

Abstract

Considering the various problems that are affecting the healthcare sector in recent years, the aim of this thesis is to investigate patient involvement in healthcare management by highlighting the importance of his participation for the service improvement. To this end, we analyze three main dimensions belonging to the patient's sphere, particularly, participation in the co-creation process of "health value", patient empowerment and patient satisfaction, proposing a model of investigation aimed at identifying the relations between the variables considered.

Value co-creation is a paradigm developed in marketing discipline over the last decade and that can be defined as a process by which businesses co-create value during interactions with their customers through the integration of resources and the application of competences. Customers thus become an active part of the offer generation process.

The resources and competences that patient can applied in these processes are positively influenced by his level of empowerment, ie the set of knowledge and skills that patient possesses in managing his health condition. The analysis in this work shows that both variables are positively related to patient satisfaction which is often seen as a perceived service quality measure. The results show that patient does not have the only role to assess the quality in terms of satisfaction, but he is also an active part in its creation.

Thus, the tools for the quality evaluation should not only investigate the health organization's ability to provide quality of services, but also the patient's role in achieving the same. Moreover, being the satisfaction a subjective variable, in its assessment it is essential to consider the resources and competences that patient possesses in relation to his own health and that can affect his quality perceptions.

In terms of management, the results should encourage policy makers to adopt policies aimed at encouraging the active participation of citizens in healthcare. This implies an economic and cultural effort as build and promote the effective integration means investing time and capital (including human) in the re-education of both health professionals and patients in a logic of mutual and sustainable benefit.