

DISSERTATION PROJECT

A STUDY ON BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF PATIENTS AT SANKARA EYE HOSPITAL, COIMBATORE

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INTRODUCTION



- Market studies helps in figuring out new market opportunities that might be available for us. It helps in diagnosing geographic locations for market tapping or increasing consumer base. By focusing our efforts to the right target segment, there will be an increase in the scope of improved efficiency, faster results and greater overall performance in terms of increased patient footfall.
- As the number of health institutions increases, both competition conditions and patient preference criteria have increased. For the same, healthcare organizations have started giving more emphasis on patient demands in order to be preferred by patients.



RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the factors responsible for paying patients choosing Sankara eye hospital, Coimbatore over other hospitals?





OBJECTIVES



- To identify the factors responsible for paying patients choosing Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore over other hospitals
- To assess the socio-demographic profile of the new patients coming to the paying section of Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore
- To investigate the association between the socio-demographic profile of the patients to the utilization of services offered at Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore
- To recommend measures for better marketing & utilization of services for the hospital



METHODOLOGY

Study site

- The study was conducted at Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore

Study period

- 3rd February 2020 to 2nd May 2020

Study Population

- Newly registered patients coming for treatment at Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore were conveniently selected for the study (N=236). Sankara Eye Foundation is a renowned hospital in ophthalmologic care in India. It is known for providing effective patient care at affordable prices.

Inclusion criteria

- Paying patients who are willing to participate in the study

Exclusion criteria:

- Paying patients who did not participate due to language barrier or time constraint

Sample Size

- 236 respondents

Sampling Technique

- Non-probability convenience sampling

Data Collection Method

- The researcher administered the questionnaire to the participants eligible for the study.

Study Tool

- A questionnaire was developed by the researcher with the help of experts in the field. It was translated in the local language for the convenience of the participants. The first part of the questionnaire collected information regarding socio-demographic details of patient's like age, gender, educational qualification, occupation, marital status. followed by information related to their buying behaviors. Determinants' of choice of hospital like referred by patient, staff or a doctor, word of mouth, doctor's reputation, advertisements, review on internet, eye screening camps, location feasibility, affordability, etc. were collected in the other part of questionnaire.

Data Analysis Plan

- Data was entered in Microsoft Excel 2016. Categorical variables were summarized using frequency and percentages. Chi- squared test of association was used between dependent & independent variables. Chi square test of association uses following formula;

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(o - e)^2}{e}$$

- A p<0.05 was considered to be significant in the study. Statistical package of social sciences (SPSS),version 25 was used for statistical analysis.

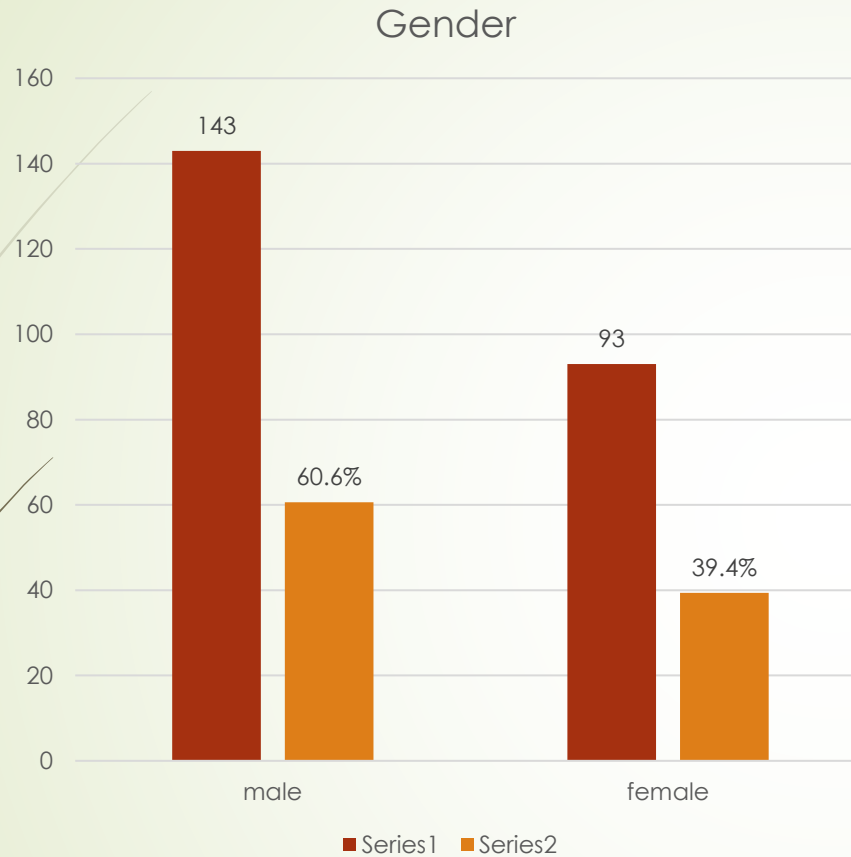


THE QUESTIONNAIRE WAS DIVIDED INTO 3 PARTS

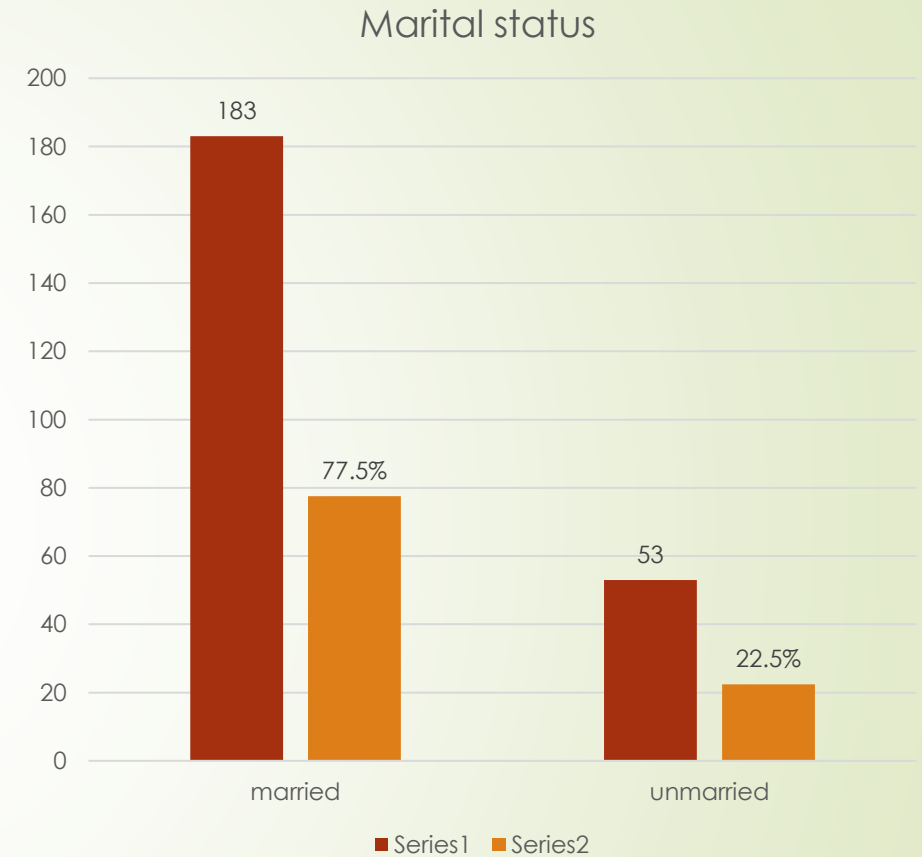
1. Socio-demographic attributes
 - Gender
 - Marital status
 - Age
 - Occupation
 - Education qualification
2. Socio-economic attributes
 - Mode of transport
 - Vehicle availability
 - Annual household income
3. Determinants of choice of hospital
 - Sources that drive the patients to Sankara
 - Factors influencing the choice of hospital selection

The data of sub-speciality services availed by the respondents extracted from the hospital software.

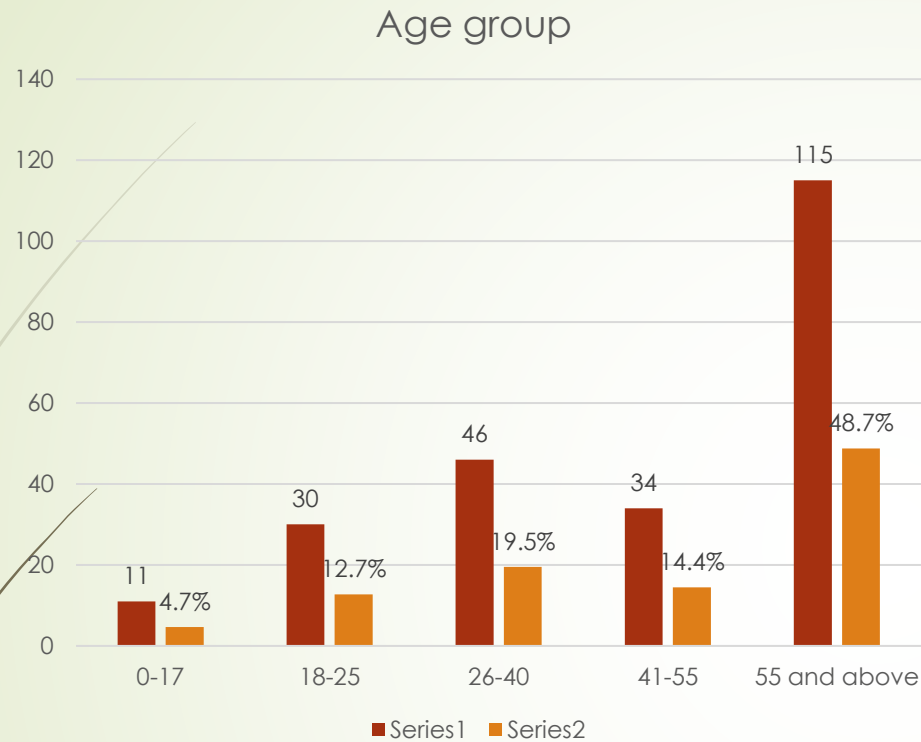
RESULTS : GRAPHICAL PRESENTATION



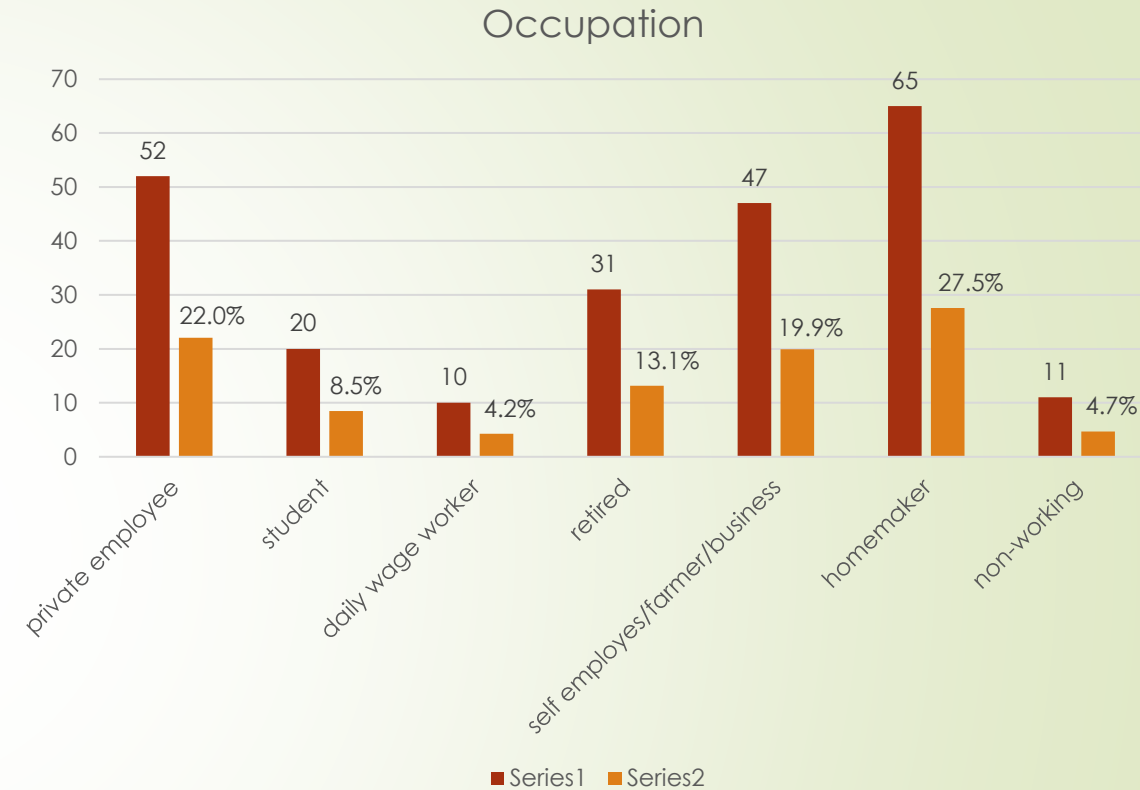
Total patients participated in the study includes male (61%) and female (39%).



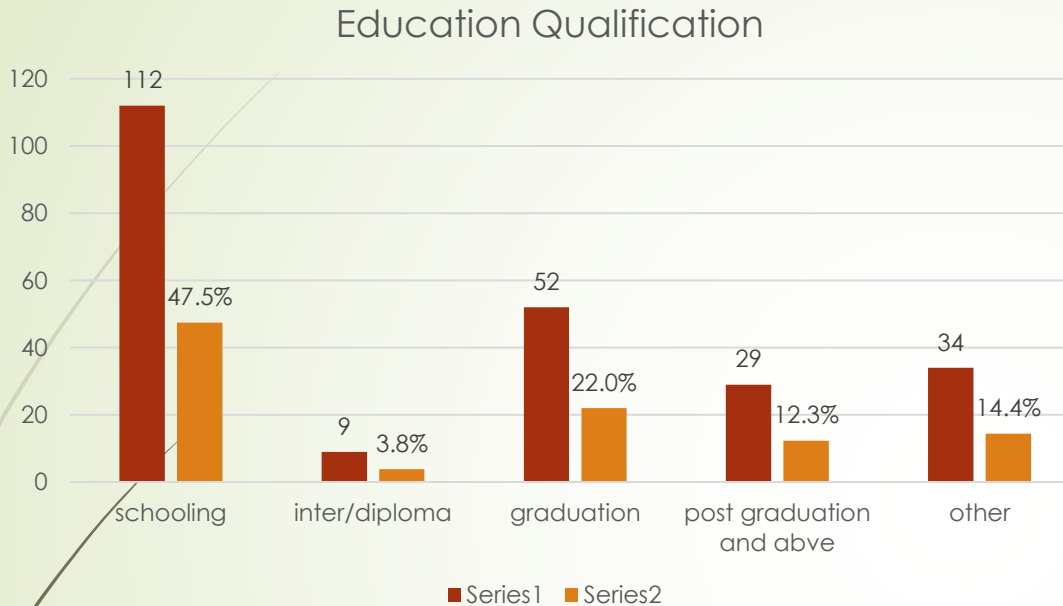
77% patients who visited the hospital were married rest 23 % were unmarried.



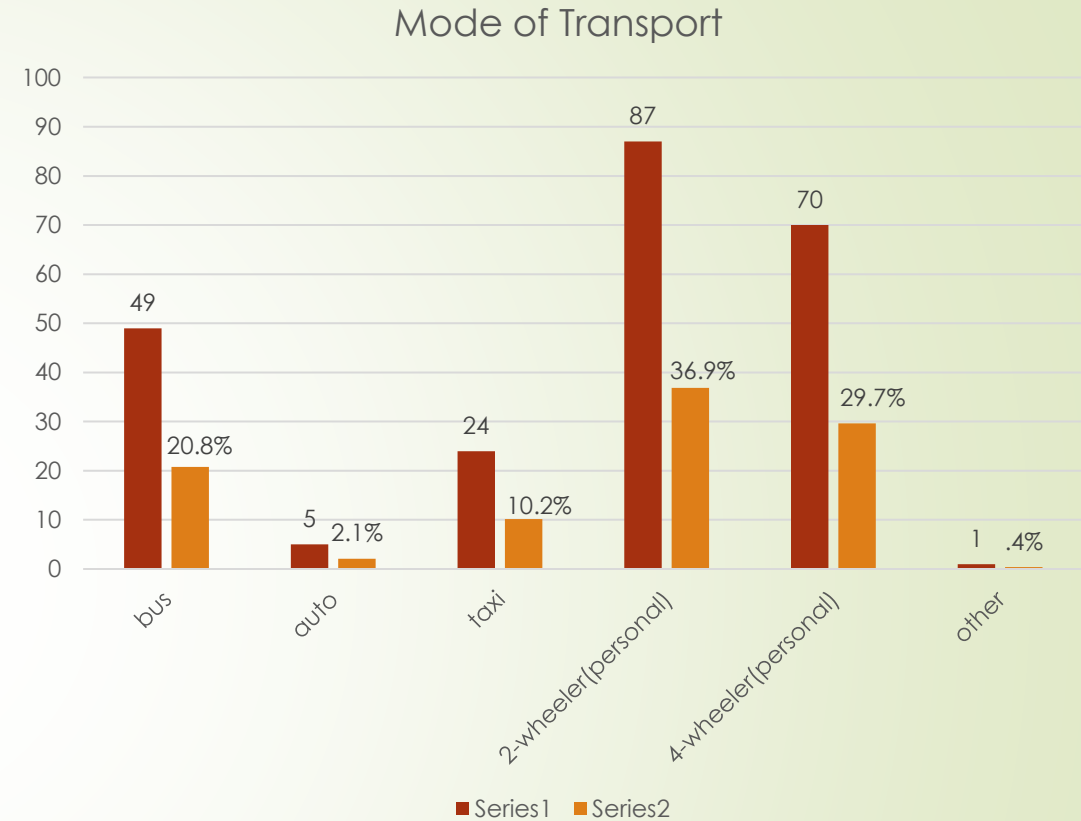
The age of the patient varies from 0-17 to 55 and above with the highest patients of age 55 and above (49%). Maximum no. of patients at this age requires eye care services.



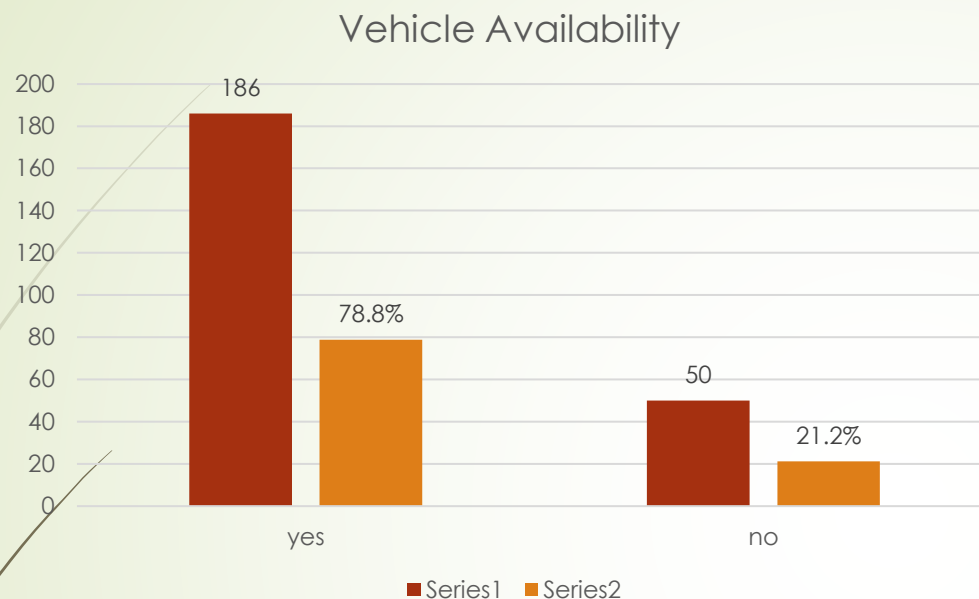
The above figure depicts that most of the patients who took treatment were homemaker (28%) followed by private employees (22%) and self-employed/farmer/business (20%).



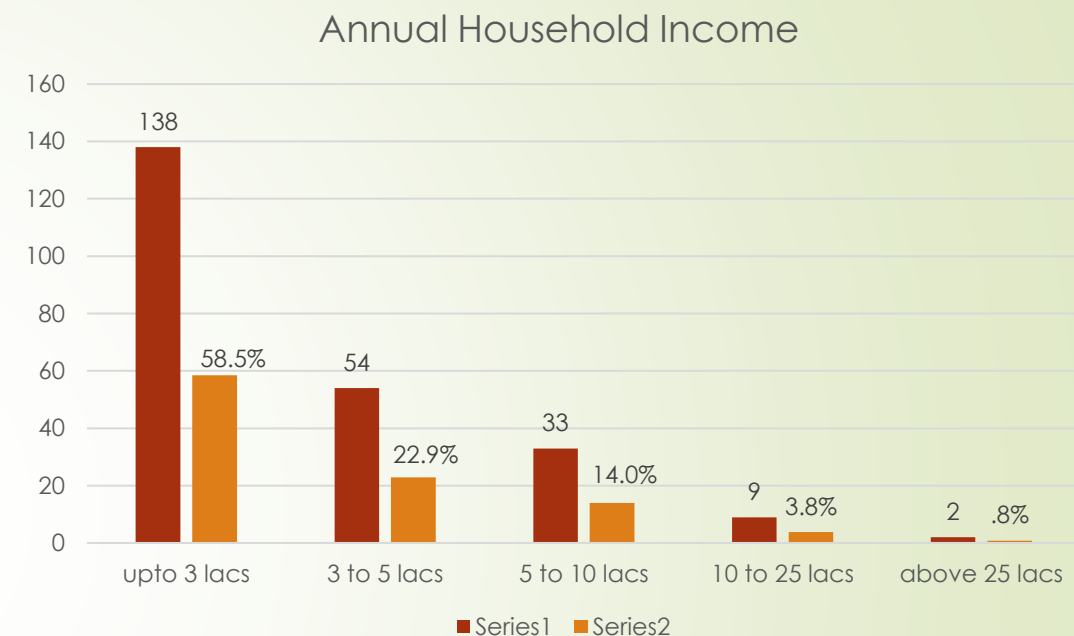
The figure shows that most of the patients visiting Sankara have completed their schooling (48%) and graduation (22%). Here the respondents those who were having no education comes under other (14%).



It was seen that most of the patients preferred 2-wheeler (37%) followed by 4-wheeler (30%) and bus (21%) while coming to Sankara. Less no. of patients preferred taxi and auto facility.

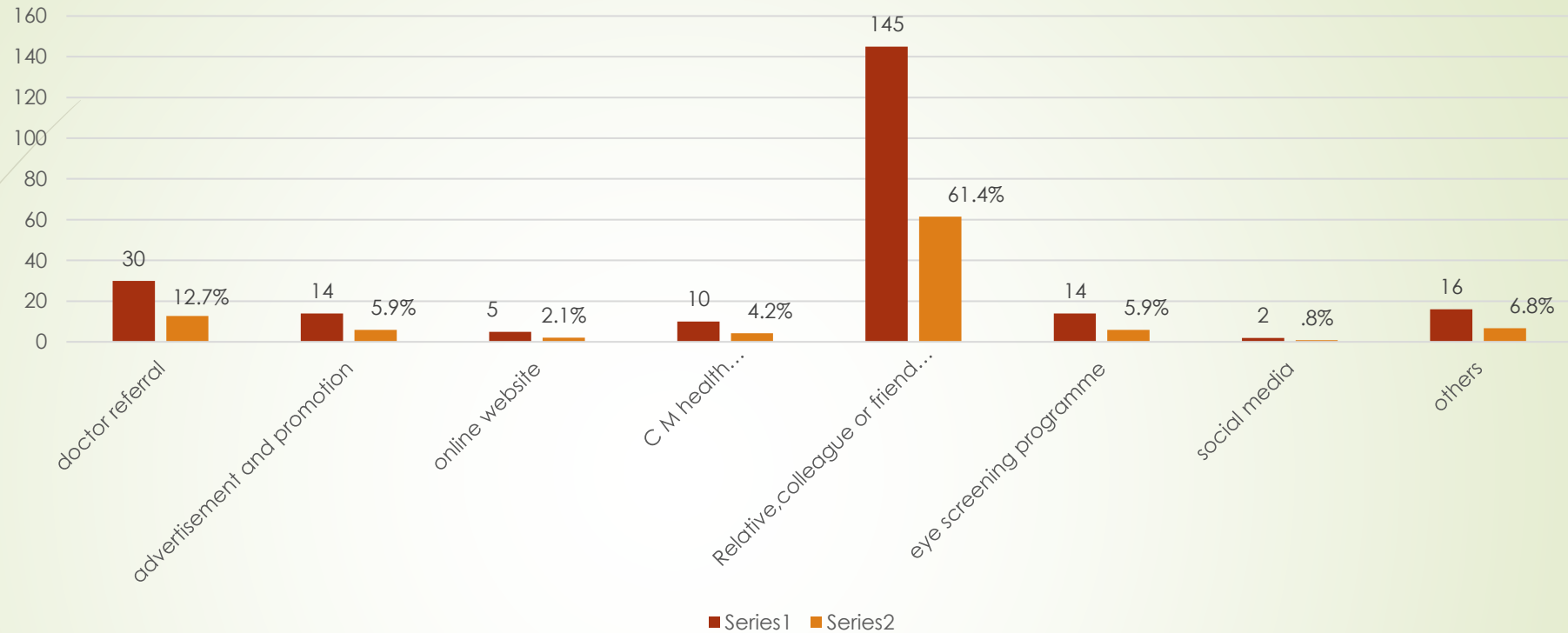


The above figure depicts the no. of patients who own a personal vehicle (79%) while rest do not own a vehicle (21%).



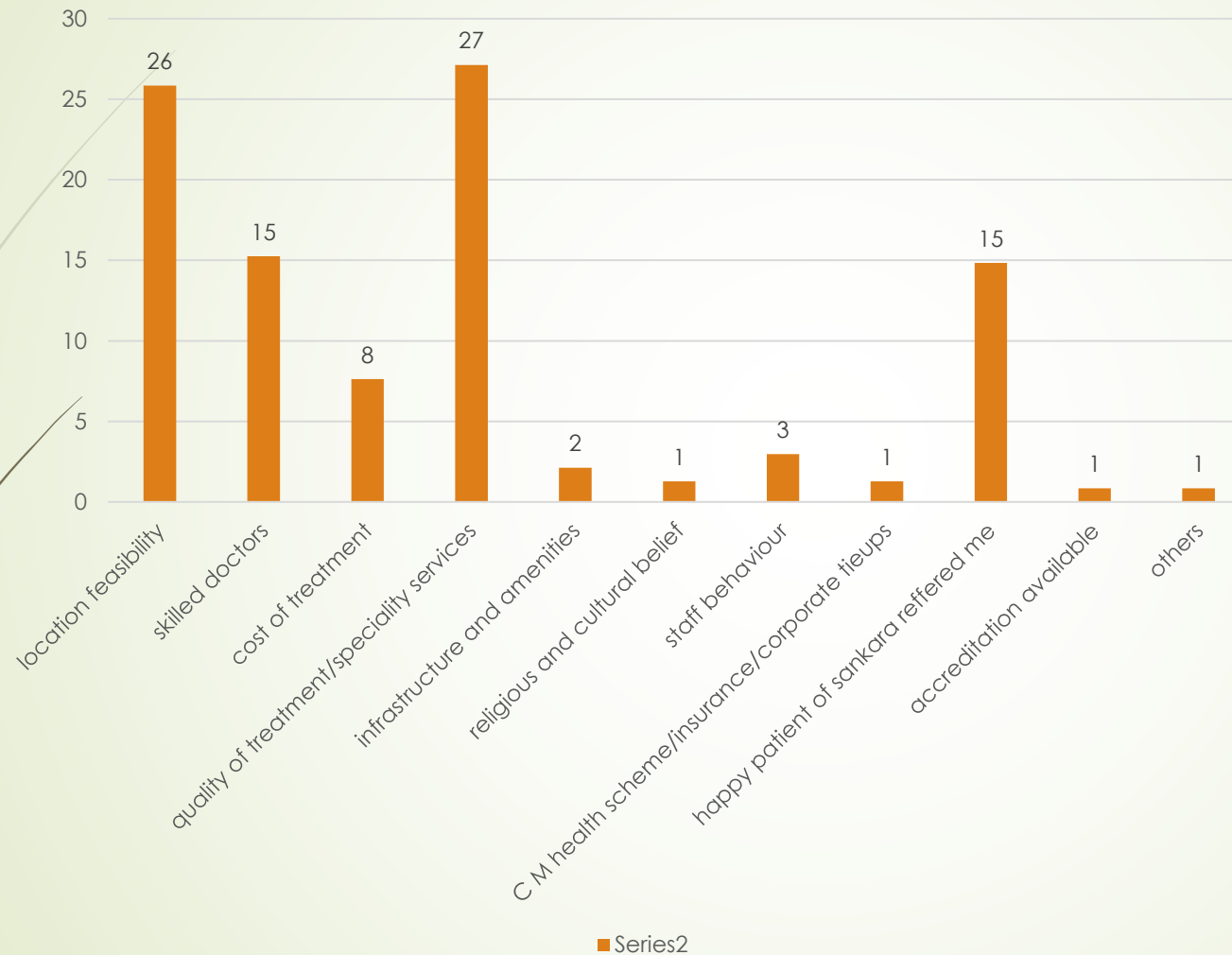
In order to know the target segment of Sankara, the socio-economic determinants were included in the questionnaire. It was found that large no. of patient comes under up-to 3 lacs of income (58%), followed by under 3 to 5 lacs (23%), under 5 to 10 lacs (14%) and rest of the comes under above 10 lacs (5%).

Sources that drive the patient to Sankara



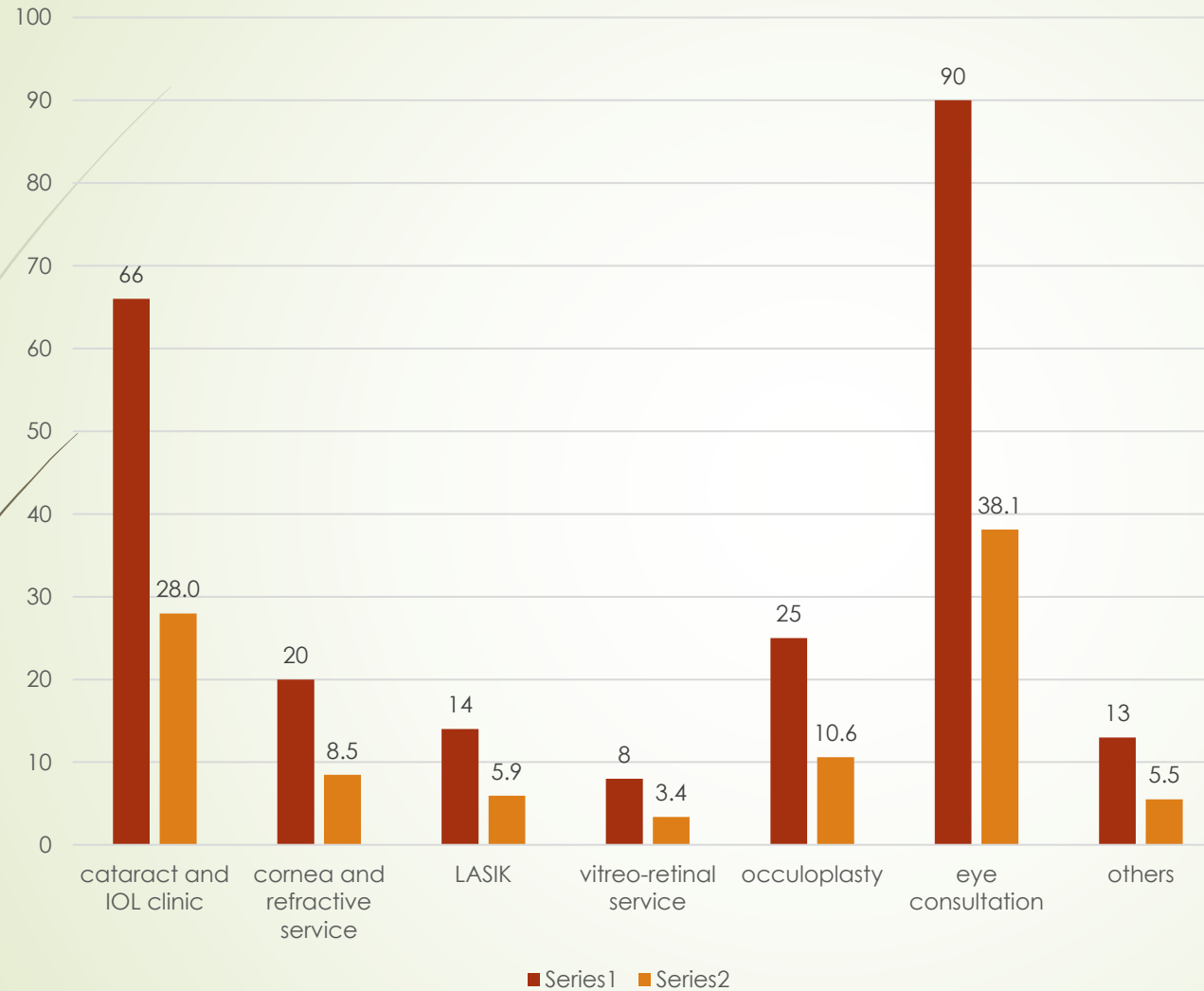
The sources that drive the patient to the hospital were mainly doctor referral, advertisement and promotion, online websites, corporate tie-ups, WOM, eye screening programmes, social media, trust, or religious belief. It was found that majority of people coming to Sankara were from relative, friend or colleague's recommendation (WOM) (61%) and least through social media (1%) and online websites (2%).

Factors influencing selection of hospital



The findings of the questionnaire survey revealed that “quality of service/speciality services” (27%), followed by “location feasibility” (26%), “happy patient of Sankara referred me” (15%) and Skilled doctors (15%) respectively were the main reasons for choosing Sankara.

Type of speciality



Among 236 patients, there were no. of patients visited the hospital for Eye consultation (38%), Cataract (28%), Oculoplasty (11%), Cornea services (8%), Lasik surgery (6%), Retinal services (3%) and other services (6%) like Squint correction, Glaucoma services, optical services and pediatric care.

Crosstabulation and Chi square test : Between Education qualification with respect to sources that drive patients to Sankara eye hospital

education * hear Crosstabulation

			hear								Total
			doctor referral	advertisement and promotion	online website	C M health scheme/insurance/corporate tieups	Relative, colleague or friend recommendation(WOM)	eye screening programme	social media	others	
education	schooling	Count	12	7	2	5	68	7	1	10	112
		Expected Count	14.2	6.6	2.4	4.7	68.8	6.6	.9	7.6	112.0
	inter/diploma	Count	1	1	1	0	6	0	0	0	9
		Expected Count	1.1	.5	.2	.4	5.5	.5	.1	.6	9.0
	graduation	Count	10	3	1	1	33	2	0	2	52
		Expected Count	6.6	3.1	1.1	2.2	31.9	3.1	.4	3.5	52.0
	post graduation and above	Count	4	2	1	3	18	1	0	0	29
		Expected Count	3.7	1.7	.6	1.2	17.8	1.7	.2	2.0	29.0
	other	Count	3	1	0	1	20	4	1	4	34
		Expected Count	4.3	2.0	.7	1.4	20.9	2.0	.3	2.3	34.0
	Total	Count	30	14	5	10	145	14	2	16	236
		Expected Count	30.0	14.0	5.0	10.0	145.0	14.0	2.0	16.0	236.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.810 ^a	28	.742
Likelihood Ratio	24.120	28	.675
Linear-by-Linear Association	.002	1	.965
N of Valid Cases	236		

a. 30 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .08.

The Pearson chi-square value is found to be statistically insignificant. Meaning thereby no significant association of education qualification of study subjects was observed with the sources that drive the patient to hospital ($\chi^2 = 22.810$, $df = 28$, $p = 0.742$).

Crosstabulation and Chi square test : Between Education qualification with respect to factors influencing selection of hospital

education * reason Crosstabulation

			reason										Total	
			location feasibility	skilled doctors	cost of treatment	quality of treatment/speciality services	infrastructure and amenities	religious and cultural belief	staff behaviour	C M health scheme/insurance/corporate tieups	happy patient of sankara referred me	accreditation available		others
education	schooling	Count	23	16	9	35	2	3	3	3	15	2	1	112
		Expected Count	28.9	17.1	8.5	30.4	2.4	1.4	3.3	1.4	16.6	.9	.9	112.0
	inter/diploma	Count	1	2	0	4	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	9
		Expected Count	2.3	1.4	.7	2.4	.2	.1	.3	.1	1.3	.1	.1	9.0
	graduation	Count	17	9	4	10	2	0	0	0	10	0	0	52
		Expected Count	13.4	7.9	4.0	14.1	1.1	.7	1.5	.7	7.7	.4	.4	52.0
	post graduation and above	Count	11	6	0	6	0	0	1	0	4	0	1	29
		Expected Count	7.5	4.4	2.2	7.9	.6	.4	.9	.4	4.3	.2	.2	29.0
	other	Count	9	3	5	9	1	0	2	0	5	0	0	34
		Expected Count	8.8	5.2	2.6	9.2	.7	.4	1.0	.4	5.0	.3	.3	34.0
	Total	Count	61	36	18	64	5	3	7	3	35	2	2	236
		Expected Count	61.0	36.0	18.0	64.0	5.0	3.0	7.0	3.0	35.0	2.0	2.0	236.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.254 ^a	40	.726
Likelihood Ratio	40.689	40	.440
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.131	1	.288
N of Valid Cases	236		

a. 40 cells (72.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .08.

The Pearson chi-square value is found to be statistically insignificant. Meaning thereby no significant association of education qualification of study subjects was observed with the factors influencing the selection of Sankara eye hospital ($\chi^2 = 34.254$, $df = 40$, $p = 0.726$).

Crosstabulation and Chi square test : Between gender and sub-speciality services availed by the respondents

gender ^ speciality Crosstabulation										
			speciality							Total
			cataract and IOL clinic	cornea and refractive service	LASIK	vitreo-retinal service	occuloplasty	eye consultation	others	
gender	male	Count	40	19	5	5	10	55	9	143
		Expected Count	40.0	12.1	8.5	4.8	15.1	54.5	7.9	143.0
	female	Count	26	1	9	3	15	35	4	93
		Expected Count	26.0	7.9	5.5	3.2	9.9	35.5	5.1	93.0
Total		Count	66	20	14	8	25	90	13	236
		Expected Count	66.0	20.0	14.0	8.0	25.0	90.0	13.0	236.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.413 ^a	6	.005
Likelihood Ratio	21.230	6	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	.436	1	.509
N of Valid Cases	236		

a. 2 cells (14.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.15.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.279	.005
	Cramer's V	.279	.005
N of Valid Cases		236	

The Pearson chi-square value test was found statistically significant. Meaning thereby There's a significant association between gender and the type of sub-speciality chose by patients ($\chi^2 = 18.413$, $df = 6$, $p = 0.005$).



CONCLUSION

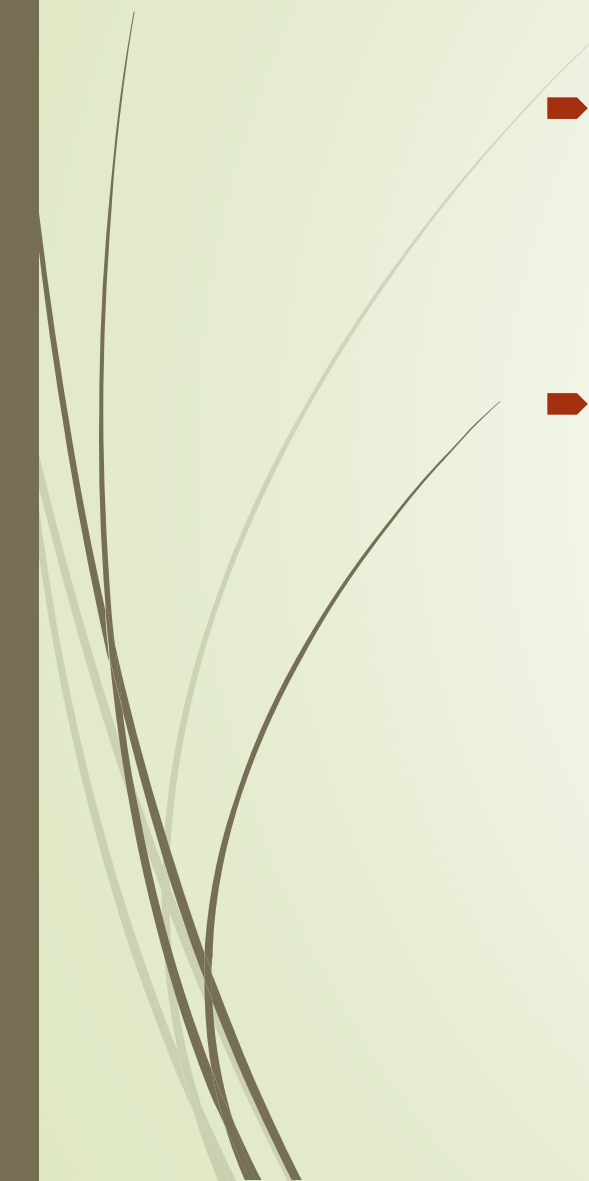
The study concluded that the Sankara Eye Hospital has succeeded in maintaining a tradition in which rendering excellent care and quality services to its patients are its most important strategic goal. It was found that majority of people coming to Sankara were through relative, friend or colleague's recommendation (WOM) and least through social media and online websites. For this more emphasis could be given on promotions through digital marketing channels. Doctors play a major role in motivating the patients as the study shows that patients coming through doctor's referral is second most influencing source that drive patients to hospital.

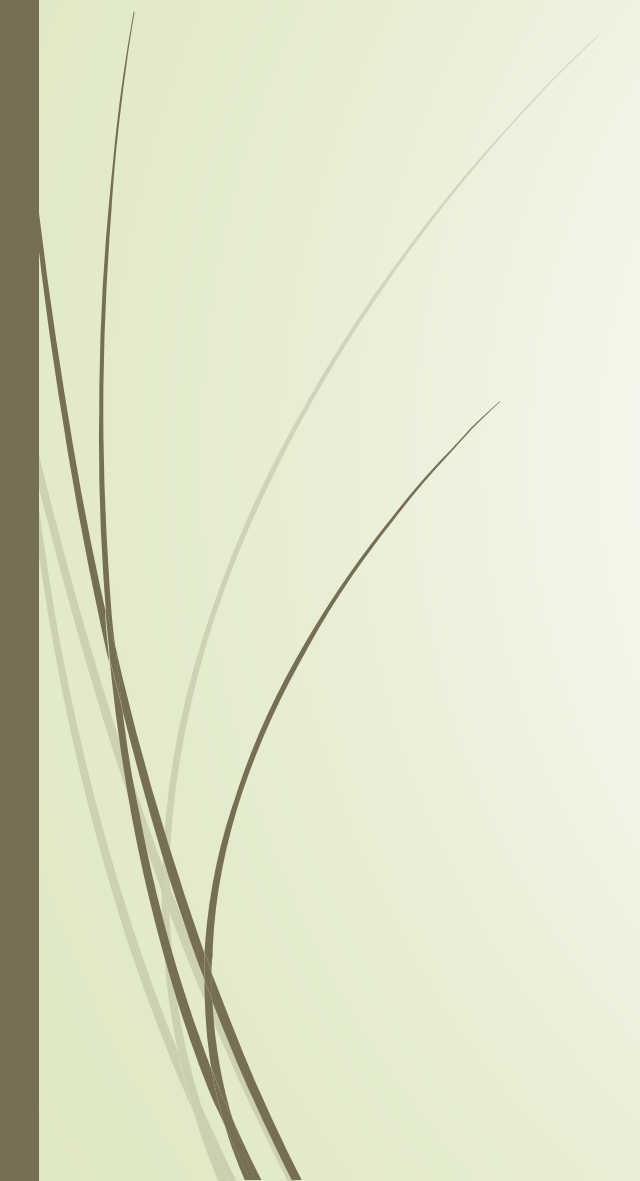
The Pearson chi-square test was found to be statistically significant in crosstabulation of gender with respect to the sub-speciality selected by the patients. Meaning thereby an association was observed between the gender with respect to the sub-speciality selected by the patients at Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore.



SUGGESTIONS

- The predominant problem we see through the study is that the patients are usually confused, that whether they are entering into Sankara eye foundation or Sankara Netralaya, to remove this difficulty one thing that Sankara eye foundation can implement is to reiterate the tagline and focus on awareness campaign so that it becomes much clearer in the patients' mind.
- Another difficulty faced by the patient is that the spectacles sold by Sankara eye Hospital are way above the purchasing power of them to reduce this problem so that they cannot buy the spectacles outside of the organization they can follow mass vs price rule so that they can increase the volume of production and therefore the prices can come down so that people can easily buy from the organization itself.

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- Doctors play a major role in motivating the patients as there are patients due to doctor referrals and visiting the hospital to get treated by skilled doctors. More emphasis can be given in increasing networking of doctors through mutual benefit.
 - According to an in-depth research report from Google on how people search for hospitals, some 77% of potential patients turn to a search engine and 76% look at an organization's website — the most engagement, by far, with any marketing channels. In order to acquire new patients, the digital marketing channels like SEO, SMM and Content marketing about eye care aids can be promoted.



THANK YOU!