



A STUDY ON ROLE OF DIGITAL MEDIA IN HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY AND ITS IMPACT ON CUSTOMERS

Dr. Belur O. Baxi

N. R. Institute of Business
Administration,
SMPIC Building,
Ahmedabad.

Mr. Azhar Khan

Doctorate Student of Calorex
University,
Ahmedabad.

Abstract

Over the last few years, every industry is welcoming the big data and digital marketing in their line of business due to its numerous advantages. While it was possible in the earlier days to reach out the customer through the traditional way of marketing, but now it is difficult to target, as we have seen how innovative technology is taking over and how people got scattered on various medium. For most of us, a question might arise how can marketing spread its footprints in the healthcare industry? Current research work is an attempt to understand the role of digital media in health care Industry and to understand the impact its left on customers. Researchers collected data from customers/patients and identify the various usage of digital platform in Health care industry. Findings reveal that digital media play important and vital role in health care industry and customers are aware about the digital media platform, but usage of digital media is not being done in full of its capacity. On the basis of findings, researchers suggested the ways to enhance the usages of digital platform to pharma companies, doctors and hospitals.



Key words: Digital Media, Social Media, Health care sector, Pharma Sector

Introduction

As the digital age advances, technology is becoming more and more prevalent in the healthcare industry. As such, it is increasingly important for all healthcare organizations to develop a digital presence. Digital marketing is making inroads into the healthcare industry but is taking its time compared to other industries. It is important for customers to realize the benefits of the digital realm but also to consider and prepare for the challenges you will face as your healthcare organization becomes more digitally advanced.

Indian healthcare industry is expected to grow at CAGR of 22.9% during 2015-20 to US\$ 280 billion. Healthcare delivery, includes hospitals, nursing homes and diagnostics centres, and pharmaceuticals, constitutes 65 per cent of the overall market. Today, the consumers are no longer satisfied to blindly accept what a doctor tells them. They prefer doing homework before visiting a doctor. This means that the doctor no longer has the only say on medications, hospitals, treatment, and more. Healthcare is more like the collaboration between the doctors and consumers, thus catering to the needs of digital marketing for hospitals.

Using the ownership criterion, the health care system can be divided into four board sectors:

- The public sector, including government-run hospitals, dispensaries, clinics, primary health care centres and sub centres and paramedics.
- The private not- for profit sector, including voluntary health programs charitable institutions, missions, churches and trusts.
- The organized private for profit sectors, including general practitioners (having at least a bachelor's degree or equivalents in medicine), private hospitals and dispensaries (popularly known as nursing homes), registered medical practitioners and other licensed practitioners.

- The private informal sector, including practitioners without formal qualifications (such as faith healers, herbalists, tantric, hakims, and Vaidya's).

This research paper is an attempt to understand the role of digital marketing and its impact on customers. For this researchers studied literature review on digital media and Pharma sector, and collect data through structure questionnaire. Findings and suggestion are been elaborated in coming heads.

Literature Review

Literature reviews is a description of published information in connection with the research. This section consists of review of literature related with impact of social media marketing with respect to consumers. It provides a critique review of miscellaneous studies related with social media marketing and online marketing.

Kohli R and Devraj S (2003) analyses that there is strong relationship between usage of it and better performance of hospital. It is also observed that improvement over conventional measures such as IT investment proven to be more effective for service quality and service delivery. Various dynamics of implementing information technology like labour costs, data were available, in place of the usage variables. It is observed that the IT investment variable was not statistically significant in the estimated models for better service to the hospitals or doctors or patients

Bodkin C (2007) by using quality dimensions identified by trade associations, it appears that consumers believe useful and accurate healthcare information can be found online and more than two third of them indicated that they are searching for medications/prescriptions. This reveals that a potentiality exists to develop trusting relationships with online eHealth consumers. It would seem that pharmaceutical companies are best positioned in the online environment to capitalize on developing relationships with consumers who link directly to a company's web site from search engines results. However, researchers have suggested that pharmaceutical companies need to be concerned with developing web sites that are easy to understand. As results also imply that the development of ethical codes for eHealth web sites has an effect on consumers' perceptions. With

this level of trust, it appears that eHealth web sites also have potential for developing long-term relationships with this market.

R.A.Gbadeyan (2010) study examined that there are opportunities for businesses in the market, businesses can grow with the help of social media marketing. Uses of SNS explored that organization can do direct marketing for online social network there are people who spend more time on SNS. Study also finds the reasons for people were using social networking sites due to safety concerned reason, technically inexperienced due to lack of confidence in using internet, intellectual rejecters who feel waste of time.

Srivastava R (2012) had depicted that with the new business environment created by the different and empowered capabilities of digital contexts, the marketing mix paradigm increasingly becomes object of criticisms. The search for a new dominant paradigm for operative decisions in digital environments is still in progress. It is further noticed that e-marketing research and practice will arrive to a deeper comprehension and maturity in the digital environment, we will probably see a new marketing mix paradigm which will definitely put to the traditional 4 Ps to rest and give light to a new widely accepted paradigm for marketing operations. This ultimately leads to less trial ability and digital product is quick to launch and accept as to conventional one which may be in requirement of different form of promotion.

Ate Bayazit Hayta (2013) studied that social media is on the most important tools communication channels. Consumers do access to information about goods and services to be purchased as per need by means of social media to a great extent. Also studied social media which affects our live in recent years that brings a new dimension to Internet and determine the effects of social media networks on purchasing behaviours of consumers.

Anitha and Navitha Thimmai (2013) published a paper “Satisfaction from Primary Health Care Services: A Comparative Study of Two Taluks in Mysore District” in ‘PARIPEX: Indian Journal of Research’. The utilization of any social services including health services have never been equitably distributed throughout society is proved by many studies. Along with utilization, it is also important to check the satisfaction associated with access to social services especially health services and its association with other variables. It would be interesting to examine

the relationship between utilization and satisfaction. Because the utilization rates itself does not disclose whether the users are satisfied with public health services delivered through Primary Health Centres (PHCs) or not. In this context the present paper made an attempt to study the utilization of public health services along with satisfaction through a comparative study. The results indicated that higher utilization is not a sign of higher satisfaction in the context of Primary Health Centres. Further the study identified some variables like Doctor's availability, Quality of Service, Cleanliness etc., influencing satisfaction in study area so that right decisions are taken in order to increase the satisfaction rates associated with PHCs.

Andreani J, Rokka J, Conchon F,(2014) are of the opinion that the personal sales visit (detailing) remains the most important means for reinforcing doctors' confidence towards medicine product and laboratory brands. Other promotional media, such as professional seminars, press and surveys play only a complementary role, according to our findings. Researchers further more concluded that the potential effects of online medical media including e-detailing, however one can't demonstrate impact of digital marketing on doctor's confidence on drug and laboratory brands. From the present study researcher did not manage to demonstrate synergy effects between off-line and online media. Yet, the relatively limited online media investment by the pharmaceutical brands did not help in highlighting the impact. Even after clustered the most active doctors in online media one can't find out exact impact on the brand selection of medicine by doctors. Higher rate of online contacts with pharmaceutical product and laboratory brands is not linked with higher brand confidence levels.

Kumar A and Panigrahi A (2014) are of the opinion that traditional methods such as "personal selling" and the modern technique like e-detailing and digital marketing" run simultaneously to achieve the goal. Daily Call Report ensures better supervision, management and accountability of sales team. It becomes a reliable feedback to evaluate their efficacy without which quantum increase in sales (the ultimate goal of fruitful communication) may remain a far –fetched dream. Replacing the conventional technique of communicating with doctors to digital communication creates problem rather than comfort. The digital communication

system can't provide on the spot answer to the consumers of the medicines in the digital communication.

Research Methodology

Research Methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. The purpose of this section is to describe the methodology carried out to complete the work. The effectiveness of any research work depends upon the correctness and effectiveness of the research methodology. This section deals with research design used, data collection, methods used and sampling methods used.

- Objective of Study: To understand the role of digital media in Health care sector and its impact on customers.
- Structure of Research: To fulfil research objective, researchers prepare structured questionnaire, where respond of customers on the role of digital media in health care sector is been collected. .
- Source of Data: The data collected for the study is both primary and secondary. Primary data was collected directly from the sample respondents through structured questionnaire and secondary data was collected from books, journals, magazines and Internet.
- Research type: This research work is descriptive.
- Sample Size: Researchers received 187 responses, out of which researcher found 146 valid responses
- Sample Unit: People of Ahmedabad who are using digital media for health care.
- Limitation of Research: No research is a complete research, just like that current research work is also have certain limitation, like:
 - Geographical Limitation: as this research is conducted only in Ahmedabad city.
 - Respondents' biasness: Respondents became biased toward their knowledge of digital media.

- Further scope of research: Further research can be done from the prospect of company’s point of view that how does companies look towards Digital media and its impact on customers.

Next section of this research paper deals with data analysis and interpretation.

Data Analysis

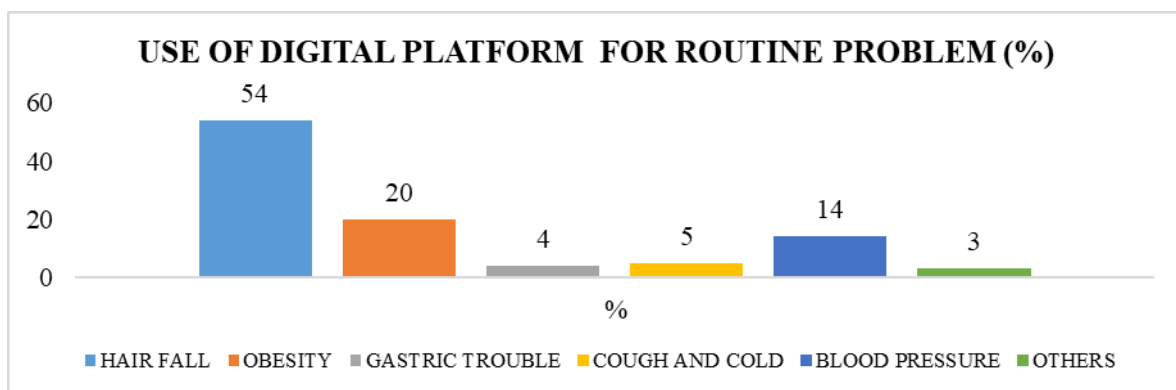


Chart: 1

Chart 1 shows data about the digital platform users for routine problem. 54% of respondents use it for hair fall problem. 20% for Obesity, 14% for blood pressure. 5% for cough and cold, 4% for Gastric problem and 3% for other problems.

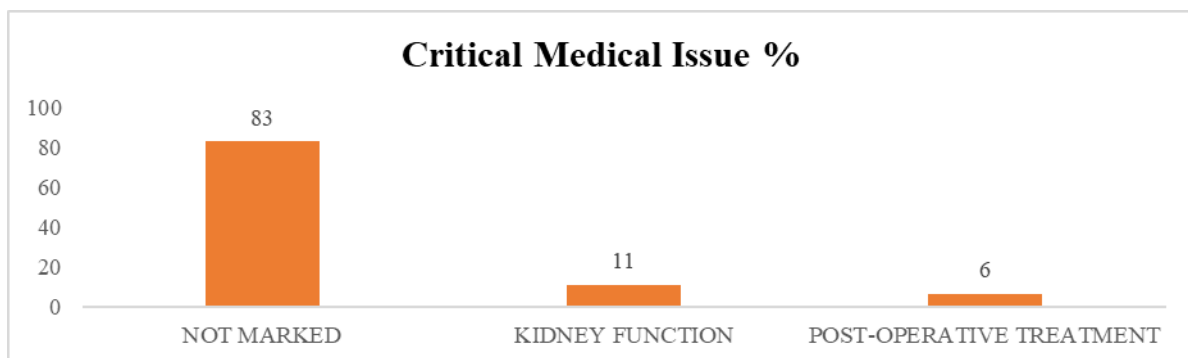


Chart: 2 shows data about the usages of digital platform regarding critical medical issue like kidney and post-operative treatments. 11% respondents use digital platform for kidney function and 6% for post-operative issues.



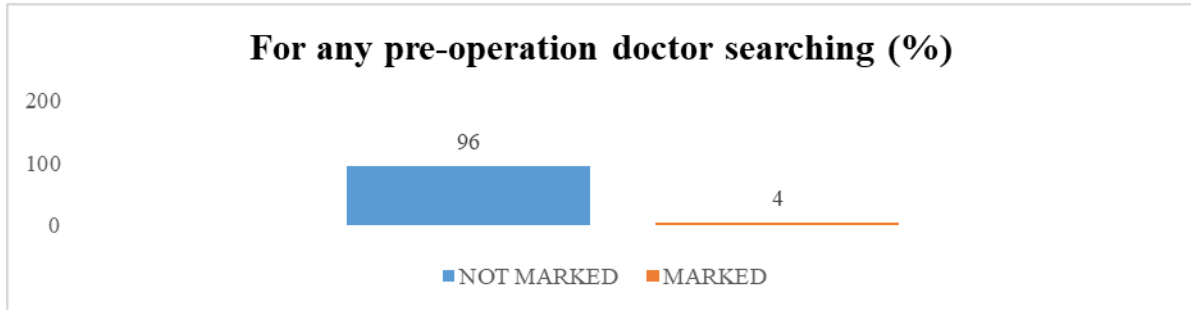


Chart: 3 explain that only 4% use digital platform to search doctors for operations.

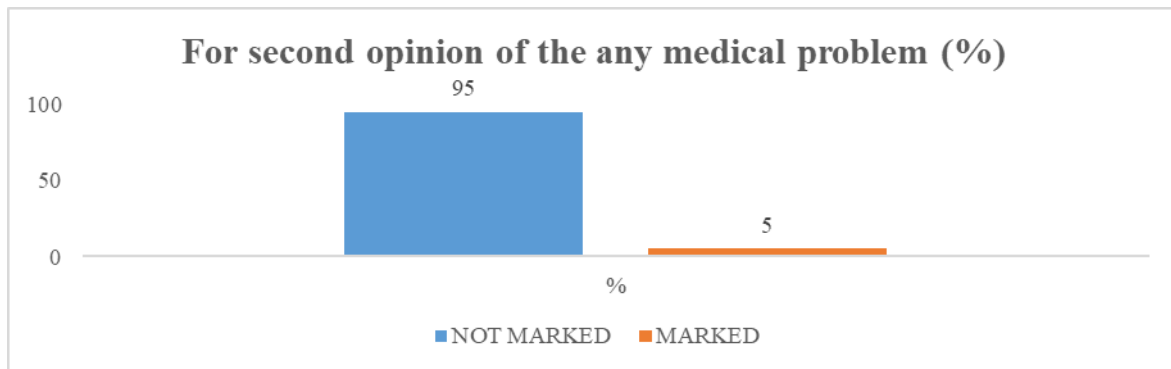


Chart: 4

Chart 4 explain that only 5% of respondents use digital platform for second opinion about the problems.

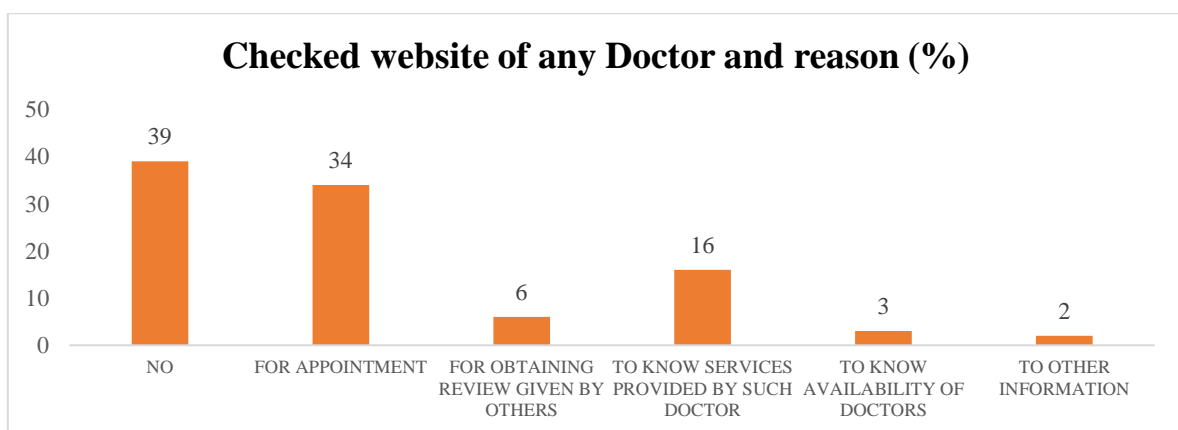


Chart: 5



Chart 5 explains the reasons for which respondents check website. About 1/3 of respondents check digital platform for appointments, 16% for services provided by doctors, 6% to know review, 3% to know availability of doctor, and 2% for the other information. Whereas 39% do not check website.

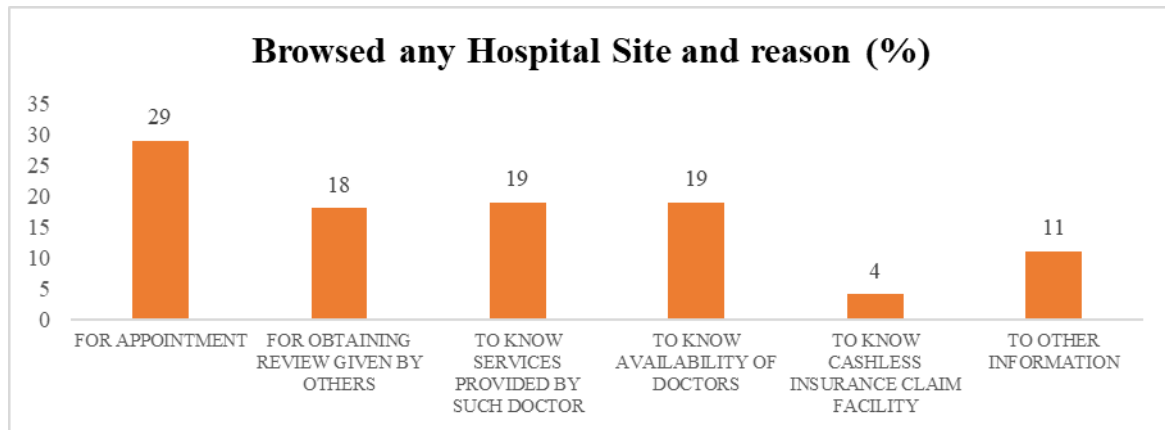


Chart: 6

Above chart explain the various reasons, for which respondents visit hospital website. About 30% respondents visit website for appointments, 19% to check doctor's availability and service provided by hospitals, 18% to know review about hospitals, 4% for insurance, and 11% to know other information.

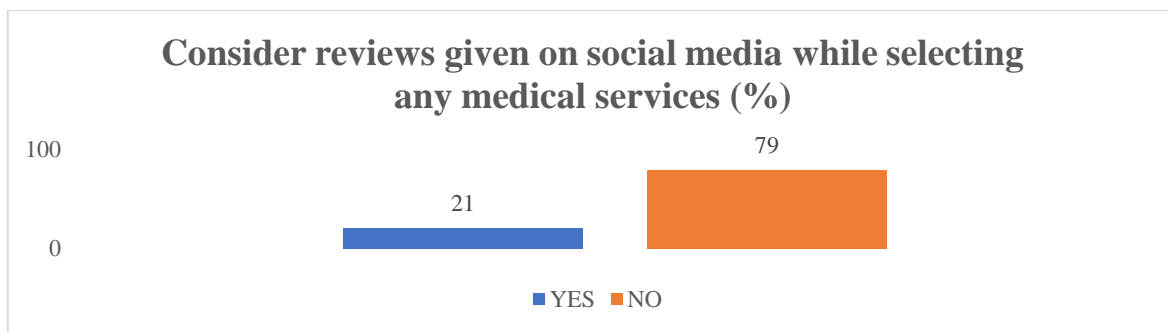


Chart: 7

Above chart explain that 79% respondents do not consider review given on social media, whereas 21% do consider reviews from social media.





Chart 8 explain the buying habit of respondent at digital platform. 54% do not buy medicines at digital platform. 38% respondents buy it from online portal, and 8% buy medicines from application of medical stores.

Findings

- About the usages of digital platform regarding the routine problems, research found that hair fall (more than 1/2 of the respondents) is common problem for which respondents find solution at digital platform, followed by obesity and blood pressure. Solution for cough and cold are being search less by respondents.
- Regarding the critical medical condition, research found that respondents do not use digital platform much. Only 11% respondents use it for kidney function and 6% for post-operative treatment. Researcher also found that respondents do not search for any re-operational doctor finding at digital platform. Researcher also found that respondents do not use digital platform for any type of second opinion. Only 4% respondents do so.
- Regarding the checking website of doctors and information browsed, researcher found that 39% of respondents do not browse any website and those who browsed, they looked for appointment followed by to know services offered by doctor. Other looked for availability of doctor, and to read reviews.
- Researcher found that regarding the information for which hospital site were browsed, for doctor appointment (29%), followed by to know the availability of treatment and service provided by hospital. Other information are collected regarding the reviews.



- Researcher found that respondents (79%) do not consider reviews given on social media. Research also found that only 18% of respondents are member of such groups which provide health or medical information.
- Researcher found that when it's come to purchase medicine from digital platform, more than 1/2 of the respondents did not buy, and those who purchased, purchased from online portal followed by medical store application.

Conclusion

On the basis of findings researchers conclude that digital media provide a good platform to the health care companies, and companies need to use it wisely to increase awareness about the service and treatments. Also digital media has positive impact on the customers. Customers are using digital platforms in healthcare sector.

Recommendation

However, on the basis of findings, researcher also would like to suggest that:

- Customer need to search about the doctors before any major operation.
- Also customers need to search doctors' website for appointment or to know facilities available at there.
- Researcher recommend that review given at digital platform need to be considered by customers.



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