



HEALTHCARE MARKET IN POST COVID-19 ERA A CASE STUDY OF NORTH BENGAL

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ABSTRACT

North Bengal– covering districts Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar, Kalimpong, Alipurduar, Uttar Dinajpur and Malda of West Bengal are having the border areas of neighboring states Assam, Bihar and Sikkim and also border areas of neighboring countries like Nepal, Bhutan & Bangladesh. As a result people from neighboring states / countries also avail the healthcare facilities in different districts of North Bengal. But deployment of healthcare amenities varies penetratingly across northern areas of West Bengal. The present study applies market survey tools to explore present status of utilization of health care is affected by different socio-economic, demographic, and other relevant factors in the rural and urban areas of northern part of West Bengal and adjacent states of India and neighboring countries. The present study does an analysis of user's perception regarding choice of health care and computes salience of different opinions towards utilization of health care facilities for minor to severe ailments. Patients' or households' inclination for expenditure for different types of health care facilities that has a significant department on the use of different types of health care where both public and private sectors run parallel with different recognized systems of medicines.

KEYWORDS : North Bengal, Health-care Market, Public and Private sectors

INTRODUCTION

North Bengal – covering districts Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar, Kalimpong, Alipurduar, Uttar Dinajpur and Malda of West Bengal are having the border areas of neighbouring states Assam, Bihar and Sikkim and also border areas of neighbouring countries like Nepal, Bhutan & Bangladesh. In different districts of North Bengal, health care sector is solely dependent on government aided hospitals or primary health centers. Most of the private hospitals are basically ownership basis nursing homes owned by the medical practitioners. Multi-specialty hospitals are not available in any district towns. Concentrations of some corporate hospitals are there in around Siliguri town that too with some limited medical facilities in comparison to metro cities of India.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

Research Objectives

- To identify the present health infrastructure of different districts of North Bengal
- To identify the satisfaction level of the inhabitants of different districts of North Bengal and its neighboring states/countries.
- To identify a feasible project on Health Care Division in North Bengal for future investment opportunities

Research Problem :

Identification of investment opportunities in healthcare sectors in different districts to extend state of the art medical facilities to the people of North Bengal.

Hypotheses

Set 1

H₀: Healthcare facilities are adequate in different districts of North Bengal

H₁: Healthcare facilities are inadequate in different districts of North Bengal

Set 2

H₀: New healthcare facilities may not be viable in the districts by private organizations

H₁: New healthcare facilities may be viable in the districts by private organizations

Set 3

H₀: New Multi-specialty OPD with additional facilities won't be enough to resolve the immediate medical emergency of the patients

H₁: New Multi-specialty OPD with additional facilities can resolve the immediate medical emergency of the patients

Set 4

H₀: A new Multi-specialty hospital at Siliguri will not be enough for the people of North Bengal to go out of state for medical treatment purpose

H₁: A new Multi-specialty hospital at Siliguri will be preferred for the people of North Bengal to avoid going out of state for medical treatment purpose

Population :

People of all ages suffering from different ailments and also having the affordability to pay the hospital bill for themselves and their families.

Sampling Design:

Sample Size: 10,000

Area of Sampling: All districts of North Bengal, Sikkim, Bihar, Assam and Border areas of Nepal & Bhutan

Sampling Technique Applied: Stratified Random Sampling

to obtain a sample population that best represents the entire population being studied by dividing the entire universe into homogeneous strata based on income level and age group. A random sample from each stratum is taken in a number proportional to the stratum's size when compared to the population. These subsets of the strata are then pooled to form a random sample.

Data Collection tool

- Primary Data Collection tool: Questionnaire Survey of people aged above 18 years and having different sources of family income. Data collected via Google Form.
- Secondary Data from different official websites maintained by Government of India, Government of West Bengal, World Health Organization etc.

Plan of Data analysis

All primary data collected through the questionnaire survey are tabulated and Graphical solutions were generated with the help of MS Excel. All objectives linked with Hypotheses were tested with the help of different Statistical tools before deriving any kind of conclusion based on mere assumptions.

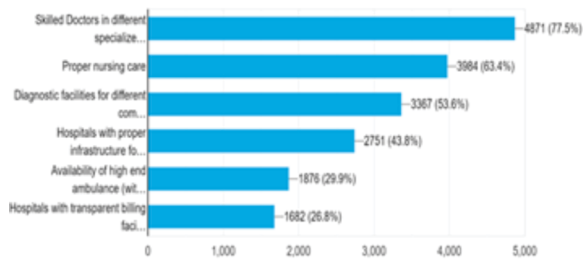
III DATA ANALYSIS & INFERENCE

Hypotheses Set 1

H₀: Healthcare facilities are adequate in different districts of

North Bengal

H₀: Healthcare facilities are inadequate in different districts of North Bengal



CHI-SQUARE (χ^2) = 2466

DEGREE OF FREEDOM : $V=(n-1)$; where n is the number of column 5

INFERENCE :

For 5 degree of freedom at specific level of significance, acceptance / rejection of null hypothesis depends on the table value. Here χ^2 (CHI SQUARE) from the table is found out to be 16.7 which is lower than the calculated χ^2 value i.e. 2466, so we reject the null hypothesis and accept the predictive statement Healthcare facilities are inadequate in different districts of North Bengal which was our alternative hypothesis.

Hypotheses : Set 2

H₀: New healthcare facilities may not be viable in the districts by private organizations

H₁: New healthcare facilities may be viable in the districts by private organizations

CHI- SQUARE (χ^2) 26365

DEGREE OF FREEDOM : $V=(n-1)$; where n is the number of column 6

INFERENCE

For 6 degree of freedom at specific level of significance, acceptance / rejection of null hypothesis depends on the table value. Here χ^2 (CHI SQUARE) from the table is found out to be 18.5 which is lower than the calculated χ^2 value i.e. 26365 so we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that is New healthcare facilities may be viable in the districts by private organizations.

Hypothesis : Set 3

H₀: New Multi-specialty OPD with additional facilities won't be enough to resolve the immediate medical emergency of the patients

H₁: New Multi-specialty OPD with additional facilities can resolve the immediate medical emergency of the patients

LIKERT SCALE ANALYSIS

The total responses in the above table have been considered after neglecting the neutral response, which is 352 responses, hence the total responses is taken as 9698 in place of 10050. Z TEST result shows 9.64

INFERENCE

As per the table at 5% significance level Z score value is 1.960. Null hypothesis is rejected here since the calculated value of Z which is 9.64 is bigger than the critical value, which is 1.960. So, it can be now said that a new Multi-specialty OPD with additional facilities can resolve the immediate medical emergency of the patients in different district towns.

Hypothesis : Set 4

H₀: A new Multi-specialty hospital at Siliguri will not be enough by the people of North Bengal to go out of state for medical treatment purpose

H₁: A new Multi-specialty hospital at Siliguri will be preferred

for the people of North Bengal to avoid going out of state for medical treatment purpose

The question was framed on 5 point Likert Scale to get the exact ordinal preference of the respondents. A non-parametric test was executed to get the result.

The total responses in the above table have been considered after neglecting the neutral response, which is 459 responses, hence the responses is taken as 9591 in place of 10050. Z TEST 20.012

INFERENCE

As per table at 5% significance level Z score is 1.960. Null hypothesis is rejected here since the calculated value of Z, which is 20.012, which is bigger than the critical value that is 1.960. So, it can be now said that a new multi-specialty hospital at Siliguri will be preferred by the people of North Bengal to avoid going out of state for medical treatment purpose.

In North Bengal apart from weaker health infrastructure for the inhabitants, the status of health infrastructure for the animals and game birds are also not very encouraging. New investors can keep these factors in mind for future proposition.

CONCLUSIONS

In northern part of West Bengal people are not truly satisfied with the health facilities extended by the Government at the same time private players are not that serious in investing money to develop new health related ventures as people are not so sure about of return on investment due to lack of studies in this field. Most studies found are on health economics that do not give any market direction to the new investors having vision to built mammoth health care facilities with all sorts of amenities in their venture. People of north Bengal do have money and regular ailments as usual like any other corner of the country but they just lost the faith on the present health infrastructure which needs to be strengthened by offering them world class facilities with proper branding. To start with tapping the rural areas with better quality service an OPD with some renowned medical practitioner from metro city with high-end diagnostic facilities and some day care surgery services. Health infrastructure also includes the opportunities to invest in building new para-medical college, pharmacy college or nursing college offering Graduation from reputed health University with all necessary approvals from the government agencies. The research found a huge reluctance of the government as well as private players in investing in these sectors, as a result properly trained manpower need in para-medical fields or nursing are being outsourced from other places of the state or country. Interested candidates are also bound to travel away from their home towns to far distance just to get a proper qualification. So, these areas also can be tapped by the new investors.

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