

Digital Marketing Actions – Healthcare Providers of Dubai

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Abstract- Digital Marketing has become important tool in campaigns, which attract and retain Internet users for healthcare issues. This study investigates the main ways in which patients can be gained and retained by the doctors / medical staff on behalf of healthcare providers of Dubai using digital marketing actions. This research study deals with a new approach that will optimize digital marketing tools and technologies for the evolution of patient trends, and therefore, will be of academic and professional use for doctors / medical staff, marketing managers and web solution developers working for the healthcare providers. The results and conclusions of the research identify the specific actions that must be carried out to attract and retain patients by healthcare providers that use the digital marketing tools and technology on the Internet. The results further indicate that the digital marketing of healthcare providers of Dubai through Internet is considered by the patients with the presence in social media has a reinforcing effect on building trust and long-term relationships by the doctors / medical staff.

Keywords: digital marketing actions; healthcare providers; doctors / medical staff; patients; Dubai.

JEL Classification: M12; J81; J24; O15.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the Communication Advertising and Marketing Education Foundation, “Digital Marketing is a broad discipline, bringing together all forms of marketing that operates through electronic devices such as on-line, on-mobile, on-screen. Over the years, it has developed and operated enormously and it continues to do so all over the world in general and Dubai in particular. Based on recent research from renowned IT and management consulting firms, the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the global economy is forecasted to be massive. In a 2016 report, Forrester predicted that AI-driven companies would realize \$1.2 trillion in additional annual economic value compared to their laggard peers by 2020. This appears to have been a conservative forecast. McKinsey Global Institute now forecasts \$3.5 - 5.8 trillion impact from AI by 2020. Healthcare services represent one of the fastest growing segment of the United Arab Emirate’s economy. The UAE spends about double that of other Arab nations as a share of GDP (>10%). The current healthcare debate related to marketplace reform is only one outgrowth. Contributing to the larger crisis is the ever changing marketplace, from rapidly advancing technology and medical science with its corresponding new treatment options, to the persistent erosion of the tertiary level hospital, to changing demography. These and other shifts have affected virtually every area of

healthcare delivery. The increasing factors will continue to challenge marketing planners and decision makers who interface directly with patients as service providers, as never before. The purpose of this research paper is to share the experiences of private healthcare sector efforts to enhance their marketing performance through their continuing efforts to monitor their service to patients and deliver value consistent with their continuing patient oriented research program. Recent research shows that work and employment are not only drivers of happiness, but that happiness can also itself help to shape job market outcomes, productivity, and even healthcare business performance. While happiness is often thought of as the experience of pleasant emotion and a general satisfaction with life, we know true happiness requires more than a pleasant life. Individuals need to have a sense of purpose, they need positive relationships and they need to achieve meaningful goals. The study of happiness in the healthcare workplace has become confused by separately evaluating job satisfaction, employee engagement, flow and other constructs. Martin Seligman attempted to solve this problem by developing the PERMA model, which acknowledges and incorporates all the elements into one model. He chose to call the outcome “well-being”. Around 200 AD, woodblock printing was invented. This heralded an era for physicians, apothecaries, pharmacies, clinicians and healers. They could alert the public using “outdoor advertising.”

Simply, a rudimentary sign on the side of their wagon. When doctors established an office, they would hang a shingle to let passersby know that they were open for business. Local townsfolk could be healed from whatever ailed them. For the next 200 years, the use of the advertising media continued to expand and evolve. Furthermore, when automobiles became popular in the early 20th century, it launched the creation of outdoor board companies. First with signs on buildings in town and on barns in rural communities. And later, 30-sheet outdoor boards along America's highways. Do you remember the "Burma Shave" ads? Those ads were outdoor advertising at its best – as an early healthcare advertising message for a medicated shaving cream. The most advanced medical services of the day were primitive. As the research illustrates, the marketing as a science substantially accelerated development, and commissioning of healthcare services allowing patients to derive economic value from medical advancements coupled with marketing and information technology applications faster by building the necessary platform components for healthcare providers. Digital marketing is evolving steadily and hugely every day. From infusing into every possible industry, to become the major source of online marketing for several corporations, digital marketing has settled well. Traditional marketing techniques do not tend to be as effective as digital marketing today. That is why digital marketing is being used by areas like the food sector, travel industry, IT industry as well as the healthcare industry. The main reason for this progress is digitalization. The same way the healthcare industry can't just overlook digital marketing. Healthcare patients have more options than ever before. With so much information available online, these patients no longer feel the need to visit the closest hospital, a medical practice closest to their location, or even healthcare practices with multiple locations in the community. That's why it's so important to have a planned, budgeted healthcare marketing plan to reach new and returning patients in your area at the best moment. Healthcare Marketing, even if you're happy with your current patient volumes, can't happen without a planned medical marketing strategy to keep the healthcare brand at the forefront of people's minds. Think of all the reasons someone might decide to switch healthcare providers: changes in the type of healthcare insurance, relocation, dissatisfaction with wait times, or just one negative experience. You are not guaranteed to keep up your patient volumes forever.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Advances in digital technology have made a significant impact on marketing theory and practice. Technology expands the opportunity to capture better quality customer data, increase focus on customer relationship, rise of customer insight and Customer Relationship Management (CRM). Availability of big data made traditional

marketing tools to work more powerful and innovative way. In current digital age of marketing some predictions of effects of the digital changes have come to function but still there is no definite answer to what works and what doesn't in terms of implementing the changes in an organization context. As per Smyth (2007), the Internet market was dominated by Google and Yahoo for search engines. Internet search traffic increased the rise of search engine optimization spread for major companies like Google. In 2007, the usage of mobile devices enlarged the Internet usage on the move dramatically, and people all over the world began connecting with each other more conveniently through social media. In the 2010s, digital marketing became more sophisticated as an effective way to create a relationship with the consumer that has depth and relevance. Year 2015 onwards, the developed world, firms have realized the value of digital marketing.

A research area covers many topics researchers can study in the context of a scientific discipline. A research topic is "the broad subject matter addressed in a study" (Creswell, 2012). Since it is the broad subject matter of a research, many researchers begin here. It helps in narrowing the topic down to something that is reasonable to conduct a study. Research can be defined as a systematic investigation, study of relevant material and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions. A "Statement of the Problem" is a description of a difficulty that needs to be solved or at least researched to see whether a solution can be found. It can also be described as either a gap or contradiction between principles and practices. The ultimate goal of a problem statement is to transform a generalized problem something that is not in the right perspective or into a well-defined problem that can be resolved through focused research and appropriate decision-making. The statement of the problem should include the following:

- A clear statement that the problem exists;
- Evidence that supports the existence of the problem;
- Evidence of an existing trend that has led to the problem;
- Definitions of major concepts and terms;
- A clear description of the setting;
- Probable causes related to the problem;
- A specific and feasible statement.

This research is focused on the digital marketing tools for the private healthcare providers of Dubai. Recently, large healthcare organizations in Dubai have made substantial investments to provide state of the art medical facilities to the population of Dubai. While evidence shows that better performing healthcare organizations have happier employees, there has been much less research on whether happy employees contribute to better healthcare organizational performance. Finding causal relations between employee well-being and healthcare organizations performance is important for them to justify spending healthcare organization resources to provide a happier work environment for their employees. While

correlational and research studies do find a positive relationship, the evidence remains sparse. The private healthcare sector in United Arab Emirates in general and Dubai in particular have no exception in it. But it is more important to know how patients are considering the healthcare facilities that are critical to the success of private healthcare organizations.

In the past, we all have studied that the concepts and conventions of happiness are relevant to success of an organization. The economic success of the healthcare organization depends a lot on the repeat business by the patients based on various factors – personal and professional. It is a case study which dealt with various patient perceived parameters in private healthcare organizations in Dubai. Dubai private healthcare sector has been chosen as a case study for examining the application of digital marketing tools for the success of healthcare providers in Dubai.

E-commerce adopters have clearly understood and experiences the immense benefit of digital marketing. Therefore, the commercial organizations are scaling down mass media advertising description of E-commerce. The main digital platform such as Google, Facebook, Twitter, You-tube are adding more user friendly products that are allowing smaller as well as large organizations to market with high efficiency to early users. It has resulted in increase in digital marketing spending by commercial organizations in particular. The innovation of digital media coupled with E-commerce mechanism is moving sharply to address the needs of customers. Therefore, it is imperative for the healthcare providers of Dubai should join the main stream for their successful operations.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research is exploratory in nature; it focuses on literature review, newspapers, journals, and the personal experiences of the authors. Additionally, websites of some digital marketing agencies and healthcare providers in Dubai have been visited to know the process, elements and functions of digital marketing. The authors have methodically collected the data from healthcare consumers / patients and healthcare providers in Dubai. The data collected by the authors was analyzed using scientific methods and drawn the conclusions. The authors discussed the issues arising from the data and its application with the established research in the field.

Methodology is crucial for this study because an unreliable method produces unreliable results and as a consequence undermines the credibility of interpretations and findings relating to the study in this context. The process used to collect information and data for the purpose of making healthcare business decision. It includes research publications, interviews, surveys and other research techniques. In management, digital marketing of healthcare business, it is important to provide relevant and sufficient information for researchers in the field to adopt the methodology used in this study.

The researchers would want to understand on how the new or existing methodology is used in an innovative process.

This study is basically explorative in nature and mainly based on primary and secondary data. The collection of primary data through the field survey method was conducted from different patients, employees working in private healthcare providers in Dubai. The secondary data is collected from Dubai Statistical Department and other informal yet reliable sources.

Sampling is done based on the response getting from employees working in private healthcare providers followed by the scientific data collection methods. This study was undertaken to examine the digital marketing tools that are useful for the success of private healthcare providers in Dubai. To answer the research questions this study follows two different approaches.

After the initial data collection, a basic analysis of the gathered data was conducted. The first data set was checked for possible errors, missing values. Second, the response rates were calculated and the characteristics of the respondents were analyzed. Third, the data was compared with the research materials and the best of all is to be considered for deciding factors of digital marketing tools for the success of healthcare operations.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS, SOURCES FOR DATA COLLECTION

The purpose of this research is to investigate the overall role and impact of the digital marketing on healthcare services in Dubai both from the doctors' / medical staff and the patients' perspectives, in order to identify commonalities and differences between the two groups. We looked into the extent to which the doctors / medical staff make use of the digital marketing, the type and intensity of use, the perceived benefits, as well as the effectiveness of digital marketing tools as judged by the patients. The investigation focused specifically on the following research questions:

What are the primary roles of the digital marketing tools from the point of view of doctors / medical staff and patients?

What are the most popular digital marketing platforms for doctors / medical staff and patients and how are they used?

What are the perceived benefits of the use of the digital marketing for doctors / medical staff and patients?

What are the differences between the perceptions of doctors / medical staff and patients with regard to the role and use of the digital marketing in healthcare sector?

What is the impact of the digital marketing on the choice for doctors / medical staff and their professional growth in the case of healthcare services?

The study involved both a qualitative and a quantitative stage. Data was collected from doctors, medical staff and patients of healthcare providers in Dubai. The analysis of the qualitative part of the investigation informed our

understanding of the phenomenon and formed the basis for the overall direction of the quantitative study and the questionnaire development. The qualitative stage involved semi-structured interviews with doctors / medical staff and separate semi-structured interviews with patients' / healthcare users. For the quantitative stage of the investigation, doctors / medical staff were randomly selected. Of the 600 questionnaires were sent to doctors / medical staff, 483 completed questionnaires were received. For patients, given that the target group was

men and women over 18 years old, the method used was non-probability snowball sampling, which resulted in 1,408 usable responses. The administration of the questionnaires was done online using the Survey Monkey software and the participants were invited to participate via email. The statistical program SPSS was used for the analysis of the data.

5. RESULTS

Table 1. Gender Wise Profile of Respondents – Doctors / Medical Staff in the survey for digital marketing tools for the success of healthcare providers in Dubai

Details	Frequency	Percent
Females	359	74
Males	124	26
Total	483	100

Table 2. Gender Wise Profile of Respondents – Patients in the survey for digital marketing tools for the success of healthcare providers in Dubai

Details	Frequency	Percent
Females	901	64
Males	507	36
Total	1408	100

Table 3. Age Wise Profile of Respondents – Doctors / Medical Staff in the survey for digital marketing tools for the success of healthcare providers in Dubai

Details / Age of Respondents	Frequency	Percent
18 years – 29 years	22	5%
30 years – 39 years	173	36%
40 years – 49 years	113	23%
50 years – 59 years	135	28%
60 years and above	40	8%
Total	483	100

Table 4. Age Wise Profile of Respondents – Patients in the survey for digital marketing tools for the success of healthcare providers in Dubai

Details / Age of Respondents	Frequency	Percent
18 years – 29 years	332	24%
30 years – 39 years	388	27%
40 years – 49 years	321	23%
50 years – 59 years	245	17%
60 years and above	122	9%
Total	1408	100

In an effort to optimize the use of the available space, results are presented below as answers to the research questions.

A. What are the primary roles of the digital marketing tools and technologies from the point of view of doctors / medical staff and patients?

More than half of the doctors / medical staff who participated in the study (65.7%) stated that they use digital marketing for professional purposes. In order of descending importance, doctors / medical staff indicated that they use the digital marketing tools and technologies for sending test medical results, publishing articles and answers to medical inquiries, providing information about their healthcare organization, posting Resumes and photographs but not for booking medical appointments and consultations. Most of the patients (90.4%) indicated

that they have used the digital marketing tools and technologies for information about healthcare issues, mainly about a specific illness followed by search for information about general medical and health issues. Patients have admitted that they resort to the digital marketing tools and technologies first to look for information about their symptoms and condition before visiting the physician. Patients stated that they made use of digital marketing tools even after visiting the physician for second opinions and to learn more about their condition and understand better the physician's diagnosis and follow-up.

B. What are the most popular digital marketing platforms for doctors / medical staff and patients and how are they used?

Doctors / medical staff admitted that Facebook (98.3%) is the most popular platform followed by blogs; most respondents also use LinkedIn (79.5%) as a professional network and have an active profile. YouTube (64.9%) is next in popularity for viewing video material but Twitter (46.2%), Instagram (39.7%) and Pinterest (32.8%) are not popular among the doctors / medical staff. Patients on the other hand prefer Facebook (98.3%), MySpace (95.1%), Google Plus (85.4%), Twitter (79.6%), LinkedIn (70.5%), YouTube (70.1%), Flickr (62.9%), blogs (55.8%), microblogs (49.3%), Wikipedia (41.7%), Virtual reality and gaming environments (38.5%). Articles of physicians published on digital marketing platforms can entice patient interest and perceptions about healthcare providers. Digital marketing platforms build the attitude and the patient-doctor / medical staff relationship which significantly impact the healthcare organizations in Dubai. It is interesting however, that overall the website is seen as the most valuable source of information about the doctors / medical staff, contact details, access map, resumes, photos and informative articles.

C. What are the perceived benefits of the use of the digital marketing for doctors / medical staff and patients?

Doctors / medical staff indicated that their perceived benefits of using the digital marketing as it Improves the patient reach (95.3%), Increases service awareness (89.9%), Counter the possibility of misinformation (88.0%), Ensures the easy access for patients (83.5%), Build Patient – Doctor / Medical Staff trust (73.3%), Customize healthcare digital marketing strategy (69.8%). The patients perceived the benefits of using digital marketing such as no more consulting their friends and relatives but began their session at a search engine such as Google or Yahoo (96.2%), patients feel more valued as a patient when doctors / medical staff use social marketing tools and technology such as blogs (81.7%), use search engines and check emails for health related updates from the healthcare providers (75.0%). Furthermore, doctors / medical staff and patients expressed that the digital marketing tools and technology enable them to project a modern image, technologically advanced, allow two-way communication with patients and caregivers, contribute to relationship building process, increase awareness of health and related issues and play an increasingly important role as the digital marketing tools and technology enhance and blend the traditional healthcare solutions with online communication via the website and other advanced platforms.

D. What are the differences between the perceptions of doctors / medical staff and patients with regard to the role and use of the digital marketing in healthcare sector?

Doctor / medical staff rightly presume that patients use the internet and social media in order to be better informed about health issues and to gain support from other patients (74,6%). Doctor / medical staff also believe that the patients evaluate positively their web presence

and can be influenced by forum discussions on the choice of a doctor / medical staff / healthcare provider (68,9%). The positive influence of the web presence is in most cases mediated by personal experiences from earlier contacts with the doctor / medical staff (61.8%). Communication via e-mail is positively evaluated by patients (95.0%). The possibility of online communication, specifically informing patients about test results and answering questions, influence positively the patient's perception about their doctor / medical staff (93.4%). Patients like to be educated online about health issues but doctors / medical staff oppose patients buying medicines online / Over The Counter medicines as some of them may be harmful or unsuitable based on individual patient conditions (99.2%). Therefore, the doctors / medical staff advocate that the patients must always consult their doctor / medical staff before self-medication (92.5%).

E. What is the impact of the digital marketing on the choice of a doctor / medical staff for healthcare services?

The overwhelming majority (96%) of doctors / medical staff believe that recommendations from family and friends remains the most important influencing factors. This perception is in agreement with the patients' view (84.3%) agreed. From the doctor / medical staff perspective, the website comes second (52.8%) and recommendations in forums (44.7%) follow. Social media networks are considered important by (41.6%) of the patients and advertising on search engines or other sites by (32.7%). Less than half of the patients (47.3%) indicated that they do not use the digital marketing and a surprising 32.8% indicated that they would never contact a physician they learned about online. It is evident that in Dubai the digital marketing significantly effective in attracting new patients who are not already familiar with the doctor / medical staff.

6. DISCUSSION

There were some research articles on the subject. Few of them on this subject are:

Investigation into Big Data Impact on Digital Marketing by Ketty Grishikashvili, Open University, UK, S. Dibb, Open University, UK, M. Meadows, Open University, UK. The research paper focused on theoretical dilemmas of the digital revolution and importance of challenges within practice. Preliminary results show that those industries that tried to narrow the gap and put necessary mechanisms in place to make use of big data for marketing are upfront on the market. However, when we compare our research with this article it is different because it is totally focused on Healthcare sector of Dubai.

In another research article, Digital health innovation ecosystems: From systematic literature review to conceptual framework by Gloria Ejehiohen Iyawaa,c,*, Marlien Herselmana,b, Adele Bothaa,b. The article

focused on the study identified components of digital health, components of innovation relevant to the healthcare domain and components of digital ecosystems. It further suggests, within the context, a comprehensive definition of digital health innovation ecosystems. A conceptual framework for digital health innovation ecosystems is proposed. The findings from this study could conceivably be a step towards enabling a common understanding of practitioners, professionals and academics within the digital health domain as well as a basis for further studies on digital health innovation ecosystems. However, the present study was of practical relevance to application of digital marketing tools and technology in the geographical setting of Dubai which is a practical application in healthcare sector.

The Impact of eHealth on the Quality and Safety of Health Care: A Systematic Overview Ashly D. Black1 , Josip Car1 , Claudia Pagliari2 , Chantelle Anandan2 , Kathrin Cresswell2 , Tomislav Bokun1 , Brian McKinstry2 , Rob Procter3 , Azeem Majeed4 , Aziz Sheikh2 * The research was focused on: In the light of the paucity of evidence in relation to improvements in patient outcomes, as well as the lack of evidence on their cost-effectiveness, it is vital that future eHealth technologies are evaluated against a comprehensive set of measures, ideally throughout all stages of the technology's life cycle. Such evaluation should be characterised by careful attention to socio-technical factors to maximise the likelihood of successful implementation and adoption. While we compare and contrast this study with our research it is totally different approach to add insights of application of technology and marketing as applied digitally by the doctors / medical staff and patients. Therefore, the two are not similar at all.

In another study on the similar subject: Promotion of mHealth Applications in Search Engines - A Study of Australia and Slovakia Andrej Miklosik, Maria Hasprova and Stefan Zak Department of Marketing, Faculty of Commerce, University of Economics, Bratislava, Petržalka, Slovakia. The study focused on The findings indicate that the level of promotion varies significantly across the keyword category, platform, location, and mHealth application. The competition in search results for keywords related to two categories of mHealth applications - exercise and training and mental health - is more intense than in two other areas of healthy living - general and healthy eating/diet. There are significant differences between search visibility in search engine results pages in Australia and Slovakia. The current research used totally different approach by evaluating the current practices by the doctors / medical staff compared to the needs and aspirations of patients in a multicultural young society of Arab origin.

Therefore, the two subjects sound similar and their application and adaptability is different altogether. In this study, we have investigated and summarized five digital marketing research questions relating to healthcare sector of Dubai. The results of this valuable research study were

found to be supportive for establishing the impact the digital marketing tools and technology for the successful operations of healthcare sector in Dubai. Thus, the findings of our study are unique to the healthcare sector of Dubai. Such empirical study was not carried out in recent times. Therefore, it attaches a significant importance to highlight the role of fast developing technology blended marketing approach has made inroads into the business world in general and the healthcare sector of Dubai in particular. It is imperative to know that the lessons learned from this study could easily be applied in other sectors of the business in Dubai especially at this critical juncture of Covid 19 pandemic.

The present study confirmed that the decision for the selection of a doctor / medical staff is not dependent upon the presence of the physician available in any part of Dubai or United Arab Emirates. A significant selection criterion for a doctor / medical staff in any specialty in Dubai is not on the recommendation by family or friends. The good old days are over when the patient use to be at the mercy of known person to recommend a doctor / medical staff. The tools and technology of digital marketing is helping the people through search engines to find the best available doctor / medical staff to address the needs of patients.

Traditional marketing techniques do not tend to be as effective as digital marketing today in the whole world in general and Dubai in particular because majority of population consists of young people from different nationalities live in. That is why digital marketing is being used by areas like the food sector, travel industry, IT industry as well as the healthcare industry. The main reason for this progress is digitalization. The same way the healthcare industry can't just overlook digital marketing. Let's have a look at the relationship between the healthcare industry and what digital marketing has to offer. In this context, the current research study measured the needs and aspirations of doctors / medical staff and the patients of Dubai in line with the advancements of digital marketing. The existence of a well-maintained website adds to the visibility and the credibility of the doctor / medical staff. On the digital marketing front, even though social media presence does not influence the patients' choice for a doctor / medical staff, this also importantly acts in a reinforcing manner, increasing visibility. People don't just blindly follow doctors and are becoming more and more aware. There is a rise in the awareness levels in people who are becoming increasingly health-conscious. Digital marketing is helping by pushing and advertising products and services across several platforms. Apps, website, blogs and even social media are equally using digital marketing. There is a wave of digital marketing covering every sector with the increasing developments in the IT sector. Healthcare industry is benefiting from this symbiotic professional relationship between the digital marketers and healthcare professionals.

A recent study found that 77% of patients perform online research prior to booking an appointment. Even more profound, another study by the Pew Internet & American Life project found that 93 million Americans (approximately 80% of Internet users) have searched for a health-related topic online. It has become clear that consumers and patients are taking advantage of online resources both during initial research and ongoing care – thus, it is increasingly important that healthcare organizations and doctors / medical staff take advantage of digital marketing to boost patient engagement and, ultimately, care outcomes. From a managerial point of view, doctors / medical staff in Dubai seem to believe that new media technologies can be used as a great supportive tool for promoting themselves and advancing their work. From the patients point of view, the study shows that the website is the most valuable channel of information about physicians, containing the physician's Resumes, information about their specialization and practice, and providing access details to their private practice. For those doctors / medical staff who choose to have digital marketing tools and technology, it is important to invest in writing articles or reports about healthcare matters, as well as providing general or customized advice. Concerning Facebook (which is by far the most popular social network in this industry), the postings of healthcare providers choosing to promote their work via this medium should be such that provide value to the prospective patients. In this way, the current study approach and results are in line with the practices of other research work in similar setting. However, none of the studies mentioned above have made any attempt to concentrate their study in the Middle East Region in general and Gulf Cooperation Council Countries in particular. Therefore, the present study was undertaken in line with the aspirations and policies of Government of Dubai to make Dubai a prominent healthcare hub for the entire region.

Aristotle argued that, happier people are those who feel what they consider the right feelings, given their typical situations. Our findings support Aristotle's claims empirically. In this study, we found that the doctors / medical staff working for healthcare organizations by applying the well tested tools and technologies of digital marketing may be able to full fill the needs and aspirations of their patients for the wellbeing of healthy population of Dubai.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The major finding from the current empirical evidence for the beneficial impact of digital marketing for the success of healthcare providers at best is modest. While absence of evidence does not equate with evidence of ineffectiveness, reports of negative consequences are possible based on patients indulging in self-medication based on online data and information might lead to disaster. Therefore, the digital marketing tools and technology is an additional tool for the patient safety and

convenience but not replace the skills and diagnostic wisdom of qualified and experienced doctors / medical staff.

One of the main purpose of this research article was to help healthcare providers in Dubai understand their patients / customer needs and aspirations in terms of digital marketing tools and technology matching with the skills equipped with the doctors / medical staff. The research results indicate that the skill sets of doctors / medical staff need to be constantly upgraded to match patient needs and aspirations in order to serve better. Healthcare providers in Dubai are using different tools and technology to promote their healthcare services. The analysis of respondent interview results showed that the competition among the healthcare providers on various technological platforms and locations might increase the possibility of acquisitions, mergers and push for undesirable targets upon doctors and medical staff.

Pioneering technologies, unless properly evaluated with results fed back into development, might not prove desired results to the extent that is needed to realize their potential when deployed in everyday healthcare scenarios. The paradox is that while the number of digital marketing tools and technologies in healthcare sector are growing, we still do not have proper understanding on how and why such technical interventions do or do not work in the long run and up to the expectations of the patients.

Webinars / webcasts play important role in digital marketing strategies. Use of such tools help the e-commerce grow leaps and bounds and first movers will definitely will have edge over others. However, in healthcare industry the webinars / webcasts will lead to cosmetic changes in the clinical practices in a highly competitive markets like Dubai. There is potential for increased misuse of digital marketing as a tool in this context.

These and similar tools and technologies developed and pursued in other parts of the world offer an unparalleled opportunity not just for improving healthcare sector, but also for learning how to (or how not to) implement digital marketing tools and technology systems and contextualize them for the local and regional culture.

When used wisely and prudently, the digital marketing tools, technology and platforms offer the potential to promote individual and public health for all categories of patients, as well as professional development and advancement for doctors and medical staff. However, when used carelessly, the damages and dangers of these tools and technologies pose a formidable threat to the patients and the society as a whole. Therefore, ethical guidelines and standards for healthcare organizations and doctors / medical staff go in a long way to avoid any pitfalls.

8. SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There is scope for funded research of digital marketing across all sectors of Dubai economy and could be

compared with the public sector organizations for boosting productivity and Foreign Direct Investment – FDI.

The is further future scope for studies in this domain clearly focused towards more medical specializations, and across Gulf Cooperation Council Countries.

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