

***C*CHAPTER**



Evaluating the Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Awareness and Consumer Behaviour While Seeking Health Care Services

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INTRODUCTION

The impact of digital marketing on healthcare service selection has been a topic of considerable discussion in recent years. On one hand, digital marketing simplifies the process for consumers to access information about healthcare services, aiding them in identifying their healthcare needs. Conversely, the abundance of information and advertisements from various sources in digital marketing can sometimes overwhelm and confuse consumers. With the advancement of digital technologies and the proliferation of online platforms, the healthcare industry has undergone significant transformation. Healthcare providers are increasingly turning to digital marketing to engage with and reach consumers who are becoming more adept with technology [3].

Through digital marketing, healthcare organizations have been able to effectively promote their services and engage with consumers in novel ways. In the digital era, consumers have access to a plethora of information and resources related to healthcare services, enabling them to research providers, read reviews, compare services, and prices before making decisions. This study aims to explore the impact of digital marketing on consumers' selection of healthcare services, focusing on identifying key factors influencing consumers' choices and examining the effects of digital marketing strategies on consumer acquisition and retention. The study will offer valuable insights into the role of digital marketing in healthcare and provide recommendations for healthcare organizations to enhance their digital marketing efforts [2,3].

Digital marketing encompasses the use of digital technologies such as websites, online platforms, search engines,

email, and mobile applications to promote products or services. In the healthcare industry, digital marketing has the potential to reach a broader audience and provide consumers with information about healthcare services. Healthcare organizations can utilize social media to disseminate information about their services, share updates on healthcare news and trends, and engage with consumers through online communities. Additionally, email marketing can be utilized to send personalized messages to consumers regarding upcoming appointments, health tips, and wellness programs [1].

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate how digital marketing influences patients' choices in selecting healthcare services.
2. To formulate suggestions for healthcare institutions on improving their digital marketing strategies to augment patient acquisition and retention.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How did digital marketing influence consumer awareness and behavior when choosing healthcare services?
2. To what extent did social media and online advertising influence individuals to opt for medical healthcare services?
3. What were the primary factors individuals considering when choosing a healthcare provider, and how do these factors impact digital marketing strategies?
4. What specific modifications should be implemented in digital marketing strategies to effectively attract and retain consumers?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the general public, comprising potential consumers of healthcare services. A Google Form questionnaire, encompassing 22 questions addressing various aspects of digital marketing concerning hospitals, was distributed. The research encompassed diverse settings, including urban and rural areas. Recruitment of participants was facilitated through multiple channels, such as social media platforms, email invitations, and word-of-mouth referrals. Participants represented a wide spectrum of demographic backgrounds, encompassing age, gender, ethnicity, education level, and socioeconomic status. Measures were taken to ensure equal opportunity for all participants to express their opinions and experiences regarding the impact of digital marketing on healthcare service selection. Participants were informed about the study's nature, purpose, and the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations. The study was conducted with utmost respect for participants' privacy and dignity, ensuring the protection of their personal information. Overall, the study aimed to shed light on the influence of digital marketing on their decision-making process and to identify strategies for healthcare organizations to optimize their digital marketing endeavors for enhanced consumer acquisition and retention.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The data collected from the survey revealed that the majority of participants (40.46%) indicated being "somewhat satisfied" with the healthcare services they had received, followed by 32.89% who reported being "satisfied" and 23.57% who reported being "very satisfied." A smaller portion of

respondents reported being "not satisfied" (2.41%) or "very unsatisfied" (0.66%) with the healthcare services they received. The study gathered information from participants across various demographics, including age groups, education levels, genders, and occupations, to assess the influence of digital marketing on healthcare service selection. The age group of 15-30 had the highest representation among participants at 91.60%, followed by 31-45 at 6.49%, and 45-60 at 1.53%. Most participants held a graduation degree (59.00%), followed by post-graduation (39.08%), and those with a Ph.D. or higher degree (1.92%). In terms of gender, the study had a nearly equal split between male and female participants, with 50.19% and 49.81% respectively.

Additionally, the majority of participants identified as students (78.46%), followed by service professionals (13.08%), business professionals (6.15%), and homemakers (1.15%). Regarding the frequency of healthcare service utilization, a significant proportion of respondents (45.04%) reported using healthcare services once a month, followed by those who utilized them once every 3 months (17.18%) and twice a year (24.81%). Only a small percentage of respondents reported using healthcare services once a year (11.45%). The high frequency of healthcare service utilization on a monthly basis may indicate a prevalence of chronic illnesses or a proactive approach to preventive health measures among the population. Conversely, the low percentage of respondents utilizing healthcare services annually may suggest that they only seek healthcare when faced with acute health issues, highlighting the need for greater emphasis on regular health check-ups and preventive measures. Overall, these findings underscore the importance for healthcare providers to promote regular health check-ups and preventive

healthcare measures to encourage more frequent utilization of healthcare services.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings underscore the importance for healthcare organizations to refine their digital marketing strategies in order to bolster consumer acquisition and retention. This can be achieved by delivering high-quality, easily accessible, and relevant content tailored to consumer needs. Additionally, healthcare organizations can enhance their digital marketing efforts by utilizing consumer feedback and online reviews to bolster their reputation and cultivate trust among potential consumers. In essence, this study offers valuable insights into the influence of digital marketing on healthcare service selection and emphasizes the imperative for healthcare organizations to embrace digital marketing as a pivotal element of their strategies for consumer acquisition and retention. Through this approach, healthcare organizations can effectively cater to consumer needs and enrich the overall consumer experience.

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