

Doctors and Administrative Staffs' Perception towards Healthcare Services of Specialty Hospitals in Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the doctors and administrative staffs' perception toward the healthcare services and marketing strategies of specialty hospitals in Rajasthan. Since superior healthcare services are the need of all individual. On the contrary, if health facilities served in a better way, this shall lead to patients' satisfaction level. Subsequently, it will result from building the right brand image of the hospital in society. Effective marketing of healthcare services urges an athletic association between healthcare service providers and customers. Notwithstanding, it is requisite to stretch attention to the features that stimulate both qualities of healthcare and specialty hospitals' performance. The scenario thus emphasizes that the hospital can be flourished with effective marketing strategies of the healthcare services which can diagnose the patient's needs, followed by the decision incorporated by the administration based on the patients' requirement.

Keywords: Healthcare, Healthcare Marketing, Perception, Specialty hospital

1. INTRODUCTION

Considering the extensive studies on marketing, it is observed that marketing is the practice of creating and communicating perceivable transformations concerning the competitors (Flemming et al. 1999). In a healthcare context, some of the differentiating variables emerged and weighted traditional marketing characteristics. The various studies conducted on the healthcare services marketing demonstrated the unique nature of marketing in this parlance. Marketing in healthcare services tends to be governing the demand for care.

Furthermore, marketing practices in the hospital must focus on nurturing characteristics such as the quality of the healthcare services in every possible way. In this vibrant environment, every hospital is expected to be more focused on strengthening the bunch of healthcare services benefits such as time, access, convenient, and locational advantages. These distinctive factors are now considered to be patients' criteria to select a hospital and its healthcare services to access. Healthcare service providers stress on promoting the optimized usage of healthcare services, generating cost-efficient actions, and nurturing society's health awareness.

Marketing strategies are subject to the context in which any healthcare service provider is specifically surrounded. In accordance with the premises, explanation of marketing is broadened to incorporate all forms of activities to support the hospitals in promoting their services, dissecting the healthcare services to target at numerous client segments. It is a quite ambiguous association in a competitive field, where different hospitals may practice the same or different marketing strategies. It is

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undoubtedly a wide-ranging concept has to be optimized to assist hospitals in the course of incorporating marketing practices.

In the previous twenty years, the hospital industry has been furnished thoroughly with international level infrastructure, modern technology, and international doctors to undergo high-level practices. With the advent of modality and comprehensive range treatment of cancer, cardiac disease, organ transplantation, and treatment of all type of the disease are offered through advanced diagnostic services. Up- surged in the skilled medical staff, maintaining the quality with the switching requirement of the patients, additional finance, the regular development of the technology, and countrywide or mainly international accreditation is obligatory for more development in the health care services.

Hospitals offer services from patients' perspective by means of collecting feedback, relevant information for further enhancement in quality. Many authors contended that specialty hospitals are recognized in the society for their excellence of treatment and exquisite measures corresponding to neurosurgery, cancer, cardiac, orthopedic, and organ transplant. In this current lifestyle, patients' number is growing over a period. Moreover, inflow in the number of patients can be cured by optimizing the existing capacity of the hospitals. Not with standing, additional interplanetary, infrastructure, accommodation, and supplementary apparatus must be required, along with the same line, more finance will be required to curing patients.

Charitable and private hospitals promote their offerings and spend a standard five out of a hundred of their funds on the promotion of their services, underneath has no fund provision for promotion in government hospitals, they do not spend on the promotion. With the inclusion of large business communities in the health care segment, big corporate hospitals have established, flourishing new dimension to the prevailing competition.

Marketing defined as a business practice that recognizes the unidentified needs and wants

of the society, outline and analyzes the magnitude of customer expectations. Furthermore, it helps the organization to decide and select recognized market places the enterprise can attend healthier. In recent time, marketing urge to envisaged enterprises' offerings, services, and experiences to assist society. Marketing encompasses the societal and decision-making processes which make people exchange the offerings and values to accomplish their expectations (Kotler, 1990).

Marketing integration in the healthcare sector started in the early era of the 50s. Series of arguments, moral and ethical facets accompanied marketing practices in this sector. Furthermore, hospital offerings were implied as well as confronted the exertion for an accurate man date. The insufficient reach in the society, data access, a conventional process for the price setting and the third party payer involvement were some of the rationals for inadequate marketing practices (Radulescu, Cetina & Orzan, 2009).

Hospital marketing is considered to be a specialized arena of marketing that pacts with concerning patients, hospitals, and physicians. In the current scenario, hospital marketing is given more importance than earlier time to confirm the long-standing feasibility of hospitals on the local as well as international level and to provide the best quality of personal health care. Since India is in the nascent era concerning the marketing of hospital services. Subsequently, hospitals incorporating marketing as a field for creating sales instead of as a means of generating awareness of the services offered by the hospitals in society (Nagar, 2007).

Patients are the ultimate customer of healthcare service organizations. The current scenario has changed due to the patients' demand for quality care. Numerous health care hospitals are entering in the hospital industry due to the variegated expectation of the patients and up-surged demand of the health care services. Consequently, marketing requirement has amplified for the hospitals to identify, communicate, deliver, and to exchange the

offerings to the customers. As the advent of the new healthcare providers, the service gap has decreased for some segment of the patients' paying capacity (Nagar, 2007)

The above discussion envisaged that numerous factors make marketing strategy efficient and worthwhile. These factors, specifically in the healthcare segment, are considered to be as service leadership, technology leadership, price orientation, promotion orientation, marketing budgeting, and patient relationship teams. The scenario thus encompasses all types of variables assisting the hospital in optimizing the healthcare services.

Although, over the last few years, the buzz about the contribution of marketing strategies based on the above-discussed variables incorporated as key to upsurge the performance of the hospital.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent time, the healthcare sector phenomenon has been transformed due to the importance of economic, demographic, and regularity modifications. Consequently, numerous hospitals tend to adopt marketing practices to sustain in the industry (Malhotra, 1986). Finance apportionment for marketing practices for the hospital is considered to be a key element to make hospital adopt specific marketing strategies (Stieber, 1986)

In the early stage of the service life cycle, each hospital requires enough share of cognizance in the society and the hospital's specific field of specialization. Furthermore, variegated forms of promotion urge society to perceive the hospital's services. Since many studies revealed that required finance must be allocated to each promotion activity to upsurge the awareness of the hospital's services in the society. To serve the existing patients of the hospitals, developing a healthy association with the doctors by means of facilitating them with required facilities for the shake of good quality of services to the patients (Flora June A, Lefebvre R (1988)

Sturn (1989) suggested that the hospital

industry must allocate a marketing budget to the hospital at a growing pace over a period. Furthermore, the author argued that hospitals could escalate the reach of the hospital's services in the society by optimizing the marketing activities of the hospital, which finally last in good market share. Random facts of the hospital urge people to authenticate the level of quality of the offerings served by the hospitals (De Jaegher K, Jegers M, 2000). Furthermore, the author recommended that advertising of the services may stimulate the reach of the hospital's services in the society that may attract numerous customers to the hospital.

In the observational research, authors investigated the marketing tracking practices to explore the healthcare services offered by the hospital (Agnes jarlier & Suzanecharvertprotat, 2000). Their work revealed that mainstream hospitals were engaged in doing tie-ups with corporate, and trade tie-ups to promote the healthcare services provided by the hospitals. Notwithstanding, to accomplish the optimal quality of the services, the hospital must design effective advertising and optimized price strategies (Montefiori (2008).

Alrubaiee, Laith, and FerasAlkaaida (2011) envisaged that quality is one of the essential determinants to measure satisfaction as well as trust. Authors argued that the quality of healthcare services provided by the hospitals urge patients to be satisfied to repeat the visit frequently. Furthermore, the authors recommended that the SERVQUAL model can be a tool to recognize other variables that may impel customers' level of satisfaction for accessing offerings. Gangopadhyay, S., & Bandopadhyay, P. (2012) recommended the practice of marketing activities in the hospital to sustain in the present competitive industry. In India, due to the competitive and flourishing opportunity hospital sector is given priority over the period.

Kevin D Dayaratna, (2013) investigated that hospitals were inclined to offer high-level quality services to the society at minimum charges. The author argued that the hospitals within the rim of their capacity were liable to

provide health benefits to society using optimized marketing practices. Bobeica Ana Amaria (2013) portrayed the effect of marketing activities practiced in the hospital on the maximizing the reach of the hospital in the society. Furthermore, based on Amaria's research findings, one can recommend the marketing practices used in the hospital urge to assure customers' level of satisfaction regarding the services rendered.

Rajabipoor-Meybodiet al., (2009) portrayed in their work referring to patients' level of satisfaction regarding the hospitals' services. They rendered that to sustain a hospital in the industry; one has to stress on the patients' satisfaction level toward the services provided by the hospital.

Gronroos (2007) embraced the authenticity of the service quality dimensions, which are base to harvest reliable and standardize services. Nevertheless, service sectors are expected to provide quality services at optimized prices. Hence, it tends to create a different scenario for a hospital administrator to focus on all variables which are responsible for upsurging the service quality. Bjorngaard et al. (2007) described the distinguished perception of patients as well as administrators toward service quality offered by the hospitals. Authors further argued that both patients and administrator's perception are similarly significant to evaluate service quality thoroughly. In contrast to rising technology, hospitals are supposed to incorporate modern, competent, and scientific management tools to maintain the sustain ability of the services (Douglas and Judge, 2001).

Under the right circumstances, the use of advanced management techniques through mechanical as well as human personal leads to high patients' satisfaction. Cheng Lim and Tang, (2000) portrayed that human resource of the hospital is key in the success of a hospital in the industry provided it can identify the hierarchy of the preferences of the patients regarding the services offered by the hospital.

It is evident that for any hospital patients are most essential customers. For the success of the

hospital, administrators of the hospital should take decisions and formulate strategies based on the patients' requirements. Administrators of the hospital must imply numerous management techniques to identify the preferences of the patients toward the offerings of the hospital. So far, these management methods tend to assist the administration of the hospital in policy framing and up-surgings the service quality.

The scenario thus emphasizes that numerous factors are responsible for creating and estimating the hospitals' service quality and for measuring patients' satisfaction level (Mina Bahrapour. et al., 2018). Furthermore, the authors suggested that physical presence is a crucial priority factor to measure patients' satisfaction level. Further, cleanliness, post-discharge training, hospital staff devotion, and admission waiting time were other factors to measure the patients' satisfaction level.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Hypotheses development:

The above literature insights assist researchers in framing the hypotheses enumerated below:

- H1: Marketing strategy of the hospital contribute to offering quality healthcare services to the patients.
- H2: Doctors and Administrators of the hospital give equal weight to the marketing strategy of the hospital to serve quality healthcare services to the patients.

Sample Size And Sampling Technique:

A sample size of 125 respondents was chosen for this study, keeping in mind the average size of samples used by other researchers in similar studies. A total of 25 administrators of the hospitals and 100 doctors were contacted in the cities viz Jaipur, Ajmer, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kota, Bikaner in Rajasthan state to fill the self-framed questionnaire. Convenience sampling technique was adopted to select the target respondents. Convenience sampling is deemed as suitable because the objective of this study is not to explore point and

interval estimates of the variables, but to explore the relationships among the variables. The criterion of inclusion in this study is the local in-respondents who have been the authority to frame the healthcare services and marketing strategies at the private as well as government healthcare units.

Data Collection:

Prior to the data collection, the questionnaire development process started with a qualitative analysis of the subject to setup an insight that was important to the study. Afterward, a self-administered questionnaire was framed based on the required variables of interest. Researchers framed the questionnaire on the ground of a comprehensive review of healthcare services and marketing strategies-oriented studies in hospitals. Five-point Likert scale used in relevant studies was administered to collect the responses of the respondents.

Before administering the questionnaire, respondents were demonstrated the meaning and significance of the scale and each item used in the questionnaire to collect the responses.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

A data collection instrument is reliable to collect the data if it produces a consistent outcome. Therefore, internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire were tested using Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha estimated .88 that validate the consistency of the responses collected through the questionnaire. The table-1 enumerated below represent the doctors' participation in the study from six major cities in the Rajasthan. The rationale behind selecting these cities was the availability of the multispecialty hospital in these big cities of the Rajasthan.

Table 1: Doctors Representation City Wise

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Jaipur	40	40.0	40.0	40.0
Jodhpur	12	12.0	12.0	52.0
Udaipur	12	12.0	12.0	64.0
Ajmer	12	12.0	12.0	76.0
Kota	12	12.0	12.0	88.0
Bikaner	12	12.0	12.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

(Source: Primary data)

The following table-2 demonstrate the administrative staffs' participation in the study from six major cities in the Rajasthan.

Table 2: Administration Representation City Wise

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Jaipur	10	40.0	40.0	40.0
Jodhpur	3	12.0	12.0	52.0
Udaipur	3	12.0	12.0	64.0
Ajmer	3	12.0	12.0	76.0

Kota	3	12.0	12.0	88.0
Bikaner	3	12.0	12.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data

Hypotheses Testing:

In order to test the proposed hypothesis1 linear regression analysis was incorporated to analyze the influence of marketing strategies in offering quality healthcare services. In this operation, marketing strategy is the independent variable and healthcare service as a

dependent variable. Results estimates (Table-3) depicts that F-value observed to be 111.86 at 1% (p=.025) significance level and regression coefficient is .624 indicates 62.4% variation explained in offering quality healthcare service. The likely scenario thus emphasis to accept the proposed hypothesis.

Table 3: Regression & ANOVA Result

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	R ²
Regression	88.37	1	88.37	111.86	.025	.624
Residual	98.02	123	0.79			
Total	186.39	124				

(Source: Primary data)

In order to test the hypothesis2 independent T-test was applied to check the perception variation between doctors and administrators towards the contribution of marketing strategies in building quality healthcare services. Test result (Table-4) depicts that doctors and administrators of the hospital given the equal weight to the proposed relationship between marketing strategies and healthcare services. It is observed from the data evidence which estimated the test value 1.173 at 1% (p=.033) significance value. The scenario thus impels researchers to accept the proposed hypothesis.

Table 4 : Independent T-test

Test value	d. f.	p-value
1.173	123	.033

(Source: Primary data)

It indicates that there was a similar point of perception between doctors and administrators toward the contribution of marketing strategies in building good quality healthcare services to the patients.

5. CONCLUSION

This research tried to analyze the perception

of the doctors and administrators toward marketing strategies and its impact in offering quality healthcare services to the patients. Since healthcare organizations and authorities tend to face significant pressure on numerous variables viz superior performance, low-cost treatment, affordable services, and focused diseases. Consequently, the system is expected to redesign and manage the competition in the industry. The current study insights into the healthcare service provider to optimize marketing strategies in offering quality healthcare services.

To escape the many parables in respect of healthcare context, where after two decades of the existence of marketing and marketing practices as public relation, now its high time for healthcare service providers to accurately outline the direction and goal of the marketing function. This research provides a framework for potential recognition and action and bringing up the peculiarities in the context of healthcare services. The results emphasise on the marketing practices in the hospitals which stress the hospital's part in recognizing, analyzing, listing priorities, and serving the

health needs of society.

The research outcome stress that in healthcare parlance, focus on marketing strategies to optimize healthcare services remains a crucial task, that must not expect to raise the demand and profit. Healthcare appropriateness and hospital quality are the essential elements to mandate healthcare services, and hospitals must incorporate marketing practices for the welfare of society.

On the healthcare service provider side, marketing practices urge each hospital in identifying its specific target patients and societal health requirements, explore its significance in serving what society depicts appropriate needs, and explain the most appropriate and sustainable ways to serve society.

Scope For Future Research:

Several implications emerged for healthcare services from the issues discussed in this research paper. Technical competency such as marketing knowledge is one of the critical characteristics to cater the healthcare marketing. It is evident from the current research that it is undoubtedly clear that traditional competency ability such as promotion is no longer sufficient to optimize the healthcare marketing and what new competency ability will provide a relevant contribution in healthcare services is undoubtedly scope of further research.

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