

ABSTRACT

This PhD thesis aims to explain how competitive advantage can be understood and applied in the healthcare system, in a context that is becoming increasingly complex for both employees, managers and patients. Starting from the specialized literature in the field of strategic management, the research builds a broad vision of the factors that contribute to the consolidation of the position of medical organizations. Theoretically, the analysis integrates classic perspectives of established authors in strategic management, along with recent contributions regarding resources, performance and patient orientation.

Thus, the research approach combined several complementary methods. In the first stage, a bibliometric and systematic analysis of the international literature was carried out, which provided an overview of the research directions in recent decades, while the empirical part was based on the collection of data from the Romanian healthcare system, including both the point of view of medical personnel and that of patients. In addition to the application of the questionnaire's, semi-structured interviews were also conducted with people in management positions within some medical units in Romania, in order to capture additional aspects related to managerial processes and organizational decisions. Thus, the applied questionnaires were statistically validated, and the results were processed through structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), supplemented with importance-performance analysis (IPMA) and necessary conditions (NCA) to highlight the relationships between variables and the importance of each of the factors involved in achieving competitive advantage.

The results obtained show that within medical organizations, the way in which resources are managed, the quality of managerial practices, employee satisfaction and organizational performance contribute directly to the formation of a sustainable competitive advantage. From the patients' perspective, perceptions related to the quality of services, existing facilities and the results of the medical act are particularly important. The study thus highlights the fact that, in order to obtain a competitive advantage in the medical field, it is necessary to overlap several elements that must be correlated in order to increase the performance and level of satisfaction of patients.

Based on these findings, a model adapted to the realities of the Romanian medical system is proposed, which can represent a benchmark for improving the activity of health organizations. The model outlines an approach that combines the efficient use of internal resources with the constant response to the needs and expectations of patients, in an external environment that is in continuous change.

From the point of view of scientific contributions, the research offers useful implications both for specialized literature, considering the multiple perspectives presented on the competitive advantage in health, and for managerial practice, by identifying concrete directions of action for medical organizations. At the same time, the study also has some limitations, mainly related to the geographical distribution of the respondents, the specifics of the national context analyzed, and the transversal nature of the data collected. Thus, these aspects can be complemented by future research aimed at expanding analyses internationally and monitoring longer-term developments.

Keywords: competitive advantage, competitiveness, patients, performance, patient satisfaction, health system.