

A Study on Referral Marketing by Doctors and its Impact on Lab Revenue with Reference to Tesla Unipath (Pvt.Ltd)

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Abstract – Referral marketing by doctors plays a significant role in the growth and profitability of diagnostic laboratories. Doctors often recommend specific diagnostic centers to patients based on factors such as service quality, accuracy of test results, reliability, turnaround time, and professional relationships. These referrals directly influence the number of patients visiting a laboratory and, consequently, its revenue. Understanding the impact of doctor referrals helps diagnostic laboratories develop effective marketing strategies while maintaining ethical healthcare practices. This study focuses on the impact of doctor referral marketing on the revenue of Tesla Unipath (Pvt.) Ltd. The primary objective is to examine how referrals from doctors contribute to patient inflow and revenue generation. It also evaluates the factors that influence doctors' referral decisions, the level of satisfaction with the laboratory's services, and the challenges faced in maintaining referral relationships. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and interviews with doctors and laboratory personnel, while secondary data were obtained from company records, journals, books, and relevant websites. Descriptive statistical tools such as percentages, tables, and charts were used to analyze the collected data. The findings indicate that doctor referrals have a substantial positive impact on the laboratory's revenue by increasing patient volume and strengthening the laboratory's market reputation. The study also reveals that accurate test reports, timely report delivery, advanced diagnostic technology, quality customer service, and strong professional relationships are the key factors influencing doctors' referral decisions. The study concludes that maintaining ethical referral practices, continuously improving service quality, adopting modern diagnostic technologies, and strengthening communication with healthcare professionals can enhance patient trust and contribute to sustainable revenue growth for Tesla Unipath (Pvt.) Ltd.

Keywords – Referral Marketing, Doctors' Referrals, Diagnostic Laboratory, Lab Revenue, Patient Referrals, Healthcare Marketing, Revenue Growth, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Diagnostic Services, Tesla Unipath (Pvt.) Ltd.

I. INTRODUCTION

The diagnostic laboratory industry plays a vital role in the healthcare system by providing accurate and timely medical test results that support doctors in diagnosing and treating patients. With the increasing demand for diagnostic services, laboratories are facing strong competition and are required to adopt effective marketing strategies to attract and retain patients. One of the most important and commonly used strategies in this sector is referral marketing through doctors.

Doctors act as trusted advisors and have a strong influence on patients' decisions while choosing a diagnostic laboratory. Most patients depend on their doctor's recommendation for selecting a laboratory for medical tests. As a result, doctor referrals have become a major source of patient flow and revenue for diagnostic laboratories. The quality of services provided by laboratories, such as accuracy of test results, timely report delivery, reliability, and customer service, greatly affects doctors' willingness to refer patients.

Understanding referral behaviour and its impact on business performance is essential for the growth and sustainability of diagnostic laboratories. Referral marketing not only helps laboratories increase patient volume and revenue but also strengthens their reputation and market position. At the same time, it is important for laboratories to maintain ethical standards while building professional relationships

with doctors. Ethical referral practices help in gaining long-term trust and ensuring transparency in healthcare services.

This study focuses on selected diagnostic laboratories and doctors in a particular region to analyse referral patterns and their effect on laboratory revenue. It examines the contribution of doctor referrals to patient acquisition and identifies the key factors that influence doctors in recommending specific laboratories. The study also looks into patient loyalty and repeats visits that result from doctor referrals, providing insights into how referral relationships support long-term business growth.

The findings of this study will help diagnostic laboratories improve their service quality and operational efficiency. It will also assist management in formulating effective and ethical strategies to strengthen referral networks and increase revenue. Overall, this study highlights the importance of referral marketing as a key factor in sustaining and developing the diagnostic laboratory business in a competitive healthcare environment.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

de Vaan and Stuart (2025): de Vaan and Stuart (2025) analyzed referral networks in professional service industries, including healthcare. The study examined millions of healthcare referrals and found that referral relationships help reduce uncertainty, strengthen trust, and improve matching between patients and specialists. The

authors concluded that referral networks are essential for facilitating healthcare access and influencing provider selection decisions. Their findings provide valuable insights into how referral systems contribute to healthcare organizational performance.

Chavan, Mohanty, and Joshi (2024) [Study A]: Chavan, Mohanty, and Joshi (2024) investigated the relationship between relationship marketing and patient loyalty in healthcare services. Using data collected from healthcare consumers, the study found that relationship marketing positively influences patient satisfaction and loyalty. The authors concluded that healthcare organizations that maintain strong relationships with patients are more likely to benefit from referrals and repeat utilization. The study highlights the importance of relationship-building as a strategic marketing tool in healthcare.

Chavan, Mohanty, and Joshi (2024) [Study B]: Chavan, Mohanty, and Joshi (2024) examined the relationship between relationship marketing and patient loyalty in healthcare services. The study found that effective relationship marketing practices significantly improve patient satisfaction and loyalty. Furthermore, loyal patients were more likely to recommend healthcare providers to others, thereby contributing to referral growth. The researchers concluded that healthcare organizations should invest in long-term relationshipbuilding initiatives to improve patient retention and referral generation.

Zervas (2023): Zervas (2023) examined healthcare marketing funnels and referral pathways involving healthcare professionals and patients. The study demonstrated that physician influence remains a critical factor in healthcare decision-making and service selection. The author proposed a healthcare referral path model showing how interactions among doctors, patients, and healthcare organizations shape referral behavior. The research contributes to understanding referral marketing strategies within healthcare systems.

Duarte, Han, and Soares (2023): Duarte, Han, and Soares (2023) investigated the role of physician professional networks in medical referrals using healthcare consultation data from Portugal. The findings revealed that professional relationships among doctors significantly influence referral decisions between primary care and specialist care providers. The study demonstrated that strong physician networks improve referral efficiency and facilitate better healthcare coordination. The researchers concluded that understanding professional relationships can help healthcare organizations strengthen referral systems and improve service delivery.

Need of the Study

- Doctor referrals are a major source of revenue for diagnostic laboratories.
- The study helps understand referral behaviour and its impact on business performance.

- It assists laboratories in building professional relationships with doctors ethically.
- The study provides insights into improving service quality and operational efficiency.
- It helps management formulate strategies to increase revenue through referral networks.
- This study highlights the importance of referral marketing in sustaining the diagnostic laboratory business.

Scope of the Study

- The study is limited to selected diagnostic laboratories and doctors in a particular region.
- It focuses on referral patterns and their impact on revenue.
- The study includes analysis of patient volume and income generated through referrals.
- The research covers both doctors' and laboratory perspectives.
- The study period is restricted to a limited time frame.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the role of doctor referrals in patient acquisition for diagnostic laboratories.
- To analyze the impact of referral marketing on laboratory revenue.
- To identify the factors influencing doctors in referring patients to specific diagnostic laboratories.
- To examine the importance of service quality, accuracy, timely reporting, accreditation, and reputation in laboratory referral decisions.
- To evaluate the role of communication and professional relationships between doctors and diagnostic laboratories in influencing referrals.
- To suggest strategies for improving referral relationships and referral marketing practices in an ethical manner.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study titled "A Study on Referral Marketing by Doctors and Its Impact on Laboratory Revenue with Reference to Tesla Unipath Pvt. Ltd." adopted a descriptive and analytical research design. The descriptive method was used to understand doctors' referral practices and factors influencing their recommendations, while the analytical method was used to examine the impact of these referrals on laboratory revenue.

The study was conducted among 50 doctors, selected through the convenience sampling method based on their availability and willingness to participate. The research used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of 20 multiple-choice questions, while secondary data was

obtained from journals, articles, websites, books, and company records.

The collected data was classified, tabulated, and analyzed using the percentage method. Tables, charts, and graphs were prepared using MS Excel to present and interpret the findings. The analysis focused on understanding referral patterns, factors influencing laboratory selection, and the contribution of doctor referrals to laboratory revenue.

Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to a small area and small sample size.
- Responses depend on the honesty of participants.
- Time constraint affected detailed analysis.
- Some respondents were unwilling to share information.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Age Wise Classification of Respondents

Table.1

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
25–35	15	30%
35–45	18	36%
45–55	10	20%
Above 55	7	14%
Total	50	100%

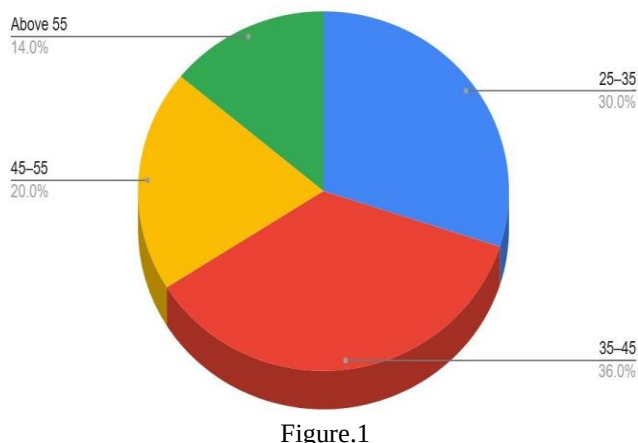


Figure.1

Interpretation

30% of the respondents belong to the 25–35 age group, 36% belong to the 35–45 age group, 20% belong to the 45–55 age group, and 14% are above 55 years.

Inference

The majority (36%) of respondents belong to the 35–45 age group, indicating that most doctors are in their mid-career stage.

2. Gender- Wise Classification of Respondents

Table.2

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	35	70%
Female	15	30%
Total	50	100%

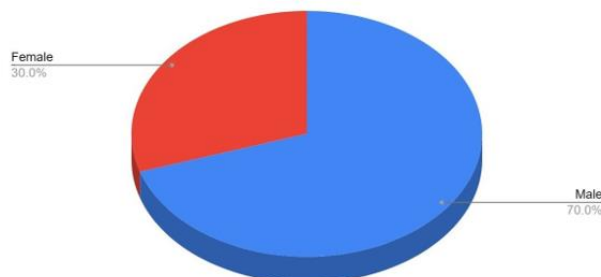


Figure 2

Interpretation

70% of the respondents are male and 30% are female.

Inference

Male doctors constitute the majority (70%) of the respondents.

3. Monthly Income-Wise Classification

Table.3

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than ₹25,000	4	8%
₹25,000–₹50,000	10	20%
₹50,000–₹1,00,000	20	40%
Above ₹1,00,000	16	32%
Total	50	100%

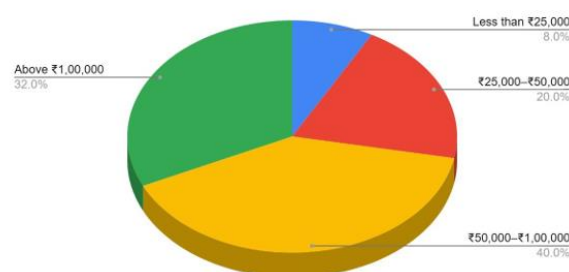


Figure.3

Interpretation

8% earn less than ₹25,000, 20% earn ₹25,000–₹50,000, 40% earn ₹50,000–₹1,00,000, and 32% earn above ₹1,00,000.

Inference

Most respondents (40%) earn between ₹50,000 and ₹1,00,000 per month.

4. Professional Experience of Respondents

Table.4

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
0–5 years	12	24%
5–10 years	16	32%
10–15 years	12	24%
Above 15 years	10	20%
Total	50	100%

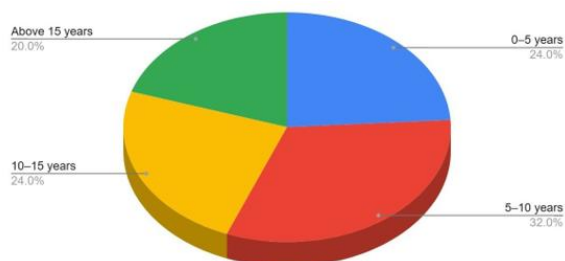


Figure.4

Interpretation

24% have 0–5 years of experience, 32% have 5–10 years, 24% have 10–15 years, and 20% have above 15 years of experience.

Inference

The majority (32%) of respondents have 5–10 years of professional experience.

Summary of Findings

- The majority (36%) of respondents belong to the 35–45 age group, indicating that most doctors are in their mid-career stage.
- Male doctors constitute the majority (70%) of the respondents.
- Most respondents (40%) earn between ₹50,000 and ₹1,00,000 per month.
- The majority (32%) of respondents have 5–10 years of professional experience.
- Most doctors (40%) frequently refer patients to diagnostic laboratories.
- Accuracy is the most important factor (44%) influencing referrals.
- A majority (60%) regularly prefer referring patients to a specific laboratory.
- Service quality is the most influential factor (40%) in laboratory selection.

Suggestions & Recommendations

- Strengthen Doctor–Laboratory Relationships
- Focus on Accuracy and Quality of Reports
- Improve Turnaround Time
- Enhance Patient Experience
- Adopt Advanced Technology
- Maintain Ethical Referral Practices
- Increase Patient Awareness

V. CONCLUSION

The study “A Study on Referral Marketing by Doctors and Its Impact on Laboratory Revenue with Reference to Tesla Unipath Pvt. Ltd.” concludes that doctor referrals play an important role in attracting patients to diagnostic laboratories and contribute significantly to laboratory revenue. The findings show that most doctors regularly refer patients to specific laboratories based on factors such as accuracy of reports, service quality, reputation, accreditation, and timely reporting.

The study also reveals that effective communication and strong professional relationships between doctors and laboratories positively influence referral decisions. Most respondents believe that doctor referrals have a direct impact on patient inflow and laboratory revenue.

Overall, referral marketing is an effective tool for the growth of diagnostic laboratories. Tesla Unipath Pvt. Ltd. can further strengthen its revenue and referral network by maintaining highquality services, improving communication with doctors, ensuring transparency, and following ethical referral practices. Thus, doctor referrals continue to be a key factor in the success and revenue growth of diagnostic laboratories.

“Doctor referrals remain the backbone of diagnostic laboratory growth, but sustainable success depends on ethical practices, service excellence, and trust-based relationships.”

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