

Listening to the Voice of the Patients: The Marketing Function, Market Orientation and Performance in Hospitals in Emerging Markets

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ABSTRACT The present study aims to explore to what extent hospitals adopt a market orientation as their corporate marketing strategy in an emerging-market context which poses many macro-level challenges for health care organizations due to its strong need for economic development, societal development, better quality-of-life (QOL), welfare, ethical practices among others. Hospitals that serve in these markets can benefit from a market orientation since a market-oriented strategy enables them to study understand and respond to their health care customers more effectively. Administrators from 400 private hospitals in Turkey were surveyed. A positive connection was found between the level of the hospital's market orientation and the presence of a formal marketing department that serves as the informational bridge between the hospital and the society. The results of this study revealed that market orientation is positively related to general performance of the hospital. The present study also showed that a statistically significant difference exists between the general performance of the hospitals having a formal marketing department and of those not having one. Market-oriented private hospitals perform better compared to their less market-oriented counterparts. A formal marketing department that connects the hospital to its customers and the society at large plays a pivotal role in the development of market-oriented strategies and operations and improves hospital performance. Managerial and public policy implications of the research results were also discussed.