

# IMPACT OF MEDICAL FAIR PRICE SHOPS (MFPS) IN THE PREMISES OF GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON SELECTED GOVT. MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITALS IN WEST BENGAL

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## Abstract

Health is an essential issue in all countries. It has further come into limelight on account of covid pandemic. Under the global impact of Covid pandemic public investment in health care is in the centre stage of discussion in recent past. This empirical study has attempted to understand the impact of public health care system under Government investment through the model of Fair price shop (FPS) situated in the government hospitals in West Bengal. Catastrophic Health Expenditure (CHE) has further augmented the burden of income in the most of the house hold ion India under the deadliest impact of Covid. This study has found the Public-private-partnership (PPP) model is the robust application in reducing the burden of the lower-level income group in terms of health-related expenditure. Accessibility of medical care has created an substantial impact on middle class and lower middle class people in West Bengal with the introduction of Fare Price Shop (FPS) initiated by Government of West Bengal. This empirical research has proposed a model to makes health care more accessible among mass section of beneficiaries in order to makes a social inclusion for health care.

**Keywords:** Fair Price Medical Shop, Public Private Partnership, Health Care.

## Introduction

Public investment on health care has been a centre of discussion from the beginning of independence in India. Catastrophic Health Expenditure (CHP), as defined as an over burden to meet the health expenses of Indian household capacity to ire their basic standard of living. It is more apparent today as under the incremental agony of Health Hazardous that has been soaring on account of Environmental pollution across globe. Under this prevailing circumstances, investment on public health and hygiene and health care related research become an issue of Government investment. Private health care system in our Country has been a sharp rise on account of inadequate investment in health care sector by government. Rural health care system becomes more vulnerable in connection with appropriate infrastructure and skilled health practitioner. National Health Mission as well Universal Health Care System are the attempts from Government to provide universal accessibility of health care and health care related benefits to all the marginalised section of the society. As the private investment in heath care has gone up substantially but the marginalised section of the society is away from basic health care benefits owing to un-affordability. In recent past, Private-Public Partnership (PPP) model bring ray of hope in public system as a channel of investment to health care in India. The cost of medicine is another one of the most highlighting concern for rural and urban poor people. This empirical study is an attempt to unveil the impact of

Fare Price Shop (FPS) as part of Public investment (West Bengal Government) under the PPP model to mitigate the cost of medicine among beneficiaries to widen the health care base among mass section of the society.

## Literature review

This empirical study has been done based on extensive literature review. Almost 60 numbers of literatures have been consulted from array of journals, articles, Newspapers, Magazines, Government reports, Press release, Public Health Reports, Seminars on Generic drugs and its history and impact, Patent act, Government policy on Generic drugs, Different State Government investment on public health system, Fare Price Counters reports on other states, importance of PPP model in health care system and the current status of India's health care system, Government initiatives of National Health Care Mission and Universal Health care mission as well holistic scenarios of West Bengal health care and West Bengal government public system on health care. Literature review has opened various horizons to look through the aspect of Government investment to Public health care system in alliance with private health care partners by introducing fare Price Shop to mitigate the burden of medical expenses among people.

## Research Methodology

This empirical study has been designed with structured framework. Hypotheses have been formulated aligning with each objective. Primary data collected in a field study taken up in 8 different hospitals across Kolkata and its adjacent districts. Research design has been formulated through Questionnaire formulation, Pilot study, Primary Data Collection, Data Analysis such as percentage, mean and Chi-square test to understand the impact of fare price shop among targeted beneficiaries. Before final primary data collection a pilot survey on questionnaire has been executed among 25 numbers of probable respondents. Changes on questionnaire have been made after the pilot survey for drafting final questionnaire. Closed ended question were considered while garnering respondents opinions through questionnaire. 24 no of final questions were made covering entire objective of research. 109 no of respondents were interviewed through the close ended questions at different time frame in the premises of multiple hospitals. Percentage analysis has been done on the respondent's opinion to examine the contribution of their opinion in every objectives of research. Chi-Square test has been applied to test the variance of independent among opinions that has been distributed among different demographic such as Age, Gender, Education, Financial Status. Hypothesis has been tested in every objective to testify the impact of Government Fare Price Medical Shops on beneficiaries. Final inference has been drawn from the deep analysis based on Chi-Square test to examine the impact of FPS on patients.

## Scope and Need of the Study

This empirical study attempts to examine the impact of Fair Price Shop (FPS) on patients and their relatives who buy medicine from this counters situated in the premises of Government Hospitals. This empirical study widens the scope of understanding the impact of Public decision to open initially 40 no of medical Fare Price Counters across West Bengal. This research has examined the opportunity of opening more such FPS in other government hospital by studying the impact factors under the influence of multi demographical factors.

Further, In determining the course of current study it has been focused on the area such as need of the further expansion of these medical shops, more government investment in health care through private partnership, awareness among beneficiaries as well their satisfaction level. Another need of this study is to focus on the aspect of medical cost reduction among buyer and the financially weaker section of the society.

## Objectives

1. To understand the degree of awareness among targeted beneficiaries Indoor & Outdoor patients)
2. To understand the accessibility and availability of generic drug from Fair Pricing Shop
3. To examine the benefit on mitigating the degree of financial burden among beneficiaries
4. To study the merit of service of Fair Price Medicine Shop over Other Chemistshop      Research Design and Sample Size

## Sample Survey and Data Collection Method

This study has been designed with the sample, consisting of most of the outdoor patients as well as Indoor Patients, their relatives and acquaintances who visit Government Hospitals and FPS medical shop situated inside the premises of hospitals. Total 109 respective patients (Outdoor and Indoor), their relatives, acquaintances have been interviewed at random rate with due care of keeping the demographical status of heterogeneity into account. 8 number of Government hospitals situated in Kolkata and its adjacent suburban districts were visited with questionnaire comprising of 24 closed ended questions. In order to retain the qualitative responds from the targeted respondents this study adopts different time slot in the hospitals to get rid of homogeneous respondents in nature. A pilot survey with 25 no of questions in a closed ended questionnaire also conducted among probable respondents before final Primary data collection. APA style of referencing has been adopted.

## Testable hypotheses

To achieve the above stated objectives, the following hypotheses have been formulated for the proposed study:

On financial Status and the opinion variance between BPL and APL on Price difference and reduction of their medical expenses.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significant difference between APL and BPL in opinion on medical bill reduction for buying medicine from FPS

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no opinion difference between APL and BPL category on medical bill reduction for buying medicine from FPS

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significant opinion difference among APL and BPL in Experiencing Price Difference of FPS medicine over other Chemist shop

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no opinion difference among APL and BPL in Experiencing Price Difference of FPS medicine over other Chemist shop

Impact on Educational back ground on degree of awareness of FPS shop in Government Hospitals

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significant degree of difference about awareness of FPS shops in Govt hospitals under PPP model in Government Hospital

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no such of difference of opinion about awareness of FPS shops in Govt hospitals under PPP model in Government Hospital

Impact of Respondent's Education on FPS shop initiative of Government, Awareness of Generic Drug and relationship between Generic drug and FPS medical shop, effectiveness of Generic Drug and its usefulness over branded Drug and respondent's preference

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significant degree of difference about awareness of FPS shops in Govt hospitals

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no such difference of opinion about awareness of FPS shops in Govt hospitals

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significant difference of opinion about awareness of generic drug among different levels of education

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no significant difference of opinion about awareness of generic drug among different levels of education

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significant difference of view on educational background about the availability of only generic drugs from FPS

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no significant difference of views depends on educational background about the availability of only generic drugs from FPS

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is significance in opinion about effectiveness of Generic drug over Branded drug in terms of educational qualification

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is significance in opinion about effectiveness of Generic drug over Branded drug in terms of educational qualification

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significance of opinion about Branded drug over Generic drug depends on respondents educational background

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no significance of opinion about Branded drug over Generic drug depends on educational background of respondents

## Data Analysis Technique

Question has been tested applying cronbach alpha in order to check reliability of questions. Pilot survey and final survey has been segregated into different aspects. Final Primary survey on questionnaire has been executed with a structured 24 no of questions comprising of close ended questions. Expected frequency has been calculated from observed frequency to determinate the p value. Calculated p value has been compared with table p value in respect of degree of freedom (df) to reach to final conclusion on respective hypotheses. Hypotheses test has been done on p value measurement. Chi-Square test also taken into consideration and applied Chi-square technique for understanding impact on patient's demographic such as age, gender, Education, financial back ground have been tested while determining the degree of deference between calculated Chi-square value with tabulated Chi-square value .

## Data Analysis Empirical Result

Percentage analysis has been done to examine to degree of awareness in total sample size. It has noticed that almost 88 % respondents agree to know the Government Fair Price Medical shop located inside the premise of hospitals under State Government Control. Degrees of awareness among indoor as well as outdoor patients are very high and they are well aware about FPS medical shops located inside the premises of Government hospitals. More than half of (51%) respondents opined that hospital visit makes them aware about the FPS. Rest of them were informed from others media. But this research revealed an important fact that more than 67 % respondents are not aware about generic drug and its effectiveness. More insightful revelation has come out from this research that more than 64 % respondents does not have any assertive answer about the type of medicine sold from FPS as a generic drug.

96 % of respondents agreed on the benefit they enjoy on price difference from other outside chemist outlets who sell branded drugs. Hence, they acknowledge this noble scheme of state government ensure their reduction of monthly medical expenditure on buying particularly medicine. Most of the underprivileged and marginalised section f the people who visits government hospital frequently have been immensely benefitted monitory from FPS and the generic drug are being sold from the counter. Similarly, a significant results has comes out from this research that respondents those who are aware about generic drug and branded drugs feels to buy branded drugs

for its popularity and effectiveness. This research has found service quality gap in FPS shops in respect of long queue as well dearth of special counter for Women, senior citizen and critical patients as part of emergency delivery of service. To analysis the impact of patient's demographic factors such as age, gender, Educational back ground, Financial back ground Chi-Square test has been applied

## Conclusion and its Implication

1. Empirical result shows that Fair Price Medical Shop has its multi dimensional impact over beneficiaries.
2. Other than hospital patients (Indoor & Outdoor) o beneficiaries as outsider visit hospital premises with doctor's prescription, only to buy medicine from FPS shops.
3. 96 % of respondents beneficiaries have acknowledge their benefits on price reduction, availability of drugs, and mitigation of financial burden on monthly medical expenses.
4. Demographical factor impact also proves that a beneficiary irrespective of financial status takes the benefit of price reduction in order to enjoy the opportunity to cut down the monthly expenses on medicine.
5. Awareness on Generic Drug among beneficiaries is very less and need to be focused through advertising and other social activities. Perception of Branded drug in comparison generic drug is underestimated.
6. Private Public Partnership in providing health care related facility particularly awareness of generic drug, low price benefit transfer is a well deserved model to be expanded in the nooks and corner for attaining accessibility of medical care among citizen.

## Implication of theory and practice

This Empirical research based study vividly implicates that following model as a theory and its application in health care practice by Government.

Government investment on health care with private partnership will leads to social inclusion. One way medical bill reduction benefit can open investment of people to other essential sectors such as education and promote up scaling standard of living among financial weak section and their propensity to saving that will lead to holistic social inclusion for a country.

This Empirical Research proposed following model as a practiced need to be adopted by Government to ensure the social inclusion and accessibility of every citizen in the country.

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