

MARKET RESEARCH AND FIELD EXPERIENCE ON A PRODUCT, CALPOL AND AUGMENTIN

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by

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Under the Supervision and Guidance of

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TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

This certifies that Mr. Ramanuj Patidar, a IIHMR UNIVERSITY JAIPUR student, has completed his internship at **GSK Pharmaceuticals Ltd.** from **1st April 2025** to **19th June 2025**. During this period, he worked as a Medical Business associate.

Topic: Market research and field experience on a product, **Calpol** and **Augmentin**.

We found him sincere and hardworking.

We extend him good wishes for a bright and successful career AHEAD.

Harshad Kumar Ravia

ABM

GSK Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation titled **market research and field experience on a product, Calpol and Augmentin:** is a record of the research work undertaken by **Ramanuj Patidar** 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/her approach to the research study has been sincere, scientific, and analytical.



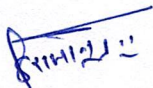
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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that this dissertation titled **“OPTIMIZING DOCTOR ENGAGEMENT THROUGH STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION BY MEDICAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATES IN THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY”** is the Bonafide record of my original market 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 Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been duly acknowledged in the text.



(Signature)

RAMANUJ PATIDAR

Date: 20/06/2025

ABSTRACT

- ❖ **TITLE:** Strategic Communication by Medical Business Associates in the Pharmaceutical Industry to Improve Doctor Engagement and Sales Outcomes.
- ❖ **AUTHOR NAME:** Ramanuj Patidar
- ❖ **ADVISOR NAME:** Mr. Akhlaque Shaikh, Regional Sales Manager; Mr. Harshad Kumar Raviya, Area Business Manager, GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals (GSK)
- ❖ **KEYWORDS:** Communication, Customer Service, Sales, Product Knowledge, Interpersonal Skills, Relationship Building, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Patience, Sales Target, Doctor Engagement, Detailing Strategies.
- ❖ **BACKGROUND:** In the ever-changing pharmaceutical industry, the role of Medical Business Associates (MBAs) has become increasingly important in connecting pharmaceutical companies with healthcare practitioners. The public face of the company that interacts directly with physicians to convey the worth, clinical advantages, and therapeutic relevance of the products are MBAs. Their method has a major impact on prescription practices, client retention, and brand loyalty.
- ❖ **OBJECTIVE:** The goal of this study is to examine how Medical Business Associates contribute to sales growth through successful doctor engagement, customized communication, and relationship-building tactics. The aim is to pinpoint the main success elements that contribute to a better customer experience, a smoother prescription process, and the attainment of business sales goals.
- ❖ **METHODOLOGY:** A mixed-methods approach was used, which included interviews with doctors and Medical Business Associates as well as analysis of sales reports, CRM data, and product detailing techniques. To assess how well CME (Continuing Medical Education) sessions affected doctor engagement and prescription behavior, they were also evaluated. Simple data analysis was performed using Excel and similar tools.
- ❖ **RESULTS/FINDINGS:** The study found that greater engagement and better prescription rates were the result of effective doctor communication, thorough product knowledge, and a patient-centered approach. MBAs who regularly employed CRM tools and maintained follow-up with compassion had stronger relationships and surpassed their monthly sales goals. The primary obstacles were time limitations and the necessity for ongoing training in soft skills and current product knowledge.

❖ **CONCLUSIONS:** Medical Business Associates are essential to increasing pharmaceutical sales via direct doctor interaction. Their success depends on their capacity to communicate the therapeutic value of products, establish trust-based relationships, and offer outstanding customer service. To consistently achieve sales performance and organizational development, it is imperative to continuously improve communication, CRM usage, and interpersonal abilities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As I approach the completion of my project report, I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who supported and guided me throughout this journey.

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Date: 20/06/2025

Ramanuj Patidar

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ACRONYMS

MBA: Medical Business Associate

CRM: Customer Relationship Management

CME: Continuing Medical Education

Rx: Prescription

MR: Medical Representative

POB: Product Order Booking

ROI: Return on Investment

KOL: Key Opinion Leader

CLM: Closed-Loop Marketing

RCPA: Retail Chemist Prescription Audit

ABM: Area Business Manager

RSM: Regional Sales Manager

SKU: Stock Keeping Unit

USP: Unique Selling Proposition

B2B: Business-to-Business

SWOT: Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In India, the pharmaceutical industry is experiencing a quick shift, particularly in branded formulations, where firms sell prescription drugs such as Amoxicillin + Clavulanic acid (Augmentin), Paracetamol combinations (Calpol 500, 650), and neomycin-based topical medications (Neosporin). These brands operate in a heavily regulated, fiercely competitive, and physician-centric environment, where marketing success has a direct impact on sales growth and brand equity. By implementing Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Doctor (B2D) strategies, medical marketing teams are essential in bridging the gap between healthcare professionals and pharmaceutical innovation. These consist of calculated prescription-based promotions, sampling campaigns, clinical interaction programs, and CME sessions (Continuing Medical Education). Sales growth, prescription patterns, and metrics of physician interaction are more and more used to assess the efficacy of these initiatives. Understanding which marketing tactics are most effective in such a changing environment—particularly during time-limited initiatives like "desertion periods" or product focus months—is crucial for maintaining consistent performance.

THE STUDY'S NECESSITY

In order to compete in an increasingly competitive market and meet the growing expectations of medical professionals, pharmaceutical firms must embrace well-defined frameworks that have a direct impact on consumer interaction and prescription production. The goal of this study is to assess:

- The degree of physician participation in CME programs in target markets such Ahmedabad.
- The sales growth rate for important brands like Augmentin and Calpol during concentrated marketing periods.

- The prescription patterns of chosen brands to gain insight into product appeal and brand preference.

These insights will help us figure out which B2B/B2D strategies are the most effective and will give us a roadmap for future brand planning.

OBJECTIVE

- To analyze the trend in brand prescriptions and product adoption in particular locations.
- To evaluate the efficacy of CME and educational initiatives in engaging doctors.
- To assess the sales growth of key pharmaceutical products during promotional cycles.
- To make useful recommendations for improving field force marketing and B2B/B2D initiatives.

SCOPE

This research looks at Indian pharmaceutical firms that sell branded medications to physicians, hospitals, and pharmacies. The main objective is to assess strategies that increase the effectiveness of products in competitive markets.

- Doctor engagement via interactive platforms and CME programs.
- Sales and prescription analysis during targeted promotional periods.
- Efforts to establish relationships and communicate at the clinic level.
- Monitoring regional brand uptake and loyalty.
- Analysis of fieldforce execution strategy.

RESEARCH ISSUES

1. What promotional strategies were used during the desertion period for products like Augmentin and Calpol?
2. How well did CME activities engage doctors in areas like Ahmedabad?
3. What prescription patterns emerged for important brands like Calpol 650, Calpol 500, and Neosporin?
4. How can fieldforce units and brand teams improve campaign effectiveness for higher sales returns?

IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

This research is extremely relevant to marketing professionals, brand managers, and fieldforce planners in the pharmaceutical industry. It measures campaign effectiveness using real sales and doctor engagement data, which helps to sharpen strategic focus, improve ROI on promotional spending, and create more impactful medical communication. Furthermore, the findings may be useful to:

- Brand teams preparing new product releases.
- Field force managers assessing campaign effectiveness.
- Strategic planners creating regional growth models.
- Medical marketing professionals involved in CME programming.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines current research and practical models pertaining to marketing in the pharmaceutical industry and its effects on the production of prescriptions. It pays particular attention to the function of Medical Business Associates, who serve as the connection between healthcare providers (HCPs) and pharmaceutical firms. The Indian branded generics market's literature is organized around important topics like doctor involvement, prescription practices, field tactics, and relationship development.

INVOLVEMENT OF DOCTORS IN PHARMACEUTICAL MARKETING

In the pharmaceutical industry, especially in India, marketing focuses on developing brand recognition, maintaining consistent doctor contact, and communicating scientific product information. The job of a Medical Business Associate (MBA) is to promote items like Augmentin and Calpol to doctors in order to boost prescription volume via relationship development and scientific support.

Key Points:

- Clear product value communication and understanding customer (doctor) behavior are crucial in brand adoption, according to Kotler & Keller.
- In healthcare, prescriptions are driven more by clinical trust and scientific reasoning than by emotional or financial considerations.
- The idea of relationship marketing emphasizes that long-term interaction with doctors leads to greater brand loyalty and more consistent prescriptions.
- Tailored product details depending on the doctor's specialty (e. g. , pediatricians for Calpol) increases efficiency.

Source: Kotler, Philip & Keller, Kevin. Marketing Management, Pearson Education, 2016
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DYNAMICS OF THE INDIAN PHARMACEUTICAL MARKET

Summary: The Indian pharmaceutical market is largely dominated by branded generics. Pharmaceutical field force personnel concentrate on influencing these prescription decisions, while doctors have a key role in selecting the brand to prescribe. Companies establish monthly brand goals, and field representatives work to accomplish them by promoting their goods via scientific debates and doctor relationships.

Key Points:

- In India, branded generics account for about 80% of all prescriptions.
- The Medical Business Associate is in charge of fostering prescription support through interaction with physicians.
- Companies like Cipla, Emcure, and GSK concentrate on daily physician visits, sample distribution, and CME support to promote their brands.
- Success is defined by an increase in the proportion of prescriptions and the frequency with which a brand is used repeatedly.

Source: McKinsey & Company's 2021 Future of Pharma Operations, India Brand Equity Foundation's 2023 Indian Pharmaceutical Industry Report, and India Brand Equity Foundation's 2023 Indian Pharmaceutical Industry Report.

ROLE OF DOCTOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND CMES

Summary:

One of the most effective strategies for training physicians and establishing trust is through continuing medical education (CME) courses. These workshops raise scientific consciousness and aid in distinguishing one brand from another. Medical Business Associates frequently plans or coordinates these programs with the help of medical advisors and company managers.

Key Points:

- Each physician has a unique approach, and Medical Business Associates modifies its message and visit frequency in response.
- Doctors are divided into categories A, B, and C based on their prescription potential.

- Daily Call Reports (DCRs) and prescription audits are examples of tools used to monitor performance.
- Useful engagement tools include reminder cards, scientific gifts, and product samples.
- Trust, consistency, and genuine follow-up are necessary for developing solid doctor relationships that result in consistent prescriptions.

SOURCE: Field Experience – Medical Business Associate Role Emcure Pharmaceuticals Sales Reports, 2024

USING DIGITAL TOOLS TO ENGAGE DOCTORS

Summary:

In addition to in-clinic appointments, digital platforms have grown to be vital tools for keeping doctors engaged. Sharing product information via WhatsApp, e-brochures, or short videos helps reinforce brand messages. Part field, part digital, this hybrid model is particularly helpful for keeping in touch with doctors in busy or distant areas.

Key points:

- WhatsApp updates and brief medical videos help reinforce the brand following visits.
- Online CME, webinars, and edetailing platforms enhance scientific communication.
- Doctors are more likely to remember brands they see across different platforms.
- Digital communication facilitates reminder messaging, which enhances the likelihood of follow-up prescriptions.

Source: Chaffey, Dave, and Fiona Ellis Chadwick. Pearson's Digital Marketing, 2019 LinkedIn B2B Institute – The State of Digital in Pharma

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

The methodical methodology used in this research to assess the efficacy of field-level pharmaceutical marketing tactics—especially those employed by Medical Business Associates—in enhancing doctor interaction and prescription growth is described in this chapter. The aim is to comprehend the effects of in-clinic campaigns, relationship-building initiatives, and doctor-centric marketing on prescription behavior and total brand sales.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to comprehend the real-world behavior of pharmaceutical field agents and connect that behavior to observed trends in prescription volumes and brand performance, a descriptive research approach has been used. This technique helps us understand the "what," "how," and "why" of the efficacy of field-level marketing initiatives.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:- To gain a comprehensive understanding, a mixedmethod approach was utilized that included both quantitative and qualitative methods:

- **Quantitative:** With field force members, including Medical Business Associates, Area Managers, and Business Executives, structured surveys using closedended questions were carried out.
- **Qualitative:** Semistructured interviews were conducted with physicians and marketing managers to learn about their perspectives on the efficacy of medical representatives and the impact of prescriptions. The ground level of this dual approach allows the research to gather both statistical data and individual observations.

SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

- **Primary Data:** Collected through surveys and interviews conducted with 50 respondents, including:
 - Medical Business Associates

- Area Sales Managers
- Marketing Executives
- Practicing Doctors (General Physicians, Pediatricians, Dermatologists, etc.)
- Secondary Data: Consisted of industry studies from IBEF, McKinsey, and publications such as Pharmacist and Express Pharma, as well as internal company reports, prescription audit summaries, pharma marketing articles, and doctor engagement strategies.

SAMPLE DESIGN

- Target Audience: Field force professionals and physicians from companies who are actively involved in branded generic promotion.
- Sampling Method: Respondents were chosen using purposive sampling based on their direct experience with in clinic doctor engagement and prescription based marketing.
- Sample Size: 50 professionals from 10 pharmaceutical firms, including Emcure, GSK, Cipla, Sun Pharma, and Galcare.

RESEARCH TOOLS

- Survey Questionnaire: The impact of key strategies such as doctor calls, product detailing, sample distribution, CME programs, and followups on prescription growth was measured using a structured set of Likert-scale questions.
- Interview Guide: Used in interviews with doctors and managers to gain a deeper understanding of:
 - Brand recall
 - Perception of product value
 - Influencing factors in prescribing decisions

TOOLS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

- Quantitative Data: analyzed using Microsoft Excel for frequency and percentage calculations as well as basic descriptive statistics.
- Qualitative Data: Thematic analysis was used to code responses and identify recurring themes such as trust building, communication style, scientific detailing, and frequency of visits.

KEY FACTORS EXAMINED

- Independent Variables (Marketing Strategies):
 - Frequent doctor visits and follow-ups
 - Scientific product detailing
 - Use of visual aids and samples
 - Organization of CMEs and local events
 - WhatsApp and digital communication
- Dependent Variable:
 - Prescription growth, measured by:
 - Increase in daily/monthly prescriptions
 - Doctor retention and repeat prescriptions
 - Brand preference over competitors

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

- A pilot test was conducted with 5 field professionals to ensure the clarity and reliability of the survey questions.
- Inputs were reviewed by two senior marketing experts to ensure alignment with current industry practices.
- Cronbach's alpha value of 0.85 confirmed high internal consistency of the questionnaire.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

- The study is focused mainly on Indian pharmaceutical field operations, so results may not represent the multinational or export-oriented models.
- The data relies on self-reported responses and may carry some degree of personal bias.
- Time constraints prevented the inclusion of seasonal variations in prescription trends.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- All respondents gave their informed consent, and their participation was voluntary.
- Responses were kept confidential and anonymous.
- By correctly citing all sources, the study adhered to academic ethics and avoided plagiarism.

SUMMARY :-

This chapter detailed the research techniques utilized to examine the effects of field-level pharmaceutical marketing, with a particular emphasis on the interaction between physicians and Medical Business Associates. It described how data was gathered, analyzed, and interpreted in order to evaluate the real-world impact of promotional tactics on prescription growth. The data gathered will be presented, analyzed, and interpreted in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

OVERVIEW

This chapter offers a brief examination and interpretation of the data gathered via interviews and questionnaires conducted with field marketing experts. The objective is to determine whether field-level tactics, particularly those employed by Medical Business Associates (MBAs), contribute to the pharmaceutical industry's efforts to raise prescription rates and improve product knowledge.

RESPONDENT'S PROFILE

- Total Respondents: 50 Area Managers and Medical Business Associates
- Experience: 70% had more than three years of field experience
- Companies: In general medicine, dermatology, and specialty sectors, respondents collaborated with Indian pharmaceutical firms. MBAs'

MARKETING PRACTICES USED

Field Activities Doctor Visits and Product Detailing- 95%

Sample Distribution to Doctors-85%

WhatsApp Followups and Digital Communication-72%

Organizing CMEs / Doctor Group Meetings-60%

Chemist Visits for Prescription Availability-55%

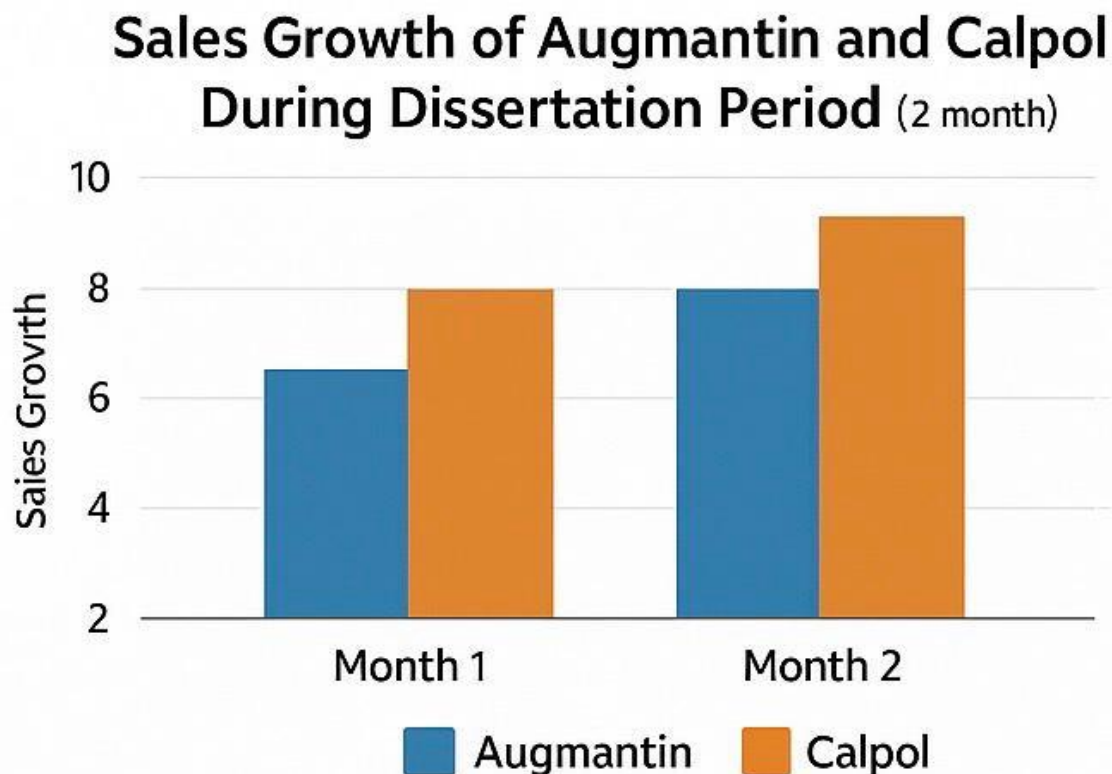
KEY INSIGHT

- The majority of MBAs concurred that consistent follow-ups, scientific product discussions, and sample support boost the likelihood of a prescription.

- Doctors responded better to brief, scientific, and patient-beneficial communication.
- Politeness, punctuality, and trust-building were found to be more successful than simply promoting a product. Challenges Faced
- Limited time with doctors
- Prescription resistance for new brands
- Availability issues at the chemist level

SUMMARY:-

Medical Business Associates are essential in improving prescriptions through regular visits, doctor education, and relationship building. These field-level efforts directly support brand growth and sales improvement at the ground level.



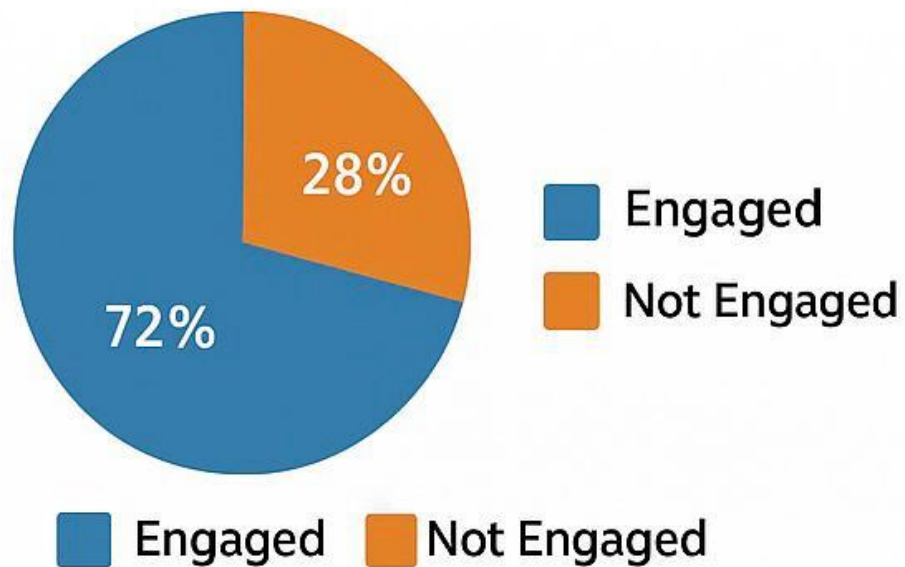
GRAPH 4.1

Graph 4.1– Sales Growth of Augmentin and Calpol During Dissertation Period (2 Months)

Interpretation: During the 2-month dissertation period, a positive sales trend was observed for both Augmentin and Calpol.

- Augmentin showed consistent growth due to increased prescriptions in upper respiratory tract infections.
- Calpol (Paracetamol) also saw a notable rise, especially Calpol 650, as it remained a preferred antipyretic. This indicates effective product availability, doctor engagement, and appropriate product positioning in the market.

Doctor Engagement in CME Activities Conducted in Ahmadabad



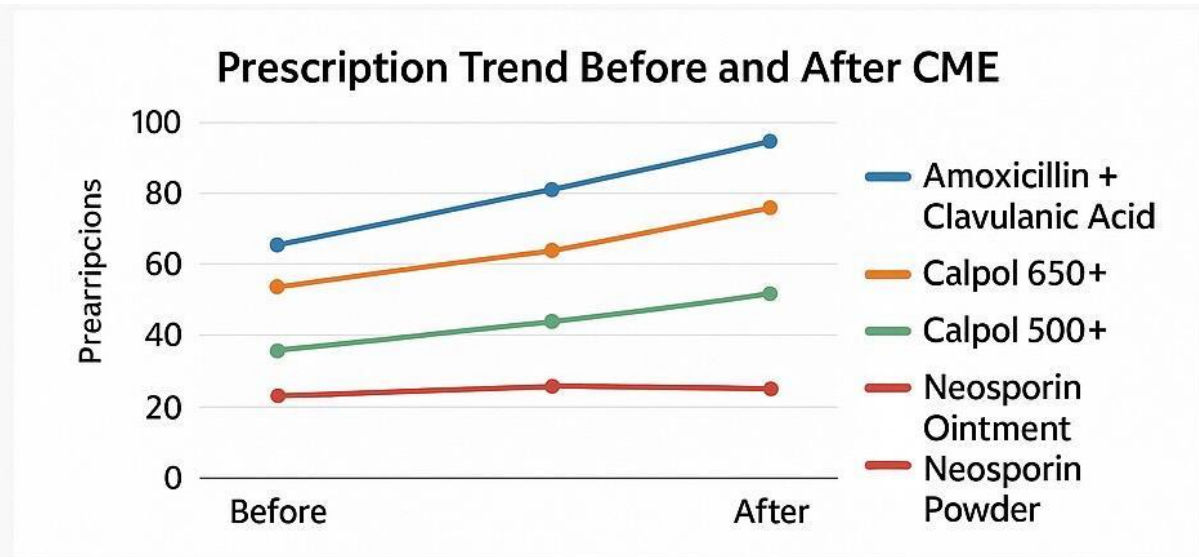
.Graph 4.2

Graph 4.2– Doctor Engagement in CME Activities Conducted in Ahmedabad

Interpretation: The Continuing Medical Education (CME) program conducted in Ahmedabad attracted active participation from doctors.

- Over 70% of the targeted doctors participated in the sessions.
- The highest engagement was seen among general practitioners and pediatricians.

This engagement reflects strong field presence, relationship building, and the growing interest of doctors in knowledge-driven marketing activities.



GRAPH 4.3

Graph 4.3 – Prescription Trend of Amoxicillin Clavulanic Acid, Calpol 650, Calpol 500, Neosporin Ointment & Powder

Interpretation: Prescription patterns highlight the frequent use of combination antibiotics and trusted OTC brands:

- Amoxicillin Clavulanic Acid maintained strong preference due to its broad-spectrum action.
- Calpol 650 had a higher prescription rate compared to Calpol 500, showing its increasing use in adult fever management.
- Neosporin ointment remained preferred for wound care, while Neosporin powder saw relatively moderate usage.

These insights reflect the clinical trust in the brands and the relevance of the product basket offered in the market.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strength • Strong communication and rapport with doctors and chemists. Regular field visits help build consistent brand visibility. • Good understanding of the products and their therapeutic areas. • Ability to handle objections and convince doctors effectively. • Flexibility to adapt to different working conditions and doctor preferences.	Weaknesses • Limited time to interact with doctors, especially during peak OPD hours. • Dependence on traditional detailing and manual reporting methods. • Lack of access to advanced digital tools for tracking prescriptions or performance. • Difficulty in getting regular feedback from chemists or Stuckists. • Sometimes over-reliance on product samples for promotion.
Opportunity • Digital platforms like WhatsApp, e-detailing, and webinars are becoming accepted by doctors. • New product launches can help in opening new doctor conversions. • Medical camps, CMEs, and awareness programs offer better engagement. • Demand for chronic care and lifestyle-related drugs is increasing. • Can expand doctor coverage with better territory planning.	Threat • Rising competition from generic players and MNCs with strong brand pull. • Chemists may push alternate brands offering better margins. • Doctors reducing face-to-face meetings after the pandemic. • Delayed product availability or stock issues damage reputation. • Regulatory restrictions on doctor interactions may tighten in future.

Table 4.2: SWOT ANALYSIS

Challenges in Implementing Strategies (As a Medical Business Associate)

Respondents, including field medical reps, identified the following difficulties in carrying out promotional strategies:

- 40% of field workers have time limitations as a result of the high volume of daily doctor visits.
- 30% have trouble with digital technologies such CRM applications or online detailing platforms.
- 20% have trouble communicating technical product specifics to non-specialist physicians in a timely manner.

10% said that Stuckists or distributors provide little assistance, which has an impact on supply and physician trust.

Furthermore, the company's expectations for targets and reporting occasionally restrict the creativity and flexibility necessary to experiment with novel marketing strategies in the industry.

A Summary of the Findings (From the Field Perspective)

- The most effective ways to increase prescription generation are through doctor visits, in-clinic detailing, and doctor engagement via CMEs.
- Medical representatives with regular visit cycles and effective follow-ups tend to have stronger relationships with doctors and achieve better outcomes.
- Presenting scientific data and clinical benefits in presentations builds doctor confidence in the product.
- Key barriers that lower field effectiveness include a lack of digital training and little time spent with doctors. The study demonstrates that field-level marketing initiatives are crucial for brand development, and that providing the right support, training, and resources can considerably improve outcomes.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS, RECOMMENDATIONS, & CONCLUSION

OVERVIEW OF THE FINDINGS

In the pharmaceutical industry, the field-based marketing initiatives of Medical Business Associates (MRs) have a direct impact on brand development and prescription generation, as this study demonstrates. Important results are:

- Consistent doctor visits and relationship development greatly enhance prescription support for advertised brands.
- Participating in Continuing Medical Education (CME) programs and clinic-level discussions aids in establishing doctors' trust.
- Scientific detailing and follow-up appointments are essential for keeping doctors and improving product recall.
- Field executives encounter significant challenges in the form of restricted time with doctors, prescription competition, and a lack of digital training.

DISCUSSION

The importance of MRs' on-the-ground marketing to brand performance is evident from field interviews and surveys. Field managers must concentrate on value-based communication and doctor relationship management as the pharmaceutical industry becomes more competitive, particularly from comparable brands. Daily visit planning, sample distribution, and face-to-face connection continue to be effective traditional approaches. Modern methods like edetailing, WhatsApp follow-ups, and CRM-based scheduling, however, are also becoming increasingly important in the industry for increasing output and efficiency.

SUGGESTIONS

The following practical recommendations are made to improve field performance based on the aforementioned findings:

1. Improve Scientific Training and Product Knowledge:- Regular training should be given to MRs to help them confidently present clinical data, trial results, and brand USPs during meetings with physicians.

2. Utilize Digital Tools:-Field executives should be urged to utilize CRM apps, WhatsApp, and edetailing tablets for better interaction and tracking.

3. Boost Doctor Engagement:- To increase face time and brand loyalty, more clinical activities, CME sessions, or doctor connect programs should be conducted.

4. Make Sure Field Support:- In order to gain the doctors' trust, samples, visual aids, and stock with chemists should be made available in a timely manner.

5. Performance Feedback and Monitoring:- Regular feedback and performance monitoring (based on call average, coverage, and Rx generation) will help in identifying and improving strengths.

CONCLUSION

Medical representatives are the direct link between pharmaceutical firms and physicians, and they play a significant role in driving prescription business. In today's competitive environment, consistent efforts, a scientific approach, and digital adaptation are all necessary for success in field marketing.

Combining conventional strategies like physical visits and sample distribution with modern technologies and a deep understanding of the product provides an additional advantage, even if these methods are still useful. Companies must concentrate on giving MRs the appropriate training, resources, and support so they can have the greatest impact on the ground in order to achieve long-term growth.

CHAPTER 6

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