

META ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE ON MARKETING COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES OF PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES

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Abstract - Marketing Communications are the resources by which companies attempt to notify, convince and recap consumers – directly or incidentally – about the merchandises and brands they trade. Marketing Communications represents the expression of the firm and its brands and are resources by which it can generate a dialogue and form relations with consumers.

In this article, Researcher has endeavored to review information about previous related research papers and articles which highlight importance about the area of study chosen. These studies are majorly related to prescription behavior of Doctors, impact on consumers and various strategies carried out by organization and implemented by its sales force. Few other factors are also reviewed which are majorly related to pharmaceutical industry and its relevance for study. It also reveals the scope of further study. These literatures are helpful for problem identification and to prepare scientific research plans.

Keywords: Marketing Communication, Pharmaceutical Industry, Doctors, Prescription Behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Marketing needs effective communication flow between the company and the consumer. Manufacturing a fine product and making it available in the market are no doubt important parts of the marketing job. But it is equally important to communicate to the consumers that such a product is available in the market. In fact, it is not even enough if merely the availability is made known. In a competitive market situation, where several firms are striving to win over consumers, it is essential to propagate and promote distinctiveness of the product and the value it carries. This Propagation has to be carried out by using various methods and channels of communication. Firms should also get feedback on how customers interpret its messages and accept its product. A two way communication flow becomes necessary between the marketer and his market/consumers. This is the essence of the Marketing Communication (V S Ramaswamy, 2013).

Marketing Communications are the resources by which companies attempt to notify, convince and recap consumers – directly or incidentally – about the merchandises and brands they trade. Marketing Communications represents the expression of the firm and its brands and are resources by which it can generate a dialogue and form relations with consumers. It can state or display consumers in what way a product is utilized. Customers can acquire knowledge about who creates the product and what is the image of company and brand; and they can be rewarded for trial or usage. Promotions allow firms to connect their brands to emotions of other people, places, occasions, products, know- hows, feelings and belongings. They can add to brand equity by creating place of the brand image in memory as well as drive sales and even affect shareholder value (Philip Kotler K. L., 2009).

OBJECTIVE

- To conduct a critical assessment of literature in relation to the research problem being explored

METHODOLOGY

The review of Literature has been classified into different groups of respondents and various elements of Marketing which are related to pharmaceutical industry. Literatures relevant to Physicians (Doctors), Consumer (patients), Sales Force and Pharmaceutical Companies as well as other literatures related to Marketing of Pharmaceutical Products are discussed in this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It has been highlighted in the article by Ornstein & Jones that the drugs most aggressively promoted to doctors typically aren't cures or even big medical breakthroughs. Some are top sellers, but most are not. Instead, they are newer drugs that manufacturers hope will gain a foothold, sometimes after failing to meet Wall Street's early expectations. Manufacturers of drugs — Pradaxa, Xarelto and Eliquis — have been wooing physicians in part by paying for meals, promotional speeches, consulting gigs and educational gifts. In the last five months of 2013, the companies spent nearly \$19.4 million on doctors and teaching hospitals (Ornstein & Jones, 2015)

Banerjee et al states that the purpose of this study is to analyze the scope and acceptability of e-detailing concepts recently started by domestic as well as multinational pharmaceutical companies in India. professional service representative (PSR) visit, invitation, and detailing type have a positive impact on the probability of acceptance of e-detailing. Moreover, it can be seen that marginal increase in the PSR visit, invitation, and detailing type increases the probabilities of e-detailing acceptability among physicians (Banerjee & Dash, 2011).

In the article of Shankar, titled Brand Building with Physicians moves into the Cyber age mentions that Pharmaceutical companies are increasingly using web based content through customer service portals to build their brands with physicians. Web portals allow Physicians to access journal reprints, order samples, download patient education Information and videoconference online with sales representative (Shankar, 2008).

Study by Shwartz emphasize on developments regarding human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines that transform HPV vaccination in the United States while simultaneously raising several new policy and ethical concerns. Policymakers, vaccine manufacturers, and the public health community must now respond to the presence of competing vaccines that are similar but distinct, particularly with respect to genital wart prevention and the benefits of vaccinating males. Researcher reviewed the current status of HPV vaccine policy in the United States and examine issues of public health ethics and policy central to ongoing and future HPV vaccination programs (Schwartz, 2010).

Study by Cavusgil & Calantone set forth that Marketing managers continually struggle with how to maximize the effects of an integrated marketing communications strategy. The growing number of available communication outlets, as well as highly varying competitive landscapes, adds further complexity to this challenge. This empirical study examines the differential impact within a pharmaceutical market therapeutic category where both "push" and "pull" communication strategies operate on consumers and gatekeepers alike, in an atmosphere of unrelenting product innovation and broad competition (Cavusgil & Calantone, 2011).

In the study of Sharma it has been pointed out that Doctors and paediatricians in India have called for an end to "unscientific and indiscriminate" marketing of vaccines not included in the government-sponsored Expanded Programme of Immunisation (EPI) by drug companies. While vaccines for chicken pox, typhoid, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and influenza have been approved by the drug controller of India for marketing, none have been included in the EPI, no guidelines have been issued for their use, and all are unaffordable for poor people. Manufacturers are promoting these vaccines through schools, local residents association, and some medical practitioners by distributing alarmist literature about hepatitis B virus infections and infections such as typhus (Sharma, 1999).

DISCUSSION

The pharmaceutical marketing environment is characterized by increasing competition and the pharmaceutical firms in the product patent era have to restructure their Marketing communication strategies to build in a market orientation to the business plan. The pharmaceutical companies advantage lie in their ability to understand communication needs of their brands by better understanding of Physicians and Customers Behaviour.

CONCLUSION

A pharmaceutical product's market share is dependent on doctor's acceptance which is a function of the level of promotional expenditure at the time of product introduction and the inherent therapeutic quality of drug. A company obtaining a high market share in a given therapeutic class, leading to high profits, will be able to support high levels of promotional expenditure to defend its market position and also support a large research and development team.

Promotion influences doctors' attitudes much more than they realize. They often use it as a source of information about new medicines, and for medicines used outside their usual therapeutic field. Pharmaceutical companies need to identify their strengths and opportunities and build capabilities through innovative marketing communication strategies and programmes.

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