personnel employing in the hospital. Also it is recommended through establishing the satisfaction measurement systems. The rate of patients' satisfaction or dissatisfaction before discharge is measured<sup>[6-8]</sup>.

Ability to develop loyalty in the patients seems to have a direct relationship with the patients' satisfaction. The patients will be loyal to the hospital if they are adequately satisfied the services received. Also, it should be considered the patients' loyalty is hardly established<sup>[9-12]</sup>. One of the most important problems to establish loyalty in the patients is the costs related to treatment. Therefore, the strong satisfaction resulting in loyalty in the patients can be a reliable lever for the hospital on attracting the healthcare users.

## CONCLUSION

One of the most important results of this research is that the demographic factors such as age, gender, residency and can be considered as the very effective variables related to the customers' satisfaction and loyalty. Hence, given to the results obtained of the present research the managers and chiefs of the hospitals in which this research has been done are suggested that make aware their personnel the effectiveness of these variables in the satisfaction and loyalty rate of the patients. The awareness of the personnel on the effect of these components on the patients' satisfaction and loyalty can influence directly the mode of behavior of the personnel with the patients.

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