

Internship Report

Submitted to



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(MBA) in Pharmaceutical Management

By

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Introduction

I interned with the B-Black Belt Brand Builders founded and led by Mr. Vivek Hattangadi. This organization is known for providing strategic support and training to pharmaceutical professionals, helping them become better brand builders. The institute is respected for promoting patient-centered marketing strategies and effective communication methods tailored to the Indian pharma market.

As part of my internship, I worked on a dissertation titled: “Reshaping Healthcare Provider Perceptions: Developing an Integrated Marketing Framework for Biosimilar Adoption in Specialty Care.”

The project involved understanding how healthcare professionals perceive biosimilars, what challenges they face in prescribing them, and what kind of support or information would help improve their confidence. Through a mix of surveys and literature review, I developed a marketing strategy aimed at increasing the acceptance and use of biosimilars in specialty care settings.

The rising global demand for specialty care treatments such as oncology, autoimmune diseases, and endocrinological disorders has increased the relevance of biologic therapies. However, the high cost of originator biologics has created barriers to access, especially in emerging markets like India. Biosimilars—biologic products like already approved reference biologics—present a more affordable alternative while maintaining comparable safety and efficacy. In India, despite favorable regulatory efforts by CDSCO and DBT, the uptake of biosimilars in specialty care remains suboptimal. A primary barrier is the cautious perception of healthcare providers (HCPs) regarding biosimilar efficacy, safety, and interchangeability.

This internship focused on reshaping these perceptions by designing an Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) framework for biosimilar promotion, incorporating both stakeholder education and strategic outreach. By leveraging literature reviews, real-world case studies (e.g., Biocon and Dr. Reddy’s biosimilar launches), and a simulated HCP survey, this project explores how structured marketing can bridge knowledge gaps and boost biosimilar adoption in India’s specialty care.

Objective of the Internship

To study healthcare provider behavior and perceptions regarding biosimilar therapies in specialty care in India, and to develop an Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) framework for biosimilar adoption, focusing on building trust, education, and awareness among physicians.

Organizational Profile

The B-Black Belt Brand Builders led by Mr. Vivek Hattangadi, is a pioneering platform dedicated to training, mentoring, and consulting in the field of pharmaceutical branding and marketing. With decades of industry experience, Mr. Hattangadi has established IHBC as a leading name in scientific branding practices, especially for India's growing pharmaceutical sector.

The organization is focused on transforming pharmaceutical marketing by promoting human-centric strategies that go beyond conventional promotion techniques. Instead of relying only on product features and data, IHBC emphasizes emotional connection, patient-oriented messaging, and value-based communication — reflecting the principles of Kotler's Human-to-Human (H2H) marketing.

They work across various areas, including skill development for brand managers, branding strategy formulation, academic collaborations, and creating engaging marketing content. It also supports young professionals and MBA students through hands-on training, insightful projects, and guided internships that prepare them for real-world challenges.

Mr. Hattangadi's approach combines deep marketing knowledge with storytelling and empathy — helping pharmaceutical companies connect better with healthcare providers and patients. Under his leadership, IHBC continues to influence how brands are built, positioned, and sustained in the healthcare space.

Key Activities and Projects Undertaken

- Conducted secondary research on the global and Indian biosimilar industry.
- Analyzed CDSCO and DBT guidelines on biosimilar approval and market authorization.
- Studied existing marketing practices by Biocon and Dr. Reddy's for CANMAb and Hervycta.
- Designed a survey questionnaire to simulate HCP perceptions (awareness, attitudes, barriers).
- Created a draft Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) model tailored for specialty care.
- Prepared literature matrices, SWOT analyses, and messaging frameworks for biosimilar education.
- Prepared the final dissertation structure and marketing framework based on research insights.

Key Learnings from an Internship

- Gained understanding of biosimilar lifecycle: development, regulatory review, and commercialization.
- Learned importance of physician education and trust-building in specialty product adoption.
- Enhanced knowledge of IMC theory in a healthcare setting—aligning digital, academic, and field strategies.
- Developed real-world awareness of HCP behavioral drivers and resistance patterns.
- Strengthened research and analytical skills through secondary data synthesis and framework design.
- Exposure to the strategic role of branding and messaging in shaping therapeutic choices.

Professional Development

The internship significantly enriched my professional profile. It sharpened my ability to assess market challenges, interpret HCP needs, and recommend actionable strategies. I honed academic research skills, learned how to translate clinical data into marketing insights, and developed communication materials suitable for specialty product launches. Additionally, I enhanced my collaborative skills through virtual interactions with marketing mentors and brand teams.

Conclusion

This internship provided me with a holistic perspective on how biosimilar products can be better positioned in the Indian specialty care market. The integration of academic research with strategic marketing practices offered a rich learning experience. The proposed IMC framework serves as a replicable model for future biosimilar campaigns, aligning stakeholder education, policy support, and promotional strategy to overcome perception barriers and improve access to biologic therapies.