



FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PREFERENCE OF PRIVATE HOSPITALS TO PUBLIC HOSPITALS IN OMAN

Ms. Sheikha Mohammed Ali Al-Balushi¹, Dr. M. Firdouse Rahman Khan²

^{1,2} Faculty of Business, Sohar University, Sultanate of Oman

Email: sbalushi@soharuni.edu.om, firdouse4u@yahoo.co.uk

Article History: Received on 05th October, Revised on 24th October, Published on 02nd November 2017

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The objectives of the study are to analyze the factors which influence patients to go to private hospitals against public hospitals of Oman and to analyze the expectations of patients from the integrated public hospitals in Oman.

Design/methodology/approach: The study was carried out with a well-defined questionnaire through which 251 survey samples were collected on a random sampling basis.

Findings: The results of the study reveal that there is an association between the selection of hospital and services and the cost of the services offered in the hospital and it is found that the cost of services incurred makes an impact in the selection of hospital for medical treatment. The study also revealed that in private hospitals patients could easily approach anyone including the reception staff and all are helpful, and the private hospitals are equipped with modern equipment, and doctors treat patients in a friendly manner.

Research limitations/Implications: The majority of the population taken for the study are aged above 20 years, and the samples were collected from selected regions of Oman, and wide range collection of samples from all the regions will help to improve the solution.

Social implications: The study suggests that sufficient medicines should be provided in all the public health centers and periodic inspection should be conducted at regular intervals to improve the standards of the public health Centers and Government Hospitals concerning cleanliness, treatments and the front line services.

Originality/Value: No study has examined the causes for the hospital selection delay in the construction projects of Oman, and it is a first-hand study of its kind and the results will be useful to the stakeholders.

Keywords – *Private hospitals of Oman; Public Hospitals of Oman; Patients' preference; Services; Cost of treatment.*

INTRODUCTION

Under the patronage of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, the focus of Government is towards improvising the lifestyle of nationals and providing a healthy and safe environment to the country – Sultanate of Oman. Considering this as a long-term mission, Ministry of health has been given more attention, and the Health Visions has been extended to 2050 to enhance the health services provided to the public in the Sultanate. Oman Government has invested a lot in providing such health services to the public of Oman through Ministry of Health (MOH) through their established health centers and specialty hospitals in every region of Oman. The Ministry of Health had also established a health directorate in each region of the Sultanate. One such directorate is in Al Batinah located at Sohar. These directorates are responsible for managing and moderating the workflow of all the public and private hospitals in Oman. As of date, there are 60 hospitals, out of which 50 of them are integrated hospitals belonging to the Ministry of Health, and further there are 248 medical health centers. Besides, there are private clinics and hospitals as well.

Although the efforts of MOH is to raise the efficiency level of its hospitals and to provide a high level of the medical services to the citizens, people prefer to get the medical treatment in private hospitals rather than public hospitals for unknown reasons. The main purpose of the study is to find out the reasons behind their choices of choosing private hospital against public hospital. The study brings out the facts why people are reluctant to go to public hospitals and what impedes them. The study will throw light on the factors which make the patients choose Private Hospital against public hospitals and get treated at private hospitals and also to know what exactly induces the patients to go outside Oman for treatment?

The study will help the Government to take necessary action to reduce this phenomenon. This research will be directly benefiting the Ministry of health to improve the efficiency of the health sector and to provide satisfactory, attractive and quality services in the public hospitals to earn back the trust of citizens. The research will also be beneficial to the owners of



private hospitals, the medical graduates and the society on the whole and the study will lead to building quality and safety healthcare system in the Sultanate.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For carrying out the research, an initial pilot survey was conducted to examine the questionnaire. The study was carried out with a well-defined questionnaire through which 251 survey samples were collected on a random sampling basis which includes people from universities, colleges, schools, companies, Banks, Governmental authorities and institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

[Samir and Karim](#) (2011) stated that though the healthcare system in Oman is commendable, issues such as long waiting times, costly private healthcare services and the idea of leisure with healthcare attracts a significant number of Omanis towards medical tourism. [AlDhawi and West](#) (2006) stated that a sustainable health care system is required in Oman to achieve its objectives over time. [Pavel, Chakrabarty, and Gow](#) (2016) found that public hospital patients, who tend to be the poorest, bear a larger economic burden of illness and treatment than relatively wealthier private hospital patients. [Basu et al.](#) (2012) identified that the public hospital frequently appears to lack timeliness and hospitality towards patients. Even [Mrayyan](#) (2004) found that Nurses who work in private hospitals were more satisfied and intended to retain their jobs more than nurses in public hospitals. [Balushi](#) (2015) confirmed that the nurses at the public hospitals are tensed while performing their duties, cannot perform diligently and want to move to administration jobs in Ministry of Health, Oman. [Pongsupap and Lerberghe](#) (2006) found that the waiting time was longer at all stages: at reception, between reception and consultation and much more longer before the consultation. [Andaleeb](#) (2000) showed that the quality in private hospital is driving many patients to the private hospital. [Khattak et al.](#) (2012) found that the patients in private sector hospitals are more satisfied than those in public sector hospitals. [Irfan and Ijaz](#) (2011) showed that private hospitals provide better services to their patients compared to public hospitals. [Motwani and Shrimali](#) (2014b) found that the four important factors which influence the patients' decision while selecting the hospitals for treatment are the availability of qualified and experienced Doctors, 24*7 Services, experience with the hospital and the availability of trained Nursing staff. [Chen and Kao](#) (2011) identified the marketing means of influencing consumers' choice of hospitals are: free consultation, referrals, free treatments, mailing of clinic schedules, TV news exposure, and providing education in public health and hygiene. [Cooper et al.](#) (2015) found that the factors relating to cost and quality are systematically correlated with higher hospital prices viz. hospital market structure. [Motwani and Shrimali](#) (2014a) put forth the elements which differentiate hospitals from competitors are price transparency, hospital services at patients' location, medical staff behavior, tangibility, and process through technology. [Baddour and Abbas](#) (2016) found that the majority of hospitals were already using computer applications. [Koksal et al.](#) (2012) found the health communication tool websites are used by private hospitals effectively. [Al Rashdi and Al Qasmi](#) (2012) showed the need to implement strategies that deal effectively with the platform and programs that reinforce the culture of quality service amongst healthcare providers to improve patient satisfaction. [Lee et al.](#) (1996) found that satisfaction was highly correlated with perceptions about physician order entry effect on productivity than with physician order entry effect on quality of care. [Al-Mujaini, Al Farsi, Al Maniri and Ganesh](#) (2011) identified the low report satisfaction and perceived the quality of work among physicians in institutions with Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system. [Al Farsi and West](#) (2005) identified that EMR at Sur (Oman) had improved the communication between the departments and the quality care of patients. [Wanjau, Muiruri, and Ayodo](#) (2012) found that low employee's capacity, low technology, ineffective communication channels and insufficient fund affect the service quality in public health sector affecting the perceptions, patient satisfaction, and loyalty. [Chao-Chan](#) (2011) indicated that hospital brand image is an important factor in the field of healthcare which offers a useful avenue for improving patient satisfaction and loyalty. [Kim et al.](#) (2006) identified the factors that influence the brand equity through customer relationships are trust, customer satisfaction, relationship commitment, brand loyalty, and brand awareness. [Kondasani and Panda](#) (2015) found that the customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between perceived service quality and customer loyalty.

FINDINGS

Table.1 Demographic details of the respondents

Characteristics		Frequency	%
Nationality	Omani	184	73.3
	Non-Omani	67	26.7
Gender	Male	127	50.6
	Female	124	49.4
Age	20 – < 30 years	88	35.1

	30 – < 40 years	97	38.6
	40 – < 50 years	49	19.5
	50 – < 60 years	11	4.4
	60 years and above	6	2.4
Qualification	Secondary or below	71	28.3
	Diploma	53	21.1
	Degree	89	35.5
	Others	38	15.1
Employment Status	Working	207	82.5
	Not working	44	17.5
Marital Status	Married	193	76.9
	Single	57	22.7
	Divorce/Divorced	0	0.0
	Other	1	0.4
Location	Suhar	153	61.0
	Shinas	8	3.2
	Saham	61	24.3
	Liwa	6	2.8
	Barka	1	0.4
	Muscat	6	2.4
	Ibri	0	0.0
	Suwaiq	2	0.8
	Nizwa	0	0.0
	Salalah	0	0.0
	Musandam	4	1.6
	Yanqul	1	0.4
	Al Khaboura	5	2.0
	Others	3	1.2
Family Monthly Income	< RO 200	40	15.9
	RO 200 – Ro 500	72	28.7
	RO 500- 1000	68	27.1
	RO 1000 and above	71	28.3
	Others	5	2.4
No. of members in the Family	< 4	88	35.1
	4- 7	102	40.6
	7- 12	50	19.9
	>12	11	4.4

Source: Questionnaire

Table 2. Services / Facilities

#	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	K-S value	Chi Square	P value
1	In private hospitals patients easily approach the reception staffs	32 12.7%	17 6.8%	31 12.4%	94 37.5%	77 30.7%	4.457	113.474	.000
2	I feel free to tell the doctor at the private hospital my problems rather than one at the public hospital	25 10%	47 18.7%	63 25.1%	63 25.1%	53 21.1%	2.275		
3	In private hospitals patients get easy online booking services	32 12.7%	42 16.7%	80 31.9%	56 22.3%	41 16.3%	2.603		
4	Waiting time is lesser in a private hospital	18 7.2%	32 12.7%	75 29.9%	63 25.1%	63 25.1%	2.675		

5	The private hospital buildings are clean and tidy compared to public Hospital	18 7.2%	25 10%	68 27.1%	78 31.1%	62 24.7%	3.223		
6	Private hospitals are equipped with modern pre-observatory equipment	20 8.0%	22 8.8%	55 21.9%	103 41%	51 20.3%	4.120		
7	In private hospitals, doctors treat patients with high respect	21 8.4%	22 8.8%	60 23.9%	88 35.1%	60 23.9%	3.645		
8	In private hospitals, doctor gives enough time to patients to explain their difficulties	19 7.6%	21 8.4%	65 25.9%	82 32.7%	64 25.5%	3.400		
9	In private hospitals, patients can obtain all sorts of medicines in the pharmacy	25 10%	38 15.1%	64 25.5%	63 25.1%	61 24.3%	2.830		
10	Food provided in a private hospital is better than food provided in a public hospital	16 6.4%	41 16.3%	85 33.9%	58 23.1%	51 20.3%	2.901		
11	In private hospitals, doctors ask patients to do necessary tests only	29 11.6%	31 12.4%	62 24.7%	68 27.1%	61 23.4%	3.040		
12	In public hospitals, they provide only basic medicines for all the diseases	31 12.4%	26 10.4%	83 33.1%	65 25.9%	46 18.3%	2.926		
13	In public hospitals, they do regular basic checkups only and do not do the necessary tests	26 10.4%	53 21.1%	73 29.1%	55 21.9%	44 17.5%	2.445		
14	In private hospitals, I can approach the doctor to clarify my doubts regarding the treatment	20 8%	38 15.1%	73 29.1%	63 25.1%	57 22.7%	2.674		

The above table shows that p-value is less than 0.05. So the null hypothesis: “There is no relationship between the services/ facilities of the Hospital and the choices of the respondents” gets rejected. i.e., It connotes that there is a significant relationship between the Service/ Facilities of the Hospital and the choices of the respondents. Comparing the K-S values obtained from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it is observed that ‘In private hospitals, patients easily approach the reception staff’ ranks first followed by ‘Private hospitals are equipped with modern pre-observatory equipment’ and ‘ In the private hospitals, doctors treat patients with high respect.’

Table 3. Efficiency

#	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	K-S value	Chi Square	P value
1	In private hospitals doctors treat patients in a friendly manner	38 15.1%	15 6%	34 13.5%	103 41%	61 24.3%	4.600	51.108	.033
2	In public hospitals, doctor leave patients with many questions unanswered about his/her health condition	16 6.4%	50 19.9%	82 32.7%	46 18.3%	32 12.7%	2.625		
3	In public hospitals, doctors use words that patients do not understand, but in private hospitals, they explain fully	41 16.3%	50 19.9%	82 32.7%	46 18.3%	32 12.7%	2.623		

4	In private hospitals, patients feel free to ask doctors any questions	34 13.5%	41 16.3%	69 27.5%	71 28.3%	36 14.3%	2.893		
5	In private hospital, I felt the nurses are qualified, skilled and trained to deal with emergency situations	43 17.1%	44 17.5%	66 26.3%	58 23.1%	40 15.9%	2.523		
6	In private hospitals, doctors keep me away from worrying	27 10.8%	28 11.2%	68 27.1%	84 33.5%	44 17.5%	3.367		
7	Doctors at the private hospital examines me with utmost care compared to the doctor at public hospital	26 10.4%	43 17.1%	61 24.3%	76 30.3%	45 17.9%	3.183		
8	Doctors at private hospital seems to have genuine interest in me	22 8.8%	52 20.7%	64 25.5%	66 26.3%	47 18.7%	2.820		
9	I feel great confidence in the doctors at private hospitals	40 15.9%	40 15.9%	56 22.3%	71 28.3%	44 17.5%	3.102		
10	Doctors at private hospital seems to be competent and trained	36 14.3%	42 16.7%	62 24.7%	67 26.7%	44 17.5%	2.889		

The above table shows that p-value is less than 0.05. So the null hypothesis: “There is no relationship between the efficiency of the Hospital and the choices of the respondents” gets rejected. i.e., It connotes that there is a significant relationship between the efficiency of the hospital and the choices of the respondents. Comparing the K-S values obtained from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it is observed that ‘In private hospitals, doctors treat patients in a friendly manner’ ranks first followed by ‘In Private hospital doctors keep me away from worrying’ and ‘Doctors at private hospitals examines me with utmost care compared to the doctor at public hospital.’

Table 4. Cost of Treatment

#	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	K-S value	Chi Square	P value
1	The cost of transportation going to the public hospital at Muscat is greater than the cost of treatment at a private hospital in my area	54 21.5%	39 15.5%	68 27.1%	57 22.7%	33 13.1%	2.506	111.211	.000
2	The cost of my stay for treatment purposes at Muscat exceeds the charges at a local private hospital	35 13.9%	35 13.9%	65 25.9%	76 30.3%	40 15.9%	3.131		
3	I feel the indirect cost of getting appointments with public hospital due to repeated attempts pushes me to approach a private hospital in my area	45 17.9%	24 9.6%	54 21.5%	77 30.7%	51 20.3%	3.420		
4	I have experienced spending more towards going to a public hospital than a private hospital locally	46 18.3%	73 29.1%	63 25.1%	45 17.9%	24 9.6%	3.063		

5	Cost of treatment is more in private hospital, but I get a better treatment	30 12%	25 10%	59 23.5%	83 33.1%	54 21.5%	3.518		
6	Cost of treatment is not a matter of concern if I get medicines of my choice	25 10%	28 11.2%	40 15.9%	79 31.5%	79 31.5%	3.811		
7	Cost of treatment, doctor's fees, and medicines is not an issue as I get timely treatment and cure from a private hospital	23 9.2%	33 13.1%	39 15.5%	78 31.1%	78 31.1%	3.764		

The above table shows that p-value is less than 0.05. So the null hypothesis: "There is no relationship between the cost of the hospital services and the choices of the respondents" gets rejected. i.e., It connotes that there is a significant relationship between the cost of the hospital services and the choices of the respondents. Comparing the K-S values obtained from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, 'Cost of treatment is not a matter of concern whereas I like to get medicines of my choice' ranks first followed by 'Cost of treatment, doctor's fees and medicines is not an issue as I get timely treatment and cure from a private hospital' and 'Cost of treatment is more in private hospital, but I get a better treatment'.

Table 5. Hospital Selection

#	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	K-S value	Chi Square	P value
1	Availability of modern and advanced equipment in the hospital is the reason for selecting the hospital	23 9.2%	28 11.2%	30 12%	78 31.1%	92 36.7%	4.018	130.992	.000
2	Specialty services (all under one roof) may be the reason for choosing	14 5.6%	33 13.1%	37 14.7%	100 39.8%	67 26.7%	4.289		
3	Reputation of doctors working in the hospital attracts patients in choosing	9 3.6%	25 10%	44 17.5%	78 31.1%	95 37.8 %	3.578		
4	The overall appearance of the hospital contributes to the patient's choice of hospital	21 8.4%	46 18.3%	70 27.9%	64 25.5%	50 19.9%	2.703		
5	Good room and hygienic food provided in the hospital contributes to the choice of the hospital	13 5.2%	38 15.1%	54 21.5%	80 31.9%	66 26.3%	3.453		
6	The location of the hospital attracts the patients to choose a hospital	29 11.6%	36 14.3%	78 31.1%	73 29.1%	35 13.9%	2.858		
7	Cashless treatment and insurance facilities will be a reason for choosing the hospital for treatment	28 11.2%	30 12%	57 22.7%	99 39.4%	37 14.7%	3.946		
8	The availability of transport and communication facilities contribute to the choice of hospital	15 6%	32 12.7%	83 33.1%	81 32.3%	40 15.9%	3.071		
9	The availability of transport and communication facilities contribute to the choice of hospital	35 13.9%	32 12.7%	83 33.1%	81 32.3%	40 15.9%	3.071		

10	The cost of staying in hotel close to the hospital encourages the choice of hospital	35 13.9%	59 23.5%	65 25.9%	64 25.5%	28 11.2%	2.685		
11	The abundance of hospitals contributes to choosing the right hospital to treat	26 10.4%	31 12.4%	38 15.1%	106 42.2%	50 19.9%	4.465		
12	Availability of Ambulance may be an important reason to choose the hospital	19 7.6%	43 17.1%	83 33.1%	67 26.7%	39 15.5%	2.631		

The above table shows that p-value is less than 0.05. So the null hypothesis: “There is no relationship between the selection of the Hospital and the choices of the respondents” gets rejected. i.e., It connotes that there is a significant relationship between the selection of the hospital and the choices of the respondents. Comparing the K-S values obtained from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test it is observed that, ‘The abundance of hospitals contributes to choosing the right hospital to treat’ ranks first followed by ‘Specialty services (all under one roof) may be the reason for choosing the hospital for treatment’ and ‘Availability of modern and advanced equipment in the hospital is the reason for selecting the hospital for treatment’.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Table 6. (a), (b), (c)&(d): Variables Entered/Removed

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Service /Facilities, Efficiency, Cost, Hospital Selection	...	Enter

^a Dependent Variable: Hospital Selection, ^b All requested Variable entered.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.723 ^a	.522	.516	6.317

^a Predictors: (constant), Cost, Service, Efficiency.

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum Of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	10764.686	3	3588.229	89.931	.000 ^b
Residual	9855.234	247	39.900		
Total	20619.920	250			

^a Dependent Variable: Hospital Selection, ^a Predictors: (constant), Cost, Service, Efficiency.

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std.Error			
(constant)	12.104	1.699		7.123	.000
Service/ Facilities	.178	.055	.231	3.224	.001
Efficiency	.092	.078	.097	1.186	.237
Cost	.629	.100	.456	6.279	.000

^a Dependent Variable: Hospital Selection

From the above table, it can be seen that the p-value for Efficiency is .237 which is (.237) more than 0.05.

Therefore, eliminating this variable, the regression analysis is carried out again, and we obtained the results as follows:

Table 7. (a), (b), (c) & (d) Variables Entered/Removed

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Cost, Service	...	Enter

^a Dependent Variable: Hospital Selection, ^b All requested Variable entered.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.721 ^a	.521	.515	6.322

^a Predictors: (constant), Cost, Service.

ANOVA

Model	Sum Of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	10708.533	2	5354.266	133.973	.000 ^b
Residual	9911.387	248	39.965		
Total	20619.920	250			

^a Dependent Variable: Hospital Selection, ^a Predictors: (constant), Cost, Service.

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	12.069	1.700		7.098	.000
Service	.211	.047	.275	4.439	.000
Cost	.691	.085	.501	8.090	.000

^a Dependent Variable: Hospital Selection

From the above table No. 7(a), (b), (c) & (d), we obtain the regression line as follows:

$$SH = 12.069 + .211 S + .691 C$$

Where H – Selection of Hospital

S – Services / Facilities

C – Cost of the Services offered

There is an association between the selection of hospital and Services and Cost of the services. In other words, Services / Facilities offered in the hospital, and the cost of services incurred makes an impact in the selection of hospital for medical treatment.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

There are professionally skilled and talented good doctors are available in public integrated hospitals of Oman. Though the cost of treatment is more in private hospitals of Oman, they are assured of getting better treatment. So they prefer private hospitals as they get their medicines of their choice, timely treatment, and cure. Indeed, they prefer private hospitals for the following reasons:

- They do not face long waiting time in the private hospitals
- Getting online booking service is easier
- Equipped with modern pre-observatory equipment
- Timely treatment
- Utmost care during patients’ treatment
- They feel free to discuss their problems with the doctors
- The get due respect from the doctors while their treatment
- Doctors keep the patients away from worrying

- They believed that the nurses are qualified, skilled and trained to deal with emergency situations
- The availability of all medicines
- Obtaining medicines of their choice suitable to their body conditions
- The appearance of the hospital
- The hospitals are kept clean and tidy and
- Availability of advanced equipment and ambulance in the hospital

The respondents also stated that the food provided in a private hospital is much better than food provided in a public hospital. They have also reported that in private hospitals, doctors ask patients to do necessary tests only. Most of the respondents also agree that they can easily approach the doctors to clarify their doubts regarding the treatment.

The above facts can be explained using a model viz. Selection – Cost – Services Model (SCS Model). Figuratively,

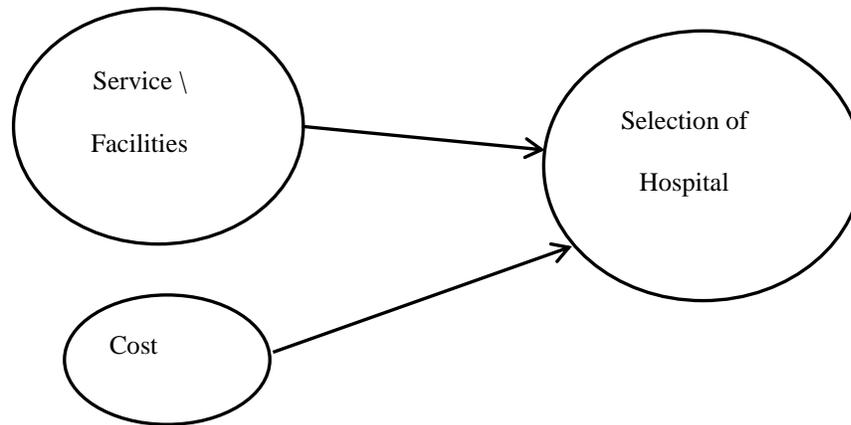


Fig.1 Selection – Cost – Services Model

On the other hand, most the respondents feel that public hospitals provide only basic medicines for all the diseases and they do regular basic checkups only and do not do the necessary tests. Most of the respondents agree that in public hospital, doctors leave patients. With many questions unanswered about ahealth condition. Most of them agree that doctors in public hospitals use words that patients do not understand whereas in private hospitals they explain fully. Most of the respondents agree that in private hospitals they feel free to tell the doctors their problems. Most of them agree that the cost of going to a public hospital located in Muscat exceeds the cost of private hospital treatment in local private hospitals. Most of the respondents reported that the cost of stay for treatment purposes at Muscat also exceeds the private hospital charges incurred locally in private hospitals.

In a nutshell, ‘Long waiting time’, ‘Unclean and untidy environment’, ‘No-due respect from the doctors’, ‘Non-availability of medicines’, ‘Not paying utmost care in treating patients’, ‘Non-availability medicines of their choice’ and ‘Untimely treatment and the appearance of the hospital’ are the reasons for the unwillingness of the patients in preferring the integrated hospitals in Oman.

SUGGESTIONS

Thus it is recommended that

- Work on Human relations need to be improved such as reception, electronic booking and telemedicine consultations
- Provision of modern equipment, laboratories and facilities should be provided at all the health centers to reduce the number of reviews and delays in appointments.
- Necessary and sufficient medicines should be provided in all the health centers and hospitals.
- The Periodic inspection should be conducted at the health centers/hospitals to maintain the standards concerning cleanliness, treatments and the front line servicing personnel.
- Suggestions and public opinions should be taken to improve the quality of the services rendered by the public and integrated hospitals.

REFERENCES



1. Al Farsi, M. and West, D.J. Jr. (2006), "Use of Electronic Medical Records in Oman and Physician Satisfaction," Journal of Medical system, Vol. 30, issue.1, pp.17-22, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16548410>
2. Al Rashdi, I. and Al Qasmi, A. (2012), "Staff Perception of Relative Importance of Quality Dimensions for Patients at Tertiary Public Services in Oman," Oman Medical Journal, Vol.27, issue. 5, pp. 396-401, available at http://omjournal.org/images/289_M_Deatials_Pdf_.pdf
3. AlDhawi, A.A. and West, D.J. (2006), "Challenging Health Care system Sustainability in Oman," Journal of Health Sciences Management and Public Health, Vol.7, issue.2, pp.124-135, available at <http://medportal.ge/eml/publichealth/2006/n2/index.html>
4. Al-Mujaini, A., Al Farsi, Y., Al Maniri, A. and Ganesh, A. (2011), "Satisfaction and Perceived Quality of an Electronic Medical Record System in a Tertiary Hospital in Oman," Oman Medical Journal, Vol.26, No.5, pp.324-328, available at http://www.omjournal.org/images/142_M_Deatials_Pdf_.pdf
5. Andaleeb, S.S. (2000), "Public and private hospitals in Bangladesh: Service quality and predictors of hospital choice," Health Policy Plan, US National Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health, Vol.15, No.1, pp.95-102, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10731240>
6. Baddour, A. and Abbas, A. (2016), "Private and Public Hospitals Automation," International Journal of Pure and Applied Sciences and Technology, Vol.32, No.1, pp.1-16, available at www.ijopaasat.in
7. Balushi, A. (2015), "Occupational Stress issues of the Nurses from Hospitals in Sohar, Oman," MBA Research Project Dissertation Report submitted to Faculty of Business, Sohar University, Oman, 2015, pp.1-175.
8. Basu, S., Andrews, J., Kishore, S., Panjabi, R. and Stuckler, D. (2012), "Comparative Performance of Private and Public Healthcare Systems in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Systematic Review," *Private and Public Healthcare Performance*, Vol.9, issue. 6, pp.1-14, available at <https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/10433489/3378609.pdf;sequence=1>
9. Chao-Chan, W.(2011), "The impact of hospital brand image on service quality, patient satisfaction and loyalty," African Journal of Business Management, Vol.5, No.12, pp.4873-4882, doi: 10.5897/ajbm10.1347
10. Chen, C.B., and Kao, P.L. (2011), "The Effects of the Hospital Marketing Promotion on Consumers' Choice of Hospitals Consumers," The Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning, Vol.7, No.2, pp.156-168, available at <http://www.hraljournal.com/Page/18%20Chuan-Biau%20Chen.pdf>
11. Cooper, Z., Craig, S., Gaynor, M. and Reenen, J.V. (2015). "The Price Ain't Right? Hospital price and health spending on privately insured", The National Bureau of Economic Research, NBER working paper 21815, Dec. 2015, pp.1-55, available at http://www.healthcarepricingproject.org/sites/default/files/pricing_variation_manuscript_0.pdf
12. Irfan, S.M., and Ijaz, A. (2011), "Comparison of Service Quality between Private and Public Hospitals: Empirical Evidence from Pakistan," Journal of Quality and Technology Management, Vol.7, issue.1, pp.1-22, available at <http://results.pu.edu.pk/images/journal/iqtm/PDF-FILES/01-Comparison%20of%20Service%20Quality%2026-5-2011.pdf>
13. Khattak, A., Ismail Alvi, M., Awais Yousaf, M., Zain-ul-Abideen Shah, s., Trial, D. and Akhter, S. (2012), "Patient satisfaction- A Comparison between public & private Hospitals of Peshawar", International Journal of Collaborative Research on Internal Medicine & Public Health, Vol.4, issue.5, pp.713-722, available at <http://www.iomcworld.com/ijcrimph/files/v04-n05-32.pdf>
14. Kim, K.H., Kim, K.S., Kim, D.Y., Kim, J.H. and Kang, S.H. (2008), "Brand equity in hospital marketing," Journal of Business Research, Vol. 61, issue.1, pp.75-82, available at [http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0148-2963\(07\)00136-1](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0148-2963(07)00136-1)
15. Koksall, L., Mumcu, G., Sisman, N., Catar, R.O., and Sur, H. (2012), "The use of Web Pages as a Health Communication Tool in Private and Public Hospitals," Journal of Marmara University Institute of Health Sciences, Vol. 2, issue.1, pp.14-19 available at <http://musbed.marmara.edu.tr>
16. Kondasani, R.K.R. and Panda, R.K. (2015), "Customer Perceived Service Quality, Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty: An Empirical Test of Mediation in Private Hospitals," ResearchGate, Proceedings of the 1st IIMA International Conference on Advances in Health Care Management Services, Jul. 2015, available at <http://hdl.handle.net/11718/14117>
17. Lee, F., Teich, J.M., Spurr, C. D and Bates, D.W. (1996), "Implementation of Physician Order Entry: User Satisfaction and Self-Reported Usage Patterns", Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association Vol.3, issue.1, pp.42-55 available at <https://academic.oup.com/jamia/article/3/1/42/861814/Implementation-of-Physician-Order-Entry-User>
18. Motwani, D. and Shrimali, V. (2014a), "Service Marketing Mix of Indian Hospitals: A Critical Review", Czech Journal of Social Sciences, Business and Economics, Vol. 3 , issue.2, pp. 65-72, available at <http://www.cjssbe.cz/journal-archive/volume-3-issue-4-2014/>



19. Motwani, D. and Shrimali, V. (2014b), "Factors affecting patients' decision in selection of Hospital," *Management Strategies Journal*, Vol.25, issue.3, pp.5-10, available at <http://www.strategiimanageriale.ro/papers/140301.pdf>
20. Mrayyan, M.T. (2004), "Nurse job satisfaction and retention: comparing public to private hospitals in Jordan," *Journal Citation Reports* Vol.13, issue.1, pp.40-50, available at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2834.2004.00453.x/full#publication-history>
21. Pavel, M.S., Chakrabarty, S., and Gow, J. (2016), "Cost of illness for outpatients attending public and private hospitals in Bangladesh," *International Journal for Equity in Health*, Vol.15, issue. 167, pp.1-12, available at <https://equityhealthj.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12939-016-0458-x>
22. Pongsupap, Y. and Lerberghe, W.V. (2006), "Choosing between public and private or between hospital and primary care: responsiveness, patient-centeredness and prescribing patterns in outpatient consultations in Bangkok," *Tropical Medicine and International Health*, Vol.11, No.1, pp.81-89, available at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-3156.2005.01532.x/full>
23. Samir, N. and Karim, S. (2011), "Medical Tourism, Local and International Perspective," *Oman Medical Journal*, Vol.26, No.4, pp.215-218, available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/51760725_An_Insight_Medical_Tourism_Local_and_International_Perspective
24. Wanjau, K.N., Muiruri, B.W. and Ayodo, E. (2012), "Factors Affecting Provision of Service Quality in the Public Health Sector: A Case of Kenyatta National Hospital," *Institutional Repository, Kartina University*, Jul.2012, available at <http://karospace.karu.ac.ke/handle/123456789/463>