



A STUDY OF HEALTHCARE MARKETING MIX STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY HOSPITALS IN AHMEDNAGAR - A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract:

The marketing strategy of a private hospital is to combine all of its marketing goals into one comprehensive plan. A good marketing strategy should be drawn from market research and focus on the marketing mix in order to achieve the maximum profit and sustain the business. A good marketing mix strategy is one which makes sure that the services offered is satisfactorily accepted the consumers. Hospitals should not only concentrate on giving medical help, but also should look into other aspects of marketing mix strategies which pertains to the attributes of 7 P's such as ambience, affordability, cleanliness, soft – skills of the staff etc. Marketing mix should play a vital role in attracting even those consumers/ patients who are not economically sound to avail the services provided at the hospital.

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Introduction:

In India, healthcare has become one of the largest sectors in terms of both employment and revenue. People in India have become health conscious off late and spending on getting benefited by healthcare services available. (Indian Medical Foundation, Report 2012) Indian healthcare is divided into public and private sectors. Government runs (public) secondary and tertiary hospitals provide services in cities and Primary healthcare centers in rural regions.

In earlier years, advertising by hospitals was strongly objected and was regarded as unethical and hospitals usually advertise on traditional lines to position hospital's image in the community. The various promotional that can be put to use for promoting hospitals are healthcare and educational seminars, free

health camps, health fairs, immunization camps, news, release, and annual reports, public service campaign.

Marketing of hospital services the healthcare service providers should adopt very dynamic approach and analyze the marketing environment so that appropriate marketing efforts can be planned. Marketing is just finding out what is required and then communicating to patients that the hospitals carry all those facilities that are expected by the patients.

Literature Review:

1. According to R. Rajini, (2016), in her study," Healthcare Marketing Strategy to the Sustainable Development of Society, found that a hospital service provider offers different types of services to its patients that is, the line services, supportive services and auxiliary services. The most important



service that is being marketed by hospitals is the healthcare and hospitals therefore, need to provide quality healthcare and necessary infrastructure should be acquired before offering it to patients.

An appropriate tool for marketing of healthcare services is the communications programme hospitals need to select, which should include, Public Relations, Publicity, Advertising, Educational Programmes, Endorsement of Opinion leaders, Personal Selling and Direct Marketing. Further, hospitals need not only to select but also require to dividing the tasks amongst professionals.

2. **Kevin D Dayaratna**, (August 19, 2013) – In the literature review of the academic research suggest that- Healthcare in competitive markets offer patients high quality care at reasonable price. The health benefits program of employees and Medicare part which serves as two demonstrative examples in today's competition of healthcare. To add proper reforms for further scope of competition in healthcare industry would be important for future growth and position as world's leader for healthcare.
3. **Agnes jarlier & Suzane charvert- protat (2000)** had conducted an observational study on marketing of health care". Which can improve quality care and decrease hospital costs? In "international journal for quality and marketing in healthcare". Their study revealed that, majority of hospitals carry out an aggressive marketing activity in form of corporate tie-up, trade and TPA tie up.
4. **Flora June A, Lefebvre R** (1998) in their research had conducted cross sectional study on "Social health marketing and public health intervention in health education quarterly", through formative research methods and techniques, selected hospitals are quite satisfied with their existing product portfolio. Their study revealed that, maintaining good relation with outside doctors, by providing quality services, patient education and awareness programs about hospital through marketing.
5. **In a research study, "Healthcare Marketing in India with special reference to hospitals: Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies. By Abhinav Sarma, (2020)**, revealed that, Healthcare Marketing plays an important role in helping the healthcare professionals in creating, communicating, and providing value to the target market. Modern marketers start from the consumers rather than from products or services. It is more important to build a sustainable relationship, than to ensure a single transaction. The aim of a healthcare service provider should be to create a high level of consumer satisfaction so that they return to the same service provider whenever the need arises.
6. **A study on marketing strategies of health care services and patients' decision making regarding choice of a hospital** by Dr.N.Abdul Jaleel found that Patient's decision to choose a hospital is based on factors like facilities available in the hospital, expertise of doctors and the staff and vicinity. Hence all the professionally managed healthcare institutions should evolve a systematic approach for marketing with specific strategies and action plan.
7. **Effective Marketing Strategies in Health Services: Systematic Literature Review by Andri Nur Rahman,Nuryakin ,Firman Pribadi** Concluded that before carrying out marketing program activities, it is advisable to assess the current market situation experienced by the hospital or clinic. **Jena (2020) developed a marketing assessment tool called the 4S of the market (size, shape, share, & soar)** so that marketers can work more effectively. The 4S model can measure prevalence rates, diagnosis and treatment rates, socio-demographic levels and variables (patient age, income, residence), and other factors influencing health service demand. These data provide a model or guide for hospital or clinic marketers to independently use this marketing



assessment tool to determine their potential market.

8. **The Impact of Marketing Strategies in Healthcare Systems an article**

Published by Shahid N Shah talks about everything related to marketing strategies in healthcare systems. The goal and impact of marketing strategies in healthcare systems go hand-in-hand. It can either promote medical information or generate a campaign for patient retention and influx. Healthcare marketing enhances patient engagement and improves treatment and care facilities. Moreover, educating a patient can help them make informed decisions. It can help improve the rates at which loyal patients refer others to the practice. Therefore, bringing in a patient influx. Building a good reputation and having a positive impact on the community will help build strong relationships. Marketing can help establish clinical leadership that enhances doctor-patient relationships.

9. Practicing Marketing; And Its Challenges In The Healthcare Industry, Amoah-Binfoh Kenneth, Dr. Joe Sarprasatha 3. Priscilla Bempah Botwe SRM University in their study found out that health workers overall did not know the elements of healthcare marketing. Even the few who had some idea about the elements were very particular about targeting patients and ignoring other elements. It was also found that the marketing department if at all there was one, was not effective at all. The study found out that the hospital charges the lowest prices for its services as confirmed by the patients. The employees agreed that, this is only the penetration strategy. It was also found that the front office reception was nice and welcoming. The major medium for promoting the health services was community outreach from the employees' point of view but according to patients it was patients' referral system. It was also observed that the reputation of the hospital was just an average. It was also found that most doctors were sympathetic and understanding though a few were rude.

10.Strategic Marketing of Health Care Services: A Systematic Review by Sadaf Tallia, Muhammad Ali Zulsibtain, Raza Ali, And Muhammad Haroon Hafeez in their study conducted a systematic review of the literature to frame varied dimensions of research articles that are discussed by authors particularly on development of healthcare as a brand/brand image through strategic marketing. Aims/originality of paper is to determine (1) what mix of marketing strategies have shown to improve the competence of healthcare industry (2) identifies the knowledge gap in investigating the relevance of use of strategic marketing in healthcare brand image. They further concluded that, attributes like patients' participations, service quality, level of patient satisfaction, branding of services are fundamentals attributes and skills used to develop a positive brand image of healthcare sector in consumer's mind. Further there is a need to develop standard instrument to measure marketing objectives on healthcare to develop brand image.

11.An Empirical Study on the Impact of Marketing Strategy on the Private Hospital's Performance in Patient Satisfaction by, Dr. Prashant Madan, Research Guide, Dept. of Management, Himalayan University, Itanagar concluded that larger hospitals use marketing techniques at a higher rate than smaller hospitals. Large hospitals have a strong reputation for providing innovative healthcare services and brand development. Internal and interactive marketing are key factors in determining how well marketing initiatives are implemented at the hospital. The innovative health service delivery and brand building include marketing methods that have a significant impact on how hospital patients perceive the level of service and service quality. Thus, the current study's conclusion is that in order to satisfy all types of customers in the health care industry and foster patient loyalty to the



hospital, effective marketing strategies in diverse customer categories are required. Because patients demand modern medical care across the board, hospitals must deliver it if they hope to keep their current patients and draw in new ones.

Conclusion:

In today's world, healthcare field has become prominent and is in boom. It is the responsibility of the manager/administrators to build the image of the hospital by providing quality services at an affordable price. Hospitals may follow strategy of "Differentiation". Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategy for survival and hospitals may regularly send to its customers" cards, and gifts. It should also include the present and past patients to participate in these activities being carried out by hospital for social causes. Having feedback forms filled up during the discharge hour of the patient is one useful CRM exercise. Suggestion boxes and patient satisfaction surveys can also be used.

A good marketing mix strategy is one which makes sure that the services offered is satisfactorily accepted the consumers. Hospitals should not only concentrate on giving medical help, but also should look into other aspects of marketing mix strategies which pertains to the attributes of 7 P's such as ambience, affordability, cleanliness, soft – skills of the staff etc. Marketing mix should play a vital role in attracting even those consumers/ patients who are not economically sound to avail the services provided at the hospital. The hospitals, with a well-planned marketing strategy can stay ahead of their competitors as well as establish a sustainable relationship with the patients through their high-quality services and everlasting reputation.

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