

Research Article

Are Corporate Hospitals Meeting Expectations? A SERVQUAL Gap Analysis from Delhi NCR

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Article History
Received: 27.02.2026
Accepted: 20.03.2026
Published: 28.03.2026

Abstract: Corporate hospitals in Delhi NCR are increasingly focusing on service excellence to retain and satisfy patients. An empirical study conducted across 644 respondents reveals that while service quality is generally rated positively, patient loyalty does not always mirror satisfaction. This article applies the SERVQUAL gap model to uncover nuanced dimensions of service perception versus expectation, offering actionable insights for hospital administrators. Key findings emphasize the importance of empathy, education-specific service tailoring, and emotional engagement.

Keywords: Service Quality, Patient Satisfaction, Loyalty, SERVQUAL, Corporate Hospitals, Delhi NCR.

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INTRODUCTION

Can high-end infrastructure alone secure patient trust? The SERVQUAL gap model sheds light on whether patients' expectations align with their real-world experiences. As healthcare systems become more consumer-driven, understanding perception gaps becomes essential for ensuring patient loyalty and sustainable service improvement. Existing literature on service quality in Delhi NCR's hospitals indicates consistent performance gaps across dimensions such as empathy and responsiveness, warranting continuous strategic intervention.1-3

METHODOLOGY:

- A structured quantitative approach was adopted:
- Sample Size: 644 patients and caregivers across corporate hospitals in Delhi NCR.
- Framework: SERVQUAL model assessing five dimensions: Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy.
- Gap Score Formula: Perception - Expectation.
- Data Collection: Structured questionnaires.
- Data Analysis: SPSS v25 for descriptive statistics and inferential tests.

RESULT

Results: Gap scores showed that perceived service exceeded expectations across all SERVQUAL dimensions.

Table 1: Mean Gap Scores by Dimension

Dimension	Mean Gap Score
Empathy	+0.058
Assurance	+0.054
Responsiveness	+0.052

Reliability	+0.048
Tangibility	+0.042

Key Insights:

- Empathy had the highest positive gap, showing patients felt emotionally supported.
- Tangibility had the lowest gap, suggesting high baseline expectations for physical infrastructure were already met.

Table 2: Gap Scores by Educational Qualification

Education Level	Tangibility Gap	Empathy Gap
Doctoral Degree	+0.072	+0.068
Postgraduate	+0.066	+0.074
Undergraduate	+0.041	+0.052

DISCUSSION:

The study reaffirms prior research suggesting that satisfaction does not automatically translate to loyalty, even when service quality is rated positively. 4-6 Patients with higher education levels showed nuanced expectations, especially valuing empathy over tangibility—a finding consistent with SERVQUAL studies in India. 7-10 Uniformity of perception across socio-demographic factors such as income, location, and marital status highlights standardized service delivery—a positive sign for hospital management. 11-14 However, loyalty appears to be driven more by emotional connection and personalized care than mere efficiency. 15-17 For administrators, this points to the strategic importance of investing in empathy training, refining communication strategies for more educated cohorts, and regularly applying gap analysis for quality assurance. 18-20

CONCLUSION:

Delhi NCR’s corporate hospitals show strong performance in service delivery, but bridging the satisfaction-loyalty gap will require more than physical excellence. A renewed focus on patient-centric care, staff empathy, and expectation management can shift experiences from satisfactory to exceptional. The SERVQUAL gap model proves an effective tool in driving these improvements.

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