

Prescription Modifying Marketing Factors: A Survey among the Clinicians in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT: *It was aimed at finding out the important factors those influence the prescription preparation of doctors during their daily life consultancy. It was a descriptive, cross-sectional survey conducted by purposive, convenient sampling. 200 registered practicing doctors from different regions of Bangladesh were interviewed with the prepared self reporting questionnaire from February 2013 to October 2013. Questionnaire was prepared and finalized after pretesting. The measurement was made on the basis of 5 point Likert scale and data were analyzed by using SPSS 16 version and Microsoft Excel®. It was found that doctors consider company image, brand availability, regular promotion, easy brand name, scientific information, and personal experience related confidence with high preference. Promotional tools and representatives' improvisation, low price of brands are relatively less sensitive to doctors. This study provides only selected aspects on pharma marketing; larger study may reveal the scenario more precisely.*

Keywords: *Prescription preparation, Marketing factors, Pharma marketing*

I. INTRODUCTION

Pharmaceutical industry is one of the progressive and perspective industries in Bangladesh. It contributes 1% to the country's GDP and is the third largest industry in terms of contribution to government revenue (Sultana & Khoshru, 2011). The current market size is about 12,100 million with having almost persistently double digit growth (IMS Health, 2015). The market is almost self-sufficient in meeting local demand as 97% of the drugs are manufactured locally and is exporting to 92 countries (Jahan, 2011; Shawon, 2011; Hussain, 2013). There are 267 licensed pharmaceutical companies in Bangladesh (Hussain, 2013; DGDA). About 80% of the drugs sold in Bangladesh are generics and 20% are patented drugs. The country manufactures about 450 generic drugs for 5,300 registered brands which have 8,300 different forms of dosages and strengths (Sultana & Khoshru, 2011; Jahan, 2011; Saad 2012). Among the 49 Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Bangladesh has the strongest base to manufacturing pharmaceutical products (Sultana & Kashru, 2011). This large pharma market is principally driven by the prescriptions of doctors. Company personnel (marketing and sales division) always try to motivate doctors to prescribe their own company brands by personal selling, clinical meetings, seminars, symposia, etc because in Bangladesh the promotion of pharmaceutical products in the mass media is strictly prohibited (Jahan, 2011). The sales division (medical representatives) is playing the imperative role for marketing division. Medical representatives regularly make sales call to doctors by sharing scientific information and competitive advantages of their products over the competitors (Habib & Alam, 2011). During prescription preparation doctors consider such factors and use brand names for treatment and patients buy the prescribed brands. It might be helpful to pharma marketers to figuring out the factors that influence physicians to include brands in prescription which will ultimately help to sustain the development in the intense rivalry.

II. METHODS

It was a descriptive, cross-sectional survey conducted by purposive, convenient sampling. 200 registered practicing doctors from Dhaka, Rangpur, Comilla, Narayongong, Mymensing and Khulna were interviewed with the prepared self reporting questionnaire from February 2013 to October 2013. The interviewed doctors were specialized in Medicine, Surgery, Gynecology, Dental and GP (General Practitioner). 5 point Likert Scale response based questionnaire was prepared and finalized after pre testing done in physicians

(30 physician) and changed minimally according to pretesting response. Non response was very minimal and that was filled by neutral value. All data input, format, transformation and analysis were performed using SPSS 16 version and Microsoft Excel®. Better generalization can be done if the whole country was covered with addition of negative questions in the questionnaire that would more solidify the perception.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Among the 200 physician respondents 58 were female and 142 were male physicians; more specifically, 18 were dentist, 86 were GP, 45 were medicine specialist, 28 were surgeon (Table 1). It was found that doctors consider company image, brand availability, regular promotion, easy brand name, scientific information, and personal experience related confidence with high preference. Promotional tools and representatives' improvisation and low price of brands are relatively less sensitive to doctors (Table 2). 22.68% younger (25 - 35Y) doctors are strongly agreed to consider company image and 36.59% older (46Y and above) doctors have same consideration. Whereas 88.89% younger (below 25 Y) and only 25% older (46Y and above) representatives strongly agreed on it. Younger doctors (53.61%) are more sensitive to regular promotion than older (36.59%) ones. Older physicians have more focus on availability maintaining. There is no variation of responses with age in case of doctor to have role of marketing people on changing doctors' decision in favor of their brands.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by demographic characteristics

Demographic characteristics (N=200)					
Age	Completed years	Percent	Gender	Gender	Percent
	25-35 y	48.5		Male	71
	36-45 y	31		Female	29
	46 and above	20.5	Specialty	Discipline	Percent
Practicing Year	Completed years	Percent		Medicine	22.5
	1-10	59		Surgery	14
	11-20	31		Gynaecology	11.5
	21-30	6		Dentist	9
	31 and above	4		General Practitioner	43

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of variables on prescription modifying marketing factors

Variables	Response in percentage in 5 point Likert scale				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Company image	25.5	51	15	6	2.5
Regular promotion of brands	21.5	47.5	24	4.5	2.5
Brand availability	32	46.5	10.5	7	4
Low price	24	33	20.5	18.5	4
Representatives' improvisation	19	52.5	20.5	5.5	2.5
Easy brand name	30.5	36.5	17.5	11	4.5
International certification of company	29.5	38	23	8.5	1
Promotional tools	23	42	26.5	7.5	1
Scientific information	29	49	17.5	2.5	2
Personal experience	30.5	46	16	6	1.5

IV. CONCLUSION

Pharma market in Bangladesh has become hyper competitive, because every firm is competing in this generic market. Medical representatives of every firm are firmly trying to create prescriptions in favor of their brands by many innovative ways. This study contains a minimum scenario of modifying marketing factors on prescription preparation and hope to see a healthy growth of pharma industry of Bangladesh.

Conflict of interest: Having no conflict of interest.

Authorship Contribution

Conception, Design & Instrument Development

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Data Collection & Management

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Data Analysis & Interpretation

S.M. Yasir Arafat & S.M. Hafiz Al Asad

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Disclosure

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