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Policy Holders Awareness and Satisfaction towards Health Insurance

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Abstract
   Health is a crucial factor in developing the human Development index of a country. Productivity and economic Growth of a nation depends on the health of its people. There is a proverb that "when wealth is lost nothing is lost, when health is lost something is lost, when character is lost everything is lost". The main aim of the study is to identify the policyholder's awareness and satisfaction towards health insurance. 230 questionnaires were taken for analysis. Convenient sampling method is adopted to select the sample policyholders. The study concluded that majority of the policyholders have taken health insurance after watching the accident road shows conducted by institutions & insurance companies.

Introduction
        In India, the health insurance is alternatively called as "Healthcare insurance" or "mediclaim insurance". In mid 1980's most of the hospital in India were government owned and treatment was free of cost, with the advent of private medical care the need for health insurance was felt and the four public sector general insurance companies namely, New India Assurance Company, National Insurance Company, Oriental Insurance Company and United Insurance Company introduced mediclaim insurance as a product in the year 1987. Initially, these companies offered the health insurance with limited ceilings and benefits and later these ceiling were removed and general insurance companies (GIC) revised the features of the health insurance schemes period. In the year 1999, the Indian insurance sector was liberalized and many private players entered into the Indian insurance market and thus have brought in a lot of innovations in the health insurance products. The introduction of TPA'S in 2001 further simplified the service delivery procedure with cashless transaction brought in 2003.

        In India health insurance has witnessed a significant increase in terms of both premiums and numbers over the past few years. Health insurance premium has risen to Rs. 8,300 cores in 2009-10 from 2,200 cores in 2011-12. It continues to be one of the most rapidly growing sectors in the Indian insurance industry with gross written premium for health insurance

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which has been increased by 16 percent from Rs.13, 212 core in 2011-12 to Rs. 15,341 core in 2012-13 and it has registered a compounded annual growth rate (AGR) of 32 percent for the past eight financial years. However only about 12-13 percent of population has some form of health insurance coverage, including those who are covered through some form of government schemes and this is low when compared to other countries. This shows that there exists a huge potential in this sector and that is yet to be completed.

Review of Literature
        Balu and Anu Radha(2014) made a study on consumer awareness and satisfaction of mediclaim insurance in Kumbakonam with the objective of usage and awareness of medical insurance in semi- urban area. The data used was primary in nature and collected with the help of interview schedule. Convenient sampling was adopted for collection of data. The sample size taken was 192 respondents. For analyzing the data chi-square test and one-way ANOVA were used. The study revealed to find out the relationship between some of the demographic variables and metric variables such as factors influencing the preference of mediclaim policy and consumers satisfaction towards various services provided by the company.

        Freeman F.K. Gobah(2011) Carried out a study on "National health insurance scheme with special reference to Ghana prospects". Primary data was collected towards 320 respondents with the help of interview scheduling. Convenient sampling technique was used for sample selection. For data analysis chi-square, t-test was used. The result showed that there was the need to take a critical look at expanding geographical

21

access to quality healthcare, especially to primary health care in the rural areas in order to achieve universal coverage.

Statement of the Problem

At present there are 25 general insurance companies and 24 life insurance companies, offering health insurance and hence the growth in this sector is tremendous especially for the past one decade. But still a majority of the people in India is not covered by any type of health insurance. One main reason for this is that most of the insurance companies are operating in metros and urban cities thus making the rural people not to have frequent access to health insurance companies. As a result some are not aware of the policies and features offered by the health insurance companies.

Objectives of Study

(i) To examine the awareness of health insurance

(ii) To examine the factors acting as a barrier to private health insurance

(iii) To exhibits the relationship between some of the demographic variables and the actors considered to be important in preferring the mediclaim policies

Sources of Data

The present study is mainly based on primary data which is collected through issuing questionnaire. The questionnaire contains questions about awareness and satisfaction towards health insurance policy details and motivation for taking up health insurance policy.

Sampling Procedure

The data required for the study have been collected by issuing questionnaires to 250 policyholders in Pollachi Taluk. Of the total 250 questionnaire issued, 240 questionnaire were collected and out of which 230 questionnaires were taken for analysis due to incomplete information found in 10 questionnaire. Convenient sampling method is adopted to select the sample policyholders.

Analysis of Data

For analyzing the data the following tools were used.

❖ Simple percentage
❖ Friedman Rank Test

Limitations of the Study

Since the present study is mainly based on primary data, the opinion given by the policy holders may be bias in nature. Further, as the sample drawn for the present study constitutes the policyholders residing in rural areas of Pollachi Taluk alone, the results of the study cannot be generalized to other areas.

Analysis and Interpretation

The data has been collected from 230 respondents who are residing in Pollachi Taluk, through a structured questionnaire.

Table 1

Socio-economic profile of the respondents

S.NO	PARTICULARS		NO.OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENT
1	Area	Urban	93	40
		Rural	137	60
2	Age	20 - 30 Years	104	45
		31 - 40 Years	68	30
		41 - 50 Years	41	18
		Above 50 Years	17	7
3	Gender	Male	110	48
		Female	120	52
4	Marital Status	Married	135	59
		Unmarried	95	41
5	Educational Qualification	Illiterate	33	14
		Upto SSLC	39	17
		Higher secondary	31	14
		UG	51	22
		PG	76	33
6	Occupation	Employed	78	34
		Business	64	28
		Daily wage earners	20	09
		House Wife	21	09
		Unemployed	17	07
		Professionals	19	08
		Retired	11	05

7	Annual Income	Less than 50000	92	40
		Rs.50,000 - Rs.1,00,000	85	37
		Rs.1,00,001 - Rs.1,50,000	35	15
		Rs.1,50,001 - Rs.2,00,000	8	4
		Above Rs.2,00,000	10	4
8	Insurer of health insurance	Public company	110	48
		Private company	120	52
9	Amount Paid Annually	Less than 2000	103	45
		2000-5000	80	35
		5000-10,000	17	07
		More than 10,000	30	13
10	Cost of Health Insurance plan	Low Premium	56	24
		No paper work	81	35
		Life time renewability	55	24
		Cashless treatment	38	17

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it is that Majority 137 (60%) of the respondents are residing in Rural area. Majority 104 (45%) of respondents belong to the age group of 20 years to 30 years. Majority 120(52%) of the respondents are female. Majority 135 (59%) of the respondents are married. Majority 76(33%) of the respondents are post graduates. 78 (34%) respondents are Employed. 92 (40%) respondents are earning Less than Rs. 50,000 per annum. Majority 120 (52%) respondents have taken private health insurance policy. 103 (45%) respondents pay less than 2,000 annually. 81(35%) respondents are   attracted towards paperless work involved in health insurance plan.

Friedman Rank Test

Friedman Rank Test is employed to ascertain rank from health insurance policyholders for finding the sources of influence for taking health insurance policy.

Table 2

Factors influencing health insurance

Particulars	Mean Score	Ranks
News paper	2.63	9
Conference and Seminars	4.17	7
Incentives to policy Holder	4.70	6
Renewal notice by Insurance Companies	5.20	4
Advertisement	4.05	8
Sponsoring event by insurance companies	6.17	3
Internet	4.79	5
Road shows& festivals	7.04	1
Introducing savings linked insurance	6.25	2

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it indicates that the health insurance policy holder have taken health insurance road shows with mean score of (7.04) stands as first and Introducing savings linked insurance with the mean score of (6.25) stands as second and Sponsoring event by insurance companies with the mean score of (6.17) stands as third and Renewal notice by Insurance Companies with the mean score of (5.20) stands as fourth and Internet with the mean score of (4.79) stands as fifth and Incentives to policy Holder with the mean score (4.70) stands as six and Conference and Seminars with the mean score of (4.17) stands as seven and Advertisement with the mean score of (4.05) stands as eight and remaining News paper with the mean score of (2.63) stands as nine.

Suggestion

It is seen from the study that those in the joint family network are more aware of health insurance compared with nuclear family members. Hence the insurance companies may identify the and target the nuclear family members to create awareness on health insurance policies suitable to them. Also the daily wage earners have less awareness than others. The insurance companies programme in rural areas. To educate importance of the healthcare policies of health insurance have taken private health insurance the government, can taken necessary steps to create awareness towards government insurance policies to the public. Regarding the satisfaction level professionals have low level of satisfaction towards procedure involved. So the insurance companies may improve their services.

Conclusion

Health insurance industry in India is one of the fastest growing segments. Although the Indian health insurance market still lacks behind other countries in terms of penetration one main reason become low among is that awareness and knowledge about health insurance is dreadfully among rural people. Further, it is said that income, Age, and family expenditure on healthcare are significant determinants of health insurance purchase. In our research for the low level of awareness prevails in adequate measures to be taken to. And improve the insurance policy awareness. And the illiterate people daily wage earners not aware on the insurance policy whereas low level of satisfaction.

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