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A CASE STUDY ON- ISSUES IN PHARMACEUTICAL MARKETING

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ABSTRACT

The study is based on a survey method using standard inspection form (SIF) filled by various stakeholders from the pharmaceutical marketing field. This primarily descriptive case study focuses on finding out tools used as promotional devices and their significance in marketing. This study also describes the various issues that the pharmaceutical industry is facing during launching its product and increasing the sale of the product. The Market for medicines all over the world is projected to grow 9-12% over the next 5 years, in which India would become one of the top 10 countries in terms of medical spending. By 2020 the current role of the pharmaceutical industry's sales and marketing workforce will be replaced by a new model as the industry shifts from a mass-market to a target-market approach to increase revenue. We have conducted a survey based on pharmaceutical stakeholders where we have found some factors that would be believed to influence the development of a successful pharmaceutical product that are unmet need, Clinical efficacy, Comparators, safety, and price. The aim of this research, therefore, was to explore the understanding of market access among various stakeholders and how their understanding of this concept improves patient access to pharmaceutical products.

Keywords: - Marketing, Strategies, Challenges, Issues, etc.

INTRODUCTION

Pharmaceutical businesses received showcasing cost with some controlled practices at first. In any case, with the entry of time, pharmaceutical promoting became like quick moving shopper merchandise (FMCG) and all the worries in regards to understanding security and wellbeing were disregarded. The definition of pharmaceutical marketing is “activities focused on making physicians as well as the general public aware of new and existing pharmaceutical brands, pharmaceutical marketing can include giveaway samples, detailed product literature, disease management programs, and support material for patients, internet initiatives, and events/meetings for physicians”. Pharmaceutical marketing can also be defined as a management process that serves to identify and profitably meet patients’ needs. The pharmaceutical business mainly adopts sales and promotion, the branches of marketing. World Health Organization (WHO) defines promotion as “all informational and persuasive activities by manufacturers and distributors, the effect of which is to induce prescription, supply, purchase and/or use of medicinal drugs”. In light of these recognizing clients, firms started to receive the promoting idea, which includes; concentrating on client needs before building up the item, adjusting all elements of the organization to concentrate on those requirements and understanding a benefit by effectively fulfilling client needs over the long haul. Advertising is both a logical (hypothetical) and handy order. The wealth of advertising hypothesis in scholarly circles is past debate^{1,2}. There is a created set of examples, a glossary of the control, and an extensive assortment of information. When this information leaves the premises of the scholarly world and enters the truth of monetary life, a legitimate inquiry is presented - to what degree is a set summed up suspicions (and comparative arrangements) pertinent, in actuality. This shifts incredibly starting with one industry then onto the next. The utilization of showcasing in the pharmaceutical industry outperforms the structure of its application in the quick-moving buyer products industry, where the order has arrived at its statures².

From a managerial perspective, a good understanding of drug companies influence on physicians provided pharmaceutical managers a framework to optimize promotion activities by firstly deciding where to focus their efforts to increase their benefits and secondly by choosing the best promotional approach and tool to persuade physicians best and thus avoiding any wasteful expenditure³. Additionally, the observance of ethical theories for medicinal drug promotion by doctors contributed to a more rational prescription of drugs. On

another hand, when drug companies had more influence on some physicians and not on others, companies' managers began to address the question regarding physician's opinions about the ethicality of receiving gifts and samples as a factor preventing these doctors from being influenced. If there was a difference in physicians' opinion, managers then began to address possible reasons for the differences in answers observed such as demographic factors and physicians' profile (location of practice, age or year of graduation and its influence on rates of adoption, gender, and nature of practice^{4,5}).

Major issues in Pharmaceutical marketing

From the survey conducted we found some issues which lead to affect product sale and industry revenue³.

Knowledge skill and patience- As per the survey of UNICEF in November 2019, it is found that more than 50% of Indian youth will not have skills for 21st-century jobs. UNICEF survey about south Asia in Oct 2019 states that more than half of South Asian youth are not on track to have the education and skills necessary for employment in 2030.

Drug efficacy, safety, and price- as from the survey it was found that safety, efficacy, price, quality of the product is a very important factor that influences the development of the successful pharmaceutical product.

Foreign market- Some drugs are banned by the USFDA those are sold in India while some drugs are banned by FDA that is approved by USFDA. So that foreign countries not acquiring the Indian market for some product and vice versa. e.g. Nicip plus is banned by USFDA but still, it is sold in India.

Rural area- The rural area constitutes the heart of the Indian market. The rural area constitutes 75 Cr of the total population of India. For acquiring rural market aggressive promotion ads is required to increase sale and demand of product form customer. The tag line which attracts rural customer should have to make as the campaign so that sale will be increased.

Digital Marketing- Social media marketing is the method reaching out to your customer base and product user through Face book, Twitter and other social networking's.

Content marketing- For increasing the sale of the product we have to make strategies, we have to make a plan. We are formulating products, promoting our product but after sailing product into the market we are not analyzing and amplifying, thus content marketing cycle is not completed successfully. The drawbacks, complaints, good things about the product should have to amplify every time.

Challenges in Pharma marketing

The people who work within the field of pharmaceuticals are well aware of the fragmented and fluctuating nature of the industry. This growing industry is trying to adapt to an ever-changing world in terms of communication, but it is experiencing some roadblocks along the way. We look at some of the most notable challenges facing pharmaceutical marketing today. With the rise of technology, healthcare is shifting towards a more patient-centric environment. This means that we are now dealing with more informed and more inquisitive patients. The transition to a patient-centric approach can be both times consuming and expensive but the biggest challenges arise in changing the existing culture⁵. To start health care systems must get physician buy-in, ensuring both doctors and their staff are prepared, adequately trained and the proper expectations are set across the organization. Patient-centric healthcare should have to increase engagement with all stakeholders.

Stagnation in the market is a vital consideration, marketers working for pharmaceutical companies face other challenges that more closely reflect their day to day work. Those using scientific communication to present their drugs to medical experts will perform better than those who don't. Perhaps it is time to move towards presenting the mechanism of action and differentiating drugs in this fashion. There is often a gap between what the medical expert hears about the drug and what the end users does⁶. Today patients are well informed and a failure to approach them as such and satisfy their need for information helps feed the fire of doubt. Branded scientific communication to these well-informed patients helps to create value and resource customers of your products. It can only make life easier for medical sales reps if the end-users and the medical expert can both relate to the brand. Whenever there is policy reform, pharmaceutical companies have to scramble to comply. This not only impacts how drugs are sold but also these business marketing efforts. Biosimilars are causing headaches for pharmaceutical companies and are only expected to grow through 2021.

However, this presents an opportunity for companies that excel at marketing them within their product ranges⁵.

Strategies to overcome issues

Don't neglect social media presence in pharmaceutical marketing. Content is what drives engagements so make sure that you strike the right balance between being overly promotional and publishing content that the viewer wants to see. Patients also get information online about treatment for their health conditions, so be sure to address both audiences in your drug's social media campaigns. Having good relationships with a physician is a key aspect of being a successful pharmaceutical marketer. It always pays to think creatively when you are looking at your marketing tactics. Guerrilla marketing happens in unexpected ways⁴. Sometimes a pharma marketing expert might directly target their competitors in some unexpected way. Many companies see this as a great method for being able to stand out from the crowd. One idea for reaching new clients as a pharmaceutical marketing firm is to create a meaningful experience that connects emotionally with customers. When creating an experience to connect with customers emotionally, you must do it with an ethical marketing baseline to ensure you are being respectful and responsible with your messages⁶.

When a pharmaceutical company does get the opportunity to engage the patient. It must bring everything it got to the table. the most powerful way to do so is by showing how the drugs it sells work inside the body using medical animation and simple and easy-to-understand language. Pharma must take scientific communication strategies and skills seriously and invest in them to ensure survival during this period of stagnant growth. This must be part of an overall digital communications strategy that has the aim of nurturing a working and productive relationship with HCP's as well as patients.

Survey-based analysis

Table No. 1: Survey-based analysis

Questions for stakeholders	Answers in Percentage		
Buyer's friendliness and courtesy...	56 % Poor	36 % Good	7 % Excellent
What would be the major issue found in pharmaceutical marketing?	10% Knowledge	56 % Skill	50 % Patience
Who is your target audience in pharmaceutical marketing?	43 % Patient	41% Money	21 % other
Do you recommend others to do a job in pharmaceutical marketing?	61% Yes	28% No	9% Other
Where would people buy your product or service from?	80 % Urban	17 % Rural	8 % other
How much you rate for Exporting strategies for pharmaceuticals in foreign countries.	17 % Statics for Good	69 % statics for Average	2 %Excellent
Have you ever done an advertisement for your company in daily?	14 % Yes	82 % No	3% other
Do you use questioning method or expectation in marketing places?	30 % Yes	64 % No	4 % Not Sure
Do you have yearly marketing plan or advertising campaign mapped out?	39 % Yes	53 % No	6 % Not Sure
Which factors you believe would influence the development of successful pharmaceutical product?	Safety, Efficacy, Price, Unmeet need, Burden of company, comparators		

In total, 108 respondents questionnaire answered by 94 responded completely with results: in that 30 at the conference, 45 at the educational course, and 19 at the pharmaceutical company. Of the respondents, 71 (75%) were pharmaceutical industry experts, 10 (10%) were pharmaceutical consultants, 7 (7%) were academics, 4 (4%) were policymakers or health technology assessors, and 2 (2%) were healthcare professionals.

Across all professions, the top five factors believed to influence the development of a successful pharmaceutical product were as follows: Unmet need/burden of disease, Comparators, Safety and Clinical efficacy, Price and Quality of product.

CONCLUSION

Due to the continuous use of past strategies of marketing pharmaceutical companies are not achieving their targets so we need to think about new challenges and demands of the customer. The concept of market access is still poorly understood and the definition varies depending on the stakeholder's perspective. The survey described here revealed that a good awareness of unmet needs, clinical efficacy, choice of comparators, safety and price were the most important factor influencing the development of a successful pharmaceutical product. For cost-effective products to be developed and made accessible to the patient, there is a need for a wider understanding of market access and the value perspective of the various stakeholders. In the rural area, there is a need for marketing because the number of buyers in India is coming from the same. For uplifting pharma vision 2020, we need to develop strategies of pharmaceutical marketing like digital marketing, internet marketing, etc. also there is a need to access foreign markets by increasing the parameters like efficacy, safety, cost to meet the need and conditions.

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