**CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY**

**NISHA P S**

Assistant Professor, Sree Krishna College Gurvayoor &

Research Scholar, St. Joseph’s College (Autonomous) Irrinjalakkuda Email: nishabijeesh1@gmail.com,

**CIYA C.G**

M.Com IV Sem Student, Sree Krishna College Gurvayoor Email: ciya199923@gmail.com

**Abstract**

The study is aimed to examine the sources of awareness about helth insurance, perception of policy holders towards health insurance and finally to study the policy holders satisfaction level. By applying convenient sampling technique, 100 respondents from Choondal Panchayath in Thrissur District have been selected for the study. Data were analyzed by using percentage analysis, ranking method and Chi Square. The findings reveal that most of the respondents belong to less than 30 years as policy holders and customer satisfaction is the major factor contributing to the overall satisfaction towards health insurance. At the same time it was recommended by the respondents, the extents of promotional efforts need to be enhanced in order to increase the awareness level of health insurance.

Keywords :Awareness, Health insurance, Satisfaction level

**Introduction**

The insurance industry in our country is on the threshold of a new era of rapid expansion. A more competitive environment is emerging with new participants entering the insurance industry. Risk management has a wide application. It is relevant not only to insurance industry but also to many other organizations in the fields of business and finance. To understand risk, measure it and weigh its consequences are an integral part of management. Financial institutions in the management of the funds placed with them have to reckon with market risk, credit risk, counter party risk and liquidity risk. To mitigate the impact of various risks is the essence of risk management.

Health insurance is an insurance against the risk of incurring medical expenses among individuals. Health insurance can reimburse the insured for expenses incurred from illness or injury or pay to care provider directly. The term health insurance Is a type of insurance that covers all medical expenses risk. The health insurance is significant because they safeguard peace of mind, eliminate all the worries about medical treatment expenses and prevails focusing energy on more important things like acquiring improved better live and well-being. Fundamentaly health insurance policy is a Contract between an insurer and an insured person and contract is renewable per annum. Health insurance policy is to compile confident that insured person prevail the requisite are as per contract.

Health insurance is a protection scheme to take care of health of a person and works it by buying a policy from a company or an insurance agent. Health insurance schemes are particularly important for individuals from the lower income group to provide them and their family members with adequate cover in event of any illness. Health is a major concern on everybody’s mind in the present environment. The awareness of health insurance has been extensive, enlarging new dimensions and preferable mechanism to finance the health care services in India.

Health insurance is an agreement whereby insurance company agrees to undertake a guarantee of compensation for medical expenses in case the insured falls ill or meets with an accident which leads to hospitalization of the insured. Generally, insurance companies have tie-ups with the leading hospitals so as to provide cashless treatment to the insured. In case the insurance company has no tie-ups with the hospital, they reimburse the cost of expenses incurred by the insured. The government also promotes health insurance by providing a deduction from income tax.

In health insurance, the rate of public and private sector players are significant. The success of marketing mainly depends upon customer preference towards health insurance, the satisfaction of customers etc., however, these factors are often not critically examined and evaluated . This study covers the areas of sources of customer awareness, perception of policy holders about health insurance, and to analyze the policy holders level of satisfaction health insurance policy.

# OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

* To examine the sources of awareness about health insurance policy.
* To measure the perception of policy holders about health insurance and its utilization.
* To analyze the policy holders level of satisfaction on various aspects of the health insurance policies.

Hypothesis

H1: “The two attributes namely gender and level of satisfaction towards health insurance are independent”,i.e.not related.

H2: The two attributes namely type of insurance and income level towards health insurance are independent i.e not related.

**Research Methodology**

The study is descriptive in nature and analytical in nature in nature. Both primary and secondary are used for the study. The primary data have been collected for this study by utitlising a questionnaire specially prepared for this purpose. The important source of secondary data includes books, journal, websites etc. 100 respondents have been collected following convenient sampling method. Tools used for data analysis and interpretation are percentage analysis ,chi square and weighted average analysis

**Review of Literature**

Ajmal & Rizwan (2015) in his study showed that the education level of the households did not reveal any significant association with obtaining health insurance. However, awareness has a positive and significant association with willingness to purchase health insurance.

Narware (2017) identified the determinants of health insurance purchase decision revealed that the health insurance would incorporate their unexpected medical expenses and protect against high cost of medical expenses.Hanawai & Vaidya (2018**)** investigated the feasibility and acceptability of health care financing reform by examining households willingness to pay (WTP) for a contributory national health insurance scheme. Anjali Jacob (2018)recommended to make necessary arrangements for all hospitals to accept health insurance cards, all diseases should be cover under health insurance policies etc.Marjolein van Rooijen, Milena pavlova & Wim Groot (2018)in his study suggested that Tax based funding as an option that can help to enhance healthcare utilisation among the poor vulnerable groups.

The main challenges facing social health insurance are achieving universal coverage, ensuring sustainability and self employed population(Anas Mustafa Ahmed Salim &Fatima Hashim,2018). Tanuj Mathur, Gurudas & Hemendra Gupta (2018) Examining the influence of health insurance literacy and perception on the people preference to purchase private voluntary health insurance. This study determined economic factors remain insufficient in clearly explaining the reason for poor private voluntary health insurance take up.Sharon Elizabeth Jacob & Kanchana Naidu (2020) in his study whether the recent growth is just a temporary response to pandemic or whether the pandemic had indeed caused a permanent change in the mind set of the public towards health insurance.Bino joy (2021)in his study“product awareness and customer satisfaction: A study on private health insurance customers in Kerala.” The study was undertaken with the primary objective of examining the role of product awareness of customers of health insurance product on their satisfaction in the state of Kerala SPSS version 22 was used to analysis the data and the statistical tools such as exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis were used to draw significant answers to study objectives.here here is significant influence of demographical factors such as Region, Educational background, income, age on buying behaviour towards health insurance. The main reasons for not taking health insurance policy was poor service provided (Dharmendra S Mistry &Pallavi C Vyas; 2021)

**Data Analysis**

**CHI SQUARE TEST: 1**

A sample of 100 students are selected through convenience sampling to test is there any relationship between gender and level of satisfaction towards health insurance.

Null hypothesis(H0): “The two attributes namely gender and level of satisfaction towards health insurance are independent”,i.e.not related

Alternative hypothesis(H1): “The two attributes namely gender and level of satisfaction towards health insurance are dependent”,i.e. related

**TABLE**

**CROSS TABULATION OF GENDER AND LEVEL OF SATISFACTION**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Male | Female | Total |
| Satisfied | 27 | 35 | 62 |
| Not satisfied | 23 | 15 | 38 |
| Total | 50 | 50 | 100 |

 contingency table

 **CALCULATION OF CHISQUARE TEST**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Value | Degree of freedom | Level of significance |
| Chi square value | 0.0993 | 1(2-1)(2-1) | 5%(005) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Calculated value | Table value |
| 0.0993 | 3.841 |

The table value at 5% significant level with degree of freedom is 3.841. since the calculated value of chi square (0.0993) is less than the table value so we accept the null hypothesis(H0).

That means the two attributes gender and level of satisfaction towards health insurance are independent. So we can conclude it as gender and level of satisfaction are not related.

 **CHI SQUARE TEST: 2**

A sample of 100 students are selected through convenience sampling to test is there any relationship between gender and level of satisfaction towards health insurance.

Null hypothesis(H0): The two attributes namely type of insurance and income level towards health insurance are independent i.e not related.

Alternative hypothesis(H1): The two attributes namely type of insurance and income level towards health insurance are dependent”,i.e. related

**TABLE**

 **CROSS TABULATION OF INCOME LEVEL AND TYPE OF INSURANCE**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Less than 50000 | 50000-100000 | 100000-150000 | Above 150000 | total |
| Individual | 1 | 3 | 8 | 8 | 20 |
| Group | 3 | 10 | 17 | 20 | 50 |
| Family | 1 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 14 |
| Other | 5 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 16 |
| Total | 10 | 20 | 32 | 38 | 100 |

 **CALCULATION OF CHISQUARE TEST**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Value | Degree of freedom | Level of significance |
| Chi square value | 0.2513 | 9(4-1)(4-1) | 5%(005) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Calculated value | Table value |
| 0.2513 | 16.919 |

The table value at 5% significant level with degree of freedom is 16.919. since the calculated value of chi square (0.2513) is less than the table value so we accept the null hypothesis(H0).That means the two attributes income levels and type of health insurance are independent. So we can conclude it as income level and type of health insurance are not related.

**Findings & Discussion**

The study found that the most of the respondents are belong to less than 30 years as insurance holders and their income level is above 100000. Mostly relative persuade the respondents to take policy and coverage of doctors visit is considered by the respondents before taking insurance policy. Finally inferential statistics reveal that the two attributes gender and level of satisfaction are independent and also the two attributes income level and type of health insurance are independent.

**Conclusion**

The study was based on the consumer perception towards health insurance policy with special reference to CHOONDAL PANCHAYATHU. And the data was collected through primary and secondary sources.

 In the study we see the different health insurance policies and what is the importance of these policies in the present era. The main aim of opting the health insurance policy is to cover themselves with the future uncertainties. Even though there is no claim, but it is an important instrument in reducing the financial burden of the insured. There are various plans available in the market with different features and policies. By the entry of private insurance players in the market, there are new and innovative products to attract people. People who are aware of investment policies and its general benefits usually go for Health insurance. In the study we can see that all the consumers are purchasing the policy by themselves from that we can see the importance of the health insurance policy.

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