
A study of Social marketing – Special reference to HIV/Aids problem in Aurangabad district

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SOCIAL MARKETING - A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Marketing is a social science for promotion of goods and services in the 21st century. However, there is a drastic change in the concept and practice of marketing during the last two centuries. Prior to the World War II, "Marketing was a far simpler subject. Consumer marketing largely operated on mass marketing principles and business marketing primarily concerned itself with how to build the best sales force." (Kotler Philip, "Marketing Management", Prentice Hall of India, New Delhi, 2002, pp-25) (28). However, this approach has considerably changed in the recent times. New modes of marketing have emerged in the world. Social Marketing is one of the challenging areas in the modern time.

About the changed situation of Marketing, Kotler has written that "today's marketers, of course, face the same tough decisions. But, today's marketplace is enormously more complex. Domestic markets, at one time safe from foreign invaders, are now the happy hunting grounds of giant global corporations as well as global niche specialists. Major strides in technology have considerably shortened time and distance." (Ibid., pp – 25) (29). Due to fast speed of the modern communication, now Marketing has to look after both profit and service motives.

HEALTH ISSUES IN INDIA AND RESEARCH BACKUP

REGARDING SOCIAL MARKETING- HEALTH SECTOR AND SOCIAL MARKETING

There are complex problems in the health sector in India. As population is increasing in the world, and particularly India, being densely populated, is facing critical health problems such as diabetes, high/low blood pressure, heart problems and now the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS that have further complicated the health issues. The WHO had designed "Health for All" program targeted to be completed in 2000 AD. (Dastane santosh, " Maharashtra 2004", Dastane and Company Publishers, Pune, 2004 , pp -128) (12). But, the targets could not be achieved mainly due to lack of rigorous planning and effective implementation at the national as well as the state levels. Maharashtra State with its wide and well developed system has focused on four major objectives : (1) To promote family planning scheme for controlling population in the State, (2) To support health system for completion of minimum demands for health services of weaker sections, (3) To pursue various schemes in order to implement the WHO objectives such as "Health for All" and (4) To develop network of basic infra-structure for providing minimum curative health services and preventive social medicine in the State.

HEALTH SECTOR AND SOCIAL MARKETING

India is a village based nation and Indian economy is based on agriculture. In rural areas, health facilities are inadequate. In Social Marketing of health services, both lack of infrastructure and lack of market facilities are major problems. The important features of the Social Marketing in health sector can be explained below:

Relationship marketing: "From focusing on transactions to building long term, profitable customer relationships. Companies focus on their most profitable customers, products and channels." (Kotler Philip, "Marketing Management", Prentice Hall of India, New Delhi, 2002, pp-27) (1). Health services marketing is also based on relationship between hospitals, patients and doctors. Further, the medical shops and medical representatives work as channels.

HEALTH SERVICES DELIVERY SYSTEM IN INDIA

The health care infrastructure in rural areas of India has been developed as a three tier system and is based on the following population norms:

- I. One Sub-Centre (SC) for 5,000 populations in rural areas and for 3,000 populations in tribal areas.

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- II. One Primary Health Centre (PHC) for 30,000 populations in rural areas and for 20,000 population tribal areas.
- III. One Community Health Centre (CHC) for 1, 20,000 populations in rural areas and for 80,000 populations in tribal areas.

The institutional set-up for the delivery of the health services includes-

1. SCs 2. PHCs 3. CHCs

IMPORTANT COMPONENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT POLICY AND PLANS FOR CREATING AWARENESS ABOUT THE HEALTH ISSUES (VIS-À-VIS SOCIAL MARKETING)

The major components of Government policy and plans are being used for publicity on the health care services and other development related issues have been briefly described as -

1. **ADVERTISING**
2. **AUDIO VISUAL CELLS**
3. **PRINTED PUBLICITY WING**
4. **OUTDOOR PUBLICITY**
5. **EXHIBITIONS**
6. **MASS MAILING**

IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations emerging for improving each of the public health issues under the study mainly with the help of the Social Marketing strategies and activities could be listed issue-wise as follows:

HIV / AIDS

- The disease of HIV/AIDS is concentrated in the younger age-group (15-25 years). It indicates that the disease is of relatively recent origin. It is more among women in the reproductive age-group which might affect their children to be born. However, this finding is not very much different from the age-pattern of the disease found elsewhere in India. The Social Marketing efforts need to be directed relatively more to this target group.
- There is a need for creating correct awareness about HIV/AIDS which could be done through the efforts of the Social Marketing.
- The Social Marketing campaigns are required to inculcate adequate faith among the people about the medical doctors and institutions which are good/reliable.
- Social Marketing can also play an important role in motivating the patients for taking the treatment completely and properly.
- Social Marketing should promote greater use of news papers/ magazines for dissemination of information on HIV/AIDS as people in the villages have more and easy access to them. The Social Marketing can play an important role in changing the mindset of the victims of the patients their family members and also the society for the better. If the Social Marketing efforts are effective, then the patients would not have much negative feeling about themselves; and the family members, friends and neighbours would also develop more positive attitude towards the patients.
- The Social Marketing can create awareness among the people as to what the various stakeholders can do and cannot do in rehabilitation, control and prevention of HIV/AIDS.
- Similarly, some of the strategies of the Social Marketing should be to motivate the medical practitioners so that they could undertake some Social responsibilities in educating the people on HIV/AIDS and changing some negative opinions which the people have about them.

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