



A STUDY ON ROLE OF DIGITAL MEDIA IN SELECTION OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

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Selecting a Healthcare Provider

- Selecting a healthcare provider is an important decision that has a big impact on your general health and well-being. Selecting a physician with whom you are comfortable is essential, regardless of whether you are seeking a specialist or a general care physician.
- Choosing the right healthcare provider impacts your health and well-being. A good relationship with your physician is key for effective treatment and cost management.

Influence of Digital Media in India

- Digital media reshapes healthcare decisions with online platforms, social media, and information access.
- **Patient Empowerment:** Patients research providers, read reviews, and make informed decisions.
- **Social Media:** Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Facebook influence opinions through patient experiences and feedback.
- **Online Reviews:** Sites like Google Reviews and Practo impact provider reputations

Evolution of Digital Media in Healthcare

- **Early Internet:** Late 1990s - Initial healthcare info online.
- **Social Media Rise:** Mid-2000s - Patients share experiences, and providers engage directly.
- **Healthcare Portals:** 2010s - Platforms like Practo and 1mg offer consultations, bookings, and more.
- **Telemedicine:** Remote consultations improve access, especially in rural areas.

Government Initiatives

- **National Digital Health Mission (NDHM):** Launched in 2020, includes Health ID, Health Facility Registry, Personal Health Records, DigiDoctor, and Telemedicine Services.
- **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM):** Focuses on interoperability, digital health records, and health information exchange.
- **Telemedicine Guidelines and E-Sanjeevani:** Regulatory framework and platforms for remote consultations.
- **Digital India:** Enhances internet access, digital literacy, and mobile health services.

Benefits of Digital Media in Healthcare

- **Accessibility:** 24/7 information, wider geographic reach, and easy appointment scheduling.
- **Informed Choices:** Detailed provider profiles, transparency, and comparative analysis.
- **Patient Engagement:** Reviews, educational content, and interactive tools.
- **Personalized Care:** Tailored recommendations, patient portals, and telemedicine.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** Price transparency, reduced travel expenses, and competitive pricing.
- **Better Outcomes:** Continuous monitoring, follow-up reminders, and data-driven insights

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Title	Author	Study location	Sample Size	Year of Study	Salient Features
Exploring patient choice in India: A study on hospital selection	Vishakha Chauhan, Anand Sharma & Mahim Sagar	Delhi & Chandigarh	285	2019	This study looks at the variables influencing patients' decisions when selecting a hospital for treatment because it acknowledges the vital role that patient empowerment and involvement play in helping them choose the best service providers. It is especially critical to comprehend patient choice in developing nations like India, where delivering publicly financed healthcare services is fraught with difficulties. Empirical analysis is used in this work to assess patient data from Chandigarh and New Delhi's public and private hospitals. The survey highlights critical elements that patients should take into account, including the standard of care, hygiene, reputation of the hospital, and facilities like meals and payment services. It also emphasizes the fact that patients frequently perceive the reactions given by care providers to these variables inadequate, highlighting the necessity of better service delivery in hospitals. (12)

Determinants of Hospital Choice among Patients and Perceptions of the Same among Hospital Employees in a Tertiary Care Corporate Hospital in Mumbai, India	Swati Singh, Vani Lakshmi, G Somu and Rajesh Kamath	Mumbai	308	2022	Patients are increasingly using available information to actively participate in their healthcare decisions, comparing hospitals and providers to make informed choices. A study at a tertiary care corporate hospital in Mumbai, with a sample size of 252 patients and 56 employees, identified key factors in hospital selection: competent staff, emergency and laboratory services, hospital reputation, service costs, and location. Understanding these factors from both patient and provider perspectives is crucial. By addressing these factors, hospitals can enhance patient satisfaction and loyalty.
The impact of marketing strategies in healthcare systems	Professor Eng. Victor Lorin Purcareea, PhD, Executive Editor	N/A	N/A	2019	The article argues that healthcare marketing is crucial for health brands, focusing on patient needs and satisfaction through targeted communication and digital platforms. It emphasizes a shift from mass marketing to building patient relationships and loyalty through improved health outcomes.
Applying Digital Marketing Methods in the Healthcare Industry	Andrée Lindgren, Daniar Mohidin	Uppsala, Sweden	N/A	2020	A Swedish study (Immuneed, Uppsala) examined digital marketing in healthcare. The mixed-methods approach (combining theory and real-world data) explored the industry's digital marketing lag. Surveys and interviews provided a comprehensive analysis. The study emphasizes strong findings and offers practical recommendations for healthcare organizations to improve their digital marketing and compete more effectively.
Healthcare Industry Sales Performance : How The Role of Social Media and Digital Marketing?	Mochammad Jasin	N/A	190	2022	This research examines the effect of social media marketing and overall digital marketing on the sales performance of healthcare organizations. Researchers utilized quantitative methods, conducting online surveys distributed through social media platforms. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 190 healthcare industry professionals. Data analysis was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS software. The results indicate that both social media marketing and general digital marketing strategies positively and significantly impact sales performance in the healthcare sector.

Objective of the Study



- 1.To identify the key factors that shape the selection of Healthcare Providers through digital channels.
- 2.To understand how digital media influences patient's selection of healthcare providers.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research approach to examine the influence of digital media on the selection of healthcare providers in India. This approach provides a thorough understanding of the factors affecting individualities' choices when opting healthcare providers online.

Data Collection Methods

- **Primary Data Collection:**

Tool: Google Forms questionnaire with 10 questions (open-ended and closed).

Target Audience: Individuals using digital media to search for healthcare providers.

Confidentiality: No email addresses or personal identifiers collected to ensure privacy and reduce bias.

Sample Selection

Participants: Digital media users who search for healthcare providers online.



Data Analysis

Tool: Microsoft Excel.

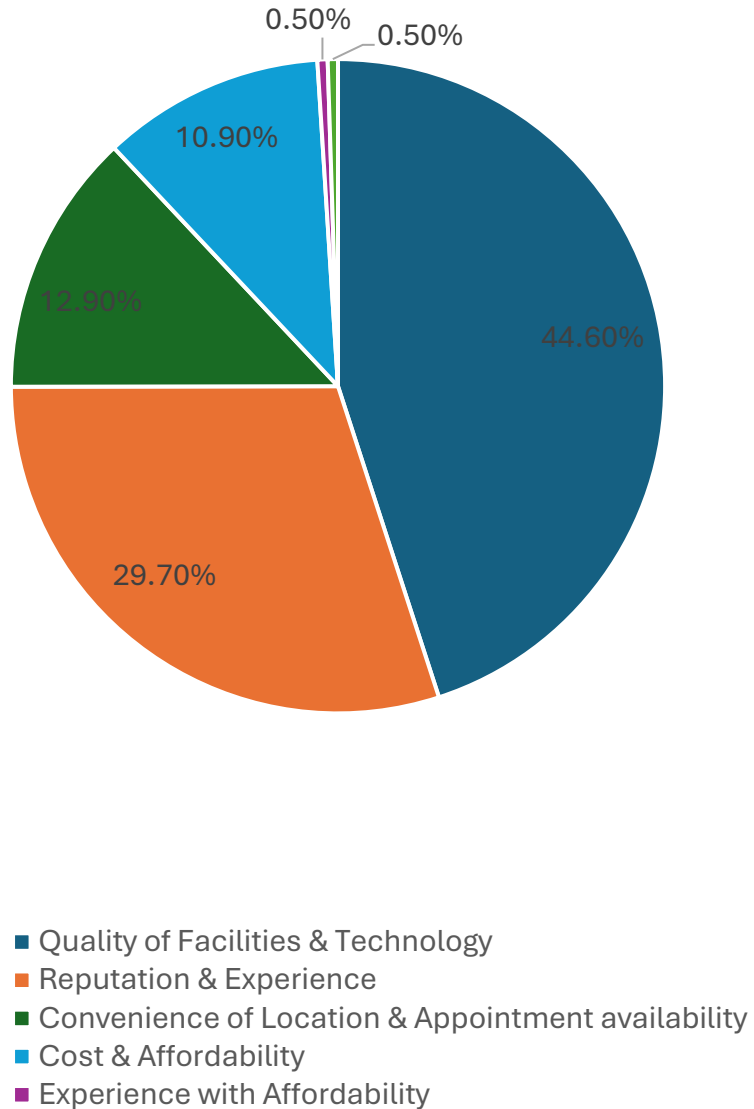
Analysis: Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages).

Presentation: Pie charts and graphs.

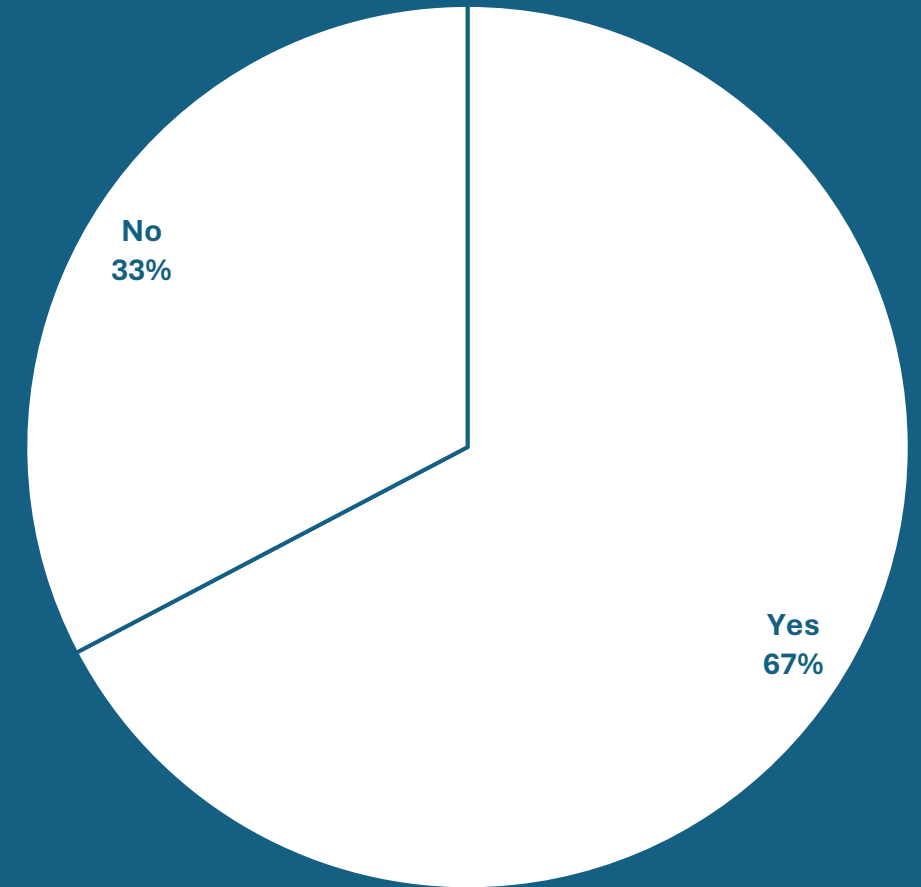
RESULTS

- The responses to a Google Form survey, which attempted to include participants that use digital media in selection of healthcare providers.
- Total Responses: Total 350 people were approached for this study, from which 204 people responded. 3 participants did not use digital media to enquire about doctors / clinicians, were excluded from this study. And the final sample size was 201.

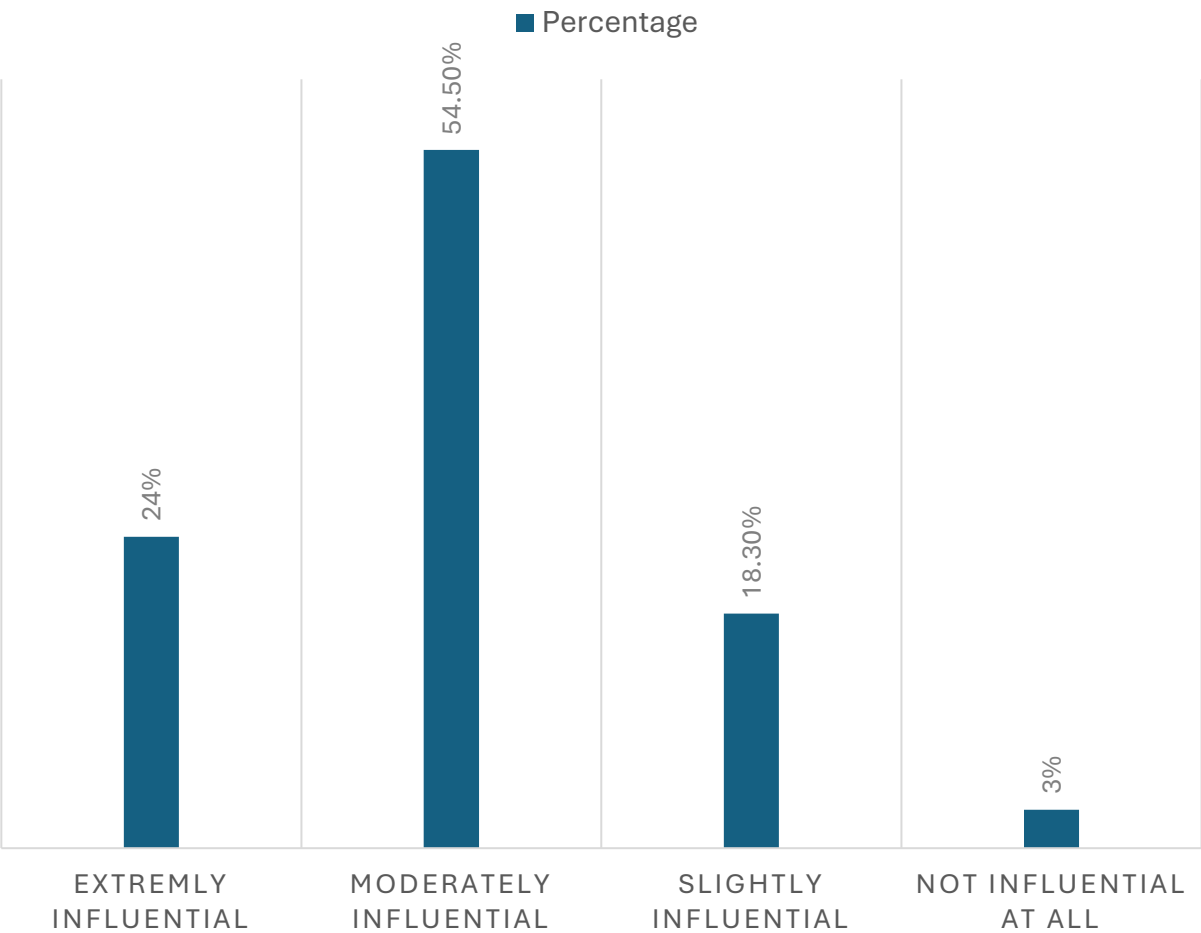
Important Factors in Choosing a Healthcare Provider (N=201)



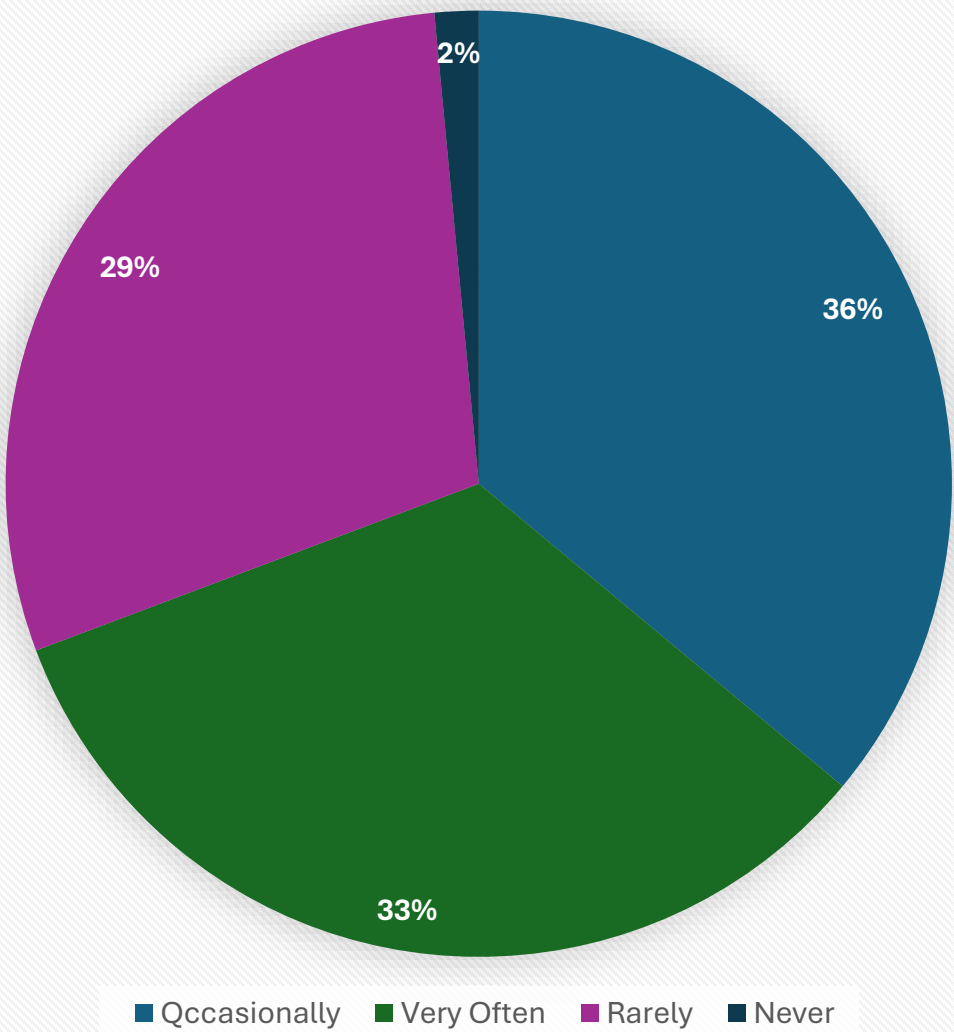
EVER CHOSEN A DOCTOR OR CLINIC BASED ON THEIR ONLINE PRESENCE WITHOUT ANY PRIOR RECOMMENDATION OR REFERRAL (N=201)



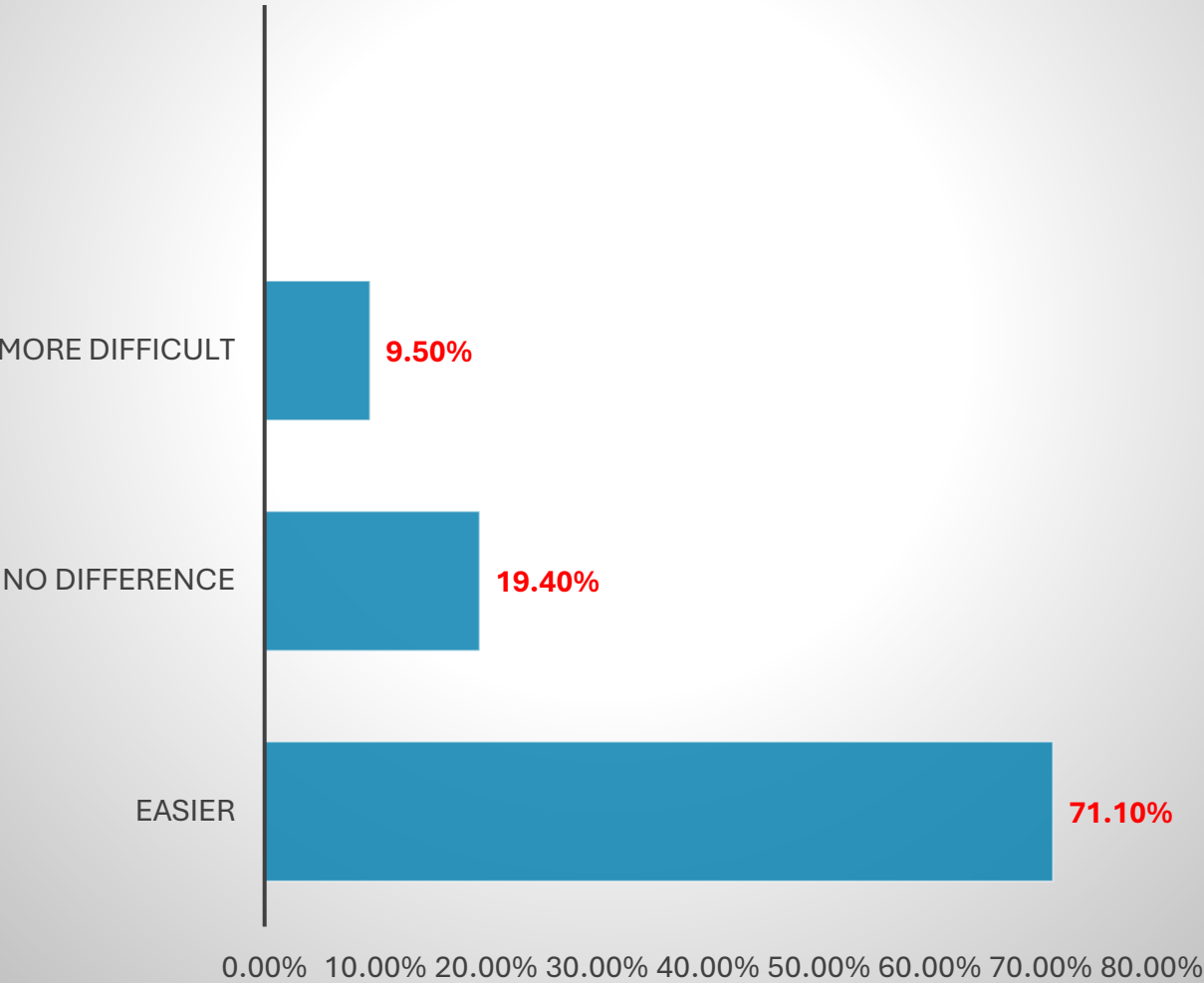
PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF ONLINE
PLATFORMS IN SHAPING PUBLIC OPINION
ABOUT HEALTHCARE PROVIDER IN INDIA
(N=201)



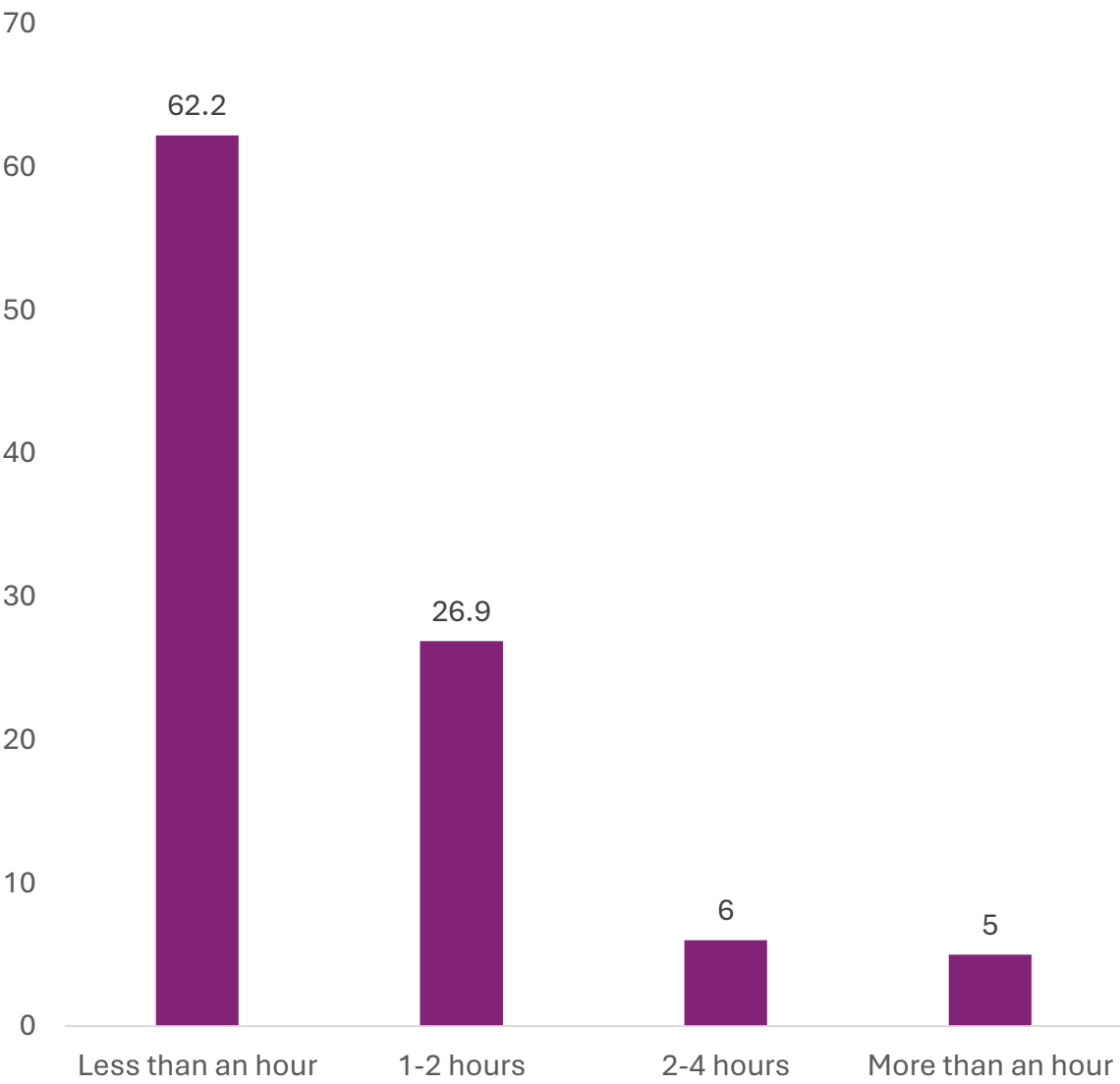
How Often do you seek healthcare
information online (N=201)



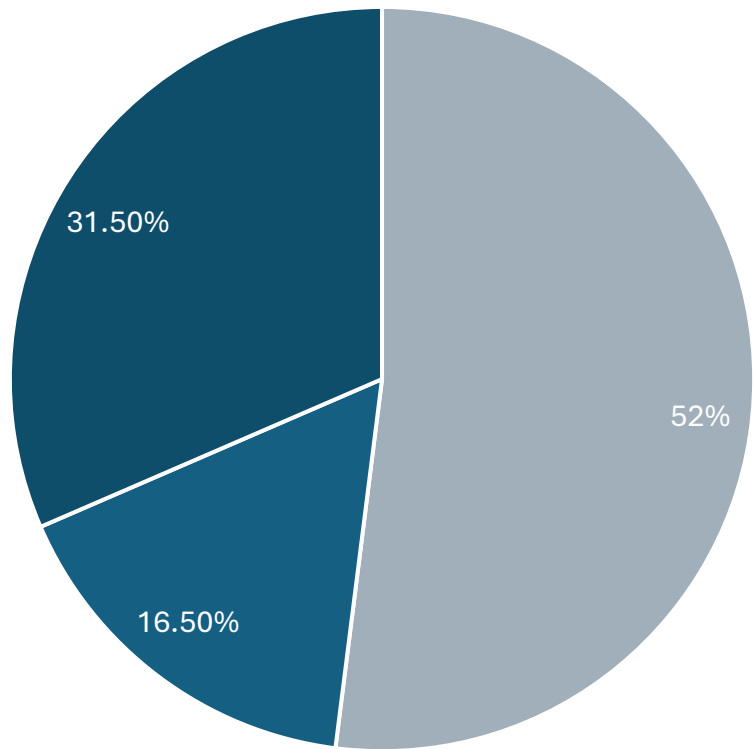
The availability of online reviews has made it easier or more difficult for patient's to choose a healthcare provider (N=201)



Time spend researching healthcare providers online (N=201)

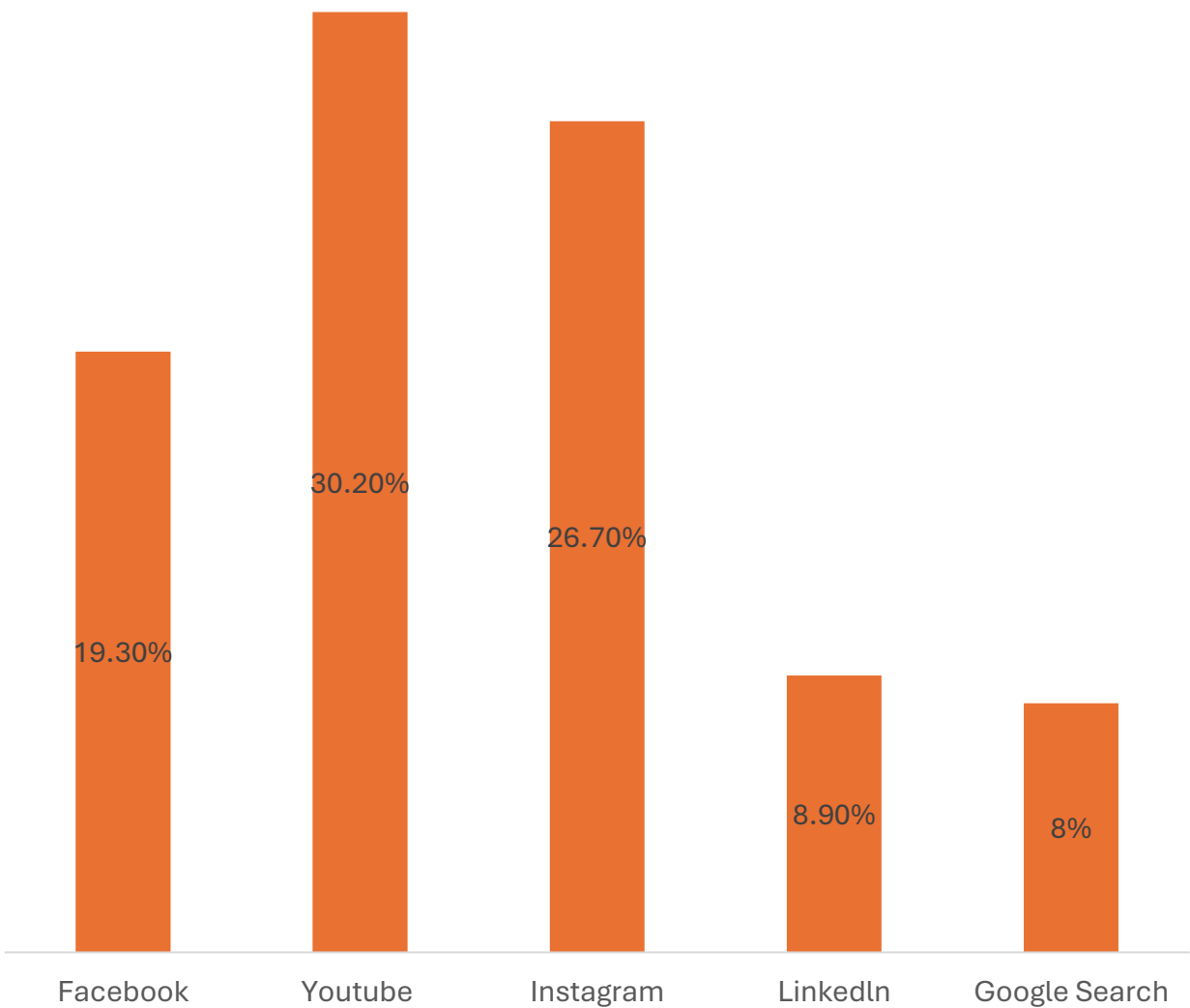


Should healthcare provider actively engage with patients through social media & online platforms (N=201)

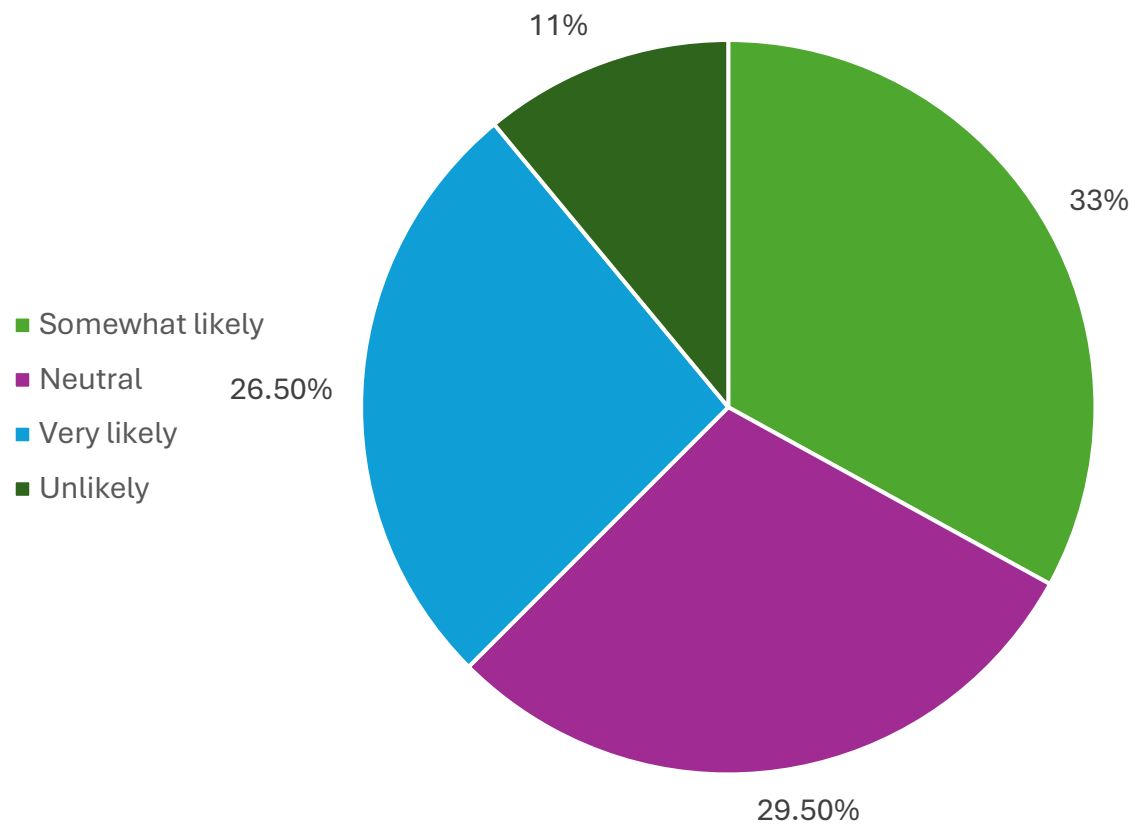


- Yes, it enhances transparency & accessibility
- NO, it may compromise professionalism & privacy
- It depends on the nature of engagement

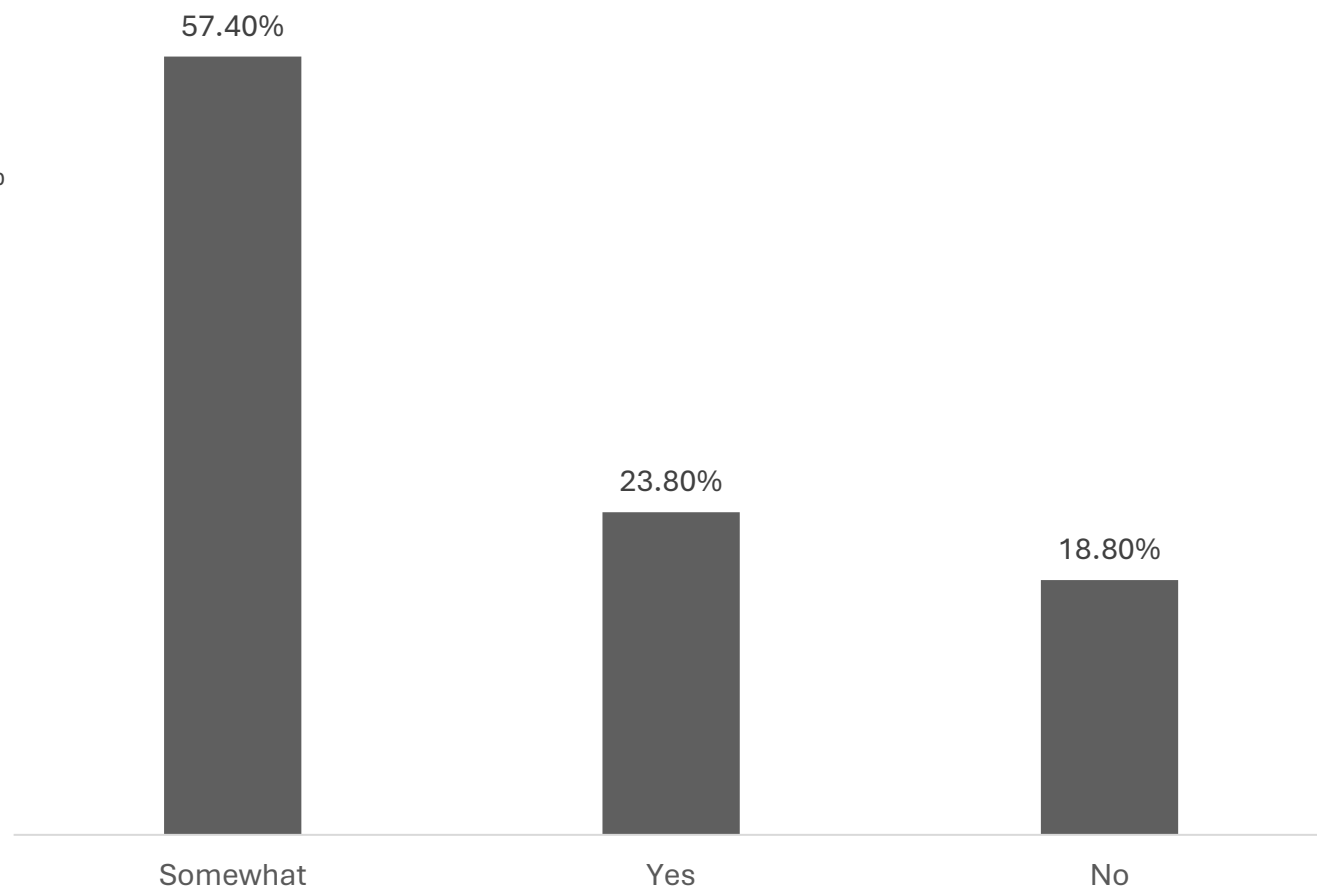
Most Influential Social Media Platform in selection of Healthcare provider (N=201)



Percentage of recommending a
Doctor/Clinic to others based on your own
online research & experience (N=201)



Online platform provide fair representation of a
healthcare provider's quality & capabilities
(N=201)



DISCUSSION

- A study done in 2019 “Exploring patient choice in India: A study on hospital selection”, talks about the factors which influence the patients decision to choose healthcare providers. This study also reveals that 44.6% of respondents prioritize the quality of facilities and technology when selecting a healthcare provider, while 29.7% emphasize experience and reputation. Cost and affordability matter to 10.9%, and 12.9% value location convenience and appointment availability. Only 0.5% prioritize referrals and past affordability experiences.
- Regarding online healthcare information usage, 36% occasionally seek information online, and 33.2% do so very often. About 29.2% rarely use online sources, and 1.5% never do. Additionally, 24% believe online platforms significantly influence public opinion on healthcare providers, with 54.5% perceiving a moderate influence.
- Digital presence is crucial, as 67.3% have chosen a healthcare provider based solely on online presence. Online reviews ease the selection process for 71.1%, though 19.4% see no difference, and 9.5% find it more challenging due to conflicting information. Most respondents (62.2%) spend less than an hour researching providers online, while 26.9% spend 1-2 hours.



- Social media engagement is important for 52% of respondents, who believe healthcare professionals should engage with consumers online. However, 16.5% worry about privacy and professionalism, and 31.5% say it depends on the nature of the engagement. YouTube is favored by 30.2% of respondents, Instagram by 26.7%, and Facebook by 19.3%. Notably, 8% consider Google Search influential. This aligns with study “Social Marketing in Healthcare” done in 2011.

- Digital information is trusted by most, with 59.5% likely to recommend a provider based on online research. However, 11% are unlikely to recommend, and 29.5% are neutral. Additionally, 57.4% believe online platforms somewhat accurately depict healthcare practitioners' qualifications and abilities, while 23.8% disagree, and 18.8% are uncertain. Which was also discussed in a study “Applying Digital Marketing Methods in the Healthcare Industry” done in 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Social Media Engagement:**

Use social media to engage patients by posting health tips and updates, and responding to questions. This increases information clarity and accessibility while maintaining a professional outlook and patient privacy.

- **Client Information:**

As only 24% of participants say that online platform provide fair representation of a healthcare provider's quality & capabilities, Honest representation should be done to build trust and keeps patient expectations reasonable.

- **Patient Reviews:**

Encourage satisfied patients to leave positive comments and respond professionally to negative remarks. Timely and polite replies show a patient-centered approach and willingness to enhance services.

- **Professional Communication:**

Ensure all business communications are professional. This includes social media posts, patient inquiries, and responses to negative reviews. Online behavior should reflect the quality of in-clinic service.

CONCLUSION

The study depicts that, digital media plays a key role in defining how the patients in India are choosing their healthcare providers. It is a necessity that helps in the access, acquisition and facilitation of trust. Factors influencing the decisions of the patients include accreditation and infrastructure, specialists' reputation and experience, facility location and time of appointments, and charges.

Essentially, a considerable number of patients constantly look for healthcare information on the internet for many opting to make decisions depending on the existence of an internet profile and online reviews. In terms of the perceived influence of online media, the results indicate that the Internet, in particular, is regarded as moderately influential; however, uncertainties about the truthfulness of online representations are still present. Interacting with patients on the social platform such as YouTube and Instagram helps to make the information more open and available to a larger population of patients who are comfortable freely discussing their situation online.

In conclusion, digital media has spread its influence on the choice of healthcare providers and has affected the patients' decisions and experience.



THANK
YOU!

