

To study the Perception towards E-Commerce of Pharmaceutical Products

Dissertation Submitted to:



The IIHMR University, Jaipur

for the partial fulfilment for the award of degree of Master of Business Administration

(MBA)

in

Pharmaceutical Management

By

Kushal G M

Under the Supervision and Guidance of

Dr Sudhinder Singh Chowhan

2022

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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I here declare that this dissertation title “To Study the Perception towards E-Commerce of Pharmaceutical Products” is the bonafide record of my original research work. I declare that it has not been submitted to any other university for award of any degree or diploma. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of the others has been duly acknowledged in the text.

Name of the Student: Kushal G M

Date: 24- Jun- 2022

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

This is to certify that Kushal G M in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MBA Pharmaceutical Management from the IIHMR University, Jaipur has successfully completed his Project at IIHMR UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR during March 22, 2022, to June 19, 2022.

Place: Bangalore

Preceptor/Head of the Organization

Date:24/06/2022

IIHMR UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR

Certificate from Faculty Guide and School Dean

This is to certify that dissertation titled **TO STUDY THE PERCEPTION TOWARDS E-COMMERCE OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS** is a record of the research work undertaken by Kushal G M in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MBA Pharmaceutical Management** from the IIHMR University, Jaipur under my guidance and supervision and his approach to the research study has been sincere, scientific, and analytical.

Dr Sudhinder Singh Chowhan

Faculty Guide

IIHMR University, Jaipur

DATE: 24/06/2022

Dr Saurabh Kumar

School Dean

IIHMR University, Jaipur

DATE: 24/06/2022

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I take this opportunity with pride and gratitude to thank those who have contributed to the successful completion of this journey

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Kushal G M

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1. Introduction

E pharmacy is an internet pharmacy which operates over internet and delivers the medicine to customers.

With the rapid growth in internet usage and smart phones e commerce sector has seen an exponential growth in all the categories in that e pharmacies also emerged as one of them. E-Pharmacy is one such model that has enabled accessibility for the patients. E-Pharmacy is a technological improvement that meets three most important needs of the consumers, namely accessibility, affordability, and convenience of getting the prescription drug and non-prescription drugs at their doorstep with the single click of button. Purchasing of Pharmaceutical products has become a well-liked phenomenon and has continuously opened the word.

E-Pharmacy sells pharmaceutical products of both Non-Prescription and prescription drugs. The E-Pharmacy is easy to access and convenience in buying of drugs and best in terms of cost affordability, the cost of medicines is at least 15-20% less than the traditional pharmacies.

The estimated size of the worldwide e-pharmacy industry, which is dominated by North America and Europe, was at US \$29.3 billion. It is projected to increase at a CAGR of 17.7 percent and reach US \$ 128 billion by the end of 2023.

In 2020, the worldwide e-pharmacy industry was valued at US \$0.8 billion, with prescription pharmaceuticals accounting for 68% of sales and over the counter (OTC) drugs accounting for the remaining 32%.

Nearly 50 e-pharmacies are currently active in the Indian market, accounting for 14% of all e-pharmacies' sales in the Asia-Pacific area in 2020.

Indian E pharmacy market is valued at US \$ 344.78million in 2021 and it is expected to rapid growth around 21.28% by 2027. The digital India Campaign by government of India is further expected to increase the market growth by 2027

The raise in the chronic disease in India is likely to increase the sales in E pharmacy due to heavy price concession and wide number of brands

Indian E pharmacy market is segmented into different types namely

1. Drug type: In drug type markets can be divided into prescription drug and OTC drug. The prescription drugs were having overall market share of 66.41% in the year 2021
2. Product type: In this type of the markets can be divided according to Chronic diseases skincare nutritional supplements, medical devices, and others
3. Operating platform: in this platform there are two operating systems website and apps
4. By Region: regions can be divides as north south, east west

How does E pharmacy Work?

1. E Pharmacy are the pharmacy where Customers can upload the scanned copy via a mobile application. of the prescription prescribed by the registered Medical Practitioner and place the order for prescribed medicines.
2. Every order that will be placed by patient will be verified and checked by registered pharmacist
3. The registered pharmacist after verification will forward the verified prescription to the store from where medications are packed and dispatched.
4. The application is governed by the Information Technology Act 2000 it is applied to all the companies which does the online business. This act is bridge between consumer and E-store

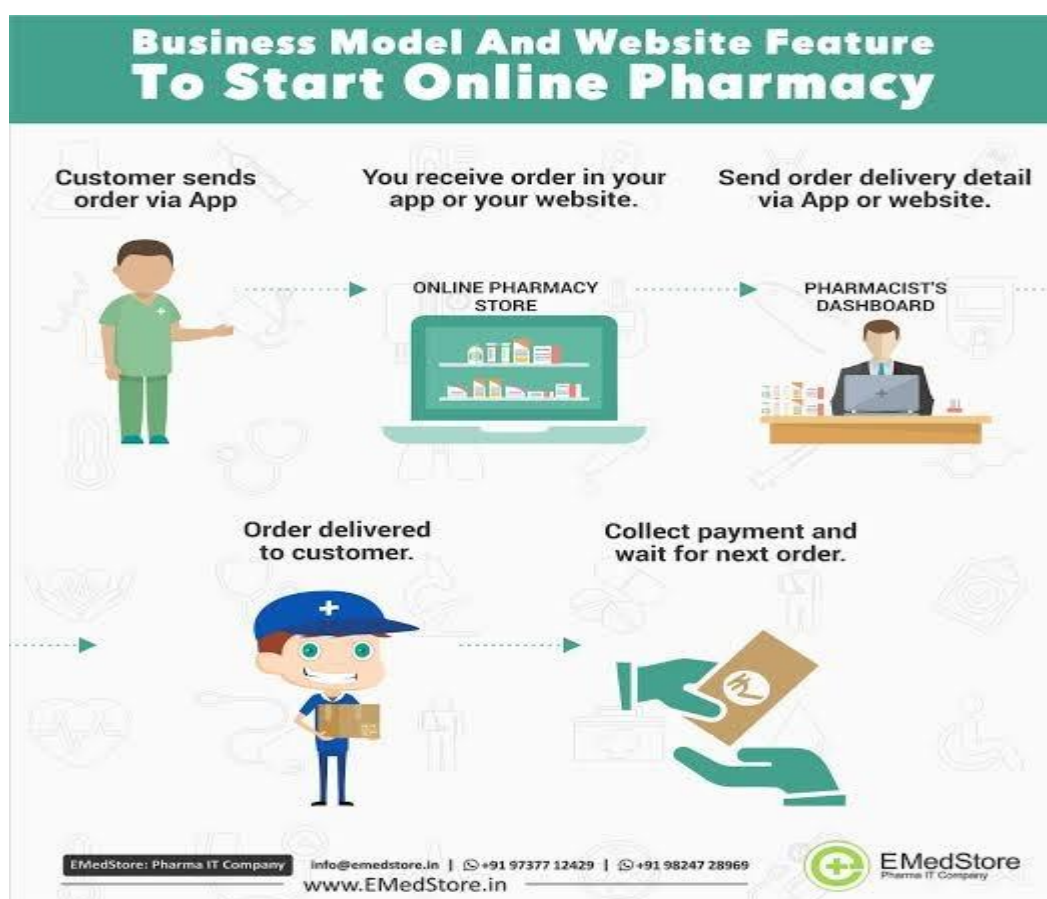


Figure 1

The marketing strategy of E pharmacies includes their most common benefits over traditional pharmacies. Almost every category of medicines and OTC products are available online from cosmetics to life saving drugs and basic medical devices

Retail pharmacies raise their voice against E pharmacies towards safety, dosage instruction and unregulated sale of prescription medicine

E pharmacies have both advantages and disadvantages

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

[1] A study was conducted by Nandagopan G (2022) To study Consumer Awareness and preference of E pharmacy during the covid period.

Online Pharmacy in India is appealing business model that can improve the country's healthcare system after online pharmacy entered the Indian market the medicines are easily available to every part of nation. Along with other benefits such as price discount, convenience, and doorstep delivery. The online pharmacy is now getting popularity with customers, but there are risks associated with online pharmacy which may include drug misuse and unlawful resale of drugs.

[2] A review article (2022) by Bandivadekar SS: Online Pharmacies: A new Prescription for health in India

The healthcare environment and demographics in India present special obstacles for the online pharmacy industry, but there is also a tonne of room for expansion. Opportunities exist because of expanding accessibility and affordability gaps in the expanding Indian population.

increasing prevalence of chronic diseases. These need gaps can be effectively filled by online pharmacies. The administration is attempting to address the issues through regulatory systems. using the currently being revised draught guidelines. after being entrenched in the urban. counterparts can venture into the most rural and isolated regions of the nation where access is the most difficult, enhancing the general accessibility of healthcare across the country. The market is now quiet. Small but with great potential for growth and expansion

[3] A study by Long CS, (2022) On Online Pharmacies selling Prescription Drugs systematic review

This survey found that nearly half of online pharmacies lacked proper regulation and had fraudulent concerns. Therefore, to address these difficulties, government authorities should impose stronger restrictions along with more regular. Every online pharmacy is subject to supervision of the licencing process and pharmacy verification. This would lessen the prevalence of fraudulent activities and illegal online pharmacies.

[4] A study by Ushir RB (2022) On consumer perception towards online Pharmacy and offline pharmacy

Despite significant advancements in smartphone and internet services and the readily available e-medicines, a sizable section of the Indian population still lacks access to healthcare. Presently a large group of people opts to purchase some medications retail pharmacies' medical supplies. It exhibits people are more conventional and health-conscious attitudes and perspectives (despite developments in other areas of life). When deciding whether to acquire either online or offline, medicines. People are in favor of offline over internet for several factors, including ease of use, reliability, and accessibility. Whenever medications are unavailable in retail pharmacy, which customers can buy online if not, they only choose to use the offline alternative. In addition, even if inexpensive medication is provided in online most consumers choose to purchase the same thing online

[5] A study was done by Srivastava M, Raina M (2020) on consumers usage and E-pharmacy adoption

There is a lack of awareness in common people about the benefits of E pharmacy so there should be awareness demonstration about the use of E pharmacy and their benefits along with awareness of illegal activities present. Customers appreciated the doorstep delivery of medicines which was purchased online and will prefer to purchase it online. The results suggested that E pharmacies are easy to use, and the availability of outdated and incorrect data would lead to fear or trust issues in the consumer perspective.

[6] A study was conducted by Singh H, Malviya N (2020) to know the impact of online pharmacy on society and pharma field.

The study mainly focuses on influence of E pharmacy during pandemic time in this study researcher has shown about several good impacts during covid 19 pandemic situation. The main aim of E pharmacy is to deliver medicines at reasonable price. The major drawback of E pharmacy is self-medication. Government of India has given permission with set of rules for running an E pharmacy as drugs and cosmetics Act 1940, whereas Pharmacy Act 1948 was very old and outdated where no provision was given to sell medicines online.

[7] A study was done by Anwar W, Gupta T (2020) to know the factors leading to preference for buying medicines online and their effects on actual buying behavior

The foremost work of this examine is focusing on different factors for which the web pharmacy is established through society some of the key reasons are price effectiveness,

easy to buy, and every other cause for recognition E pharmacy in India because of marketing campaign digital India and E healthcare initiative with the aid of using authorities of India and direct overseas investment

[8] A study was conducted by Gupta MS (2020) on buying behavior of consumers towards E pharmacy

This study consists of 100 respondents from Jaipur town via way of means of random sampling approach and outcome of study showed that respondents was aware of E pharmacy and had a good knowledge of E pharmacy. Consumers from Jaipur city was purchasing medicines from both online and offline pharmacy. But when it comes to risk factors of E pharmacy government and concerned authorities have a major role in educating people about risk factors while buying medicines through online pharmacy.

[9] A study was done by Saraswathi S, Jain R K and Awasthi S. (2020) analyzed the benefits and drawbacks of E pharmacy in India.

This study stated that government has responsibility in creating legislative and regulatory framework to supervise the activities of E pharmacy to overcome the challenge of E pharmacy which are concerned to limit the risk and improve patient benefit.

[10] An article by S.V. Chordiya and B. M. Garge (2018) on E Pharmacy vs Conventional Pharmacy

It is stated that E pharmacies are not having same touch as offline pharmacies, as in traditional pharmacies we can interact with the pharmacist and get suggestion about the drug and its side effects.

Article has also stated benefits and disadvantages of both E pharmacies and traditional pharmacies.

Benefits of E pharmacy are its convenience, time saving, low price, wide range of choices, drug approval with prescription and medical information of drug

E pharmacies are having its own drawback which are lack of physical evaluation of prescription, and process are not done by licensed health professional, fear of protection of personal data and financial data. Conventional pharmacies are having its own benefits which may include the processing of prescription, care of patients by taking their drug history clarify the dosage units and its usage, monitoring the drug utilization and its adverse effects.

Some disadvantages of conventional pharmacy are time consuming, and price are on high side when compared to E pharmacy and inconvenience for elderly patients or people who are not able to visit store and buy.

[11] study was conducted by Pujari NM (2016) “to know the Consumer buying behavior towards Prescription and Non-prescription drugs”

This observe was carried out to discover what is going to be supply of records humans pick out approximately the pharma merchandise and what affects buying behavior for selecting drugs. The survey was carried out amongst 100 respondents and the end result turned into interesting. 60% of population was shopping for drugs through doctor preference in which other elements which consist of magazine, internet, family, and friends additionally impact at the same time as buying a medicine. It confirmed that humans want their prescription on their personal desire and rate wherein pharmacist and doctor idea isn't influencing factor over money

[12] A study was conducted by Priyanka v, Ashok B (2016) on E pharmacies regulation in India.

in India There are several acts but all the acts were old and outdated these acts came into action before computerized technology and now internet has been regulating Online Pharmacy Information Technology Act 2000 are taken into consideration as Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940, Drugs and cosmetics Rule 1945, Pharmacy Act 1948, Indian Medical Act 1956, Drugs and Magic Remedies Act 1954, these acts have no specific provisions for selling medicines online. It shows that online pharmacy doesn't follow these outdated acts and they want avoid Drug and Cosmetic Act 1940 which states that for selling drug, Pharmacy should possess a proper drug license and medicines should be sold only with proper prescription from doctor. Some scheduled drugs are named as restricted drugs which could be given along with Proper prescription from medical practitioner and for record keeping purpose one copy of prescription should be kept in pharmacy for at least 2 years.

In Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1945 it is also stated that sale of drug under registered pharmacist which includes to signing of bill and stamp on prescription by the pharmacist and this practice should be adopted for the Schedule H and X drugs which are placed under restricted drugs. and the pharmacist should maintain a separate register to maintain record the drugs sold under schedule H1 with the record of patient details should be at least kept for three years and it should be open for inspection by regulatory authorities.

Regulation 5.3 of Medical Council of India code of ethics states that pharmacist and doctors should be working together if online pharmacy are given permission this relationship will be lost.

Regulation 7.14 of Medical Council of India code of ethics 2002 does not allow medical practitioner or pharmacist to disclose the data or secret of patients

The Information Technology Act 2000 regulates legal issues related to online dealing, but this act is silent in E pharmacies as a this resulted in increase of illegal pharmacies. There are no laws related to data privacy in India. The law that are dealing with the privacy of the data in India are Section 43A of the Information Technology Act 2000.

[13] A study was conducted by Salter SM (2014) on online pharmacies: A n growing market in Indian retail pharmacy.

To this study 252 participants turned into taken as respondents and majority of them i.e.,66% of them bought medication from on-line as there has been no right recommendations to promote drugs on-line it turned into advised that there need to be proper verification of scanned prescription for the duration of order placing and once

more the prescription need to be rechecked while handing over to stop the miss use of drugs.

3. OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

AIM

To study the Perception towards E commerce of Pharmaceutical Products

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- To know the knowledge and perception among the consumers about E-Pharmacy
- To study the customer satisfaction level

METHODOLOGY

Research Method:

The study is based on exploratory as well as descriptive research design. The purpose of the study is to evaluate consumer perception and satisfaction level towards E pharmacy and to know what factors indulges the consumers to purchase medications from online.

Sampling Method: Consumers were selected as respondents through random and convience sampling A sample size of 100 respondents was selected for the study.

Data Collection Instrument: well-structured Questionnaire (google form)

Data Collection Method: The study data is having both primary and secondary data.

Primary data was collected through online via google form with the aid of questionnaires.

Secondary data was collected through books, journals, articles, websites etc.

Duration: 15 March 2022 to 15 June 2022

Sample size: 100 respondents

Data analysis: The first part of questionnaire consists of demographic data of respondents like Name, Age, and Gender,

The second part of questionnaire consists of several questions which the data about the purchasing time of respondents and their perception towards E Pharmacy along with their questionnaire to know the satisfaction level of respondents from E pharmacy.

The response collected was organized in the format of an excel sheet and This data analysis is present study done by using simple statistical tools like percentage average, etc. which will be used as per the requirements of the data. In the study the appropriate statistical tool is EXCEL.

4. RESULTS

This involves all the detailed process of analyzing data which was obtained from the sample population. The data was collected to analyze and report on consumer perception towards E commerce of medicine. Using Microsoft Excel which includes graphical representation.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Part 1- Demographic Analysis

AGE

Figure 2

Most of the respondents of the population group belonged to age group between 18-25 years of age (57% of respondents) indicating that sample population was young

GENDER

Figure 3

Of the 100 respondents the split between the two genders was in the ratio of 60:40 with the total number of 60 males and 40 females.

Part 2 – Perception and satisfaction level findings

Have you ever purchased medicines from Online?

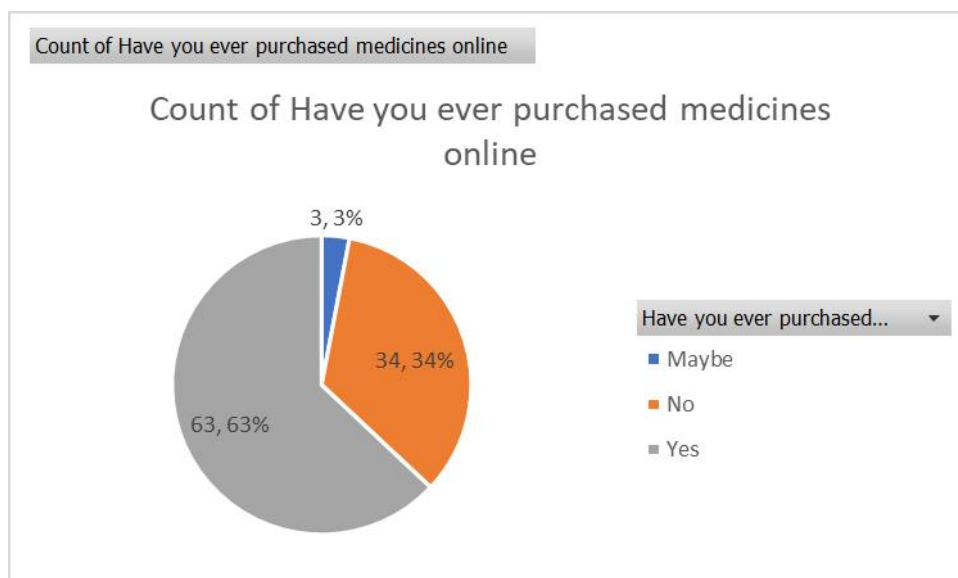


Figure 4

63% of the entire population said that they have purchased medications from E-Pharmacy and followed by 34% population who have not purchased any medications from Online, and only 3% of population are not sure about their purchase of medication through Online.

Since How many years you are purchasing medicines online?

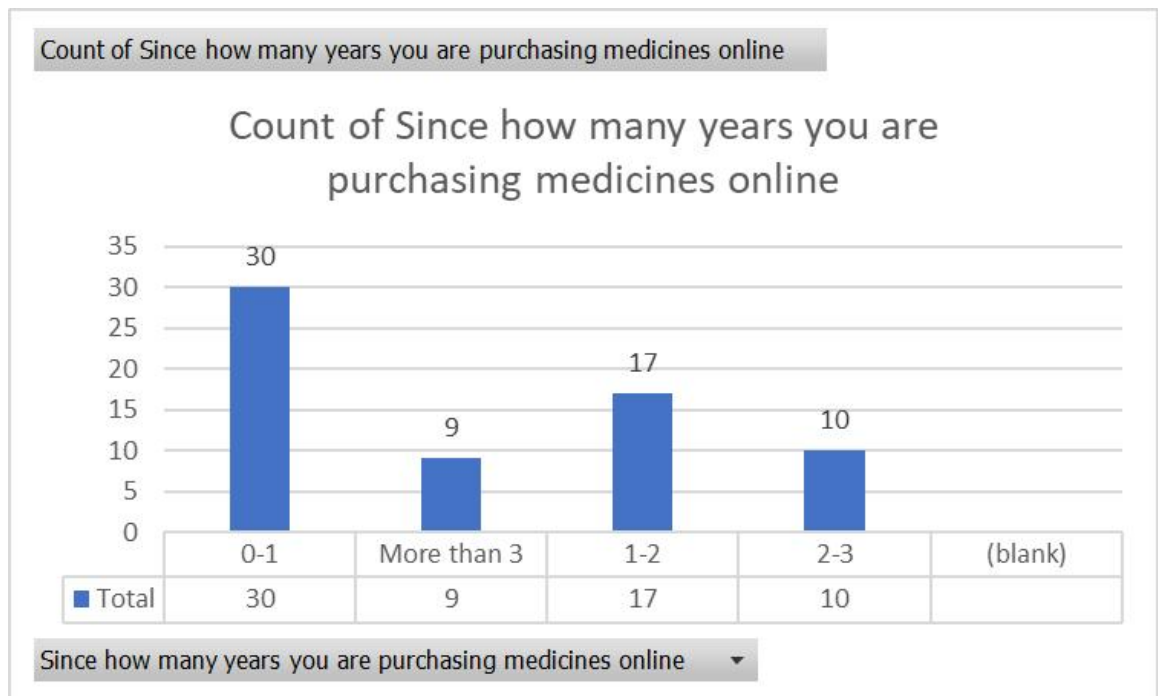


Figure 5

Each respondent of the survey was asked to recall from how many years they are purchasing medications online almost 45% of respondents have purchased medication recently i.e., from past 1 year, 26% of population from respondent are purchasing from 1-2 years, 15% from 2-3 years and 14% are purchasing from long time.

Hence it can be said that COVID has influenced the population to purchase medication Online

What Indulges you to request a drug online?

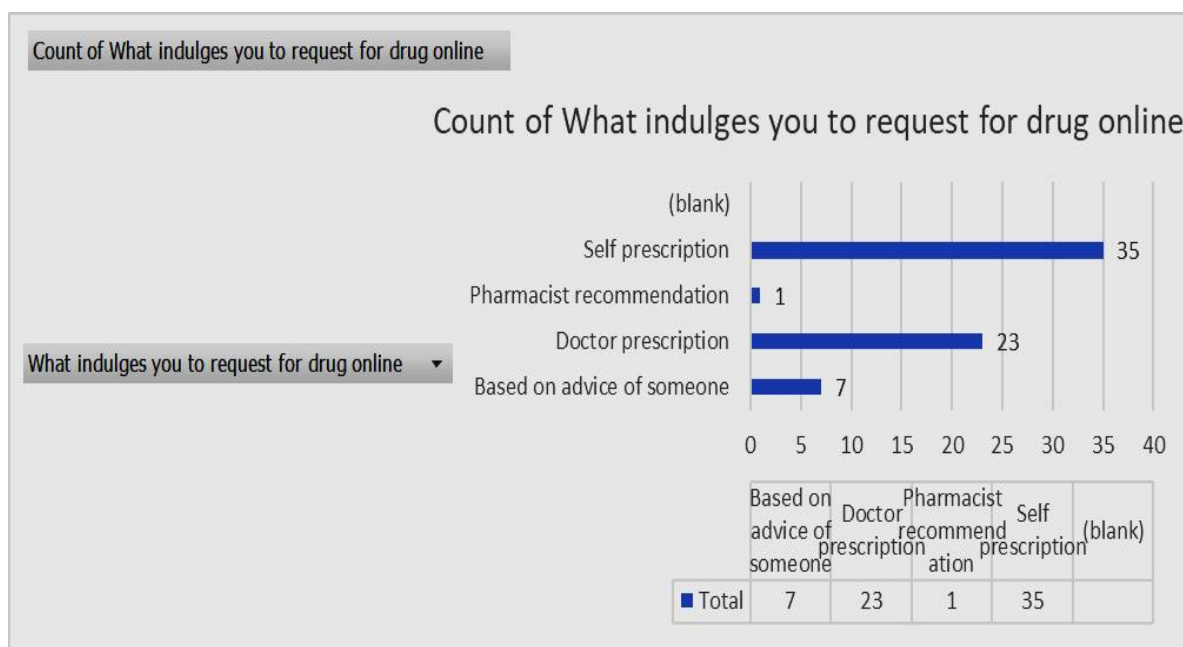


Figure 6

As per analysis of the responses of the respondents of the survey about 53% of population self-prescription was the factor that was indulging them to buy medications from online. Among the population 35% of respondents used doctor prescription to buy medications from online ,11% from advice of their friends or peers and 1% from the recommendation of pharmacist.

Reasons for purchasing medicine online

Figure 7

The above graph examines the reasons that lead the consumer to buy medication through online

Low Price with 56% was found to be the most common reason to purchase the medication from online this was followed by wide choice of products at 24% non-availability at 18% and 2% due to prescription is not required

The above results can be said by the fact that India is a country where people buy medicines in huge quantity hence people do research before buying and do price comparison before buying

Which is the most purchased medication from online?

Figure 8

The above graph examines the purchasing behavior of consumers about most purchased medication between prescription drug and non-prescription drug

Population of respondents was found that purchasing of both prescription drug and Non-prescription drug was at 50%, almost 35% were buying prescription drugs and Non-Prescription drug at 15%

Are you aware of illegal trading of Medicines Through Online?

Figure 9

It was found that majority of the population from respondents were aware of the illegal activities through online pharmacy almost 69% and 19% of population were not aware of the illegal activity. And 12% were not sure about the illegal activity which are done in online platform

How was the quality of medicine which you purchased Online?

Figure 10

The graph above depicts an examination of quality of medicines which was purchased online

The graph depicts the outcomes of the quality of medications purchased online by respondents, most of the respondents 70% says the medications were of reasonable quality, 29% says the medications purchased was of high quality and least percent was not sure about the quality of medications which was purchased online

Would you Purchase medicines online in future?

Figure 11

Above graphic depicts an examination of respondents about their future buying perception towards online pharmacy

62% of respondents were interested to order medications through online in future, and 32% of population were not sure about purchasing medication online it shows that they may, or they may not purchase the medications from Online and only 6% of population were confident that they won't order medications through online

After consuming medication purchased from online is there any improvement in health condition?

Figure 12

Above graph shows improvement in health condition of population after consuming the medicines purchased from online.

Majority of the respondents i.e., 52% of respondent's health saw remarkable improvement after consuming the medications which was purchased online, and 42% respondents' health saw little improvement after consuming the medication which was purchased from online and 2% of respondents have not seen any improvements after consuming the medication purchased from online.

Would you like to recommend online pharmacy to your friends or family?

Figure 13

The above graph examines the satisfaction of respondents from online pharmacy which can lead to recommending online pharmacy to friends and family

Most of the population from respondents were ready to recommend online pharmacy to their family friends and peer one that is 77% were ready to recommend and 21% were not sure about recommending they may recommend, or they may not it may depend upon the availability of drugs at local chemist and 2% were sure that they won't recommend online pharmacy

How Satisfied you are by purchasing online medications?

Figure 14

The above graph examines the satisfaction level of respondents after purchasing medications through Online Pharmacy.

64% of respondents were satisfied after purchasing medications through online and 24% of respondents were very much satisfied after purchase of the medication from Online Pharmacy and 6% respondents were neutral as they were not sure either they are satisfied or unsatisfied and 2% were dissatisfied after purchase of medication through online.

If you were given opportunity how likely would you purchase drugs from Online Pharmacy?

Figure 15

The above graph represents how likely a costumer is ready to purchase medicines through online pharmacy.

57% of respondents are likely to purchase the drugs from online Pharmacy, 18% are extremely ready to make a purchase, 17% are not sure either ready or not to make a purchase through online and 6% are not so likely to make a purchase through online and 2% are not at all ready to make a purchase from online Pharmacy.

5. Study Findings

From the survey using questionnaire the finding is:

Maximum no of respondents is of 18-25 age group that shows respondents are young age

Maximum respondents are male

Most people are buying medicines through online pharmacy and majority of the people started buying medicines through online recently i.e., during COVID 19 time through Online Pharmacy. The rate of buying from online Pharmacies have been increased in COVID times

Recommendation or self-inspiration plays important role in the purchasing behavior of the consumers. Majority of people buy from online pharmacy by self-prescribing method

The main reason of purchasing drug from online pharmacy are price and wide variety of choice

Most of the consumers are purchasing both Prescription and Non-Prescription drug from online pharmacy

Most of the respondents are aware of illegal trading in online pharmacy that shows people are getting educated

Most of the people opinion in the quality of drug purchased from online is of reasonable quality

Almost 70% of respondents are willing to buy medications from online in future that shows the people are adopting to new trends and ready to recommend to their friends.

Most of the respondents are satisfied the medications which purchased through online and most of the respondents are likely to purchase medication through online pharmacy in future

Discussion

In a business it is important to know the consumer perception about the business model or the products in which they operate. The Pharmaceutical market is totally a different market when compared to other market and it's a huge market. Nowadays there are N number of products in market with different name and brand name and many players are there in market. Consumers can select any among this product which are available in market. From this study we can say that consumers are adopting Online pharmacies like other E commerce platforms and due to outbreak of COVID 19 has increased the market penetration of E pharmacy along with that various factor influence the consumer to buy medicines online such as low price and doorstep delivery etc.

As technology is getting better consumers are adopting it accordingly

6. Conclusion

E-commerce of medicine in India is new model which can influence both positively and negatively on the healthcare system. The E pharmacies delivers the medicines to every location in the country and getting medicines is easier nowadays as emerge of online Pharma. Online Pharmacies have its advantage and risk factors too.

As the people are adopting new Technology and new trends in the market Online pharmacy is having a good market growth in India in Upcoming years as E pharmacies is easily accessible and vast selection of medicines and lower price. E pharmacies can be said as future pharmacies seeing the current trends.

The Survey Conclusions with certain limitations like:

The sample size count used for this survey is 100 respondents so it may not be the proper representation of the Bengaluru population

While answering for the questionnaire the respondent can form his own question according to their thinking

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Annexures

To Study the Perception Towards E- Commerce of Pharmaceutical Products

1. Name
2. Age:
 - 18-25
 - 26-30
 - 31-35
 - 36-40
 - Above 40
3. Gender
 - Female
 - Male
 - Prefer Not to say
4. Have you purchased medicines online?
 - Yes
 - No
 - May be

5. Since how many years you are purchasing medicines online
- 0-1
 - 1-2
 - 2-3
 - More than 3
6. What induces you to request for drug online
- Doctor Prescription
 - Pharmacist recommendation
 - Self-Prescription
 - Other
7. Reason for purchasing medication Online
- Low price
 - No prescription Needed
 - Non-Availability in local Pharmacy
 - Wide choice of Products
8. Which are the most purchased medications from Online
- Prescription drug
 - Non-Prescription Drug
 - Both
9. Are you aware of illegal trading of medications through online?
- Yes
 - No
 - Maybe
10. How was the quality of medicine which you purchased through online?
- Very poor quality
 - Poor quality
 - Reasonable quality
 - High quality
 - Not sure
11. Would you order medicines online in future?
- Yes
 - No
 - May be
12. After consuming medications purchased from online is there any improvement in health condition?
- Remarkable improvement
 - No improvement

Little improvement

13. Would you like to recommend online pharmacy to your friends and family?

Yes

No

May be

14. How satisfied you are by purchasing online medications

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Neutral

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

15. If you were given opportunity how likely would you purchase drugs from online pharmacy

Extremely likely

Likely

Somewhat likely

Not so likely

Not at all likely