

## **ABSTRACT**

Evaluation of patients expected and perceived quality of hospital services using servqual approach in southern part of Tamil Nadu were analysed in this research. The identification of the research problem may be identified as the ground water is highly polluted by the tanneries and textiles industries especially in select southern districts of Tamil Nadu namely Dindigul, Madurai, Theni and Tirunelveli. There are many diseases spread out in these areas where better hospital services are needed. Though many hospitals are in existence, the quality of services is not fulfilling the expectations of the patients. This research systematically analyses the service quality of private and public hospitals. Service Quality of hospitals becomes very essential for patients' satisfaction and retention. Hence the present study has made an attempt to fill up the research gap with proposed research model.

In all items of service quality, perception is slightly less than expectation of patients. The only few exceptions are ease of discharge and convenient timing of service delivery for patients. It does not mean patients are expecting more. Rather it means that their satisfaction has not matched their expectation. The more facilities available at the hospital, the better will be the feeling of patients. Therefore, hospitals, both in public and private sector, need to concentrate on augmenting the facilities including modern equipment in the hospitals.

However, the facilities provided should be need based and hospitals have to bear in mind that mere availability of facilities will not work in their favour. Availability of qualified doctors to make use of the facilities for treatment is equally important. It is in this context the private hospitals are able to take on the government hospitals. The study confirms that general feeling about a hospital is a leading factor when it comes to choice of hospital. So, every hospital should work to create a favourable public opinion.

People view hospital service in the four districts as medium in quality. So, there is tremendous need and scope for improvement in all areas.