

Inpatient Complaining Behaviour: A Study on the Overt and Covert Behaviour of Inpatients in Indian Hospitals

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ABSTRACT Consumer dissatisfaction and complaining behaviour have always been a topic of discussion in educational institutes and industries alike. Whereas dissatisfaction with product purchases and subsequent returns or associated consumer responses is very common, the same in the service sector has been quite different. In India, it is not only the patient who decides, which healthcare service to opt for, because Indians are culturally embedded in a system of collective consumption where other family members or relatives or friends also influence their decision-making. This paper is an exploratory study done to comprehend the chosen behavioural responses of dissatisfied inpatients in India through a questionnaire survey. The survey followed a retrospective recall technique in which the recall window was fixed at six months. The sampling technique followed was probability sampling. The data collection tool was structured and self-administered questionnaire administered in the sampled nine districts of Kerala. A good number of respondents attributed their overt complaining behaviour to lack of cordiality of doctors, nurses or the attending staff and lack of proper care and concern from doctors or nurses. Post complaining, service recovery was found to be satisfactory for most of the complainers.