

Deterrents of Complaining: An Empirical Study of Inpatients

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ABSTRACT The purpose of the present research is to identify the reasons behind non-complaining behavior of inpatients, despite their dissatisfaction with the hospital services. This paper also looks into the various responses of non-complainers after a dissatisfaction episode. This is an empirical research done in the various districts of one of the southern states of India, Kerala. A self-administered structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data that was analyzed using SPSS (version 16.0). The research found that majority of non-complainers opted to switch to another hospital the next time they had an illness after confronting with a dissatisfaction episode with hospital services. Using multiple response scale, it was found that 'perceived relative inability' was the major reason that dissuaded non-complainers from overt complaining behavior. In addition, using Likert scale, it was found that majority of the non-complainers fell in the moderate level of perceived disempowerment category. Besides, using t-test and ANOVA, it was found that there was no true statistically significant difference between perceived level of disempowerment of non-complainers and their socio-economic and demographic variables. This would help private and cooperative hospitals, who are cautious about revenue generation and goodwill, to develop better complaint management and service recovery strategies for tracking consumer dissatisfaction and further actions of consumers. Above all, it is also hoped that this research would add more inputs to the existing CCB literature on healthcare sector in general and hospitals in particular.