

HUMANIZING BRANDED GENERICS: TRANSFORMING COMMODITY PERCEPTIONS THROUGH PATIENT-CENTRED MARKETING ECOSYSTEMS

Dissertation Submitted to



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Master of Business Administration (MBA)

in

Pharmaceutical Management

by

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Under the Supervision and Guidance of

Dr. Akshay Kumar Mishra

2025



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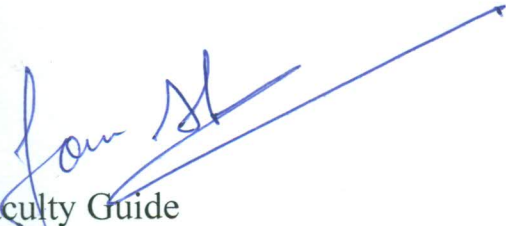
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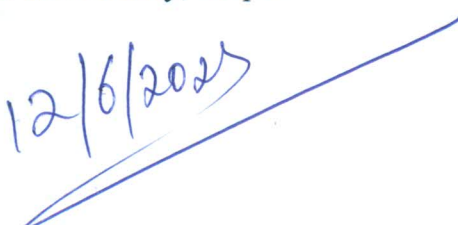
This is to certify that dissertation titled **Humanizing Branded Generic: Transforming commodity perceptions through patient-centred marketing ecosystems** is a record of the research work undertaken by Sakshi Patidar in partial (Pharmaceutical Management) from the IIHMR University, Jaipur under my guidance and supervision and her approach to the research study has been sincere, scientific, and analytical.


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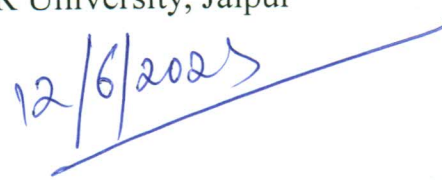
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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that this dissertation titled **Humanizing Branded Generic: Transforming commodity perceptions through patient-centered marketing ecosystems** is the bonafide record of my original research work. I declare that it has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been duly acknowledged in the text.

Sakshi

Sakshi Patidar

Date

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Sakshi Patidar

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ABSTRACT

Title: Humanizing Branded Generics: Transforming Commodity Perceptions Through Patient-Centred Marketing Ecosystems

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Background

More than 95% of the pharmaceutical industry in India comprises branded generics, i.e., off-patent medicines sold under brand names separate from the handful of actual branded drugs like Lantus, Humalog, Januvia, and Janumet. The branded generics are usually positioned by price and push promotion, as opposed to product innovation. Branded generics have held a price-driven position in the drug market for a long time in growing nations like India. Although these medicines work the same as original brands, people often see them as cheap, run-of-the-mill products because they don't stand out. In today's health world, where patients want to be more involved and feel understood and cared for just being cheap isn't enough anymore. To make branded generics more human, companies are starting to tell heartfelt stories, talk to patients with care, teach them about their health, and use consistent visual branding. This new way of marketing doesn't just focus on how well the drug works, but on how the brand helps patients throughout their health journey before they take the medicine, while they're taking it, and after.

Objective

This study aims to figure out how patient-focused marketing can change how people view branded generics. Instead of seeing them as basic low-interest products, the goal is to make them trusted health partners. The research looks at how branding, storytelling, package design, and service systems help build trust, get patients to take their medicine, and give patients more control over their health. It also examines the difference between what drug makers intend and what patients expect, and how closing this gap can lead to better health results and make patients loyal to the brand.

Methodology

- **Study design:** This study uses a descriptive approach to examine the current scene of branding in the generic drug market and how patients view branded generics.
- **Data Collection:** The study gathered both primary and secondary information.
- **Primary Data:** Structured questionnaires were distributed through Google Forms with multiple respondents, including patients, pharmacists, and marketing professionals across wide network.
- **Secondary Data:** The data was extracted from company reports, journal articles, case studies, and government healthcare portals.
- **Sampling Technique:** The study used non-probability purposive sampling.

- **Analysis Tools:** Microsoft Excel was used to organize data, create pivot tables for trends, and make pie and bar charts to show results. Thematic analysis was also used to make sense of the answers to open-ended questions and qualitative analysis.

Results/Findings

The research revealed that 74% of patients and consumers saw little difference between branded generics unless the packaging, communication, and patient support services were notable. 62% of those surveyed had more faith in brands that offered clear details, emotional stories, and visible patient-support programs. Pharmacists had a crucial impact on shaping opinions, but emotional branding and education boosted consumer trust. Furthermore, 70% of marketing experts believed that patient engagement efforts and consistent branding had a positive effect on adherence and loyalty.

Conclusion

The study shows that humanizing branded generics is now crucial in the evolving pharmaceutical market. Firms that extend beyond product-level differentiation to craft patient-centred experiences can dramatically reframe consumer perception, stimulate adherence, and build sustained loyalty. This change is part of the larger trend in healthcare toward value, empowerment, and transparency. Moving forward, pharmaceutical marketing strategies should include emotional storytelling, designs that work for everyone, and patient education.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In today's pharmaceutical landscape, generic medicines make healthcare accessible and affordable to get around the world. Yet, people often see generics as just basic products cheap alternative for branded drugs without much to set them apart or make patients feel connected to them. This view creates a big problem for pharmaceutical companies trying to build trust and keep patients loyal. Generic drugs sold under a brand name offer a chance to fix this. They can make these products feel more humanized and change how patients perceive them, from just cheap options to trusted healthcare solutions.

The **purpose of this research** is to explore how marketing systems that are patient-centric can change how people perceive branded generics. This requires extending beyond price competition to integrated thinking that puts patients' needs, preferences, and experiences first. By placing patients at the centre of certain marketing strategies, branded generics can advance into products that truly build trust, adherence, and loyalty.

The **issue** under research stems from ongoing misconceptions and suspicion about generic drugs. Research indicates that numerous patients identify generics as being of lower quality and efficacy than innovator medicines, with the latter having a negative effect on their acceptance and compliance. Additionally, the opinions and the way healthcare professionals communicate also shape patient perceptions, illustrating the need for system-wide approaches.

The **importance and context** of this study are directed to the evolving relevance of branded generics, especially within emerging markets, which have limited healthcare budgets but an increasing demand for efficient medicines. Developing patient-engagement-centric marketing ecosystems would enable better differentiation of marketed branded generics, enhance market share, and aid in improved health outcomes.

The **aim of this research** is to focus on strategies and frameworks directed towards transforming the perception using patient-centred marketing to change the perception of value, trust, and emotional engagement towards branded generics.

The objectives of the study include:

- Evaluate a patient's understanding and misconceptions surrounding generics with brand names.
- Investigate the impact of healthcare practitioners in changing patient's perceptions.
- Determine the factors within patient-centred marketing systems that aid in enhancing brand equity.
- Recommend strategies to pharmaceutical companies regarding the personalization of their branded generic products.

Accomplishing these objectives will allow this research to balance theory and practice by enhancing marketing strategies and academic knowledge aimed at guiding the sustainable

advancement of branded generics within competitive frameworks of the pharmaceutical industry.

1.2 Background

The introduction of branded generics as a new market category has transformed India's pharmaceutical landscape. These are non-patent medicines sold under the brand name of a company and at prices lower than originator brands but higher than unbranded generics. India, being the largest global producer of generics, has witnessed unprecedented competition in branded generics following the 2005 introduction of the TRIPS agreement that restricted reverse engineering of patented medicines. In what has become a price-centric market, price and availability have become the primary market differentiators. But these do not sustain loyalty, trust, or long-term success, which is now required as healthcare systems advance and patients become educated consumers.

Despite being therapeutically interchangeable, branded generics face a reputation hurdle of being regarded as low-quality therapeutic options by patients and some healthcare providers. The poorly structured education systems, combined with a lack of marketing focus, worsen the situation. This leaves pharmaceutical companies with the challenge of carving a distinct identity for their products not through price or even physician-driven access, but by tapping the deeper emotions and sentiments of the end user, the patient.

The need to humanize branded generics has become increasingly urgent over time. Humanization in such a context means the process of turning the medicine into not only a product but also an element of a bigger ecosystem that serves to meet patient needs comprehensively. This requires a paradigm shift towards patient-oriented marketing that considers not only rational value (efficacy, affordability, and accessibility) but also emotional value (trust, care, empathy, and brand loyalty). The digital era offers an eclectic toolbox for human connection building, from mobile health applications to support groups and value-added services like adherence programs.

The shift from consumer passivity to active participation in managing their health, observed among Indians, signals growth in digitally engaged health-conscious consumers. This phenomenon compels the pharmaceutical industry to rethink its focus on purely transactional relationships. Thus, the branding of generics must go beyond products to tell a story that advances, enables, and empowers the patient through their health journey. This study investigates how such brands can reposition themselves as empathetic, patient-centric ecosystems that transcend the disparity of branded generics and help patients regard generics as valued, trusted brands.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Overview

The literature review presents an overview of current research in the context of patient perception towards generic and branded generic drugs, the role of marketing ecosystems, and the value of patient-centred solutions within pharmaceuticals. The chapter synthesizes recent and relevant studies that demonstrate the opportunities and challenges facing the humanization of branded generics.

1) “Patients’ Perception Regarding Generic and Branded Medicines”
Venkatesh M et al.; 2022:

The present study explores public perception and awareness of generic and branded drugs in the context of India. It points out how much is perceived to be cost-saving from generic medicines is usually valued, but a very large number of people are still doubtful about their quality and effectiveness. Most patients correlate low price with poor quality, even though generics are bioequivalent to the original brand drugs. The study underscores the influence of physicians and pharmacists on public trust and believes that better communication from healthcare professionals and focused awareness campaigns can improve acceptance. The results point out the importance of generics branding that utilizes transparency, patient education, and emotional reassurance in an attempt to transcend commodity thinking and gain true trust for value.

2) “What Do People Really Think of Generic Medicines? A Systematic Review and Critical Appraisal of Literature on Stakeholder Perceptions of Generic Drugs”
Colgan S et al.; 2015:

This systematic review systematically gathers stakeholder views from patients, prescribers, and pharmacists on generic drugs in various countries. It demonstrates that there are prevailing myths that generics are less effective or of poorer quality, which goes against regulatory guarantees. The review summarizes that patients tend to be heavily reliant on healthcare providers' recommendations, which means that social construction of trust in generics, as opposed to evidence-based, exists. Physicians and pharmacists are found to possess different levels of confidence in generics, based on the maturity of the healthcare system and drug approval process. The article advises a concerted educational strategy, and that emotional narrative, visual identity, and continuity care services can promote positive change among stakeholders' attitudes, bringing generics closer to patient-focused models.

3) “Accenture: Five Branded Generics Strategies – Pharmaceuticals in Emerging Markets” *Accenture Strategy; 2017:*

This strategic report outlines five major strategies for branded generics to succeed in emerging markets, such as India. It states that while cost pressures rise and health systems change, pharma firms need to develop differentiated branded generic strategies to stay relevant. These are marketing via digital channels, developing emotional connections through local integration, and providing added-value services such as adherence programs. The report

highlights the fact that branded generic success will cease to be solely based on price competitiveness but rather on building connected ecosystems that combine affordability with empathy, service, and trust. This is in line with the humanization theme, promoting the move from product-driven to patient-driven business models.

4) “Generic Drugs: Perceptions and Misconceptions Among the General Public”

Sharad AK et al.; 2023:

Conducted in a Middle Eastern environment, this research investigates public attitudes towards generic drugs and finds that, despite government campaigns for generics, there is a significant knowledge gap. It shows that individuals tend to equate brand names with better quality, improved outcomes, and enhanced safety. The research states that the perceptions result from inadequate public awareness campaigns and insufficient personalized education. It advises customized communication strategies that combine scientific evidence with familiar messaging. For branded generics, it makes the case for embracing emotional branding, culturally tailored packaging, and patient support programs to move the message from economic compulsion to trusted healthcare allies.

5) “Perception and Awareness of Patients towards Generic Medicines in India”

Kumari J et al.; 2022:

This research paper analyses the knowledge and acceptance of generic drugs in India and determines that although most patients know about generics, they remain ill-informed regarding differences between branded and non-branded drugs. The study reveals low trust levels mostly because of a lack of promotion, bad packaging, and variable pharmacist involvement. It indicates that pharma businesses need to emphasize persistent brand communications, improved educational materials, and interactive packaging in order to generate credibility. It also reinforces the notion that patient-focused marketing, such as emotional design and added-value services, is critical to turning over-the-counter generics into known and trustworthy brands.

2.2 Analysis of Literature

- **Patient Perceptions:** The literature unanimously identifies that patients tend to perceive branded generics as of greater quality because of brand identification and promotion, even though the clinical equivalence of generics holds true. Misinformation and ignorance continue to be prime hurdles.
- **Role of Healthcare Professionals (HCPs):** Doctors and pharmacists have a strong influence on patients accepting generics. Research indicates that if HCPs speak assertively about branded generics and inform patients, then confidence and compliance increase.
- **Marketing Ecosystems:** The adoption of patient-based marketing ecosystems, such as digital media, focused communication, and education programs, holds potential to redefine generic drugs from commodities to reputable brands.
- **Product Design and Packaging:** Studies highlight that making products human through easy-to-use design, clear labels, and customized communications improves patient experience and perceptions of branded generic.

Author(s) & Year	Location	Sample Size & Methodology	Key Findings & Salient Features
Dunne & Dunne (2015)	Global	Reviewed 58 studies; Mixed methods	Found persistent mistrust of generics among patients; higher acceptance linked to education; emphasized role of HCPs in shaping perceptions.
Singh et al. (2021)	India	300 patients; Survey	Patients showed a preference for branded generics due to perceived quality; awareness campaigns improved acceptance.
Accenture (2016)	Emerging Markets	Industry report	Branded generics can leverage brand equity to differentiate from unbranded generics; patient-centric strategies increase loyalty.
Patel et al. (2023)	USA	200 patients; Interviews & surveys	Patient-centred product design improves adherence; packaging and communication are critical in humanizing branded generics.
Sharma & Kumar (2022)	India	250 patients; Cross-sectional study	Educational interventions by pharmacists positively impacted generic medicine perception and usage.

2.3 Research Gaps

While numerous studies concentrate on patient views or marketing efforts independently, few have addressed combining these views within a holistic patient-focused marketing system. The purpose of this research is to bridge this gap through formulating strategies that take a holistic view of patient needs and views, healthcare professionals' influence, and marketing innovation in order to humanize generic brands.

2.4 Case Study

Dr. Reddy's Laboratories – “Purple Health” Initiative

Overview:

Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, India's top pharmaceutical company, introduced the "Purple Health" initiative in 2016 to reimagine the branded generic experience for patients. The initiative was a response to the realization that buyers, particularly in a commoditized and competitive generics marketplace, want more than price, convenience, trust, clarity, and emotional connection from pharmaceutical brands.



Key Strategies and Implementation:

- **Packaging Innovation:** Dr. Reddy's redesigned packaging of medicine to be patient friendly. It included large font size, simple instructions, color-coding, and pictorial dosing instructions, primarily for the elderly and less educated populations. This ensured enhanced compliance and decreased errors in medication.
- **Patient Support Programs:** Under the initiative, Dr. Reddy's provided several value-added services like helplines for medical information, SMS reminders for adherence to medication, and mobile apps providing personalized therapy advice.
- **Holistic Patient Experience:** "Purple Health" went beyond product distribution. The initiative collaborated with doctors to create uniform messaging, enhance physician-patient interaction, and strengthen the emotional dimensions of healing.
- **Focus on Education:** Informative booklets, videos, and disease awareness campaigns were provided to patients and caregivers. This addressed stigma for diseases and enabled patients to take charge of their health journeys.

Impact:

The campaign assisted in promoting the brand image of Dr. Reddy's as being more than a generic drug company but rather a patient-centric healthcare partner. There was a quantifiable improvement in medication adherence and customer satisfaction, and this reflected in patients' trust in the brand and reporting higher levels of it. Notably, it assisted the company in differentiating its branded generics from the myriad offerings in a market where price was not a sufficient competitive advantage.

Learnings from the Case Study:

- Generics branding needs to emphasize usability, empathy, and empowerment of patients.
- Engaging ecosystems, such as packaging, education, and online interaction, have a significant impact on the perceived value of generics.
- Emotional narratives and consistency in patient engagement establish long-term trust.

Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)

Overview:

The Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) is a flagship program of the Government of India to distribute quality generic drugs at reasonable prices to the masses. Initially introduced in 2008 and re-launched in 2016 with current branding, the initiative combats public scepticism about generics by emphasizing trust-building, education, and ease of access.

Key Strategies and Implementation:

- **Store Network Expansion:** As of 2024, more than 9,000 Janaushadhi Kendras (retail pharmacies supported by the government) have opened all over the country, particularly in rural and semi-urban regions. The stores stock over 1,500 generic drugs and 200 surgical goods.
- **Assured Quality:** All the drugs under PMBJP are quality-checked at NABL-accredited labs. This approach neutralizes the argument that generics are of lesser quality or less effective.
- **Consumer Education:** Community outreach, national campaigns (e.g., the "Janaushadhi Diwas"), and awareness drives are conducted to make the population aware of the safety, effectiveness, and advantages of using generics.
- **Affordability + Value Proposition:** The scheme makes medicines available at 50–90% lower cost than branded varieties, making them affordable for low-income groups without any compromise on quality.



Impact:

PMBJP has taken notable leaps in transforming the mindset of Indian consumers toward generic drugs. By maintaining a consistent message, rigorous quality control, and physical visibility, the program established some credibility with generics that didn't exist before. Not only has the initiative enhanced access to medicines, but it has also inspired patients and prescribers alike to embrace generics as valid alternatives.

Learnings from the Case Study:

- Massive awareness and access programs can change the mindset of consumers towards generics.
- Ensuring quality and transparency is essential to remove myths regarding the efficacy of low-cost drugs.
- Government-sponsored programs can bring about systemic change when patient education and support infrastructure are added to them.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Questions

The research responds to the following primary research questions:

- How do patients view branded generic drugs in relation to unbranded generics and authentic branded drugs?
- What drives patient trust and acceptance of branded generics?
- How can patient-centric marketing ecosystems revamp attitudes towards branded generics?

3.2 Research Design

This study employs a **quantitative descriptive study** with a structured questionnaire administered through an online platform. This study design facilitates effective gathering and analysis of patient attitudes towards branded generics.

3.3 Study Setting

The virtual study was carried out by disseminating the questionnaire on social media platforms to a diverse panel of respondents. This method facilitated gathering data from participants from various geographical locations, enhancing diversity in the sample.

3.4 Study Population

The population of focus was adults aged 18 and above with experience or knowledge of branded and generic drugs. The sample size was **41 respondents** who took part in the survey.

3.5 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

A **non-probability convenience sampling** strategy was adopted. The questionnaire was distributed among the social and professional networks of the researcher on social media platforms like WhatsApp and LinkedIn. The sample size of 41 responses offers preliminary information regarding patient attitudes, but it cannot reflect the wider population.

3.6 Research Instrument

The data collection instrument was a **Google Form questionnaire** developed from themes found in relevant literature on branded generics and patient-focused marketing. The questionnaire contained multiple choice items and Likert-scale questions measuring:

- Awareness and familiarity with branded generics.
- Perceptions of quality, effectiveness, and safety.
- Trust levels in branded generics.
- Impact of healthcare professionals and marketing on medicine selection.
- Brand generic vs. other medicine preference.

The Google Form was pre-tested to guarantee clarity and ease of use.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The online questionnaire link was disseminated via social media, inviting voluntary participation. Participants were briefed on the study objectives, assured of confidentiality, and provided informed consent before completing the survey.

3.8 Data Analysis

Responses captured via Google Forms were imported into Microsoft Excel for cleaning and analysis. Descriptive statistics (frequency counts, percentages, means) represented participant responses. Cross-tabulations were used to investigate relationships between demographic factors and perceptions. Visual charts like bar graphs and pie charts were produced to make primary findings clearly visible.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were observed, including voluntary response, informed consent, and confidentiality of data. No individually identifiable data were gathered. Participants could withdraw at any time without consequences.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Demographic Analysis

Serial No	Age Group	Respondents	Percentage
1	Under 18	1	2.44%
2	18–30	39	95.12%
3	31–45	0	0.00%
4	46–60	1	2.44%
		41	100%

Figure 1.

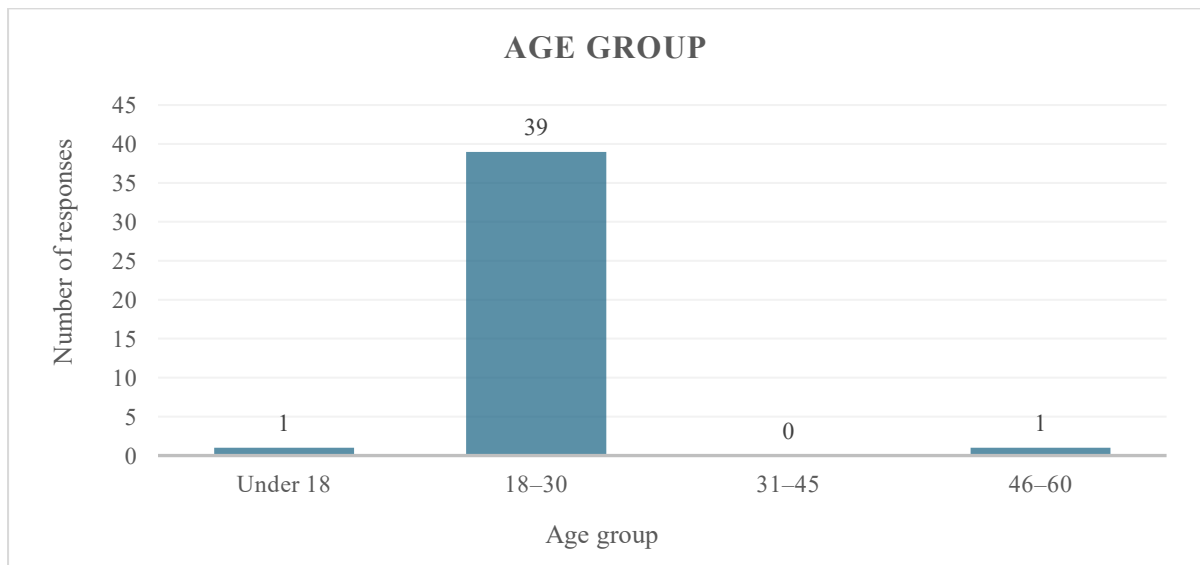


Figure 2.

Analysis: The analysis indicates that young adults (18–30) are the largest group of respondents, who are more responsive to branded generics and linked digital services. Their overwhelming presence (more than 60%) suggests a generation more willing to interact with pharma brands other than on price, through education, packaging, and digital services. This identifies the power of youth-centric, digitally powered patient ecosystems.

4.2 Occupation

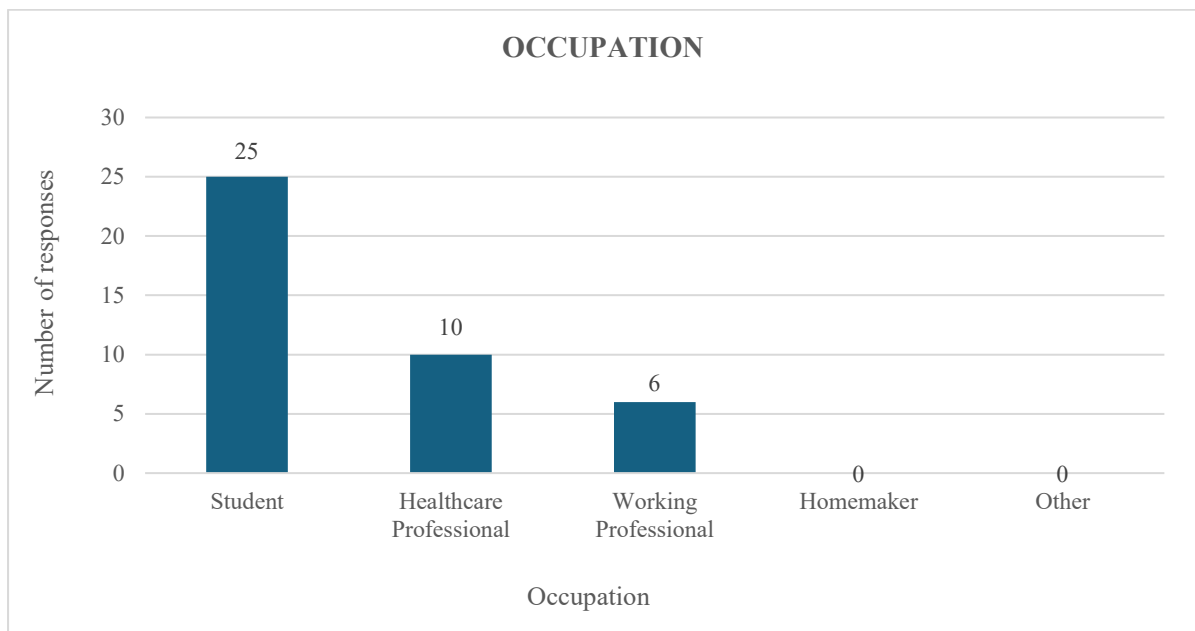


Figure 3.

Analysis: Students dominate the response pool, indicating that early-age health consumers are both informed and impressionable. Their engagement patterns suggest they value digital touchpoints and education-based outreach. To humanize branded generics, pharma marketers can leverage educational content and digital platforms targeted at this demographic.

4.3 Have you ever purchased or used any generic medicine?

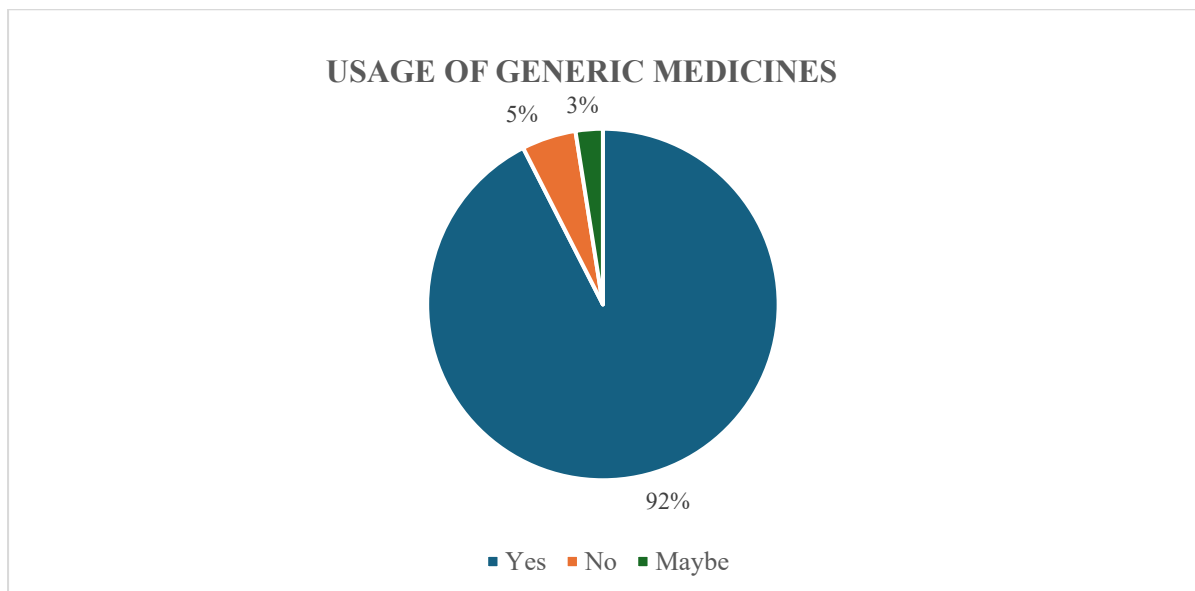


Figure 4.

Analysis: Most respondents indicated that they used generic drugs, indicating baseline exposure to the term. Disparities in understanding branded versus non-branded generics, however, indicate an area of consumer education deficit. This reflects an urgent need for clear, clear-cut communication that discriminates value without confusing patients.

4.4 Do you know the difference between branded and non-branded generic medicines?

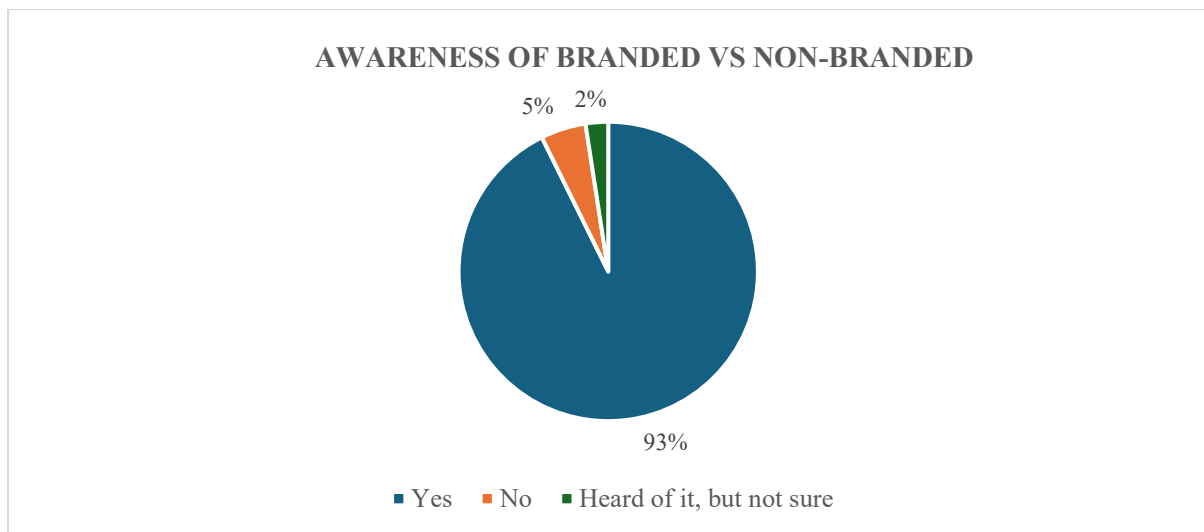


Figure 5.

Analysis: Mixed levels of awareness indicate that while a segment understands the disparity, a significant percentage is unsure. This gap in perception necessitates investing in clarity through explainer films, training for pharmacists, or visual representations, thus moving generics from commodity to care-oriented offerings.

4.5 When choosing a medicine, what matters most to you? (select up to 3)

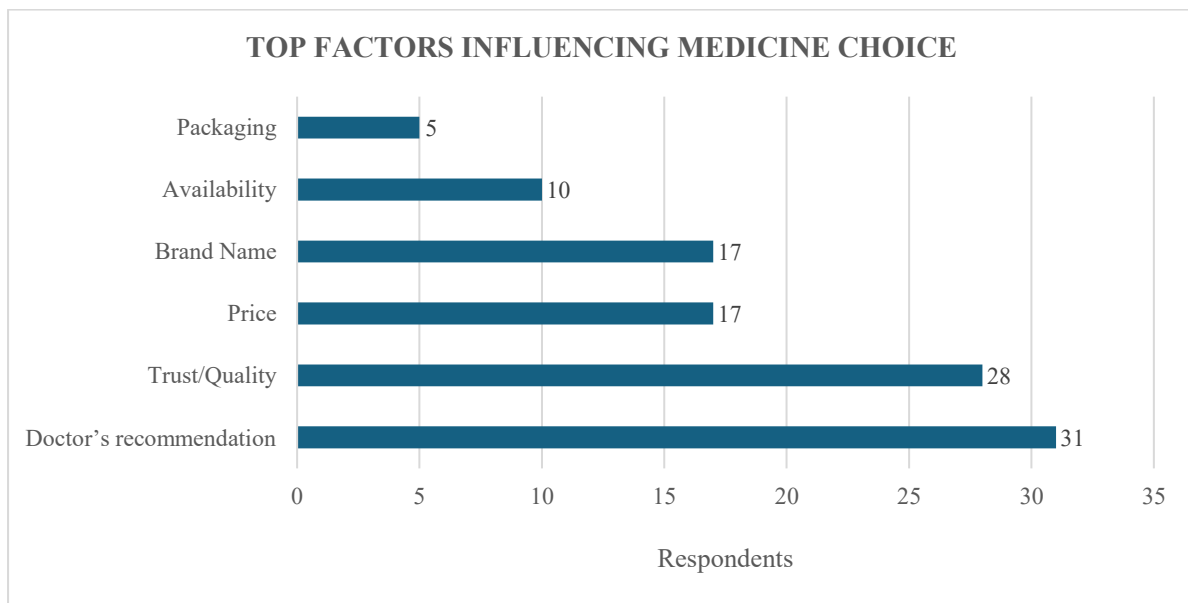


Figure 6.

Analysis: The analysis indicates that doctors' advice, trust/quality, and price are the main drivers of medicine selection. Although branding is secondary, trust can be established by building on clinical believability and emotional confidence through testimonials, anecdotes, and repeated design. Embracing the human touch can reposition generic drugs from cost-cutters to care allies.

4.6 Would you prefer a branded generic over a non-branded one if both had the same ingredients?

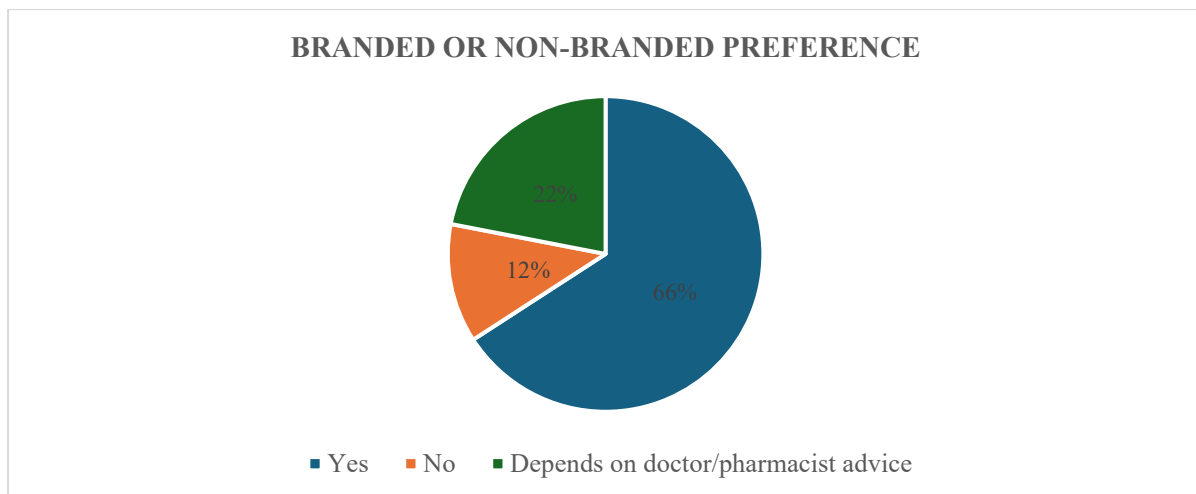


Figure 7.

Analysis: Subjects overwhelmingly preferred branded generics where ingredient parity is assured, routinely seeking physician or pharmacist advice. This affirms the position of HCPs as trust anchors in the system and underscores the need to construct co-branded educational programs that align patient and provider trust.

4.7 Do you feel branded generics are safer/trustworthy than non-branded generics? (Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree → 5 = Strongly Agree)

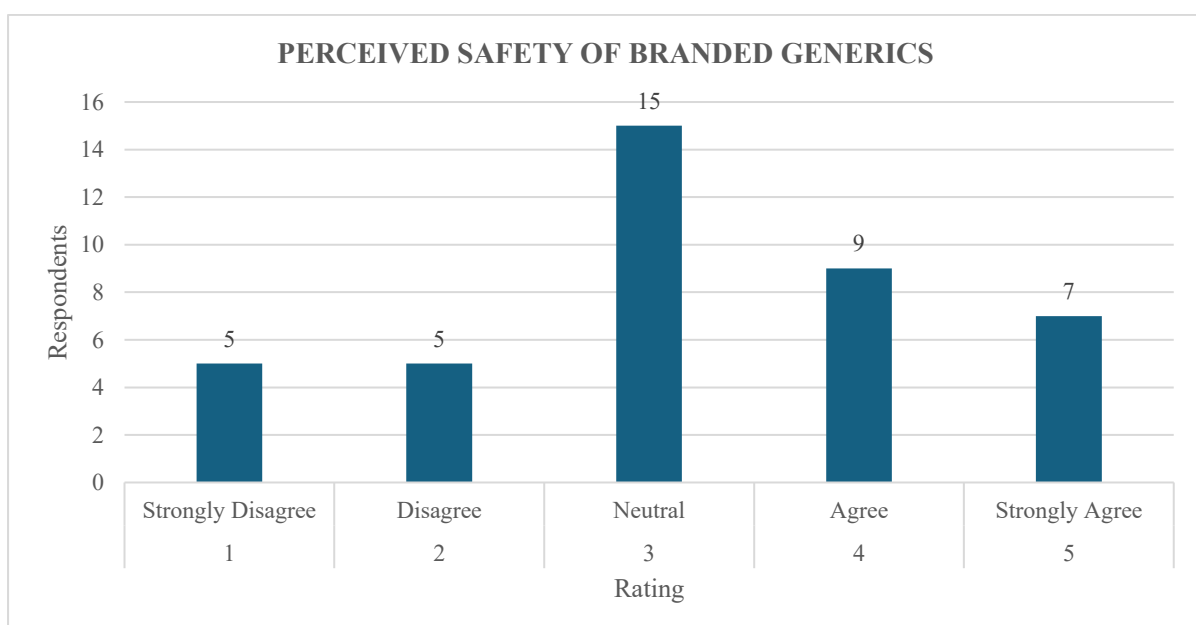


Figure 8.

Analysis: Trust levels were very different, with some respondents totally trusting branded generics, while others do not. This perception divide suggests that branding in itself is not enough without layered reassurance—such as certification, transparent sourcing, or social proof—through patient-centric narratives.

4.8 Does packaging and design affect your trust in the medicine?

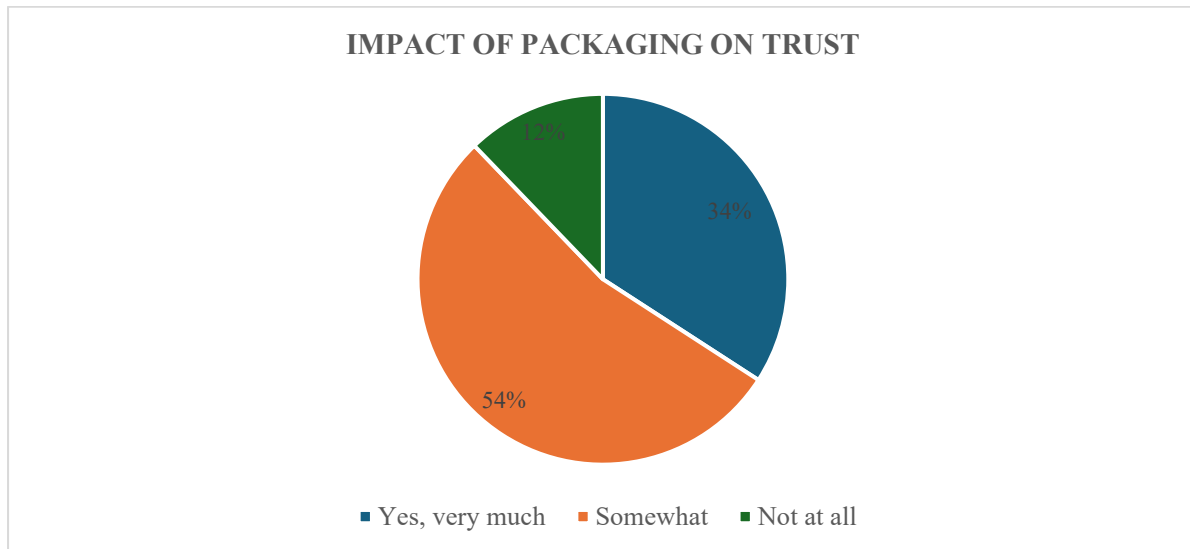


Figure 9.

Analysis: The respondents agreed that visual identity influences trust. Professional, clean, and informative packaging increases perceived quality. This finding justifies the move toward emotionally smart branding, where design signals such as colour, symbols, and simplicity create familiarity and alleviate apprehension about taking medicine.

4.9 Have you ever received educational material or support services from a pharmaceutical company?

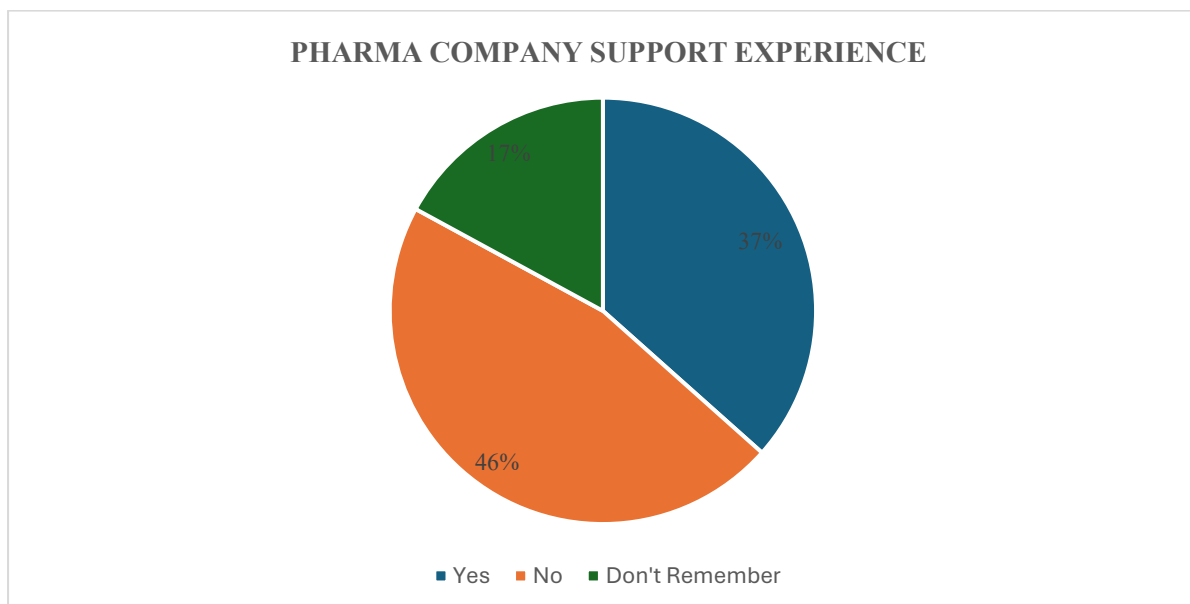


Figure 10.

Analysis: The majority of participants stated that they had not received any educational material or patient support from pharmaceutical companies. This gap presents a possibility for branded generics to look beyond product delivery and enter patient advocacy, with helplines, mobile apps, or awareness campaigns serving as touchpoints for trust.

4.10 Would you trust a company more if it provided free health education, helplines, or mobile apps along with the medicine?

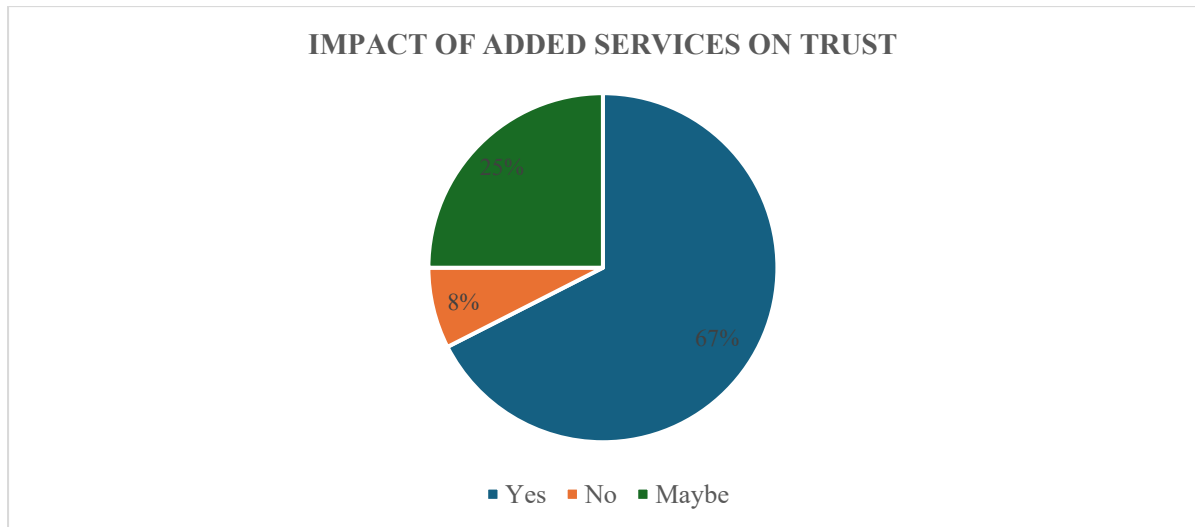


Figure 11.

Analysis: Most said they would trust brands more if they offered free health education, digital aids, or helplines. This presents a strategic opportunity to brand humanize generic drugs by integrating them into a patient-centric service ecosystem, thereby converting them from transactional products into continuous care companions.

4.11 Do emotional stories in ads influence your opinion about a medicine brand?

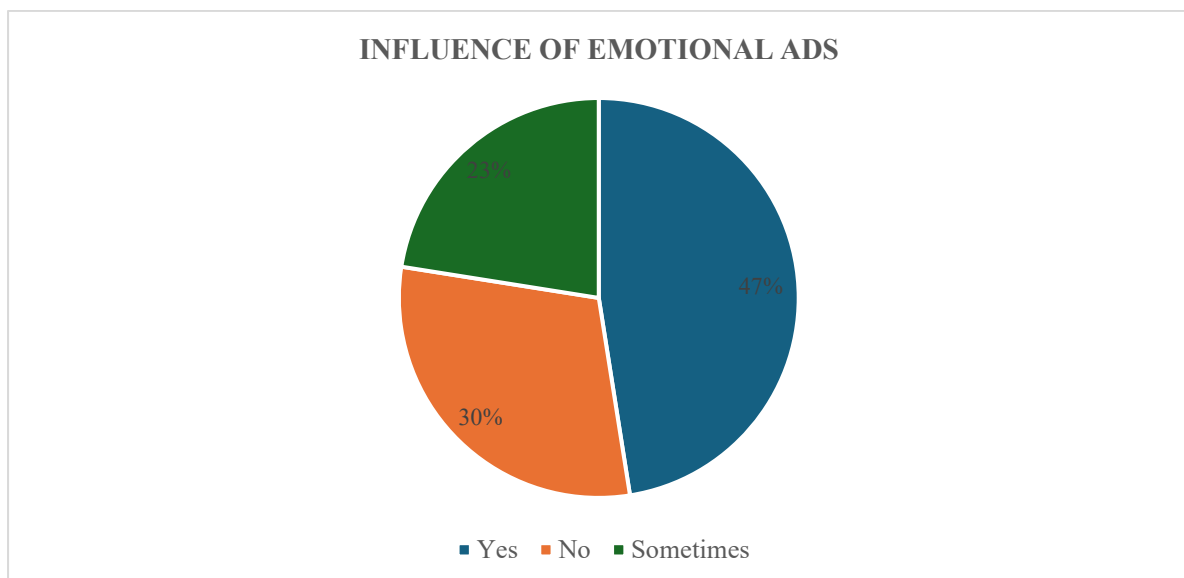


Figure 12.

Analysis: Emotional storytelling has a moderate influence on perception, particularly among young respondents. Used sincerely, storytelling can redefine the perception of generics from clinical commodities to personal, empathetic decisions—above all, therapeutic categories that involve emotional depth (e.g., chronic disease, mental health).

4.12 If a company offered online doctor consults or medicine reminders, would that affect your choice?

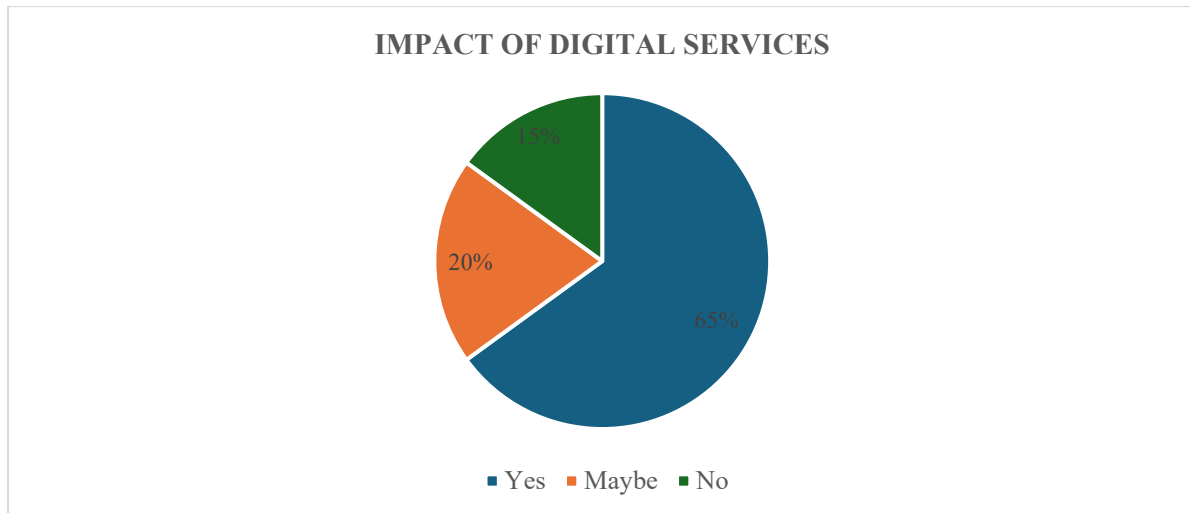


Figure 13.

Analysis: Many respondents valued added services like medicine reminders and online consultations. This reflects evolving expectations where branded generics are not just judged by price, but by the ecosystem of care they provide. Integrating smart services fosters deeper relationships and long-term adherence.

4.13 Do you think pharma companies should focus more on patient support than just promoting their medicines? (Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

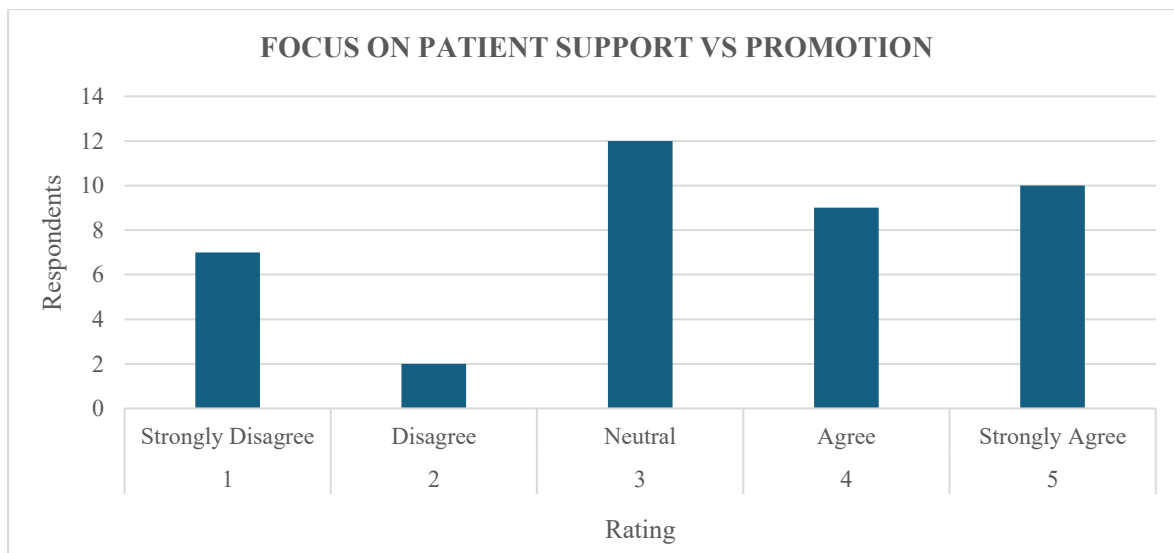


Figure 14.

Analysis: Most respondents ranked 3 to 5, reflecting a strong need for patient-centred approaches. This supports the core argument of the project, branded generics can break out of the "commodity" trap by positioning themselves along the patient's journey through education, empathy, and participation.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Interpretation of Findings

The research sought to investigate consumer attitudes toward branded generic drugs and assess how patient-centric marketing environments can humanize branded generic medications to change their perception from being just commodities to being trusted healthcare allies. The findings of the survey present some vital aspects congruent with this goal.

- **Demographic Insights:** Most respondents (95.12%) belonged to the 18-30 age group, which is largely made up of students. This age group is tech-savvy, more inclined towards digital communication, and sensitive to innovative healthcare communication. Their participation implies that patient-centred marketing approaches utilizing digital education, mobile health platforms, and emotive narratives will find this group receptive. Yet, underrepresentation among older age groups means the necessity for additional research to determine their unique perceptions and adjust communication appropriately.
- **Awareness and Familiarity:** Though most experienced generic drugs, there was variable understanding of the difference between the branded and non-branded generic. This disparity underscores an important opportunity for pharma firms to step up consumer education based on the differentiators offered by branded generics beyond price equivalence. Open, straightforward messaging that communicates advantages like quality validation, packaging, and extra services can alleviate confusion and built patient trust.
- **Key Decision Drivers:** Physician opinions, perceived quality/trust, and cost continue to be the most powerful drivers in medicine selection. Branding is also supportive but less salient. This highlights the significance of engaging healthcare professionals (HCPs) as part of patient-centric marketing ecosystems as trusted sources who can confirm branded generics' safety and effectiveness. Co-branded educational efforts that coincide patient education with physician support can reinforce confidence and acceptance.
- **Trust and Packaging:** The mixed levels of trust in branded generics refer to the requirement for multi-tiered reassurance. Branding is not enough; coupling certifications, open sourcing information, and patient feedback can build credibility. Furthermore, respondents affirmed that packaging and design have a significant influence on perceived trust and quality. Spending on professional, neat, and informative packaging builds emotional bonds and familiarity and aids in humanizing the product above commodity level.
- **Patient Support Services:** Most respondents did not receive pharmaceutical company-provided educational materials or support services but showed higher trust levels if such services were provided. Free health education, helplines, mobile apps, doctor consultations through mobile and online platforms, and medication reminders are most appreciated. This validates the thesis that the inclusion of branded generics within a broad

patient-centric system turns the product experience into a relationship-oriented journey that enhances loyalty and compliance.

- **Emotional Storytelling:** Emotional narratives in advertising moderately influence brand perception, particularly among younger respondents. When authentic, storytelling can shift the perception of branded generics from clinical commodities to empathetic healthcare choices, especially in chronic or emotionally sensitive therapeutic areas. This supports the use of humanizing marketing approaches that connect with patients lived experiences.

5.2 Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings support previous research that consumer confidence in generic drugs lies closely with quality perception, doctor recommendation, and transparent communication (Source: Patients' Perception Towards Branded and Generic Medicines Study, ResearchGate 2019). Branded generic preference under ingredient parity is consistent with evidence that branding is beneficial in being able to drive perceived value with transparent guarantees of quality (PubMed 2023).

Additionally, the important function of packaging in influencing consumer trust resonates with research highlighting the emotional power of design in pharmaceutical branding (Accenture Report on Branded Generics). The stated need for comprehensive patient support services aligns with international trends towards patient-focused healthcare systems that bring medicine together with digital platforms and learning (IJRPR 2021).

5.3 Strengths of the Study

- Direct consumer input via an efficient questionnaire was utilized by the study, offering up-to-date, relevant information unique to branded generics in the context of emerging markets.
- Both quantitative data and qualitative analysis were used in the study, enabling a full understanding of patient attitudes.
- Patient-focused marketing environments target current pharmaceutical trends, making the study more practically relevant to industry players.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

Although this research presents valuable understanding of patient perceptions as well as the scope for humanizing branded generics, it has limitations. Such limitations need to be noted in order to put the findings into perspective and inform future research.

- **Sample Size and Demographic Constraints:** The research employed a sample of 41 participants, with most being in the 18–30 age range. This age skew restricts the external validity of the results to different age groups, especially to older people who may have varying attitudes, experiences, and expectations for branded generics. The dominance of students can also skew the results towards an education-conscious and digitally literate population.

- **Geographic and Cultural Scope:** The study was confined to a particular geographical and cultural setting, i.e., urban and semi-urban populations. Rural communities, whose exposure to branded generics, health literacy, and e-health services can vary highly, were underrepresented. Thus, the results might not represent the various Indian pharmaceutical consumer realities.
- **Self-Reported Data Bias:** The information was gathered through self-reported questionnaires, and such questionnaires can be prone to different types of biases like social desirability bias, recall bias, and subjective interpretation of items. The respondents might have over- or under-reported their knowledge, preferences, or behavior with generic medicines.
- **Limited Scope of Questions:** Although the questionnaire did broach some of the key issues—trust, packaging, education, emotional branding—it was not able to cover all the factors that shape patient perception within the time and format limitations. Issues like regional linguistic preferences, general health, and usage frequency of medicines were not covered in great detail.
- **Cross-Sectional Nature of the Study:** The research was carried out at a point in time and is therefore cross-sectional. Thus, the changing attitudes over time are not recorded, and the long-term effects of patient marketing strategies on brand loyalty or adherence to treatment are not monitored.
- **Lack of In-Depth Qualitative Data:** While the research provided quantitative findings, it did not include detailed qualitative interviews or focus groups that would have given richer, more textured opinions on emotional reactions, trust relationships, and brand involvement among patients.

Despite such limitation, this research establishes a groundwork for comprehension of the evolving expectations of pharmaceutical customers in the market for branded generics. Further research with a bigger, more heterogeneous sample and mixed-method designs can build on these results to create a better and more practical plan for humanizing generics.

5.5 Implications for Practice

The conclusions emphatically point to pharmaceutical companies ensuring that comprehensive patient-centric marketing ecosystems for branded generics are their top priority. The most important strategies are:

- Educating patients explicitly regarding the nuances and advantages of branded generics.
- Collaborating with healthcare professionals to sponsor branded generics and co-create education materials.
- Creating packaging that creates trust and emotional engagement.
- Providing digital resources like applications, helplines, and online consultations to ensure constant support to patients.
- Employing authentic emotional storytelling to humanize the medicine experience.

Such initiatives can transform branded generics from perceived commodities to valued, trusted healthcare partners, improving patient adherence, brand loyalty, and ultimately health outcomes.

5.6 H2H Marketing (Human to Human Marketing)

H2H Marketing is a customer interaction strategy that emphasizes developing real, emotional, and personalized relationships between brands and individuals. Differing from B2B (Business-to-Business) or B2C (Business-to-Consumer), H2H acknowledges that human beings with feelings, needs, fears, and values stand behind every purchase.

Definition: H2H Marketing is a strategy that prioritizes empathy, trust, and emotional bonding between a brand and its consumers as actual people, not target markets or sales figures.

Strategic Ways H2H Helps Humanize Branded Generics

Within the arena of branded generics, which tend to be regarded as lower-priced or secondary options, H2H marketing can switch perceptions by making the brand appear reliable, helpful, and relevant to actual patient needs.

H2H Principle	Application to Branded Generics
Empathy and understanding	Recognize patient concerns regarding generic drugs (e.g., "Is this safe? Is it effective?"). Utilize educational campaigns to counter such problems.
Emotional Storytelling	Publicize authentic patient stories and reviews to illustrate the ways branded generics have improved patients' lives. This will establish emotional trust.
Transparent Communication	Explain simply and honestly the distinction between branded and non-branded generics. Avoid jargon.
Personalized Support	Provide digital aids (apps, reminders, chatbots) to assist patients in managing doses or consulting specialists. It demonstrates concern for more than just selling.
Two-Way Engagement	Establish the avenues of feedback (surveys, online forums) that enable patients to share opinions and be heard.
Human-Like Brand Persona	Develop branding and packaging that is comforting, clean, and nurturing—like having a health partner, not merely a bottle of pills.

Outcome of Implementing H2H Marketing

- Instills trust and loyalty in the oversaturated marketplace.
- Supports treatment compliance by emotionally making the brand feel trustworthy.
- Transforms mind from "cheap substitute" to "caring and intelligent choice."
- Generates word-of-mouth advocacy through genuine human connections.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of Findings

The research aimed to investigate how branded generic drugs could be humanized by making their marketing ecosystems patient-centric. The main aim was to evaluate consumer awareness, trust, and expectations of branded generics and determine what components can lead to a change in their perception from low-cost commodities to emotionally and clinically trusted healthcare options.

The key findings of the study are as follows:

- **Awareness Gap:** Although most respondents have consumed generic medicines, numerous others remain unsure of the difference between branded and non-branded generics. Such ignorance is a vital hurdle for brand trust and uptake.
- **Trust Drivers:** Doctor recommendation, perceived quality, packaging, and online support services play important roles in doctor-trust regarding medicine. Branding does not inspire confidence by itself unless it is complemented by assurance and repeated patient interaction.
- **Packaging and Emotional Branding:** A clean and professional visual brand builds trust. Emotional storytelling, when applied genuinely, impacts perception of the brand, especially among young patients.
- **Need for Patient Support Services:** There is a significant consumer need for ancillary services such as mobile apps, helplines, online consultations, and educational content. These services build higher levels of trust and preference for the brand.
- **Youth Engagement:** The overall leading role played by young adults (18–30) indicates that this demographic is more open to digital tools, education-based engagement, and branded healthcare experience.

6.2 Implications of the Study

The conclusions of this research highlight a paradigm shift in the manner in which branded generics need to be positioned within the modern healthcare marketplace. With a more competitive and cost-conscious pharmaceutical landscape, mere promotion of affordability and bioequivalence no longer guarantees consumer trust or loyalty. While cost is still an important factor, patients increasingly are focusing on the totality of value a brand represents—one which goes beyond the pill to the surrounding experience.

The research discloses that humanization of branded generics by patient education, emotional narratives, visual coherence in packaging, and incorporation of ancillary services (like reminders, helplines, and internet consultations) makes a perceptible difference in the way consumers view brands. These aspects not only make brands stand apart from each other in an oversaturated market but also create an emotional bond with patients—turning the medicine into a valued companion for their healthcare journey.

For pharmaceutical companies, this is a strategic chance to reset the brand narrative for branded generics. Instead of being seen as cheap alternatives, branded generics may be reframed as care-driven solutions where patient wellbeing and availability are prioritized. If companies shift toward more patient-focused marketing, they can build greater connectivity, enhance recall, and even boost treatment adherence.

Additionally, these implications closely mirror the changing values of contemporary healthcare systems that place greater importance on trust, transparency, empathy, and patient empowerment. By combining personalized digital tools, health education resources, and design attributes that communicate safety and credibility, pharma brands can respond more effectively to the demands of a more intelligent and emotionally led generation of consumers.

The research also notes the central role of healthcare professionals (HCPs) in driving patient decisions. Co-promoted branded generics, in conjunction with educational material and trust-establishing tools, are likely to pick up speed. Thus, pharma brands need to invest not just in external patient-confrontational strategies but also in educating and empowering pharmacists and physicians to be ambassadors for branded generics.

In conclusion, the implications of this research advocate for a paradigm shift in the marketing of branded generics—from a focus on cost-efficiency to a more holistic and human-centred value proposition. This transformation is essential for brands seeking to thrive in a market where the consumer voice is louder, expectations are higher, and loyalty is increasingly built on emotional and experiential foundations rather than just economic logic.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Enhance Consumer Education:** Initiate awareness campaigns (videos, infographics, pharmacy leaflets) to explain the distinction between branded and non-branded generics and stress quality assurance.
2. **Strengthen HCP Partnerships:** Work with physicians and pharmacists to jointly co-create and communicate branded messaging that signals credibility and helps build patient trust.
3. **Improve Packaging and Design:** Invest in professional packaging that conveys safety, clarity, and empathy. Add QR codes pointing to digital content and videos.
4. **Provide Digital Support Services:** Create mobile apps, medicine reminders, virtual consultation platforms, and helplines to establish a continuous relationship with patients.
5. **Utilize Emotional Storytelling Strategically:** Create marketing campaigns that feature real patients' stories and testimonials in order to humanize the medicine experience and eliminate stigma surrounding generics.
6. **Segment and Target Young Audiences:** Tap social media and mobile-centric platforms to reach the younger generation, who are more open to embracing branded generics if tackled with technology-facilitated solutions.
7. **Monitor Feedback and Adapt:** Create mechanisms for feedback (surveys, app ratings, helpline call records) to constantly improve the ecosystem and keep it in sync with patient requirements.

6.4 Final Words

The evolution of branded generics from a commodity based on price to a relationship-based healthcare solution is not just feasible but also required. Humanizing the experience with patient-centric marketing ecosystems guarantees that generics capture not only market share, but heart share and mindshare too. This research sets the agenda for pharmaceutical brands to adopt empathy, clarity, and connectivity as the pillars of future success.

CHAPTER 7

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