CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS,
SUGGESTIONS AND
CONCLUSION
CHAPTER - VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

The following are the findings made by the researcher on the basis of analysis of marketing of hospital services. The researcher has taken 500 respondents as sample size, out of which, 125 respondents are hospitals (Institutional respondents) and the remaining 375 respondents (patients) have been selected from different taluks of the study area.

FINDINGS FROM INSTITUTIONAL RESPONDENTS (HOSPITALS)

➢ Most of the hospitals taken in this study have been established after the year 2000 and in between 1996 to 2000. Out of 125 hospitals, more than fifty per cent of the hospitals are located in Salem taluk and a substantial number of hospitals are taken from the Attur taluk and the remaining hospitals have been taken from all other taluks of Salem district. Nearly 100 hospitals are situated in the urban area and the remaining 25 hospitals are located in the rural areas.

➢ There are a variety of medical services like general services, diabetic, ENT, ortho, pediatric, gynecology are given more importance when compared to other hospital services. Hospital offering treatment for cancer, kidney disorders and hypertension are
given less importance. This is because, these services are required for only a few people.

➢ All the hospitals taken in this study are giving more importance to the additional services like blood testing, taking X rays, ECG, Scanning, provision of beds and other services. Additional services attract patients than mere core services.

➢ Every hospital charges different fees from their customers on several criteria. Most of the hospitals charge fees on the basis of the nature of services offered by them. Therefore, the fee charged by the hospitals is different for different services. Some of the hospitals inform their fee well in advance for some critical services. Based on the analysis, it is concluded that pricing of medical services are not same in different taluks in Salem District. There is no significant difference in the pricing of medical services and the location of hospitals are not same in general hospitals and multi-specialty hospitals.

➢ Different hospitals adopt different strategies for their promotion. From the analysis, it is found that some of the activities of hospitals are considered as effective strategies for their promotion and upliftment. Individual attention paid by the hospitals, the amount of time spent on patients, additional services have been found effective strategies for the promotion. Advertisement is not effective one in
promoting the medical services like in consumer goods market and other services.

➢ For better marketing services, hospitals are located in the highly populated areas in which transport facilities are available, areas in which availability of supportive services are considered very important.

➢ It is concluded that Hospitals located in different taluks do not provide the same satisfaction to the respondents (patients).

➢ It is found that both general hospitals and multi – specialty hospitals are not satisfied with the distribution of medical services. Hospitals with different establishment years are not satisfied over their promotional strategies and hospitals located in rural and urban area are not satisfied with the promotional strategies.

➢ The age, location and type of hospitals are very important factors in determining the pricing of medical services. Area (Taluk) is not considerable factor in this regard.

➢ As far as promotional strategies are concerned, location of the hospitals is very important factor which is followed by type of hospitals. Year and taluk have positive relationship with the distribution of medical services and location and types of hospitals are having negative relationship with the distribution of hospital services.
FINDINGS FROM THE RESPONDENTS (PATIENTS)

➢ Out of 500 respondents, 375 respondents are patients. Of them, 225 are male and 150 are female. Most of the respondents are more than 55 years old and more than fifty percent of them (Both male and female) are employed. This is followed by the self employed, farmers and professionals. Most of them fall under the income category of from Rs.7501 to Rs.15000. A few of them earn more than this. More than fifty per cent of the respondents are living in the urban area.

➢ Majority of the respondents (158 male and 113 female) are taking allopathic treatment and this is followed by Homeopathy treatment and siddha treatment. For immediate relief from the diseases, most of the clients are taking allopathic treatment. A very few of them are taking unani and other medical treatment.

➢ Respondents (both male and female) are selecting their medical services on the basis of many criteria. Majority of them choose their medical services as alternative one. After taking a particular medical treatment, due to dissatisfaction, they choose another medical treatment as alternative one. So, respondents who got dissatisfaction from allopathic treatment, they go for alternative one either homeopathy or siddha or unani.
Past experiences and previous involvement in particular medical services is another factor which motivates a client to continue in a particular medical treatment. Besides, opinion from the friends, chemists and druggists also motivate to select a particular treatment.

Respondents from rural and urban areas do not prefer all the medical services for a particular disease. They select medical treatment differently for ordinary treatment and major illness. Majority of them (Both rural and urban respondents) select MBBS doctors' services for ordinary illness. This is being done only after the failure of self medication. They approach foreign doctors for major treatment only.

The respondents are satisfied over the trustworthy of the staff members of the hospitals, individual attention, working hours, importance to patients, keeping correct records, sincerity, promptness, physical facilities, dress code, listening to patients, providing update information, motivation, maintenance of database, approachability, using modern technology and other related activities of hospitals.

Hospitals' services can be best marketed by fulfilling the expectation of the respondents. The male are expecting from the hospitals are: easily meeting the doctors during the emergency period, using non-technical words while treating the patients,
installing the latest equipments, disclosing the results to the patients. They prefer explanation about the disease only from the doctors not from the others. They also prefer provision of auxiliary services along with the core services.

- Periodical reminder from the hospitals is another important expectation of the male respondents.

- Regarding female respondents, they expect the availability of doctors in time in the hospitals. Availability of latest equipments, informed fee details are expectation of the female respondents. Just like male, they also expect using non-technical words while speaking with the patients. They are expecting service minded doctors and staff. All other expectations are same as male respondents.

- It is found from the analysis that the male and female respondents choose their medical services in the same way. That is both are having the same tendency towards selecting the medical services. It is concluded that there is no significant differences between age of the respondents and their selection of hospital services.

- The marketing of medical services create different effects on different sectors of the respondents. They are employed, businessmen, farmers and professionals. Selection of medical services by the respondents doing different jobs is not in the same
Selection of medical services by the employed is exclusively differ from the selection of farmers. Similarly selection of medical services by the businessmen is differ from the selection of medical services by the professionals. Since the cost is considerable factor in selecting the medical services, this happens so.

- Both male and female respondents are satisfied over the services offered by the hospitals in the study area. But at the same time, all the age group of the respondents are not satisfied over the hospitals' services. Adults having more age are highly satisfied than that of other age group of the respondents.

- Except professional respondents, other respondents are highly satisfied over the hospital services. Therefore it is found from the testing of hypothesis that respondents of different occupations are not same in getting satisfaction over the medical services. They are satisfied even though earn different levels of income. Both urban and rural respondents are not satisfied over the medical services. It is concluded that respondents of different occupations do not consider the hospitals' services as important one.

- There are significant differences between various opinions of importance of respondents of different income group.

- As far as choice of hospitals are concerned, age plays an important role in selecting the hospitals. Occupation and location of
respondents are other factors in determining the selection of hospital services.

- Location in which the hospitals are located is a crucial factor offering the quality medical service. Respondents having different occupations and different ages are expecting more from the hospitals than others.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the analysis, the researcher recommends the following suggestions for the better marketing of the hospital services in the study area. They are:

I. FEE CONCESSIONS

Patients are different types in the study area. Some of them take medical treatment for the time being diseases. But some other takes medical treatment for the chronic diseases. Therefore fees concessions can be give to the patients who are taking treatments for their chronic disease.

II. OPENING OF BRANCHES

Since Salem is one of the biggest districts in terms of area in Tamilnadu, the respondents are distributed across the area. In order to access the medical services easily by the patients, it would be better for financially well sound hospitals to open branches in areas in which there is no such a medical services which covers potential respondents.
III. PRICE DISCRIMINATION

Place discrimination of pricing of medical services is suggested to satisfy the rural and urban clients. This is because there is income disparity among the respondents in rural and urban areas. But it should be carefully done without affecting others.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES

Today the number of hospitals are being established. Therefore there has been growing competition among the medical service providers. In order to fight with the competitors or to maintain the existing patients and to cover the potential patients, state-of-art facilities have to be established.

V. ADDING ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Many hospitals in the study area are lacking additional facilities like blood testing centers, X-ray facilities and scanning facilities. Therefore clients have to be move from one place to another place for availing these additional services. Hence, hospitals have to concentrate more on adding additional services.

VI. TIE UP WITH INSURANCE COMPANIES

Today many hospitals are attaching with the some insurance companies. Patients are willing to take medical services from the hospitals which offering this facilities. Therefore all the hospitals should make some arrangements with the insurance companies.
VII. REMINDER TO PATIENTS

By sending SMS periodically as reminder to the clients who are taking treatment for chronic diseases, the marketing service will be improved. It is suggested that the follow-up activities can also be done.

VIII. CORDIAL RELATION BETWEEN DOCTORS AND PATIENTS

An important suggestion here is maintaining the cordial relationship between the doctors and the patients. Doctors have to approach with pleasing mind while speaking to the patients. It should be maintained strictly.

IX. INSTALLATION OF MODERN EQUIPMENTS

It is very essential to install modern equipments and apparatus replacing the old ones. It would attract more number of potential clients. Diagnosing the related diseases can be done with the help of these instruments.

X. MAINTAINING SUGGESTION / GRIEVANCE BOOK SERVICES

Like other marketing services, visitor’s book can be maintained and patients can be allowed to register their opinion or their satisfaction. It will be much useful to the hospitals to set right their services.

XI. TRANSPORT FACILITIES

Hospitals should make transport facilities to facilitate the patients to easily access the hospitals. Hospitals-owned ambulance vehicles can be operated.
XII. CONDUCTING SPECIAL CAMPS

Special camps can be conducted to create awareness among illiterate, students, public etc. to prevent the diseases well in advance.

XIII. SERVICE ORIENTED TRUSTS

Hospitals must treat their services as a product and attempt to continuously improve the quality of it. Service product features have to be imbibed at every stage by the personnel. While cost could emerge as a constraint, in modern days, even patients belonging to poor income group are prepared to pay for the best treatment. There are a number of philanthropic organizations which support such needy patients and the hospitals should take it upon themselves to educate the patient on this aspect.

XIV. IMPROVED SERVICES OF THE STAFFS

Staff attending their duty must be service oriented and duty consciousness. Such an effort would result in achieving new heights in the quality of services.

XV. MAINTAINING INTERNAL DATABASE

The cumbersome procedures have to be simplified that is patients should be made to fulfill minimum requirements. Through the maintenance of internal data base every hospital should be able to generate general patient information us and when required. So while collecting the patient
information at the front desk, a comprehensive form should be used that the patient would furnish all the details at one time.

XVI. CUSTOMER RETENTION SERVICE

In the context of hospitals, customer retention should be read as customer acting as the ambassador of the hospital and cause a re-direction of the patients towards the best hospital. Hence every patient treated in a hospital turns out to be a major source of business such as approach though sound commercial yet, practical.

XVII. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOSPITAL SERVICE

As the guardians of public health, the hospitals have their social responsibilities. More conduct of health camps and immunization camps would not fulfill their social responsibilities. A constant interaction with the environment around and to improve the same, private hospitals participating with the general hospitals in sharing of high cost service, sharing knowledge, creation and use of common facilities, treating trauma care victims, joint or collaborative research activities and united fight against diseases like HIV, SARS and other types of diseases, would enable healthcare to achieve excellence and benefit the society.
CONCLUSION

The growth and development of the service sector is very fast than that of agricultural sector and manufacturing sector. There are various services in the service sector and an important one among them is hospital services. The number of hospitals has been increasing year by year. But the quality of medical services is questionable. All the hospitals do not offer quality services to their patients. The patients prefer some hospitals than other hospital services. Doctors are considered as gods and goddess since they are providing life to the patients.

The marketing of hospital services is not an easy job. Many hospitals find it difficult to face the marketing functions. Strategies towards the marketing of medical services are carefully done. In Salem District, different hospitals are adopting different strategies to attract the potential patients. Similarly patients are carefully studying the services of hospitals before they choose a particular hospital. Pricing of hospital services, nature of medical services, cost considerations, equipments used, strategies adopted by the competitors, potential for development, population and income distribution of the area are the main factors have to be considered while taking marketing strategies towards medical services.

In Salem District, marketing of medical services done by the hospitals are satisfactory one. But they must concentrate more on covering more patients in future. At the same time respondents taken in this study
area are expecting highly qualified services from the hospitals. The quality of services assured in the advertisements and in any other form of marketing should be offered to the patients. As far as the present study is concerned, the marketing of medical services by the hospitals are better. Marketing strategies and plans should be taken in order to cope with the patients' expectations. If the above said suggestions are accepted and fulfilled, both hospitals as well as patients will benefit much. The policy makers and administrators have to take appropriate policies in this regard.