

**HUMANIZING BRANDED GENERIC:
TRANSFORMING COMMODITY
PERCEPTIONS THROUGH PATIENT-
CENTERED MARKETING ECOSYSTEMS**

Synopsis for Dissertation Submitted to



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by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how patient-centered marketing strategies influence consumer trust and adoption of branded generics. Despite their clinical efficacy, branded generics struggle with consumer perception and are often viewed as mere commodities. The research will employ a cross-sectional mixed-method study, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to understand consumer behavior. Surveys, interviews, and focus groups will be conducted across various healthcare settings. The expected outcomes include a strategic framework for enhancing brand loyalty, insights into the role of digital platforms, and recommendations for pharmaceutical marketers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Branded generics play a vital role in the pharmaceutical industry by offering high-quality, cost-effective alternatives to patented drugs. These medications combine affordability with brand recognition, yet they often struggle with consumer trust and are perceived as mere commodities rather than reliable healthcare solutions. Despite their clinical efficacy, branded generics frequently face scepticism from both patients and healthcare providers, limiting their market penetration and brand differentiation.

Traditional marketing strategies in the pharmaceutical sector focus heavily on physician-centric approaches, overlooking the importance of patient engagement in building trust. With the rise of digital health platforms, evolving patient expectations, and a shift toward value-based care, pharmaceutical companies must rethink their marketing strategies. Patient-centered marketing ecosystems which integrate digital engagement, physician advocacy, and targeted education offer a promising approach to reshaping consumer perceptions and fostering brand loyalty.

This study aims to analyze how patient-centered marketing strategies influence consumer trust and adoption of branded generics. By identifying key factors that differentiate branded generics from commodity generics and evaluating the role of healthcare providers and digital platforms, the research will propose a comprehensive framework for pharmaceutical marketers to enhance brand value and acceptance.

2. RESEARCH QUESTION

This research seeks to answer the following key questions:

- How do patient-centered marketing strategies influence the adoption of branded generics?
- What factors contribute to changing consumer perceptions from commodity to brand value?
- What role do digital platforms and healthcare providers play in strengthening trust in branded generics?
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3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:

- To assess the current perception of branded generics among patients and healthcare providers.
- To evaluate the impact of patient-centered marketing on brand trust and adoption.
- To identify key factors that differentiate branded generics from commodity generics in consumer minds.
- To develop a marketing model integrating digital engagement, physician advocacy, and patient education.

4. HYPOTHESIS

- **H1:** Patient-centered marketing strategies significantly improve consumer trust in branded generics.
- **H2:** Digital health platforms and physician endorsements positively influence brand perception and adoption.

5. MATERIAL AND METHODS

STUDY DESIGN

A **cross-sectional mixed-method study** incorporating both qualitative (interviews, focus groups) and quantitative (survey) research methodologies. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of consumer perceptions and the impact of patient-centered marketing strategies.

SETTING

The study will be conducted across multiple healthcare settings, including:

- **Hospitals and Clinics:** Where healthcare providers prescribe branded generics.
- **Retail Pharmacies:** Where patients purchase branded generics and interact with pharmacists.
- **Online Health Forums and Digital Platforms:** To analyze consumer discussions and engagement with branded generic brands.

STUDY POPULATION

Inclusion Criteria:

- Patients who have used branded generics in the past year.
- Healthcare professionals (HCPs) prescribing or recommending branded generics.
- Pharmaceutical marketing professionals with experience in patient engagement strategies.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Patients who have exclusively used patented drugs or unbranded generics.
- Healthcare providers with no experience prescribing branded generics.

STUDY TOOLS

- **Survey Questionnaires:** Structured surveys for patients and HCPs to assess their perceptions of branded generics.
- **In-depth Interviews:** One-on-one discussions with pharma marketers to understand branding strategies.

- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Group discussions with patients to explore trust-building factors.

DURATION OF STUDY

10th March 2025 – 31st May 2025 (Approximately 3 months).

SAMPLE SIZE

- **Patients:** 250
- **Healthcare Professionals:** 100
- **Pharmaceutical Marketers:** 20

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

- **Patients & HCPs:** Convenience and purposive sampling.
- **Pharma Marketers:** Snowball sampling to reach industry experts.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

- **Surveys:** Distributed via online platforms, hospital visits, and pharmacy interactions.
- **Interviews & FGDs:** Conducted through video calls, hospital discussions, and healthcare conferences.
- **Data Transcription & Coding:** Using NVivo software for qualitative analysis.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- **Branded Generic:** An off-patent drug marketed under a brand name by a pharmaceutical company.
- **Patient-Centered Marketing:** A strategy that prioritizes patient needs, education, and engagement to enhance brand trust.
- **Brand Perception:** The consumer's attitude and trust level toward a branded generic product.

6. DATA ANALYSIS PLAN

The data will be analyzed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

- **Software:** SAS for statistical analysis; Excel for data management and visualization; Orange Data Mining for qualitative data processing.
- **Descriptive Statistics:** Frequency distributions, mean scores, standard deviations.
- **Inferential Statistics:**
 - **Chi-square test:** To examine associations between marketing strategies and brand perception.
 - **Regression Analysis:** To determine the impact of patient-centered marketing on brand trust.

7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- **Informed Consent:** Will be obtained from all participants before participation.
- **Confidentiality:** Personal data will be anonymized and securely stored.
- **Ethical Approval:** The study will be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC).

8. IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH

The findings from this research will offer actionable insights for the pharmaceutical industry, including:

- A strategic framework for enhancing **brand loyalty** among consumers of branded generics.
- Improved **patient engagement strategies** through digital platforms and physician advocacy.
- Policy recommendations for regulatory bodies to support the growth of branded generics in the healthcare market.

9. REFERENCES

1. **Kotler P, Keller KL.** Marketing Management. 15th ed. Pearson Education; 2015.
2. **Hollis A, Grootendorst P.** The Market for Pharmaceuticals: Branded vs. Generic Competition. *Health Economics*. 2019;28(3):525-542.
3. **Kumar V, Paul J, Sharma A.** The Role of Physician Endorsements in Building Trust for Branded Generics. *International Journal of Pharmaceutical Marketing*. 2022;12(4):78-95.
4. **Rao S, Singh M.** Impact of Digital Health Platforms on Consumer Perceptions of Pharmaceuticals. *Journal of Health Marketing and Strategy*. 2020;9(1):33-50.

9. APPENDICES

Section 1: Demographics

1. **Name:** _____
2. **Age:** _____
3. **Gender:**
 - ☐ Male
 - ☐ Female
4. **What is your profession?**
 - ☐ Patient
 - ☐ Healthcare Professional (Doctor, Pharmacist, Nurse, etc.)
 - ☐ Pharmaceutical Marketing Professional

Section 2: Perception of Branded Generics

5. **How familiar are you with branded generics?**
 - ☐ Not familiar at all
 - ☐ Somewhat familiar
 - ☐ Moderately familiar
 - ☐ Very familiar
6. **In your opinion, how do branded generics compare to patented drugs in terms of quality?**
 - ☐ Inferior
 - ☐ Similar
 - ☐ Superior
 - ☐ Unsure
7. **What factors influence your perception of branded generics the most?**
 - ☐ Doctor's recommendation
 - ☐ Price and affordability
 - ☐ Previous personal experience
 - ☐ Pharmacist's recommendation
 - ☐ Availability in stores

8. **Do you trust branded generics as much as patented drugs?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Section 3: Impact of Patient-Centered Marketing

9. **How important is patient education in influencing trust in branded generics?**

- ☐ Not important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Critical

10. **Which of the following marketing strategies would make you more likely to trust and use branded generics?** *(Select all that apply)*

- ☐ Digital marketing (Social media campaigns, educational videos, etc.)
- ☐ Healthcare provider endorsements (Doctors, pharmacists promoting brands)
- ☐ Patient testimonials and reviews
- ☐ Government or regulatory endorsements
- ☐ Discounts and promotional offers

11. **Have you seen any digital marketing campaigns promoting branded generics?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

12. **If yes, how effective do you think they were in changing your perception?**

- ☐ Not effective at all
- ☐ Slightly effective
- ☐ Moderately effective
- ☐ Very effective

Section 4: Role of Healthcare Providers and Digital Platforms

13. How much influence do healthcare providers (doctors, pharmacists) have in your decision to choose branded generics?

- ☐ No influence
- ☐ Some influence
- ☐ Moderate influence
- ☐ Strong influence

14. Which platform do you use the most to get information about medicines?

- ☐ Doctor consultations
- ☐ Pharmacist recommendations
- ☐ Online health forums and websites
- ☐ Social media and digital advertisements

15. Would you be more likely to use a branded generic if it had a strong presence on digital platforms (e.g., social media, online reviews, healthcare apps)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

Section 5: Brand Differentiation & Consumer Adoption

16. What would make branded generics stand out from unbranded generics in your opinion? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Clearer packaging and branding
- ☐ Better patient awareness programs
- ☐ Stronger endorsements from doctors and pharmacists
- ☐ Improved availability in pharmacies
- ☐ Quality certifications and regulatory approvals

17. Would you prefer a branded generic over an unbranded generic if both had the same price?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Maybe

18. In your experience, have you faced any challenges in accessing branded generics?
(Select all that apply)

☐ Lack of availability in pharmacies

☐ Higher cost compared to unbranded generics

☐ Lack of trust in the brand

☐ Limited information from healthcare providers

☐ No challenges faced

19. On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely are you to recommend branded generics to others?
(1 - Not Likely, 5 - Highly Likely)

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

☐ 5

20. Do you have any additional thoughts on how pharmaceutical companies can improve the trust and adoption of branded generics?