

# Effects of Hospital Promotional Activities on Society: Indian Perspective

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**Abstract** - Modern hospitals have evolved as integral part of society since ancient times. They have a huge social impact and contribute to the improvement of living standard in India. Through their effective marketing strategies, hospitals have been able to create a positive social impact. Today, most hospitals administrators would acknowledge that the well-being of their organization depends upon the attraction of resources to enable hospitals to meet the historical goals of patient care, health education and research. Attraction of the necessary resources and acceptance on the part of various publics of the hospital that the organization has attained its goals are vital to the long-term survival of the institution This study lights upon the aspects related to Marketing strategies of Hospitals and their societal Impact. This study is completely based on Indian societal perspective.

**Key Words:** Hospital, Healthcare, Promotion, Hospital Marketing Strategy, Societal Impact, Perception

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of the Indian health care industry is widely attributed to the liberalized process and the increasing number of people seeking medical care. However, despite the country's progress, the cost of this care remains a major concern for most Indians. Modern hospitals have evolved to provide specialized medical care and services to patients. They offer advantages to both the patients and society.

Modern society has created formal institutions for providing medical care. The hospital, which is a major social institution, offers many advantages to both the patients and the society. In a hospital, the staff members use the latest equipment and techniques to provide the best possible care. Health care marketing is a process utilized to promote values and voluntary exchanges of values to target markets. This is a coordinated effort to achieve a set of goals and objectives. Hospital marketing can be defined as the analysis, planning, implementation and control of carefully formulated programs designed to promote voluntary exchanges of values with target markets, with the purpose of achieving organizational objectives. It relies heavily on designing the organization's services in terms of target markets, needs and desires and on using effective pricing, communication and distribution to serve the market better.

## Social Integration of Hospital Promotional Activities

Hospital as a Service Organization The overall process which involves hospital business is service. There is nothing which is tangible, which can be physically touched or verified and which is not perishable. In the first part of the discussion on services, characteristics of services have been explained. Organizations engaged in hospital business provides a wide variety of services like providing beds, complete nursing to the patients or providing equipment for diagnosing all sorts of ailments, arranging transportation in the form of ambulances, catering services, etc., to the individuals.

There have been accelerating changes in the environment in which hospitals function, resulting in accelerating changes in management of hospitals. It is important, therefore, to look at the evolution of hospitals within the environment on which it is dependent. The major changes in concept of hospitals can be divided into different periods such as 1) Trusteeship Period 2) Physician period 3) Administration period.

1. Hospital Produces Intangible Services Rather than Tangible Goods Most of the hospitals are engaged in the production of services. Services are intangible, inseparable and perishable. A hospital offers an intangible service called health care, its delivery is inseparable from its delivers i.e. physicians, nurse practitioners. Its quality is variable with respect to who delivers it and it is perishable in that an empty nurse-practitioners office or idle physician means a loss of the associated revenue, since a service cannot be stored. Hospital service marketers must keep these characteristics in mind when developing marketing strategies and plans. Moreover, production and consumption of the service occur simultaneously, so the patient must be integrated into the service production process.

2. Hospitals are subject to Close Public Scrutiny Hospitals provide public needed services, they are on subsidized, are often tax exempted, and are increasingly regulated. They experience pressures from public and are expected to operate in the public interest.

3. Hospitals has been to Limit their Choice of Marketing Strategies Hospitals can not necessarily determine their own product line or service policy, in some cases it is dictated by the local regulatory bodies. Therefore, one major effect of local bodies on hospitals has been to limit their choice of marketing strategies

4. Less Patient Price Sensitivity than Other Industries The majority of rupees expended for hospitals are reimbursed by

third parties. This results in less patient price sensitivity than is found in most of other industries.

### **The Modern Hospital – A Complex Entity**

The complexity of the modern hospital organization is evident from the fact that it provides essential services, all 24 hours a day. Obviously, the hospitals differ from other organizations in that they deal continuously with the problems of life and death. The hospital is faced by a unique set of issues and characteristics.

(a) Hospitals are operated continuously. This leads to high cost and causes personnel and scheduling problems.

(b) There is wide diversity of objectives and goals among the individuals, professional groups and various sub-systems. Hospital components are responsible to participate inpatient care, education, research, prevention of prospective ailment, accommodation and intricate medical and surgical procedures. These activities are generally conflicting effective co-ordination is becoming difficult in minimizing this conflict and obtaining the maximum support in achieving hospital mission.

(c) Hospital personnel range from highly skilled and educated, unskilled and uneducated employees. The major responsibility of the hospital manager is to get work from these diversified groups. Unionization among personnel complicates human resources management in hospitals.

(d) Many components of hospital operation have dual lines of authority. Physicians are responsible for patient care, education and research. This necessitates unique skills and special working relationships.

(e) Hospitals deal with the problems of life and death. This puts significant psychological and physical stress on all the personnel. The setting and outcome may cause consumers and their families to be hypercritical.

(f) It is difficult to determine and measure the quality of patient care. There has been progress in determining with quality, but many questions were unanswered and there is disagreement among experts as to how and what should be measured.

(g) One major characteristic of hospital management is the over emphasis on medical care and the overriding of financial aspects of hospital operations. This results in distortion of management principles and their application to hospitals as compared with other undertakings.

(h) The complexity of a hospital is characterized not only by its diversified activities but also by the personalized nature of its services. Each patient is a special product.

The private health sector becomes unaffordable for the vast majority of the poor. There is impoverishment of the lower class or middle class due to illness which could be of a chronic nature or that involving hospitalization or surgery. The high cost of health care makes the poor more marginalized. There is a need to question the dominant role of the private health sector and the consequently high health care expenditure.

### **Changing Promotion activities – A Paradigm shift in Hospital Industry**

Dynamic markets are constantly shifting and changing, requiring regular updates to the approach to marketing.

#### **a. Healthcare Developments**

Virtually every aspect of healthcare has undergone significant change over past few years, and virtually all of these changes have implications for marketing. There are some major trends that are serving to transform the environment in which healthcare marketing is taking place.

#### **b. Shifting Demand for Healthcare Services**

The demand for healthcare services is influenced by numerous factors both inside and outside healthcare. Some of the emerging demands may be created by the industry as it introduces new products and services; some of them will be the result of changes in reimbursement patterns or the enactment of government regulations. Still more of the change in demand for services will reflect broad social trends that only have an indirect connection with healthcare. Regardless of the cause of the change, the nature of the demand for health services will be a major influence on futures demand for health services will be a major influence on future marketing activities.

#### **c. Growing Consumerism**

Some observers have predicted that the first decade of the twenty first century will be the decade of the consumer in healthcare and ample evidence supports this assertion. consumer-driven healthcare is one of the latest buzzwords in the field and a consumer choicell environment is emerging in which healthcare organizations will be required to cater to the needs and wants of a more demanding set of customers. These trends will require that marketers understand both the customer and the prospective customer better than at any time in the past, not only in terms of their demographics but also their lifestyles.

#### **d. Focus on Outcomes**

Driven by concerns over the effectiveness of the healthcare delivery system, persistent disclosures of medical errors in the system, and now the emergence of a pay-for-performance mind-set, healthcare providers are increasingly faced with the need to effectively assess outcomes. Marketers may be required to defend adverse mortality outcomes or, conversely, be presented with the opportunity to capitalize on favorable surgical outcomes. Marketers will be increasingly called on to moderate the outcomes issue, and outcome measures will become an inherent component of marketing evaluation. As a result, the marketers are likely to become the go-between for the provider and the public, regulators, and policy setters.

#### **e. A Shift Toward Patient Management**

In keeping with a broader definition of health and illness, the healthcare industry is experiencing a shift away from disease management toward patient management. While no one is abandoning programs designed to manage the treatment of patients with chronic diseases, emphasis is growing on managing the whole person using a comprehensive therapeutic approach.

#### f. The Erosion of Trust

Perhaps the most significant development in the past decade in terms of effect on the healthcare-consuming public has been the erosion of trust in the healthcare system. Twenty years ago, physicians were accorded the status of demigods, and hospitals were held up as examples of efficient and altruistic institutions. Health plans were considered valuable safety nets, and pharmaceutical companies were hailed for their contributions to new therapies. Reports of unethical behavior, negligence, and greed have served to sully the reputations of most of the players in healthcare in one way or another. A spate of criminal and civil charges brought against healthcare executives have served to further create an environment of distrust and suspicion. As result, a major role of the healthcare marketer in the future is likely to involve trust building, as efforts are made to repair the damage that healthcare has inflicted upon itself over the past two decades. Marketers will not only be promoting a product or service but also the image and integrity of the entire industry.

Consumer perception is an important component of relationship with the patients. Perceptions vary from person to person. Different people perceive different things about the same situation. But more than that, we assign different meanings to what we perceive. And the meanings might change for a certain person. One might change one's perspective or simply make things mean something else. The concept of patient perception does not only relate to individual patients in consumer markets. It is also valid in business to business situations. For example, a competitor benchmarking survey of a large industrial supplier revealed that the market leader, although recognized for excellent quality and service and known to be highly innovative, was perceived as arrogant in some regions. If we take into consideration that there are about four other large players with a similar level of quality and innovative ideas, this perceived arrogance could develop into a serious problem. Patients here are well aware them in characteristics of all the offerings available at the market are largely comparable. So they might use the development of a new product generation of their own to switch to a supplier that can serve them not better or worse, but with more responsiveness and understanding.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

In modern time, an average person is surrounded by multi-stimuli. He constantly remains under stress. He least cares about his health and hygiene. He suffers from numberless physical as well as mental diseases. He really needs qualitative treatment for his illnesses. Private hospitals in India provide the treatment in the form of healthcare services. Therefore, the study of the marketing of healthcare services provided by private hospitals is nevertheless important. Marketing is essential for any type of business. Without marketing any individual, firm or company cannot stand in the market. Private hospitals are not exception to this. The present study explains how private hospitals do marketing of healthcare services and which tools of marketing they use. The study tells how these hospitals use marketing mix. These objectives are as follows...

1. To understand the hospital promotional activities and trends.
2. To understand, hospital marketing strategies will useful enhancing visibility, quality of service and brand building.

3. To throw a light on changes in patient's perception towards hospital in responds to hospital marketing strategies.

4. Marketing strategies deals with identifying and meeting customer needs.

5. To differentiate marketing or promotional activities according to therapy specialization.

## 3. CONCLUSION

Healthcare Education is important aspect in society. As far as education of respondents concern it helps for selecting the right healthcare service provider. In the era of modernization education of respondents play an important role in reacting particular disease condition. They have to choose from many healthcare providers and ultimately right hospital. Also react to different marketing strategies of hospitals. Implementation of modern marketing strategies in hospitals requires further strategic planning like health camps or health mela, ease of excess of different transportation and informative tools for example helps to know patient needs and their views about hospitals and particular healthcare institutes. Rating of patient satisfaction will also increase social impact as to reach maximum crucial social elements of society. This paper clearly provides the information as hospital marketing strategies has helping for betterment of healthcare and decreasing the social gap between modern hospitals and people in India.

We have now realized the critical importance of hospitals in maintaining public health and social development. Modern hospitals are turning towards technological advancements to constantly identify patients' needs and deliver the same to achieve social development. for that social integration of hospitals plays an integral part in Indian perspective and to convert developed nation. this paper attempted to light upon the research on social impact and to know the significant practices to add a new and encourage ongoing hospital promotional activities in India. for the patients or consumers to have successful and satisfactory healthcare experience the hospitals would need to adopt new perspective. The transition may impact of Hospital, they will require new set of marketing skills and abilities to prepare for betterment of healthcare practices related hospitals in India.

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