

Internship

At

Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore

By

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree

MBA Development Management

Academic Year 2022-2024



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INTRODUCTION

Vision is our most crucial sense, accounting for 80% of our sensory experiences. Protecting our eyes is vital to prevent blindness and vision loss. As the body's windows, eyes offer a unique, non-invasive view of blood vessels, allowing doctors and optometrists to detect various health conditions and vision problems through simple examination.

Remarkably, over 80% of blindness cases are preventable or curable. Recognizing this, Sankara Eye Foundation, India (SEFI) embarked on a mission to eradicate needless blindness 43 years ago. Today, SEFI stands as one of the world's largest community eye care networks, with a presence across 8 Indian states.

The foundation's journey began in May 1977 when Dr. R.V. Ramani and Dr. Radha Ramani established a primary health care center for the needy. This initiative blossomed into Sankara Eye Foundation - India, operating under Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Medical Trust.

SEFI's flagship program, "Gift of Vision," aims to deliver high-quality, cost-effective community eye care directly to rural India. As an intern at Sankara Eye Hospital in Coimbatore, I'm grateful for the daily opportunities to learn and contribute to this esteemed organization's mission of providing better eye care services to the public.

Objectives of Internship:

The main objective of my internship is to

1. Explore learning opportunities across various eye hospital departments.
2. Understand the process flow and operational dynamics of the hospital.
3. Enhance patient care skills through observation and direct interaction.
4. Gain exposure to diverse optometric and primary eye care practices.
5. Develop competence in handling different patient populations.
6. Cultivate interpersonal skills, professional attitudes, and values for a successful career.
7. Strengthen critical analysis abilities to contribute to efficient hospital

functioning.

8. Apply theoretical knowledge from MBA studies to practical healthcare scenarios.

9. Conduct meaningful research contributing to the hospital's knowledge base.

10. Develop project management skills through planning and executing a research study.

11. Improve communication skills through presentations and report writing.

12. Understand community outreach initiatives in eye care.

Organisational Profile:

Sankara Eye Foundation India (SEFI) is a not-for-profit organization committed to providing quality eye care services to the poor and marginalized sections of society for the past 43 years. Founded in 1977 by Dr. R.V. Ramani and Dr. Radha Ramani, SEFI began as a small primary health care center. Today, it has evolved into one of the largest and fastest-growing social enterprises in the eye care sector in India.

Network and Facilities:

SEFI manages 13 super specialty eye care hospitals located across nine states: Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Telangana. These hospitals are equipped with state-of-the-art technology to perform advanced eye surgeries, ensuring high-quality care for all patients.

Mission and Approach:

Sankara Eye Foundation India is a protagonist of the National Eye Health Care Movement in India. The organization is continuously transforming the eye care delivery structure through various initiatives across age groups, utilizing cutting-edge technology, scientific approaches, innovation, research, and training.

Vision

“To work towards freedom from preventable and curable blindness”

Mission

“To provide unmatched eye care through a strong service-oriented team”

The 80:20 Model:

SEFI operates on a unique 80:20 model, which has been recognized as a case study at the Harvard Business School. This model aims to provide best-in-class eye care treatment to everyone:

- 80% of the beneficiaries are underprivileged individuals who receive treatment for free.
- The remaining 20% are from affluent sections of society, cross-subsidizing the total cost of treatment for the poor population.

This hybrid revenue model ensures that each Sankara hospital becomes financially self-sufficient within five years of operation.

Community Outreach:

Vision Centres are a key component of SEFI's community outreach. These are permanent eye care facilities in local communities that serve as the first point of interface between the population and comprehensive eye care services. Each center is staffed by an exclusive skilled eye care worker.

Key Programs:

1. Gift of Vision:

This flagship initiative aims to provide high-quality, cost-effective, and readily available community eye care at the doorsteps of rural India. The program operates as follows:

a) Preliminary Survey:

- Vision Health Visitors (VHV) or Sankara's Field Workers conduct surveys covering a region of 40–50 km around the camp village.

- They collect demographic, socioeconomic, general health, eye health, referral, and follow-up details.

- Individuals identified with eye problems are referred to a centralized camp scheduled on a predetermined date.

b) Rural Eye Camps:

- Conducted on designated days.

- Sankara's team of eye surgeons and staff travel to the camp site from the local Sankara Eye Hospital.

c) Camp Procedures:

- Registration

- Vision screening by staff

- Examination by eye surgeon

- Lab investigations

- Fitness evaluation for patients selected for surgery

- Counseling on eye care with compassion

d) Treatment and Follow-up:

- Patients identified for surgery are transported to the base hospital.

- They receive free accommodation, investigations, treatment with IOL implants, medicines, and food.

- One month later, all operated patients are reviewed at the camp site for medical audit and qualitative analysis.

2. Rainbow Program:

Initiated in 1996, this program focuses on school children with the aim of providing a promising future for visually disabled children.

3. Additional Programs:

SEFI operates several other initiatives under its umbrella, including:

- Maitri
- Diabetic Retinopathy
- Nanna Kannu
- Women Empowerment Programs

Origins:

The roots of Sankara Eye Foundation can be traced back to the Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Medical Trust.

Through these comprehensive programs and innovative approach, Sankara Eye Foundation India continues to make significant strides in providing accessible, high-quality eye care to all sections of society, with a particular focus on serving the poor and needy.

Key Activities / Projects Undertaken Other than Dissertation-

Period of posting: 22.3.2024 to 19.6.2024

Profile of staff: Management Intern.

Assigned Mentor: Ms. Srini Karthikeyan (Chief People officer)

Schedule of Activity:

From	To	Activities
22.3.2021	13.4.2021	➤ Attended induction program ➤ Visited various departments including OPD, IPD, Facility departments, Marketing, Procurement, Inventory, HR, and Outreach ➤ Learned about workflows and

		management in different departments
15.4.2021	11.5.2021	➤ Identified areas of interest for research ➤ Selected potential topics related to Marketing, HR, CPD, and Outreach departments ➤ Prepared draft synopsis and made a final selection ➤ Presented the chosen topic to HR and received approval ➤ Prepared compliance reports ➤ Worked on hospital licenses
13.5.2021	19.6.2021	➤ Developed a research plan with organization mentor ➤ Created and got approval for a questionnaire ➤ Decided on data collection methods ➤ Trained assistants and conducted pilot testing ➤ Launched full-scale data collection across SEH units ➤ Monitored and managed the data collection process ➤ Identified key trends and insights ➤ Presented initial findings to the organization mentor ➤ Incorporated feedback into the report ➤ Draft the final dissertation document

During my tenure as an Intern at Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore, I had an excellent opportunity to observe the functioning and process flow of the entire Hospital. This experience helped me gain relevant organizational experience and apply what I learned in my academic program while working in a health service organization.

This internship opportunity has developed my cognitive skills, helping me understand the principle of "learning by observation" and the importance of "working in teams".

The activities I performed during the internship were varied and provided me with insight into Sankara Eye Foundation, India's commitment and dedication to serving humanity. My key activities and learnings include:

- ❖ I observed the process flow and functioning across various departments of the hospital, identifying day-to-day challenges. I prepared a detailed presentation suggesting improvements to enhance patient satisfaction and maintain Sankara's commitment to providing best-in-class eye care services.
- ❖ I had the opportunity to work on hospital licensing processes and maintain related information in the database management system, learning about the legal and administrative aspects of hospital operations.
- ❖ I participated in the induction program and visited various departments including OPD, IPD, Facility departments, Marketing, Procurement, Inventory, HR, and Outreach, gaining a comprehensive view of hospital operations.
- ❖ I developed a research plan for my dissertation project in collaboration with my organizational mentor, demonstrating project planning skills.
- ❖ I created and obtained approval for a questionnaire, decided on data collection methods, and trained assistants for my research project, showcasing my research methodology skills.
- ❖ I conducted full-scale data collection across SEH units, monitored the process, and began preliminary data analysis, identifying key trends and insights.
- ❖ I presented initial findings to my organization mentor, incorporated feedback, and began drafting the final dissertation document, demonstrating my ability to conduct and report on a substantial research project in a professional setting.

This internship provided me with a comprehensive view of hospital operations, from day-to-day processes to regulatory compliance and human resource management. The experience of working across different departments and on various tasks has given me a well-rounded understanding of healthcare administration.

The opportunity to contribute to process improvement through my observations and suggestions was particularly rewarding. It allowed me to apply critical thinking skills to real-world scenarios and understand the complexities of managing a large-scale healthcare

organization.

Moreover, the experience of working on multi-unit auditing, compliance reporting, and hospital licensing processes has sharpened my analytical skills and attention to detail. It has also highlighted the importance of maintaining high standards of documentation and adherence to regulations in the healthcare sector.

Overall, this internship at Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore has been an enriching experience that has significantly contributed to my professional growth. It has provided me with practical insights that complement my academic learning and has reinforced my passion for pursuing a career in healthcare management.

Key Learnings from the Internship:

During my Internship at Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore, I have learnt a lot as-

1. Gained practical experience in executing a variety of administrative tasks, which enhanced my decision-making and problem-solving skills.
2. Received valuable exposure to a wide range of association management issues, providing a comprehensive understanding of healthcare administration.
3. Benefited from one-on-one interactions with senior-level executives, significantly boosting my self-confidence in a professional setting.
4. Improved my communication skills through various tasks and interactions within the organization.
5. Developed leadership qualities by taking on independent tasks and seeing them through to completion.
6. Enhanced my time management skills, learning to efficiently complete tasks within given deadlines.

7. Gained experience working with people from different cultures and states, allowing me to observe and appreciate the cultural diversity within the organization.

8. Developed a deeper sense of empathy, compassion, care, and love for the poor and needy, inspired by the organization's primary focus on charity.

9. Acquired a better understanding of the operational aspects of a healthcare charity organization.

10. Experienced personal growth and a shift in perspective, which I believe will help me become a better person and professional in the future.