

## **Comparison between Hospital Brand Images of Public versus that of Private Hospitals in Kinondoni – Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study compared the brand image of public and private hospitals in Kinondoni Municipal Council, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The study used a sample size of 384 respondents. Quantitative analysis was used to analyze data using SPSS whereby descriptive analysis and compared mean test was used in interpreting the study results. The study revealed that people didn't have a good idea of how well-known, well-equipped, and comfortable public hospitals are. Public hospitals don't have good enough reputation for people to trust them and for doctors to act in the right way. Concerning the brand image of the services offered by private hospitals in Kinondoni Municipal, it was said that there was an inadequate image of advanced medical equipment, facilities, a comfortable environment, trusting doctors, and an inadequate attitude on advanced medical equipment. The study recommends that in order to improve patient loyalty both public and private hospitals need to strengthen communication between their patients and service providers.*

**Keywords:** *Hospital, Brand image, Public hospital, Private hospital*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Hospital brand image is observed as the beliefs, thoughts or imitation that a patient holds towards a hospital (Chamet *al*, 2016). Thus, for a hospital to attain a good or bad image it depends on the imitation that patients have towards that hospital. (Sibarani & Riani, 2017) mentioned that brand image plays a great role in business strategic planning since it represents the tangible and intangible aspects of the firm. The tangible includes the buildings and products while the intangible includes the perception, perception identity of the patients Assila (2019) mentioned that patients often produce their own picture of a brand image of a hospital from their own medical examination and treatment experiences. In developed nations where the technology is well advanced the brand image of the hospital are well considered. Patients who attend both private and public health facilities feel the same as referred to (Sajjad & Maqsood, 2018). (Naik & Bashir, 2015) from India mentioned that competition in health industry have made the service provider to consider their customer in product development processes hence establishing a good relation with the patients.

Ahmed (2017) added that in well-developed hospitals brands image depends on the ability of the hospital to maintain repeating customers and attracting new customers. These prove that in order to have good brand image then customers' needs have to be considered. Jandavath & Byram, (2016) further explain that comfort is more important than technical skill in health facilities, it is crucial for healthcare providers to constantly put the needs of their patients first when providing services. However, the WHO insists on health institutions to provide correct care at appropriate time in response to the requirements and preferences of the service users while minimizing injury and resource waste (WHO, 2008). In Tanzania the Brand Image of health facilities depends on patient's opinion, since they have different views on the way they receive treatment from those facilities. Some of the hospitals are well recognized while others are not even known in spite of providing quality services (Manongi, 2017). Some of the hospitals have attained their brand depending on the services that they provide which may not be available in other areas. For example, Ocean road hospital is well known for treating cancer. Kibong'oto hospital has created its brand by being the specialist of treating TB diseases. CCBRT is well known for performing eye site operation for this case it has been difficult for other hospital to compete with this

hospital thus it has been difficult to identify patient satisfaction depending on the services they are given. The health care industry in Tanzania is one of the country's top priorities because of the positive impact it has on the local population. Throughout reality, public and private hospitals serving the same purpose are allowed to operate in the country. For this reason, both public and private organizations have put in significant efforts to build hospitals in various locations. However, it is overlooked that patients also require consideration, in addition to the construction of healthcare facilities. Inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of drugs, a lack of medical supplies, and a manpower shortage are just a few of the problems. Assila (2019) mentioned that both public and private hospitals face variety of issues that affects services they offer to their clients, such as insufficient infrastructure, lack of pharmaceuticals, medical supplies and shortage of human resources. Meanwhile, healthcare professionals have struggled to achieve high levels of patient satisfaction. Some patients don't get the right treatments or drugs, while others grumble about the high costs associated with getting those services. Basing on this, the study focused on drawing the comparison between hospital brand images of public versus that of private hospitals in Kinondoni – Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

## **Literature Review**

### **Hospital Brand Image/Hospital Image**

A hospital is a residential establishment which provides short term and long-term medical care consisting of observational, diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitative services for persons suffering from a disease or injury and for parturient (baby delivery). It may or may not also provide services for ambulatory patients on an out-patient basis (WHO Expert Committee,1963) or the hospital is a an integral part of a social and medical organization, the function of which is to provide for the population complete healthcare, both curative and preventive and whose out-patient services reach out to the family in its home environment; the hospital is also a center for the training of health workers and for bio-social research(WHO Expert Committee,1956). A brand is not simply a name or logo which differentiates a product from its competitors, but is a set of associations that satisfies both the functional and emotional demands of target customers (Nguyen and Nguyen, 2003). In the health care context, Kotler & Clarke (1987) suggested that hospital brand image is the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a patient holds towards a hospital. The patients often produce their own picture of a brand image of a

hospital from their own medical examination and treatment experiences (Kim *et al.*, 2008). Hospital brand images refer to a set of perceptions about a brand, and it reflects a customer's overall impression of the brand (Keller, 1993). Khosravizadeh (2017) explain key dimensions of healthcare branding as a set of variables considered in branding patterns of healthcare in hospitals and medical centers each of which has a series of sub factors that are described in details:

### **Comparison between Hospital Brand Images of Public versus that of Private Hospitals**

Sheikha *et al* (2017) analyzed on the factors that influenced patients to go to private hospitals against public hospitals of Oman and to analyze the expectations of patients from the integrated public hospitals in Oman. A well-defined questionnaire was used to conduct the study, and 251 survey samples were obtained based on random sampling. It employed the selection cost service model. The study showed that there was a relationship between the hospital and services chosen and the cost of the hospital's services, and it was discovered that the cost of services incurred affects the hospital chosen for medical treatment. The study also demonstrated that patients in private hospitals may readily approach anyone, even the reception staff, who is all nice and helpful. Additionally, private hospitals have current equipment, and doctors treat their patients with respect. Mtasiwa., *et al* (2003) compared the quality of public and private first-tier antenatal care services in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, using defined criteria. Structural attributes of quality were assessed through a checklist, and process attributes, including interpersonal and technical aspects, through observation and exit interviews. A total of 16 health care providers, and 166 women in the public and 188 in the private sector, were selected by systematic random sampling for inclusion in the study. The study's findings indicated that in terms of the structural and interpersonal facets of quality of care, both public and private providers were pretty excellent. Technical components of quality were subpar in both public and private hospitals.

### **Research Methodology**

The study used descriptive design, whereby the researchers gathered information concerning the service quality, level of patient satisfaction and the level of patient loyalty in public and private hospitals. Also, descriptive design helped researcher in making comparison between hospital brand images of

public versus that of private hospitals. Thus, descriptive design helped in presenting the results and figure out what it means so that the main goal of the study was understood. With a descriptive research design, the researcher gathered information about the population of interest at a given time. The study was conducted in Kinondoni Municipal which is located in the Northern part of Dar es Salaam city. The area is selected because the majority of Roads within the municipal council are in good condition and passable in all seasons with reliable transportation to all urban areas where public and private transport are used to carry passengers from one area to another with exception of few rural areas which could be reached by Motorcycle transport popularly known as Bodaboda and Bajaji, Water and Electricity are available in almost all parts of the municipal the Municipal have registered 5 Public and 22 Private hospitals.

Population of the study involved all the patients who are aged 18 years old and above. The selected patients must have visited once or more than five times the selected public or private hospital in Kinondoni Municipal, in Dar es Salaam, for their own or their family's needs before/within the past 12 months during this study period. The researcher collected information from the patients who were found at the hospitals where the study was taking place, as well as at their places of employment, schools, colleges, universities, public or private transportation, homes and other social gatherings. The study used questionnaire and in-person interviews to gather information and draw conclusions. Participants were classified simply by their level of hospital-image knowledge. Also, the study selected those who have received medical care in either a public or private hospital which were the focus of the study. A sample calculation formula known as the Andrew Fisher's Formula was used with the following assumption: the patients' level of satisfaction (Standard deviation) in Dar es salaam was 50% (0.5), margin error (confidence interval) of 5% (0.05), and non-response rate of 10% and the desired level of confidence interval at 95% (equal to Z score of 1.96). A sample size of 384 was used, after being calculated by using Andrew Fisher's Formula as follows;

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Sample size} &= (Z - \text{Score})^2 \times STD \times \frac{(1-0.5)}{(\text{Confidence interval})^2} \\ \text{Samplesize} &= (1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times \frac{(1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2} \\ \text{Samplesize} &= 3.8416 \times 0.5 \times 200 \\ \underline{\underline{\text{Samplesize} &= 384.16 \approx 384}} \end{aligned}$$

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 was used to analyze the collected data. Descriptive statistics and paired t-test was used to describe the data collected from the research. In this case, the measures of central tendency were used to determine the mean score from the group of scores in the study. Validity and reliability testing of instruments were conducted. To ensure the validity of the instrument, a questionnaire was piloted to ascertain whether the designed questionnaire tool was valid enough to be asked and capture enough and valid information in relation to the study to evaluate the validity and viability of the research instrument before the actual administration of questionnaires to the study respondents. The purpose of pre-testing was to assess the clarity of the items on the instrument so that those items that were found to be inadequate in measuring the variables was to improve the quality of the research instrument. In the proposed study, the researcher tested the reliability of the collected data to ensure the results of the study were trustworthy. This was done by conducting scale analysis in which Cronbach's alpha was considered. The Cronbach alpha was used to determine the dependability of the data instruments; a value equal to or higher than 0.7 (70%) was be deemed reliable (George & Mallery, 2003). The study focused on making comparison between hospital brand images of public versus that of private hospitals. The study had six items which were: good reputation of the hospital, excellent facilities, comfortable environment, trust in the hospital, proper attitude of doctors, the most advanced medical equipment. with Cronbach alpha of 0.905 these results confirms that the study objective was reliable since the obtained values were higher than 0.7.

### **Findings and Discussion**

The study compared the brand image of public and private hospital at Kinondoni municipal. The study had six variables which were good reputation of the hospital, excellent facilities, comfortable environment, trust in the hospital, proper attitude of doctors and the most advanced medical equipment.

**Table 1: Variables on Hospital Brand Image**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Variables</b>
HBI1	Good reputation of the hospital
HBI 2	Excellent facilities
HBI 3	Comfortable environment

HBI 4	Trust in the hospital
HBI5	Proper attitude of doctors
HBI6	The most advanced medical equipment

**Cross Tabulation of Hospital Brand Image**

The study involved both public and private hospitals across tabulation in explaining the hospital brand image towards the services provided by public and private hospitals. The frequencies and percentages were used to express the study results. Also, study responses were arranged in a Likert scale of 1 - 5 response whereby 1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree as illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2: Cross Tabulation of Brand Image in Public and Private Hospital**

		1	2	3	4	5	Total
HB1	Public	53(13.8%)	66(17.2%)	48(12.5%)	52(13.5%)	24(6.3%)	243(63.3%)
	Private	21(5.5%)	29(7.6%)	21(5.5%)	40(10.4%)	30(7.8%)	141(36.7%)
HB2	Public	125(32.8%)	27(7.1%)	24(6.3%)	42(11.0%)	23(6.0%)	241(63.3%)
	Private	56(14.7%)	8(2.1%)	11(2.9%)	35(9.2%)	30(7.9%)	140(36.7%)
HB3	Public	30(7.8%)	64(16.7%)	72(18.8%)	38(9.9%)	39(10.2%)	243(63.3%)
	Private	19(4.9%)	26(6.8%)	21(5.5%)	40(10.4%)	35(9.1%)	141(36.7%)
HB4	Public	10(2.6%)	24(6.3%)	112(29.2%)	60(15.7%)	37(9.7%)	243(63.4%)
	Private	5(1.3%)	10(2.6%)	43(11.2%)	32(8.4%)	50(13.1%)	140(36.6%)
HB5	Public	11(2.9%)	26(6.9%)	97(25.7%)	63(16.7%)	42(11.1%)	239(63.2%)
	Private	6(1.6%)	9(2.4%)	43(11.4%)	34(9.0%)	47(12.4%)	139(36.8%)
HB6	Public	113(29.5%)	35(9.1%)	32(8.4%)	36(9.4%)	26(6.8%)	242(63.2%)
	Private	49(12.8%)	14(3.7%)	19(5.0%)	27(7.0%)	32(8.4%)	141(36.8%)

Source: Field data (2022)

Table 2 reveal that good reputation of the hospital (HBI1) in public hospital presented 63.3% while private hospital presented 36.7%, Excellent facilities (HBI 2) in public hospital presented 63.3% while private hospital presented 36.7%, Comfortable environment (HBI 3) in public hospital presented 63.3% while private hospital presented 36.7%. Trust in the hospital (HBI 4) in public hospital presented 63.4% while private hospital presented 36.6%, Proper attitude of doctors (HBI5) in public hospital presented 63.2% while private hospital presented 36.8% The most advanced medical equipment (HBI6) in public hospital presented 63.2% while private hospital presented 36.8%.

**Compared Mean Test of Hospital Brand Image**

Compare mean test was used in the study to obtain the mean scores and the standard deviation of the study results. Therefore, the hospital brand image variables were compared against the public and private hospital responses. However, in interpretation, the mean score (1.00-2.00) presented inadequate, (2.01-3.00) presented moderate, (3.01-4.00) good image, (4.01-5.00) presented excellent image (Norasmah & Sabariah, 2007; Norasmah, 2011).

**Table 3: Compared Mean of Brand Image in Public Hospital**

N/Pairs	Variable	Mean	Std
Pair 1	Reputation of the hospital - Public	1.70370	1.29313
Pair 2	Excellent facilities – Public	1.21577	1.46171
Pair 3	Comfortable environment - Public	1.96708	1.24936
Pair 4	Trust in the hospital – Public	2.37037	0.99309
Pair 5	Proper attitude of doctors - Public	2.41423	1.04518
Pair 6	The most advanced medical equipment – Public	1.28512	1.44516
	<b>Weighted Mean 1.826045</b>		
1.00-2.00 Inadequate image 2.01-3.00 Moderate image 3.01-4.00 Good image 4.01-5.00 Excellent image STD > 1.5 = Significance variation			

Source: Field Data (2022)

Table 3 reveal that inadequate image on reputation of the public hospitals with score of 1.7037, inadequate image on excellent facilities in public hospitals with mean score of 1.21577, inadequate image on comfortable environment in public hospital with mean score of 1.96708. Moderate image in trust in public



hospital with mean score of 2.37037, moderate image in attitude of doctors in public hospital with mean score of 2.4142 and concerning the inadequate image in advanced medical equipment had a mean score of 1.28512. Generally, the study results revealed that there was inadequate brand image in public hospital with weighted mean of 1.826045. Brand recognition is intangible assets that can help a company succeed in today's competitive market. Patients have an easier time imagining and understanding products with strong brands, and they are willing to take a chance on new services. Sajjad (2018) mentioned that customer satisfaction, service quality, loyalty, and the likelihood of repeated purchases are just few of the many positive outcomes that can result from a well-received brand. The reputation of the hospital as a brand is a primary factor in the overall model. Patients are more likely to return to a hospital with a strong brand image because it not only encourages loyalty among existing patients but also improves their perception of the quality of care they receive.

**Table 4 Compared Mean of Brand Image in Private Hospital**

N/Pairs	Variable	Mean	Std
Pair 1	Reputation of the hospital - Private	1.94326	1.35105
Pair 2	Excellent facilities - Private	1.60432	1.54460
Pair 3	Comfortable environment - Private	1.22695	1.31132
Pair 4	Trust in the hospital - Private	1.67376	1.02467
Pair 5	Proper attitude of doctors - Private	1.68116	1.03222
Pair 6	The most advanced medical equipment - Private	1.67857	1.51381
	<b>Weighted Mean 1.63467</b>		
1.00-2.00 Inadequate image 2.01-3.00 Moderate image 3.01-4.00 moderately good image 4.01-5.00 Good image STD > 1.5 = Significance variation			

Source: Field Data (2022)

Table 4 revealed that inadequate brand image on reputation of the private hospitals with score of 1.94326, inadequate image on excellent facilities in private hospitals with mean score of 1.60432, inadequate image on comfortable environment in private hospital with mean score of 1.22695, inadequate image in trusting private hospital with mean score of 1.67376.

Inadequate image in proper attitude of doctors in private hospital with mean score of 1.68116 and lastly inadequate image in advanced medical equipment with mean score of 1.67857. Generally, the study results revealed there was inadequate brand image in private hospital with weighted mean of 1.63467. Effective brand management was not the primary emphasis of a hospital's marketing strategy in health care industry. Managers in healthcare facilities failed to focus more on improving their institutions' reputations. Sajjad (2018) suggest that Managers need to be aware of how important it was to build a strong hospital brand image in order to boost patients' opinions of the quality of care they receive and keep their business. In addition, a number of different forms of advertising, public relations, patient communication, service training, and online marketing need to be used to establish and sustain a positive brand identity.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes that the patients were satisfied and expected to return to public and private hospitals. Also, several patients returned to the public and private hospital because they were satisfied with the treatments provided. Finally, there was an inadequate image of advanced medical equipment, amenities, a comfortable setting, trusting doctors, and an inadequate attitude of health providers, according to some of respondents from both public and private hospitals.

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends that, in order to improve hospital brand image there was a need of providing training and professional exposures to all hospital attendants. Hospital owners/administrators especially from private hospitals should be ready, positively and flexible towards ongoing research activities that involves their health facilities for service improvements purposes.

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