



PUBLIC RELATIONS IN HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING IN SELECT CORPORATE AND GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT Public relations demand an integrated approach for managing communication in developing patients-facility-doctor touch that encompasses patients as patrons of hospitals. Unlike a specialist frame of reference, corporate communication in developing public relations transcends the specialties of individual communication practitioners (e.g. branding, media relations, investor relations, public affairs, internal communication etc.) into the hospital industry to harness the strategic interests of the health sector. Public relations work is all about developing effective relationship between organizations and groups that are important to them including the media, customers, employees, investors, community leaders and members, activists groups, and government agencies. These relationships should benefit both parties. The paper outlines Public Relations in Hospital Administration and Planning in Select Corporate and Government Hospitals in Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh

KEYWORDS : Public relations, Administration, Planning, Corporate and Govt. Hospitals

INTRODUCTION

Healthcare is a service to the sick, the mentally and physically incapacitated members of the society who need medical attention and help. This service is provided by health institutions called hospitals, clinics, medical centres etc. These health institutions are either publicly owned, i.e. government hospitals or privately owned. Other than public hospitals which are supported by the government, private health institutions, i.e. private hospitals and clinics, are business enterprises, which must be properly managed if they must survive, grow as well as prosper. The application of public relations to health care is a new phenomenon. It is an activity to be embraced by everybody working in any healthcare institution for the achievement of the organization's objectives. Accordingly, understanding the role of public relations in any organization is immensely imperative for management and workers. The aim of corporate communication in developing public relations is building reputation among its stakeholders to run on sound patient man-hours. The government sector hospitals though have been the outcome of the state in preserving and protecting their subjects are supported by government funds, grants, etc for the benefit of public health. Normally due to the governments' prime responsibility and not to run on profit lines, patients are more in numbers than patients in the corporate hospitals (Petersen, B. K. and Martin, H.J. (1996).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jeff Mero (2010) viewed that the public relations is the function of communicating effectively with key hospital district audiences, including media, local residents, employees, physicians, board members, community leaders, government officials and others interested in the hospital. A public relations programme comprises strategies and tactics that help communicate key messages, respond to positive or negative events affecting the hospital, garner publicity for new programs, services or staff and create goodwill and recognition for the hospital within the community.

Vani (2014) made a comparative analysis of private and public sector hospitals and emphasized that private hospitals are leading the Health Care Service Market because of many factors like better quality services and facilities and good reputation and image.

Tanushri Mukherjee (2015) studied the Health Services of India, the problems it is undergoing and what has been the contribution of an effective PR Practice behind the successful functioning of the hospitals. The paper studied the need for PR in hospitals and suggests certain model and instrument to be used extensively by the Indian Hospitals in its effort to provide qualitative health care services to the concerned public.

Dhruv P. Gohil (2016) aired that the high costs of the services at hospitals, the competition between the public service institutions and private sector, raising the awareness of public on the diseases, demands concentration on public relation services heavily. Public relations

encompasses the users and peer groups outlook which is moulded by factors like satisfaction in terms of services provided and attitudes of the hospital personnel. Rapidly changing trends and concepts of advertising/marketing strategies along with new age social media which has an open and a widespread reach, establishing a specialized Public Relations Department has now become mandatory.

Kehinde Oladele Joseph and Igbozuruike Romanus Chukwuemeka (2016) focused on Public Relations as a tool for effective healthcare management, using Hetta Medical Centre, Ota in Nigeria, with the aim of discovering the relationships between good public relations and indices of Hetta's Management performance. Correlation coefficient of the satisfaction items with public relations items are significant and positive This showed that there is a positive relationship between good public relations and Hetta Medical Centre's management performance. The study recommends that private hospitals should practice good public relations, train and retrain both medical and non-medical staff in professional patient care.

Ramesh Chandra Pathak (2017) studied the effective approach of PR practices is following by Tata Main Hospital in the era of social media is also a major area of investigation. The private hospitals are also supposed to provide better health facilities as they claim. An effective PR practices are the demand of time and it is also behind the successful functioning of the hospital. The health service providers must be aware that our customers are equipped with internet revolution, social media benefits and convergence. They are also aware about the government health care schemes, policies and consumer rights. It investigated the analysis of public Relations of Tata Main Hospital and its public opinion expressed on social media networking sites.

Elrod, J.K. and Fortenberry, J.L. (2020) felt that Public relations—a marketing communications method involving the use of publicity and other unpaid promotional methods to deliver messages—historically has served as the communicative workhorse of the health services industry, representing the predominant pathway over many decades by which health and medical facilities conveyed stories to the public. While other components of the marketing communications mix, perhaps most notably that of advertising, have now captured a significant portion of interest, attention and use by healthcare establishments, public relations remains a valuable communicative avenue when deployed properly.

Justie O.Nnabuko and Judith Onyiaji (2021) investigated the extent and frequency of using the PR tools for enhancing healthcare delivery to women of reproductive age from selected states in South-East Nigeria. The survey research design was adopted for the study while data was collected from 201 PR experts. The findings included that most of the PR tools, such as attendance at public events, blogging, social media marketing advocacy and word of mouth advertising were used to a low extent. Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommended, among others, that health workers should make use of

PR tools to a large extent in delivering healthcare services to women of reproductive age.

METHODOLOGY

The primary data has been collected by using multistage random sampling from 129 male and female respondents each from both Corporate Hospitals and Government Hospitals in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Age

Age is an important factor which determines the physical ability to work. Age is very important factor besides the active participation in innovative activities and risk taking ability. The age-wise classification of sample respondents has presented in the Table 1.

Table 1 Age of the respondents

Sl. No.	Age	Corporate Hospitals		Government Hospitals		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Below 25 Years	11 (9%)	3 (2%)	5 (4%)	2 (1%)	21 (5%)
2	25-30 Years	32 (25%)	19 (15%)	12 (9%)	19 (15%)	65 (13%)
3	30-35 Years	30 (23%)	23 (18%)	25 (19%)	27 (21%)	105 (20%)
4	35-40 Years	15 (12%)	27 (21%)	27 (21%)	29 (22%)	98 (19%)
5	40-45 Years	17 (13%)	29 (22%)	22 (17%)	26 (20%)	94 (18%)
6	45-50 Years	19 (15%)	17 (13%)	19 (15%)	21 (16%)	76 (15%)
7	Above 50 Years	5 (4%)	11 (9%)	19 (15%)	15 (12%)	50 (10%)
Total		129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	516 (100%)

The table portrays that 105 respondents are in the age group of 30-35 years, 98 respondents are in the age group of 35-40, 94 respondents are in the age group of 40-45 years years, 76 respondents are in the age group of 45-50 years, 65 respondents are in the age group of 25-30 years, 50 respondents are in the age group of above 50 years and mere 21 respondents are in the age group of below 25 years. By and large, it is concluded that about one fifth of the respondents are in the age group of 30-35 years

Education

Education is a dimension of mind. Education, formal and informal improves awareness for better life and generates positive impulses for socio-economic advancement. The literary status of the sample heads of the households is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Literacy of the respondents

Sl. No	Education	Corporate Hospitals		Government Hospitals		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Below Secondary	55 (42%)	69 (53%)	82 (64%)	67 (52%)	273 (53%)
2	Intermediate	24 (19%)	22 (17%)	21 (16%)	22 (17%)	89 (17%)
3	Graduate	26 (20%)	23 (18%)	15 (12%)	25 (19%)	89 (17%)
4	Post-graduate	24 (19%)	15 (12%)	11 (9%)	15 (12%)	65 (13%)
Total		129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	516 (100%)

The table presents that 273 respondents (53 %) have below secondary level of education and majority of them are males visiting government hospitals, followed by 89 respondents (17 %) each have intermediate education and are graduates and majority of them are males of corporate hospitals and females of government hospitals. Moreover, 65 respondents (13 %) and majority of them belong to corporate hospitals. By and large, it is concluded that respondents (53 %) have below secondary level of education and majority of them are males visiting government hospitals.

Occupation

Occupation is an activity which gives life supporting amenities. Different people have different occupations for the sustenance of their life. The occupation of the respondents has been presented in the table 3.

Table 3 Occupation of the respondents

Sl. No.	Occupation	Corporate Hospital		Government Hospital		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Agriculture	31 (24%)	32 (25%)	87 (67%)	98 (76%)	248 (48%)
2	Employee	62 (48%)	47 (36%)	25 (19%)	12 (9%)	146 (28%)
3	Business	26 (20%)	39 (30%)	15 (12%)	10 (8%)	90 (17%)
4	Others	10 (8%)	11 (9%)	2 (2%)	9 (7%)	32 (7%)
Total		129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	516 (100%)

The table shows that 248 respondents (48 %) are farmers and majority of them are the respondents of government hospital, followed by 146 respondents (28 %) are employees and majority of them are the respondents of corporate hospital and males are higher than females, 90 respondents (28 %) are business people and majority of them are the respondents of corporate hospital and females are higher than males and 32 respondents (7 %) are having other activities like private workers, mechanics and majority of them are the respondents are corporate hospital and females are higher than males. Above all, it is concluded that majority of the respondents (48 %) are farmers and majority of them are the respondents of government hospital.

Public Relations In Hospital Administration And Planning Charges/ prices for the services

The information on whether the respondents think the charges/ prices for the services provided by the hospital are affordable has been elicited and shown in the Table 4

Table 4 Affordable charges/prices for service

Sl. No.	Affordable charges/ prices for service	Corporate Hospital		Government Hospital		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Yes	88 (68%)	73 (57%)	98 (76%)	101 (78%)	360 (70%)
2	No	38 (30%)	52 (40%)	28 (22%)	22 (17%)	140 (27%)
3.	Can't Say	3 (2%)	4 (3%)	3 (2%)	6 (5%)	16 (3%)
Total		129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	516 (100%)

The table shows that 360 respondents (70%) opined that the charges/ prices for the services provided by the hospital are affordable and majority of them are from governmental hospital whereas 140 respondents (27%) opined that the charges/ prices for the services provided by the hospital are not affordable and majority of them are from governmental hospital. On the contrary, 16 respondents (3%) opined could not say that whether the charges/ prices for the services provided by the hospital are affordable and majority of them are from governmental hospital. It is concluded that 70 per cent of the respondents opined that the charges/ prices for the services provided by the hospital are affordable and majority of them are from governmental hospital.

Public Relations staff answers to Quires

Table 5 shows Hospital staff/ Public Relations staff properly answered about queries of the respondents.

Table 5 Public Relations staff properly answered about queries

Sl. No.	Public Relations staff answer to Queries	Corporate Hospital		Government Hospital		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Yes	107 (83%)	112 (87%)	97 (76%)	89 (70%)	406 (79%)

2.	No	20 (16%)	14 (11%)	30 (23%)	35 (27%)	99 (19%)
3.	Sometimes	2 (1%)	3 (2%)	2 (1%)	4 (3%)	11 (2%)
Total		129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	516 (100%)

The table shows that 406 respondents (79 %) accepted that the Public Relations staff properly answered about queries and majority of them are the respondents of corporate hospital while 99 respondents (19 %) felt that the Public Relations staff did not answer properly about queries and majority of them are the respondents of government hospital. It is concluded that 79 per cent of the respondents accepted that the Public Relations staff properly answered about queries and majority of them are the respondents of corporate hospital.

Problem in getting proper information from the Public Relations department

The information on whether the respondents faced any problem in getting proper information from the Public Relations department has been elicited and the details are dovetailed in the Table 6

Table 6 Problem in getting proper information from the Public Relations department

Sl. No	Problem in getting proper information from the Public Relations department	Corporate Hospital		Government Hospital		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Yes	34 (26%)	25 (19%)	40 (31%)	46 (36%)	145 (28%)
2	No	95 (74%)	104 (71%)	89 (69%)	83 (64%)	371 (72%)
Total		129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	516 (100%)

The table shows that 371 respondents (72 %) opined that they have not faced any problem in getting proper information from the Public Relations while 145 respondents (28 %) opined that they have faced any problem in getting proper information from the Public Relations and majority of them are females from government hospitals. It is concluded that majority of the majority of the respondents (72 %) opined that they have not faced any problem in getting proper information from the Public Relations.

Public Relations department provides follow-up services

The information on whether the Public Relations department in hospital provided any follow-up services to the respondents has been elicited and the details are furnished in the Table 7

Table 7 Public Relations department in hospital provide follow-up services

Sl. No	Providing Follow-up services	Corporate Hospital		Government Hospital		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Yes	119 (92%)	107 (83%)	130 (80%)	99 (77%)	428 (83%)
2	No	10 (8%)	22 (17%)	26 (20%)	30 (23%)	88 (17%)
Total		129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	516 (100%)

The table shows that 428 respondents (83 %) aired that the Public Relations department in hospital provided follow-up services and majority of them are female respondents in government hospital while 88 respondents (17 %) aired that the Public Relations department in hospital not provided any follow-up services and majority of them are males in government hospital. It is concluded that majority of the respondents (83 %) aired that the Public Relations department in hospital provided follow-up services and majority of them are female respondents in government.

Public Relations department collects feedback about the services

The public Relations department collected feedback about the services it rendered to the respondents and the details are furnished in the Table 8

Table 8 Public Relations department collects feedback about the services

Sl. No	Public Relations department collects feedback about the services	Corporate Hospital		Government Hospital		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Yes	85 (66%)	73 (57%)	36 (28%)	30 (23%)	224 (43%)
2	No	44 (34%)	56 (43%)	93 (72%)	99 (77%)	292 (57%)
Total		129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	129 (100%)	516 (100%)

The table shows that 292 respondents (57%) opined that the Public Relations department did not collect feedback about the services it rendered and majority of them are female respondents in government hospital whereas 224 respondents (43%) opined that the Public Relations department collected feedback about the services it rendered and majority of them are female respondents in government hospital. It is concluded that majority of the respondents (57%) opined that the Public Relations department did not collect feedback about the services it rendered and majority of them are female respondents in government hospital.

CONCLUSION

Hospitals require public relations activities to distinguish them from competitors, provide bidirectional communication between the society and the hospital, and assist to create of a strong hospital image and culture. Study results have shown that public relations activities were a crucial factor in determining consumer hospital choice. The behaviours and attitude of personnel as public relations activities that support the hospital's reputation within the public were the primary variables in hospital choice. The Public Relations Department is responsible for implementation of hospital marketing programmes, advertising, communication, patient satisfaction monitoring. Not only does it help the hospital organization achieve its socio-economic goals but also helps in patients well being/speedy recovery. To be successful, one needs a well-considered public relations plan and, complete with ethical, appropriate and proven strategies.

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