

STUDYING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PATIENT TESTIMONIALS AND STORIES: A CASE STUDY OF RUNGTA HOSPITAL, JAIPUR



INTRODUCTION

- In today's competitive healthcare sector, emotional trust and human connection are becoming more crucial than standard service promotion.
- Patient stories go beyond satisfaction—they shape perceptions, build trust, and influence hospital choice by highlighting humanized care.
- Historically, hospitals focused on clinical expertise and infrastructure; the emotional aspect of marketing was overlooked.
- Testimonials shared via social media, hospital websites, and feedback forms can reach a wider audience and build institutional credibility.
- Rungta Hospital has traditionally relied on pamphlets and banners, doctor referral networks, health camps, local newspaper ads, and OPD promotion posters for marketing.



RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

- Traditional marketing methods like pamphlets, banners, health camps, and referrals focus more on services and infrastructure than on emotional connection.
 - These methods may fall short in addressing patients' psychological and emotional needs.
 - Modern healthcare marketing demands trust-building, emotional reassurance, and authentic communication.
 - Patient testimonials offer real, relatable experiences that humanize the hospital and build long-term trust.
-
- The study is highly relevant in Indian settings where personal stories and word-of-mouth greatly influence healthcare choices.
 - Quantitative analysis of testimonials provides valuable insights for marketers to strengthen hospital branding ethically and effectively.

Aims

To explore and evaluate the effectiveness of patient testimonials and stories, extracted from feedback forms, in enhancing healthcare marketing strategies and fostering patient trust.

Research Question

“To what extent do patient testimonials, as expressed through feedback forms, influence emotional appeal, trust-building, and branding effectiveness in healthcare marketing strategies?”

Objectives.

To analyze patient feedback to understand how testimonials influence patient trust and hospital choice.

To study Likert-scale feedback to determine the influence of testimonial marketing on patients’ perception of trust and service quality.

Author(s)	Year	Focus of Study	Key Findings
Zakkar & Lizotte	2021	Text analytics of patient stories across platforms	Social media narratives significantly influence hospital brand perception and emotional engagement.
Zakkar & Lizotte	2022	Sentiment and topic modeling of NHS patient stories using NLP	Identified themes in care experiences; highlighted the value of storytelling in service evaluation.
Arora et al.	2017	Emotional impact of testimonials on patients	Testimonials influence patient trust and are persuasive in decision-making.
Jalilvand & Samiei	2012	Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in healthcare	Online testimonials improve trust and decision-making in digital health environments.
Chimonas & Kassirer	2009	Ethical issues in using patient narratives	Warned against biased use of testimonials; stressed consent, privacy, and transparency.
Green & Brock	2000	Narrative transportation theory	Emotional storytelling enhances credibility and audience engagement.
Purcarea	2019	Strategic storytelling in healthcare marketing	Patient stories enhance emotional engagement and reflect institutional empathy.
Niveditha & Madduri	2023	Indian hospital marketing and patient relationship strategies	Testimonials improve hospital trust and engagement, especially in culturally sensitive settings.
Sheikh & Kanyal	2023	Role of traditional and digital marketing in Indian hospitals	Testimonials strengthen emotional appeal and outperform general advertisements in patient perception.

Methodology

•Sample Size:

A total of 390 responses were collected using convenience sampling over three months.

•Inclusion Criteria:

IPD patients and attendants who could fill the Google Form via their mobile phones.

•Exclusion Criteria:

Participants without mobile access, whose feedback was taken via printed forms and later digitized.

•Data Collection Method:

Data was gathered using a structured Likert-scale Google Form and printed questionnaires.

•Study Duration (Timeline):

The data collection spanned a period of three months.

•Data Analysis Approach:

Quantitative data was analyzed using mean scores derived from Likert-scale responses.

•Scale Used:

A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Highly Dissatisfied) to 5 (Highly Satisfied) was applied.

•Classification Range:

Scores were categorized from Highly Dissatisfied (1.00) to Highly Satisfied (5.00).

•Questionnaire Focus:

Questions captured patient feedback on trust, service quality, and emotional clarity during treatment.

•Analysis Method:

Mean percentages were calculated for each feedback topic based on responses from 390 in-patients.

Mean Score Calculation

Attribute	Mean Score	New Interpretation
Part of Marketing Strategy	4.29	Highly Satisfied
Awareness/Visibility	4.16	Satisfied
Influence on Hospital Choice	4.12	Satisfied
Trust-Building	4.01	Satisfied
Perceived Impact on Care Quality	3.92	Satisfied
Emotional Connection/Clarity	3.87	Satisfied
More Convincing than General Ads	3.59	Satisfied

$$\text{Mean Score} = \frac{\sum(\text{Response Value} \times \text{Number of Responses})}{\text{Total Number of Responses}}$$

FINDINGS

- “Part of Marketing Strategy” scored highest (4.29), showing strong satisfaction with testimonial integration.
- “Awareness/Visibility” (4.16), “Hospital Choice” (4.12), and “Trust-Building” (4.01) all reflected a satisfied perception.
- “Emotional Connection” (3.87) and “Perceived Care Quality” (3.92) indicated testimonials helped reassure patients.
- “More Convincing than General Ads” (3.59) showed moderate preference for testimonials over traditional ads.
- Overall, testimonials positively influenced trust, service quality, and hospital selection at Rungta Hospital.

DISCUSSION

- Findings from Rungta Hospital (390 responses) confirm that patient testimonials significantly impact trust, service perception, and hospital choice.
- “Part of Marketing Strategy” (Mean = 4.29) shows high patient satisfaction, supporting Purcarea (2019) on trust-building through authentic narratives.
- “Awareness/Visibility” (4.16), “Hospital Choice” (4.12), and “Trust-Building” (4.01) highlight the strong influence of testimonial-based communication, stated by Jalilvand & Samiei (2012).
- “Emotional Clarity” (3.87) and “Perceived Care Quality” (3.92) show that testimonials emotionally reassure patients, as noted by Arora et al. (2017).
- Testimonials rated higher than traditional ads (3.59), yet both remain relevant—aligned with Sheikh & Kanyal (2023).
- The Indian context enhances testimonial credibility due to cultural emphasis on real stories and word-of-mouth (Niveditha & Madduri, 2023).
- Overall, testimonials are validated as powerful, ethical tools for emotionally-driven healthcare marketing.

Recommendations

Based on the insights derived from this research, the following recommendations are proposed for hospitals and healthcare marketers to effectively leverage patient testimonials in their communication strategies:

- Develop a Dedicated Testimonial Collection Framework
- Feature Testimonials in the Hospital's Local Advertising Mix
- Utilize Testimonial Displays at Strategic In-Hospital Touchpoints
- Localize Stories to Appeal to Regional Audiences
- Integrate Testimonials into Pre-treatment Consultation
- Digitize and Promote Testimonials on Social Media and Website
- Train Marketing and Frontline Staff
- Track Impact Using Feedback Mechanism

ANNEXURE: GOOGLE FORM STRUCTURE

Patient Experience & Testimonial Feedback Form

Rungta Hospital, Jaipur

SECTION A: GENERAL EXPERIENCE

Please rate the following aspects of your hospital experience by ticking the appropriate box.

Parameter	1 – Highly Dissatisfied	2 – Dissatisfied	3 – Neutral	4 – Satisfied	5 – Highly Satisfied
Cleanliness of the hospital	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff behavior and communication	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Nursing care and responsiveness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Doctor's explanation and empathy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Admission and discharge process	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall hospital experience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION B: IMPACT OF PATIENT TESTIMONIALS

Kindly tick the response that best reflects your view.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I noticed patient stories/testimonials at the hospital.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Testimonials helped me feel emotionally reassured.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Testimonials influenced my decision to choose this hospital.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I trust the hospital more after seeing or reading testimonials.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Testimonials are more convincing than general advertisements.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION C: SHARE YOUR STORY (OPTIONAL)

If you would like to share your experience with future patients, please use the space below.

Your Story/Testimonial:

.....

.....

.....

☐ I consent to the use of my testimonial by Rungta Hospital for promotional and educational purposes.

Thank you!