



“Awareness of Health Insurance among Adolescents”

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Abstract

NITI Ayog's report (2021) on health insurance titled “Health Insurance for India's Missing Middle” elucidates increasing cost of quality healthcare combined with greater need and demand for health with increasing incomes, higher life expectancy, and epidemiological transition towards non-communicable diseases have made health coverage imperative. It is an important mechanism for individuals to safeguard against catastrophic, unpredictable health expenditures, which can push households into poverty. Health insurance can also improve efficiency and quality of healthcare provision. Insurers with pooled funds have more bargaining power and information against providers, as compared to individual customers. Very fundamental purpose of the current study is to ascertain the level of awareness of health insurance among the adolescents. It is evident that working class people are aware and up taking the health insurance policies as many circumstances employers offer the benefit. The question is all about are the youngsters aware of benefits of health insurance, Importance of health insurance, Private players creating value for them in terms of offering better service? Research has been carried out to validate whether there is an awareness of private health insurance among the youngsters in Bengaluru city.

Key Words: Health Insurance, Adolescents, Awareness.

I. Introduction

NITI Ayog's report (2021) on health insurance titled "Health Insurance for India's Missing Middle" elucidates increasing cost of quality healthcare combined with greater need and demand for health with increasing incomes, higher life expectancy, and epidemiological transition towards non-communicable diseases have made health coverage imperative. It is an important mechanism for individuals to safeguard against catastrophic, unpredictable health expenditures, which can push households into poverty. Health insurance can also improve efficiency and quality of healthcare provision. Insurers with pooled funds have more bargaining power and information against providers, as compared to individual customers. India's Government spending on health at 1.5% of GDP is among the lowest in the world¹. Persistently low Government spending on health has constrained the capacity and quality of healthcare services offered in the public system. Overburdened public hospitals often divert individuals to seek treatment in the costlier private sector. Almost 60% of all hospitalizations, and 70% of out-patient services are delivered by the private sector (NSSO's 75th Round survey on Social Consumption of Health, 2017-18)². The private sector is characterized by high OOPE, leading to low financial protection. Relatively low health insurance coverage and costlier provision of health services in the private sector drive India's high out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE). Despite the decline in the past few years, India's OOPE as percent of current health spending is 63%, significantly above the average for lower-middle income countries, and amongst the highest in the world. High OOPE poses financial risk to individuals.

Multiple types of health insurance schemes are available & are broadly classified as; Government Subsidized Health Insurance Scheme, Social Health Insurance and Private Voluntary Health Insurance Schemes. Post covid-19 pandemic, it has been observed that people have realized the importance of health insurance & tremendous amount of awareness is also created to uptake health insurance policies not just by government but also by the private players too. In terms of life insurance, India is ranked 10th in the world. India has a 2.73 percent share of the market for life insurance throughout the world in 2019. Premiums for life insurance in India raised by 9.63 percent year over year, while global premiums increased by 1.18 percent. India is ranked 15th in the world for non-life insurance. India has a 0.79 percent share of the worldwide non-life insurance market in 2019. The nonlife insurance premium in India climbed by 7.98% over the previous year, while the global non-life insurance premium raised by 3.35%. In 2019, life insurance premiums accounted for 46.34 percent of total premiums, while non-life insurance premiums accounted for 53.66 percent.

II. Literature Review

K Swathi and R Anuradha (2017), Health insurance in India- An overview. The paper highlights the concept and benefits of health insurance besides presenting an overview of health insurance sector in India. A brief of number of persons covered under various schemes such as government sponsored, group insurance, family insurance, individual policies is portrayed. Binny, Dr. Meenu Gupta (2017), study is of the opinion that health insurance is a growing sector in India. Companies are required to enhance their business by introduction of new business models with innovative products. Need of a universal health insurance program is recognized to cover families below poverty line. Suman Devi and Dr. Vazir Singh Nehra (2015), The problems with health insurance sector in India. The study narrates some of the new inventions in the health insurance sector such as health insurance portability, RashtriyaSwasthyaBimaYojna (RSBY), hybrid products and critical illness cover. As per study, insurers now have started visiting hospitals to meet patients for claims in the category of group insurance. If any fault is found then policy renewal is stopped. There are also pre-agreed rates for surgeries and treatments which prevents differential charging of tariffs. Other problems like high claim pay-out ratio in public sector insurers, unprofessionalism of TPAs, lack of development of health insurance in rural areas, wrong selection of health insurance policies, and lack of awareness about health insurance policies are highlighted.

III. Purpose of the Study

Very fundamental purpose of the current study is to ascertain the level of awareness of health insurance among the adolescents. It is evident that working class people are aware and up taking the health insurance policies as many circumstances employers offer the benefit. Many educated people who can afford to have better health insurance policies irrespective of out-pocket expenses are also availing the health insurance. The question is all about are the youngsters aware of benefits of health insurance, Importance of health insurance, Private players creating value for them in terms of offering better service? Research has been carried out validate the whether there is an awareness of private health insurance among the youngsters in Bengaluru city.

IV. Scope of the Study

The Scope of the study is limited to ascertaining the awareness about the private health insurance and their benefits among the youngsters who belongs to the category of high school to Graduation & are spread across Bengaluru-West.

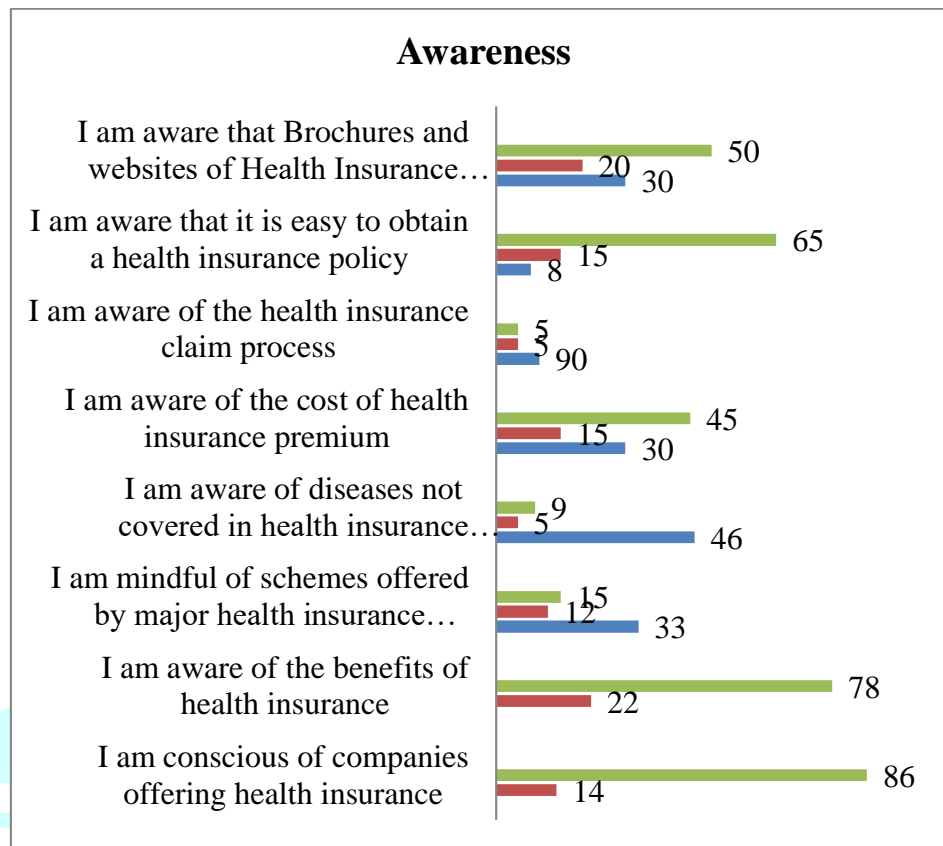
V. Methodology

As the purpose of the research is to understand and ascertain the awareness of private health insurance among the adolescents, teenagers who belong to the category of high-school (8th std to 12th std) and graduates irrespective of the disciplines who are spread across Bengaluru-West have been chosen randomly by adopting Simple Random Sampling method. Primary information has been attained by administering the structured interview schedule. Researcher administered the schedule to 150 students (approached 200 students but received complete responses from 150 students). Responses obtained have been mapped to provide the statistical validations.

VI. Analysis

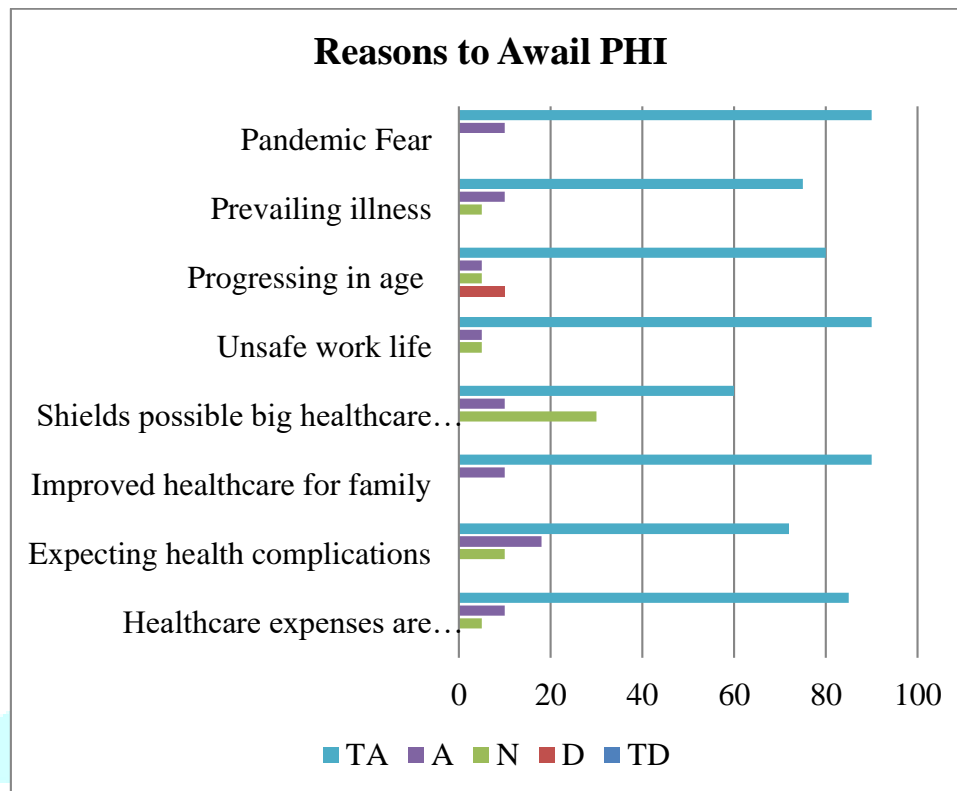
1. Mapping of Awareness

Researcher has mapped the awareness of health insurance among the sample size to know how many teenagers are aware of health insurance. From the analysis depicted in chart-1 elucidates that 86% of the teenagers Totally Agree that they are conscious of companies offering health insurance policy and 14% of them agree to the same. 78% of the respondents totally agree that they are aware of benefits offered and 22% agree. 15% of the respondents totally agree they are not aware of different schemes offered by health insurance firms, followed by 12% and 33% were neutral about the varied schemes of health insurance. Only 09% of them are aware of illness not covered under the schemes, followed by 05% agreeing to the same and rest 46% were neutral. 45% of the respondents totally agree that cost and premium to be paid to avail health insurance, 15% agreed and rest 30% remained neutral. 90% of the teenagers totally disagree about the awareness of claim process, 5% of them totally agree and 05 of the respondent's agree. 65% of the teenagers totally agree that availing health insurance policy is easy, 15% of them agree and 08% of them were neutral. 50% of the respondents totally agree that they are aware of brochures and company websites provide complete information about health insurance, followed by 20% agreeing and 30% were neutral.



2. Mapping of Reasons

Researcher has mapped the reasons to avail health insurance and found that 90% of respondents totally agree that people have become more aware of health insurance benefits due to pandemic fear and 10% of the responses obtained agree. 75% of them totally agree that people buy health insurance policies due to prevailing health issues, 10% of the agree and 05% of them stayed neutral. 80% of the teenagers totally agree that progressing age factor is the reason for avail of HIP(Health Insurance Policy), followed by 05% agreeing, 05% stayed neutral and 10% disagreeing. 90% of the teenagers totally agree and 05% agree to the fact the PHI avail increasing due to unsafe working conditions. 60% of the respondents totally agree that HIP shield the bigger expenses on health issues, 10% of the agree and 30% of them stayed neutral. 90% of the respondents totally agree that HIP provide improved healthcare to people followed by 10% agreeing to it. 72% of the respondents totally agree that as people are expecting more health complications in coming years, are availing the HIP, 18% agree and 10% of them stayed neutral. 85% of the respondents totally agree that people buy HIP due to increasing expenses, 10% of them agree and rest 05% are neutral.



VII. Findings

1. Demographic Profile: Majority of the respondents (58%) are male, followed by (42%) are females. Researcher has categorized as 14-16 years, 17-19 years, 20-22 years and 22 & above years where 35% of the teenagers belong to 14-16 years, 48% belong to 17-19 years, 37% belong to 20-22 years and 30% belong to 22 years & above. 35% of the respondents are studying SSLC, 48% are studying PUC (11 and 12th standard) and 67% are studying graduation. The source of information of HIP have been categorized as news papers, friends and relatives, insurance agents, internet, TV advertising, outdoor advertising, company brochure and hospitals/clinic. 95% of have got information through newspapers, 80% through friends and relatives, 10% through insurance agents when visited their parents, 98% through internet, 96% through TV advertisements, 93% through outdoor advertisements, 12% through company brochure and 97% through hospitals when relatives, family members were admitted.
2. Majority of the respondents are aware of health insurance policies, their benefits, cost involved.
3. Majority of the adolescents have reasoned pandemic fear, prevailing illness, healthcare expenses, health complications to avail health insurance policy.

VIII. Suggestions

1. Marketers are expected to introduce healthcare plan where the illness coverage is broader as many of the respondents feel HIP is for critical illness. As adolescents are the future, marketers must look into illness coverage as important aspect in delivering value based HIP.
2. Marketers have the scope to create awareness about the long-term benefits of HIP, process involved to avail HIP.

3. Awareness about cost involved in the entire process of value creation as HIP must be explained/ educated well emphasizing it as a non-costly affair.

IX. Conclusion

Research titled “**Awareness of Health Insurance among Adolescents**” is carried out with the purpose to know whether younger generation is aware of the health insurance policies and their benefits. Researcher during the research, it was found that majority of the youngster are aware of benefits, cost and reasons and coverage of the health insurance policies offered. Very negligible amount of the people weren’t aware of process and cost involved. Study indicates that youngster has good exposure about healthcare industry, HIP due to pandemic one reason and marketer’s effort in promotion is the other. There is huge scope for the marketers to grow and sustain well.

References:

1. K Swathi and R Anuradha (2017), Health insurance in India- An overview
2. Binny, Dr. Meenu Gupta (2017), Health insurance in India- Opportunities and challenges
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4. https://www.niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-10/HealthInsurance-forIndiasMissingMiddle_28-10-2021.pdf
5. 2020-21 estimates based on National Health Accounts, 2016-17, Union Budget, and RBI: State Finances:
6. A Study of Budgets of 2020-21 2 IPD and OPD services exclude ante-natal care and deliveries which are predominantly provided by the public sector