QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS INTO PROMOTION PRACTICES OF PHARMACEUTICAL DRUGS BY UNDERSTANDING PATIENT CENTRICITY

Dissertation Submitted to

The IIHMR University, Jaipur

For the partial fulfillment for the award of the degree

Of

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

In

Pharmaceutical Management

By

Irene Elizabath Varghese

Under the Supervision and Guidance of

Dr Saurabh Kumar

2021

Appendix C: Title Page

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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that this dissertation titled QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS INTO PROMOTION PRACTICES OF PHARMACEUTICAL DRUGS BY UNDERSTANDING PATIENT CENTRICITY is the bonfire 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 Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been duly acknowledged in the text.

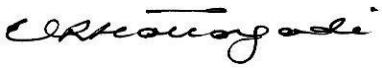
Irene Elizabath

Varghese

21/06/2021

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Irene Elizabath Varghese in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MBA (PharmaceuticalManagement) from the IIHMR University, Jaipur has successfully completed her/his internship at (The Enablers) during March 22, 2021 to June 19,2021.



Vivek
Hattangadi
Chief Mentor
The Enablers
28th June 2021, Ahmedabad

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that dissertation titled QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS INTO PROMOTION PRACTICES OF PHARMACEUTICAL DRUGS BY UNDERSTANDING PATIENT CENTRICITY is a record of the research work undertaken by (Irene Elizabath Varghese) in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MBA (PharmaceuticalManagement) from the IIHMR University, Jaipur under my guidance and supervision and his/her approach to the research study has been sincere, scientific, and analytical.

Faculty Guide
IIHMR University, Jaipur

Date

School Dean
IIHMR University, Jaipur

Date

ABSTRACT

The pharmaceutical business has long been at the forefront of drug discovery and development research and innovation. Pharmaceutical marketing's main goal is to promote their drugs; drug promotion has been an effective tool with the modest goal of increasing awareness among doctors and health care professionals. When it comes to current pharmaceutical marketing, there are many ethical and immoral actions that go into the marketing of medicines and the sales of such drugs, and in order to achieve them, the drug manufacturers must spend a lot of money on aggressive marketing strategies to produce revenue .This exploratory study sought to address this void by looking into pharmaceutical companies' existing promotional strategies, particularly the role of their medical representatives (MR). Methodologies During the period from February 2021 to June 2021, a self-administered questionnaire was provided to a sample of physicians and MRs from the private health sector for this cross-sectional study. Physicians' attitudes regarding pharmaceutical advertising, factors influencing prescribing behaviors, and views of academic details over gifts and incentives were studied using descriptive statistics. In this study the research opened our eyes at the different drug promotion activities, the numerous ethical and unethical varieties, their benefits , and also when it comes to drug promotion its noble goal was to raise awareness among doctors and update their knowledge on recent advances and facilities in treatment options, but it has since evolved only to embrace aggressive marketing strategies and tactics and often unethical, corrupt business , in which the need for profit and gain has supplanted commitment to patient care has been totally neglected. The impact of drug promotion on physician prescription behavior, the involvement of regulatory authorities or the propagation of law, unethical promotional methods, and, finally, the pharmaceutical industry's desire to satisfy its commercial purpose rather than the ethical aspect of promotion are all discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is my genuine pleasure to express my deep sense of gratitude to my mentor, my teacher Dr Saurabh Kumar, Dean School of pharmaceutical management IIHMR University Jaipur. His dedication and keen interest above all his overwhelming and kind attitude to help his students had been solely the reason for completing my work. His scholarly advice have helped me to a very great extent to accomplish this task.

I owe a deep sense of gratitude to Vivek Hattangadi (The Enablers) for his keen interest from the starting to my completion of this research. His prompt inspiration timely suggestion with kindness, enthusiasm have enables me to complete my thesis.

I profusely thank all my faculties of School of Pharmaceutical Management and all other faculties in IIHMR University for their coordination and cooperation and for their kind guidance and encouragement.

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ABBREVIATIONS

World Health Organization (WHO)
National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI)
Adverse Drug Reaction (ADR)
Continuing Medical Education (CME)
Indian Medical Association (IMA)
Indian Medical Council (IMC)
Medical Representatives (MR)

INTRODUCTION

The meaning of the phrase "ethical" in different societies varies, but it refers to or deals with morals or principles of morality, whereas the phrase "promotion" refers to all of a company's informational and persuasive actions. In line with this, drug promotion ethical criteria should be founded on suitable behaviors which ethically matters to physicians and Pharma Company that are consistent with the pursuit of truth and righteousness. Background Pharmaceutical promotion efforts should facilitate excellent quality patient care because health and healthcare activities are always important for a human to survive in life. However, there has been a lot of discussion concerning the ethical norms, unethical behavior's that should boycott which governs in pharmaceutical marketing. The goal of this study was to assess (i) attitudes about pharmaceutical advertising among private-sector physicians and (ii) the influence of pharmaceutical advertising on physicians' prescribing patterns.

The study's goal is also to find out what drug promotion practices are used in Kerala, India. Drug promotion, when achieved within ethical limits, is an efficient way to accomplish all the goals by simultaneously producing income for the producer and playing the role of an information distribution tool to doctors why? Because healthcare is the world's fastest-growing industry, with India leading the pack both before and during the Covid era. The World Health Organization defines drug promotion as "all informational and persuasive activities undertaken by manufacturers and distributors with the intent of influencing the prescription, supply, purchase, or use of medicinal drugs." For drug promotion, it is well recognized that inaccurate and selective information is always unsuccessful comparing to patients health. It is also well known and proved that the drug knowledge provided to Indian doctors by the pharma company is of misinformation, lower, poor quality than that provided to our western counterparts. At the moment, there is no legal provision in India for continuing medical education or periodic recertification. Health representatives or Medical lobbies are often a doctor's only source of knowledge on emerging clinical advances. While such studies have mislead the information to doctors stating with the importance of their own company's promotion medicines and have identified the significance and quality of promotional information made available to Indian doctors, overall with a little information has been written about promotional practices in general. And also understating patient centricity in market access of drugs which represent a shift from

disease centered to patient centered approaches in healthcare. Many studies from India have found that most hospitals, whether public and commercial, do not use patient-centered techniques. Long delays in hospitals, as well as rushed prescribing and consultation times, are affecting patients, demonstrating a lack of satisfaction with medical procedures. Furthermore, doctors often give drugs to patients primarily to make them feel better and enhance their health, but our research shows that, despite the doctors' oath, pharmaceutical corporations make money by convincing doctors through aggressive marketing strategies is what my study specifies. In light of recent developments in the health-care landscape i.e. from a developing country perspective, the industry should concentrate its energies, profits on programs that will increase the impact and value for patients and caregivers the most because no patients and caregivers uphold the industry. True patient centricity necessitates a shift in the pharmaceutical industry's cultural mentality, a boost in public confidence, more defined roles and obligations within pharmaceutical companies, a willingness to learn from others, and a structure for measuring performance.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. From a study conducted in **PubMed by Michelin Khazakka** about Pharmaceutical marketing strategy the article says, When it comes to pharmaceutical marketing, there are a lot of ethical and unethical behaviors that go into the marketing of pharmaceuticals and the sales of those drugs, and in order to achieve them, the drug manufacturer has to spend a lot of money to generate income. Pharmaceutical marketing's main goal is to promote their drugs; drug promotion has been an effective tool with the modest goal of increasing awareness among doctors and health care professionals; the sole purpose of this company's should be to update them on new drugs, ADRs, research activity and developments, and treatment options; however, it has increasingly grown to embrace its unethical practices. But there was a period when doctors were informed on scientific knowledge, R&Ds, and genuine consultations, but as the industry became more competitive, true marketing became lost. This is the area where my research focuses, and how they affected the patients.

2. From an editorial journal about **impact of pharmaceutical promotion practices by Zaidha Rahman** summaries that Patterns and procedures of prescribing drugs by physicians have changed over time. It can be influenced by a variety of elements, including textbooks, colleagues, journals, the internet, the media, CME programs, and, finally, drug promotion. However, drug promotion is now the only factor and the most subject to errors, unethical practices, bias, and drug company influence. However,

pharma corporations are now misinforming or misguiding physicians. Financial gain is the sole activity on which the business is focused, and they are oblivious to the fact that patients must suffer as a result of these drug earnings. In the, the sales lobbyist plays a significant function. It is common knowledge that pharmaceutical corporations invest a significant amount of money in drug development.

3. **Dr Muhammad Turkic from University of Michigan** published a paper on American medical society states that, to advertise their treatments, pharmaceutical corporations sometimes hide the safety and research flaws in their drugs. This unethical practice is passed on to doctors, who, intentionally or unknowingly, become entangled in this business. Doctors mindlessly overprescribe drugs for financial gain. Doctors have been known to demand financial incentives and other perks from companies that hide their safety profiles by making inflated efficacy claims for me-too pharmaceuticals, as well as utilizing irrational drug combinations and off-label use. This immoral behavior must be blamed on both doctors and pharmaceutical corporations. There are numerous studies which tried to explore the irrationalities from only one angle, i.e., the pharmaceuticals drug promotional literature.

4. Pakistan's **Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination** made an attempt to study about the promotional practices, from their findings they clearly said that, in today's healthcare industry, customer retention and patient centricity are critical aspects of maintaining and repurchasing any item. However, this is the only industry where patients or customers are completely reliant on other people for repurchasing a product. Doctors make decisions about drug repurchasing while ordinary people are helpless, so this requires a great deal of integrity. Doctors consider quality, reliability, and price while treating their patients, but they must recognize that individuals are absolutely helpless when it comes to disease and healthcare. However, because of the inequality, many of the ways utilized to sell pharmaceuticals are now considered unacceptable.

5. **Narenderan R** from a journal published in IMA about Pharma marketing and prescription practices suggests, No law or regulation from any department can make a difference in this situation. It is the responsibilities, attitudes, and conscience of every individual in the sector, from doctors to patients, to modify and correct this. When everyone adopts this as a mantra and recognizes it as a problem, a shift in the industry is unavoidable. Patient safety is uncompromising, and this is where a patient-centric approach blossoms; no financial ambitions are more important than healthcare. Improvements can be made at every phase of the health-care delivery process by doing so.

6. According to a study called **Evaluation of the rationality of promotional medication material using World Health Organization principles, by Nobhojith Roy**, says no pharmaceutical companies follow WHO recommendations when promoting their drugs. The sole purpose of these businesses was to advance their commercial goals and make money. The focus of promotional activities was not on increasing awareness of novel medications, but rather on promoting fixed dose combinations, which are not approved by WHO. ADRs, contraindications, and medication interactions are not included in the brand remainders that the company provides to doctors. However, it just makes unsubstantiated assertions and provides little or no therapeutic information to assist the doctors and doctors are convinced by this brand remainders.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective is to determine the range of drug promotional practices used in Indian pharmaceutical industry by understanding patient centricity.

METHODOLOGY

This exploratory study sought to address the void by looking into pharmaceutical companies' existing promotional strategies, particularly the role of their medical representatives (MR) and Physicians' attitudes regarding pharmaceutical advertising, factors influencing prescribing behaviors, and views of academic details were studied using descriptive statistics. Both qualitative and quantitative aspects have been considered in this research. **Methodologies A self-administered questionnaire was provided to a sample of physicians from the private and public health sectors in this cross-sectional study from February to June 2021** The primary data was collected using a questionnaire. **Google forms were used to disseminate questionnaires to a group of 25 MRs and 25 doctor's** .In addition to the respondents' demographic information. There are total items in the questionnaire, which are a mix of Likert scaling techniques, yes/no questions, and descriptive techniques. **MR questioned senior leaders from six multinational and 19 Indian pharmaceutical companies. Twenty of the twenty five**

doctors were private practitioners, and five were general practitioners. Fifteen of the MRs had been on the job for less than a year, and ten had one to eight years of experience. Questionnaires were content evaluated by an expert academician, and comments were made to make it more objective-driven. Fifty enrollees did not have their faces validated. **Demographics, perceptions of ethical promotion, and self-perceived barriers to ethical promotion of medications were all included in a questionnaire for MRs and doctors.** To maintain confidentiality, self-administered questionnaires were circulated among both MRs and doctors using **Google Forms**. No personal information or the clinic's address were included in the survey

The main outcome metric is Attitudes regarding pharmaceutical promotions, exposure to promoted pharmaceutical products, factors influencing physicians' prescription practice of promoted pharmaceutical items, and physicians' perceptions of academic details and anticipated obstacles. To provide viewpoints on medication promotion practices, the following groups were chosen: drug manufacturers who create marketing policies, schemes, medical representatives who assist medication sales, and doctors who prescribe prescriptions.

- Study type: Descriptive study
- Data source: Primary and secondary research
- Data collection technique: Survey
- Data collection tool: Researcher administered semi structured questionnaire.

Sample design:

- Target Population: Medical Representatives and Doctors
- Sampling method: convenient sampling
- Sample size: 27 MR and 26 doctors
- Study location: Calicut, Kerala, India

Data collection:

- Primary research
- Observation

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEDICAL REPRESENATIVES

1. What attitude do doctors have on promotions?
   Positive/Negative/Neutral
2. Do people feel that accepting gifts influences the prescribing patterns of doctors and are they aware about this?
   Yes/No
3. What do other group of people like pharmacist think about promotional information, Is it helpful for them in achieving business?
   Yes/No
4. How effective has been promotion on doctors on their recollection of drugs from MR?
   Effective/Moderate/ Ineffective
5. On OTC brands people buying pattern is influenced on1: advertisements or 2: by the recommendation from doctors?
   1, 2 or Both
6. Is following characters are significant in the purchase of both prescription and nonprescription medicine – Price, Brand name, Prescription, Past experience, Ads or promotion
   Yes/No/ don't know
7. Do companies provide detailed information about the drugs in Flipcharts, brochures and calendars?
   Yes/No/Maybe

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DOCTORS

1. Do doctors think that sales rep has a valuable role in medical education?
   Yes/No/Maybe

2. What doctors think about the quality of the information provided by the sales team and promotion about drug?
   Unsatisfactory/uncertain/satisfactory

3. Do patients feels that discussion with sales rep affect the prescribing pattern?
   Yes/No/Don't know

4. Do you think that the continuous supply of low and high-cost gifts to the physician at every visit of the medical representative is justifiable?
   Yes/Always, Yes/sometimes, No

5. Do you think acceptance of various types of gifts and its influence in physicians prescribing pattern and the result in early adoption to prescribe newly medications.
   Yes/No

6. Do you receive any Flipcharts, brochure's and any kind of e detailing regarding drugs from MR visits?
7. Yes/No/Maybe

8. Which is preferred input from a pharma marketer?
   Gifts of utility in day-to-day practice/ Scientific and Academic information/ CME Programs

FINDINGS AND GRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

The key role of representatives to promote pharmaceuticals directly remains the mainstay of drug promotion across the business, and the numbers speak for themselves. Direct marketing's relevance and popularity as a promotional approach is demonstrated by the fact that the industry invests so much money in it and the revenue should be the ultimate goal to them. At the most basic level the primary role of pharmaceutical sales representatives is placed only with the responsibility of informing about the newest or latest drugs of their respective companies to updating about their old drugs using promotional channels or brand remainders like brochures, flipcharts, pamphlets and also giving samples of drugs. This task is largely commercially and profit driven, and there is only a little exchange of scientific information not as like older years. The effectiveness direct marketing is effective and strengthened day by day by the various studies which conclude that increased physician–MR interaction leads to increased prescriptions for the drug and more drugs per prescription and also early adoption of drugs which impact patient's health.

Research questions to Medical representatives:

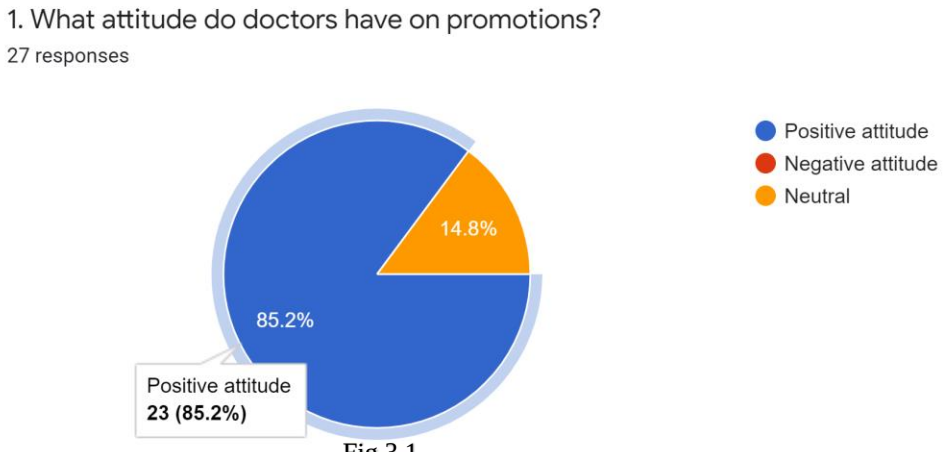

Fig 3.1

Interpretation

It has been discovered that 85% of physician's has positive impact towards promotions by company

2. Do people feel that accepting gifts influences the prescribing patterns of doctors and are they aware about this?

27 responses

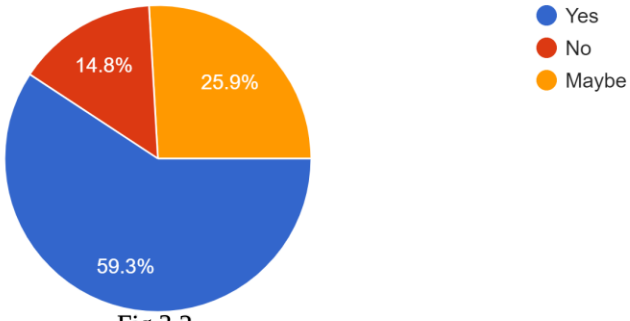

Fig 3.2

Interpretation

It has been discovered that 59%of survey populations says patients are aware about promotion practices of pharmaceutical company towards doctors

3. What do other group of people like pharmacist think about promotional information, Is it helpful for them in achieving business?

27 responses

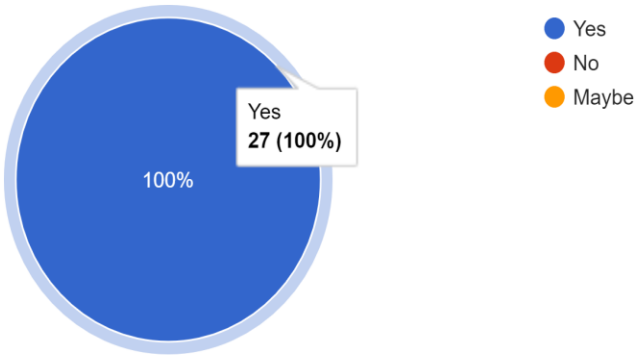

Fig 3.3

Interpretation

According to the survey population pharmacy shops can achieve business through promotions.

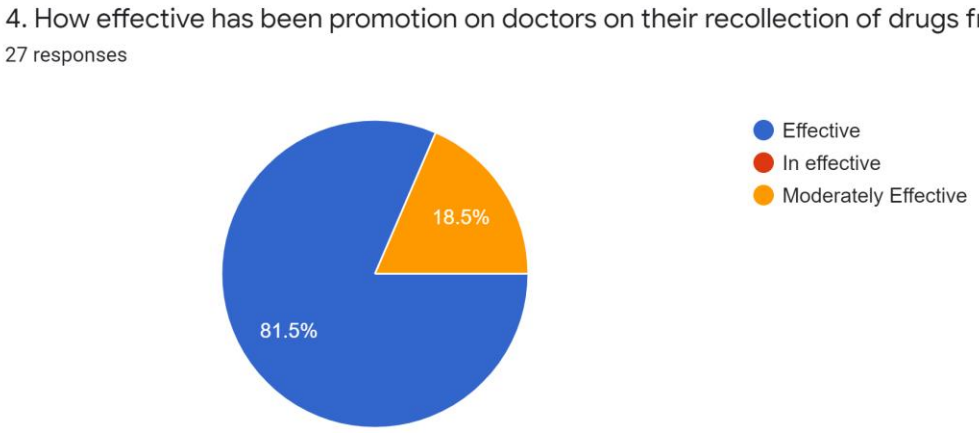

Fig 3.4

Interpretation

Promotion, according to 81% of MR, has been an effective tool for their recollection of drugs from doctors.

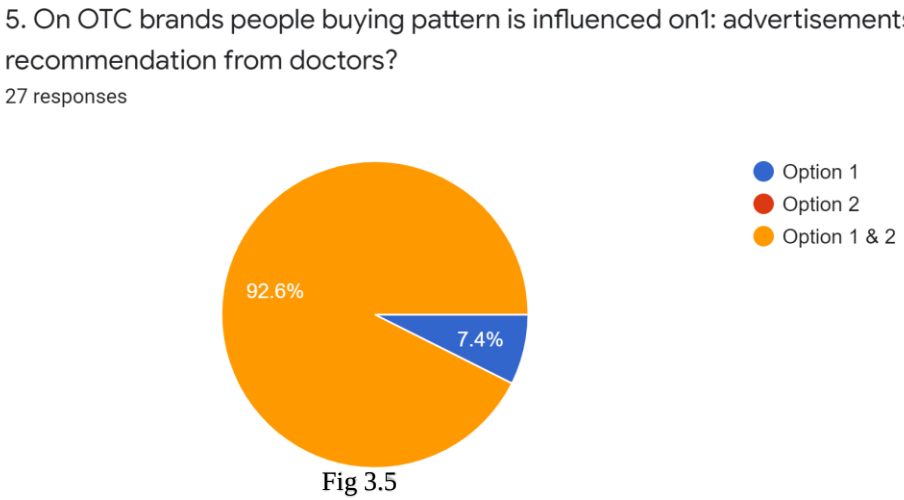

Fig 3.5

Interpretation

It has been discovered that 93% survey population says people buying pattern is influenced on advertisements and from doctor's recommendation.

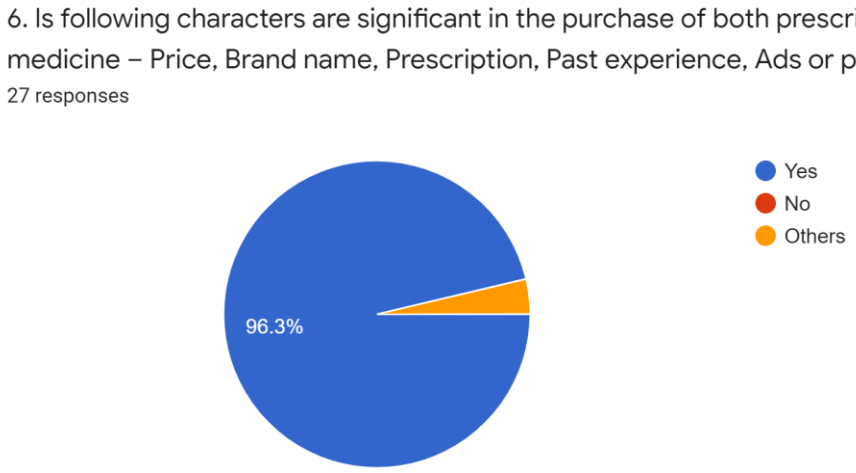

Fig 3.6

Interpretation

It was found that 97% of the survey population said price, brand name, prescription, past experience and promotions are very crucial in the purchase and repurchase of both prescription and non-prescription medicine.

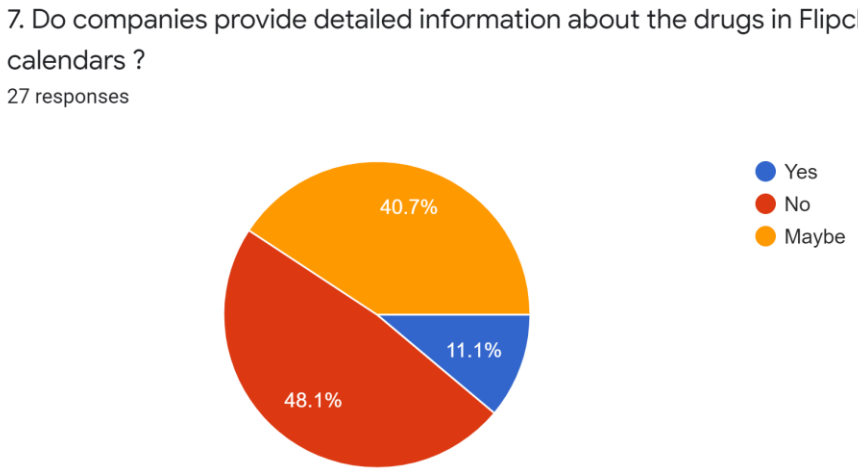

Fig 3.7

Interpretation

According to 48% of the survey population, the drug information details provided by their companies are incomplete and incorrect, implying that 40.7%, Maybe, of the survey population.

The process of providing free drug samples, flipcharts and brand remainders to doctors is another obligation and need of the MR to promote their company sales. These samples are primarily used to serve as reminders to clinicians in order to generate more prescriptions for the company's product. Despite the fact that clinicians claim to be unaffected by MR interactions or taking gifts from them, and there are clinicians who see promotions as very useful term for them to acquire gifts from high priced to low that offers from company . There is also a considerable difference in physician attitudes and behavior, as evidenced by the fact that they dispense free prescription samples and prescription behavior changes more frequently out of a sense of reciprocity.

Research questions to doctors:

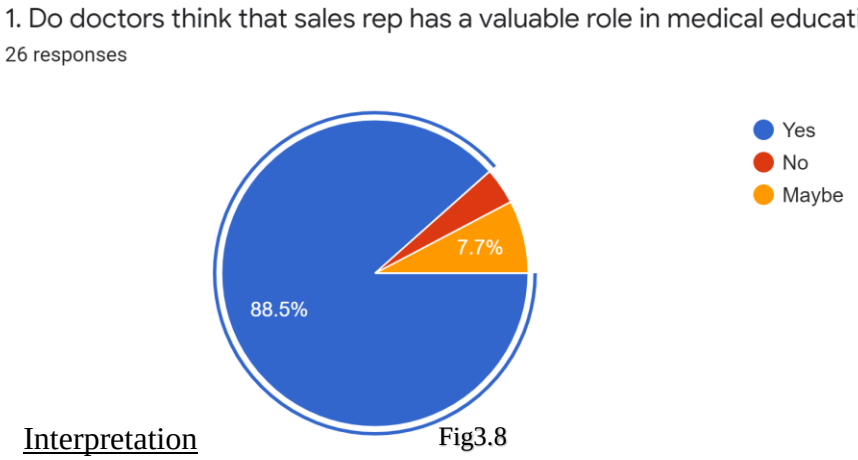

Fig3.8

Interpretation

It has been discovered that 88% of survey population says sales representatives have a role in medical education

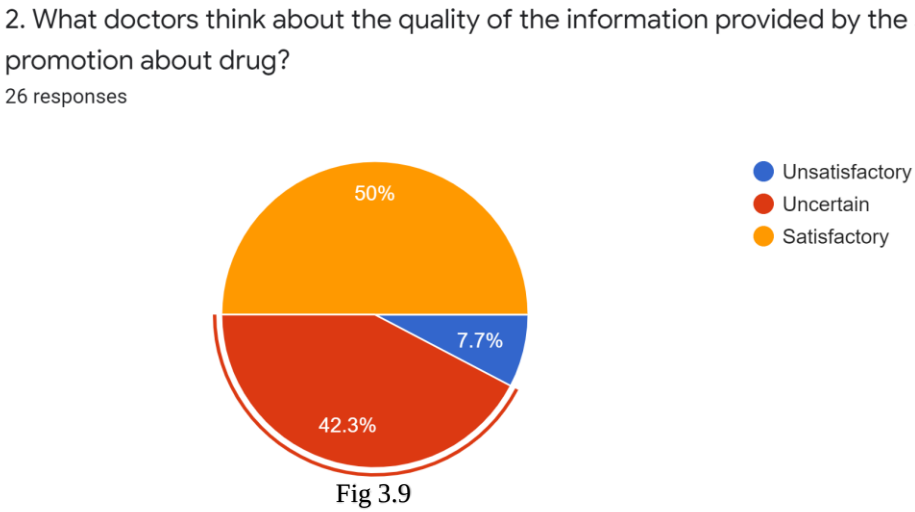

Fig 3.9

Interpretation

50% of doctors are satisfactory with the quality of information provided by the sales team

3. Do patients feels that discussion with sales rep affect the prescribing pattern?

26 responses

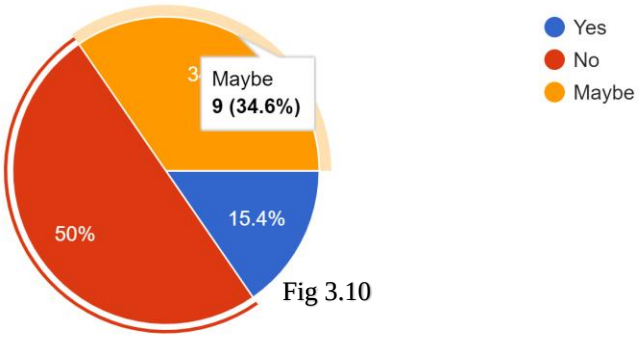

Fig 3.10

Interpretation

It was discovered that 50% of the survey population believes that discussions about MR sales have no effect on prescribing patterns.

4. Do you think that the continuous supply of low and high-cost gifts to the physician at every visit of the medical representative is justifiable?

26 responses

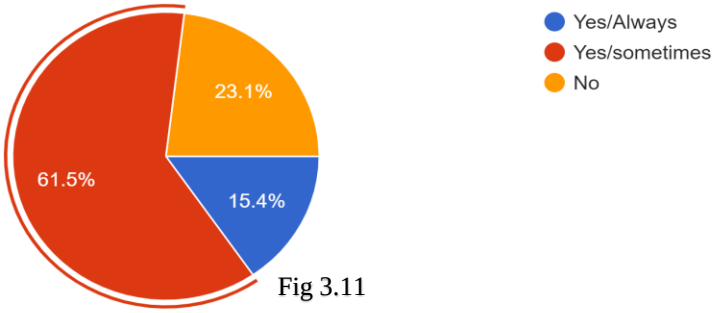

Fig 3.11

Interpretation

A 61.5% survey population says continuous supply of low and high cost gifts to physicians sometimes justifiable

5. Do you think acceptance of various types of gifts and its influence in physicians prescribing pattern and the result in early adoption to prescribe newly medications?

26 responses

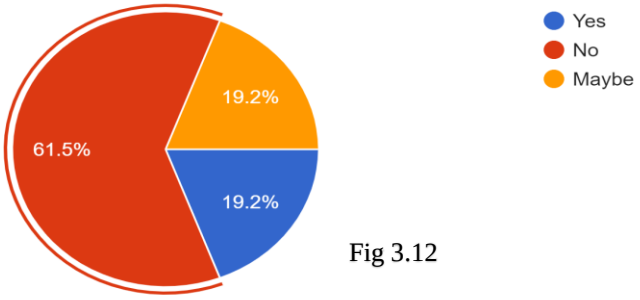

Fig 3.12

Interpretation

It is found that 62% says no gifts and brand remainders influence the prescribing pattern and early adoption to newly medicines

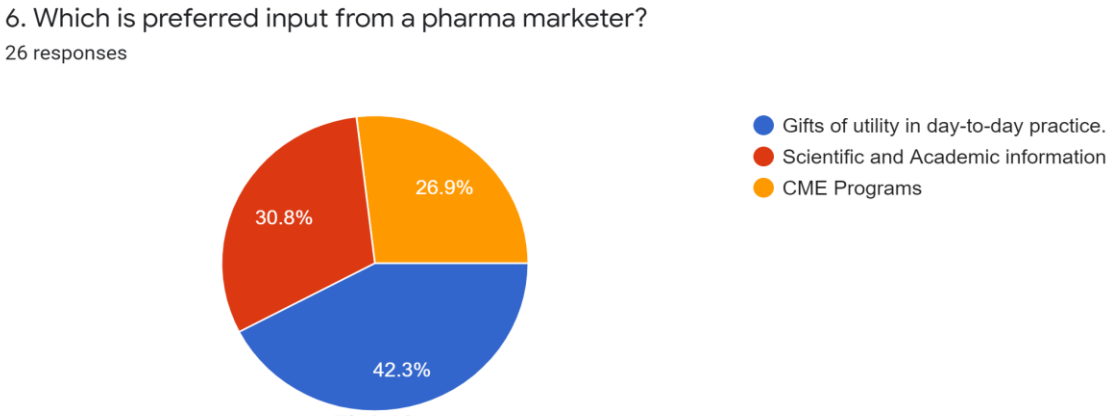

Fig3.13

Interpretation

It is found that 43% doctors preferred input from pharma marketer is gifts of utility in day to day practice

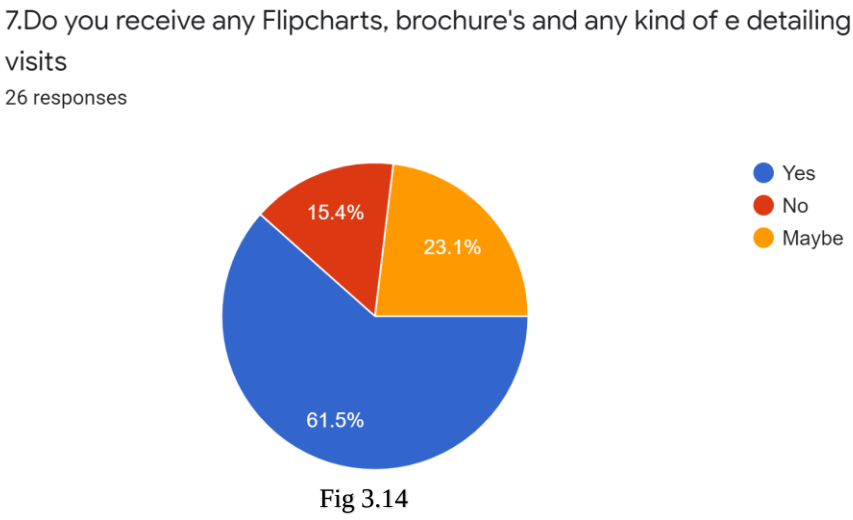

Fig 3.14

Interpretation

It is found that 61% doctors say they receive all kinds of brand remainders such as brochures, flipcharts, and drug named calendars during the MR visits.

The review found a link between doctors exposure to promotional materials from the industry or MR and lower prescribing frequency, early adoption to new medicines, more medicines prescribed despite the fact that there were survey population of 26 research that addressed with the subject of medication promotion and its effects on prescribing behavior They assert unequivocally that the marketing campaign has had solely a positive impact on their business, and doctors are satisfied with the information they supply even though the information they passes are incomplete and misleading, also implying that MR and doctors have a favorable relationship because of their aggressive tactics used to convenience doctors. Since there was a large advantage from promotional activities to pharma companies, it was recommended to limit promotion because it might potentially shorten the time for physician–patient interaction, change in prescribing patterns indirectly lead to more expensive pharmaceuticals in order to recoup the cost of drug promotion and badly affects the patients' health and When people are solely thinking about business, it can be harmful to people's health, and India is one such country in the globe that is leading in health-care activities and pharmaceutical company.

RESULTS

From accepting high and low gifts as part of a promotion to gifts in everyday practice that serve as inducements and doctors prescribing practices changing after meeting an MR to misleading or incomplete drug information and manipulating consumers to appropriate drugs, the survey revealed a number of unethical and illegal practices. Following a poll of doctors and MR, it was discovered that MR provides medical and drug information to doctors via flipcharts, brochures, and calendars, also known as e detailing's or brand remainders, which include inaccurate and incomplete information about the drug. Doctors are typically satisfied with the information supplied by MRs and have a positive response to MR visits and advertisements. However, MRs ensured that the information offered to doctors was limited and skewed towards their products. Doctors always had good sentiments toward MR, according to 90% of the MR survey sample says. Regular visits to doctors from MR and video calling from MR are the greatest ways to keep doctors informed about the brand and urge them to visit on a daily basis. It is also one of the greatest strategies to maintain a good relationship with doctors. The doctors always encourage the MRs to interact with them. The most targeted are private clinics with a large number of doctors. "Regular or intermediate visits to doctors is the only method to keep doctors aware of the brand and unforgotten," says an MR in person. "Every doctor is not convinced in one visit; they require dynamic one or maybe two visits to remember the brand. “Each doctor is assigned a category based on their profession and patient load. The most targeted doctors are those that work in private clinics with a large number of doctors. Their ‘potentiality' is measured by the number of patients who see a doctor on any given day, which is a function of the number of prescriptions that can be written.

The doctor-drug company relationship is cultivated by small gestures like brand reminders, as well as gifts that are more blatantly incentives to prescribe. Medical lobbyists bribed doctors with gifts in order to induce them to prescribe their products, and many doctors seemed to accept these bribes. Although they are subjected to influence the physicians prescribing habits, the majority of doctors had no issue to getting brand remainders. Accepting gifts is occasionally justifiable to always, according to the majority of doctors. CME programs and academic material are preferable input from the employer for 28 percent of ethical doctors, but gifts and utilities ranging from cheap too high in price are acceptable forms of promotion for 43 percent of doctors

Patients are becoming more conscious of promotional aggressive techniques, which poses a problem of self-consultation. Patients are aware of promotional practices, according to the majority of respondents in the study. Patients feel that drug advertising via the internet and other media provides them with information about numerous drugs, increasing their compliance.
In India's healthcare system, there are numerous unethical behaviors and irrationalities. Doctors' practices of accepting MR for personal advantage have resulted in changes in prescribing habits. Genuineness in the doctor-patient connection, however there are ethical doctors in our culture who are honest and integral. Many companies are fooling doctors with false information about pharmaceuticals, and based on the results of the poll, I've come to the conclusion that the majority of doctors welcome MR. The majority of doctors are satisfied with dynamic MR visits and the information they provide. The majority of MR are pleased with the doctors' demeanor, and the majority of doctors are contemplating them. Surprisingly, the majority of doctors asked preferred gifts and incentives over continuing education and academic information. This has led to the conclusion to study that most doctors enjoy presents ranging from high to cheap, and that they are impressed by promotions given to them, and that pharmaceutical corporations are gaining ground on doctors.

DISCUSSION

This research was conducted as part of an MBA Pharmaceutical Management dissertation that looked into issues ranging from promotional practices in the pharmaceutical industry to the role of MRs and their dynamic visits to doctors. It also attempted to investigate the breadth of pharmaceutical companies' ethical and unethical practices and marketing operations and tactics used. MR connects as a key strategic role to gain market share and revenue, as well as to strengthen their relationship with doctors. Pharmaceutical corporations' medication advertising techniques may be the most untrustworthy scenario in the healthcare industry. This behavior the pharmaceutical business conceals all safety profiles, makes all claims, and promotes its products for financial advantage. Such initiatives result in the promotion of "me too" medications, unreasonable fixed dose combinations, and changes in prescribing patterns. There are various opportunities for new laws and regulations to detect and penalize these immoral activities, however laws are for ignoring but not enforcing; it is the individual's obligation to change all of these practices. The Pharmaceutical companies' most popular promotional tools are drug information journals, calendars, writing pads, pens, and sample medications drug brochures. However, pharmaceutical firms have been increasingly providing nearly everything as a gift to doctors only with a mindset of increasing business and revenue whether consciously or unconsciously doctors do become part of a system. Everyone in the healthcare industry should be held accountable for boycotting such actions and working for the safety and welfare of patients rather than personal financial gain.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between practicing physicians and drug firms in India has been described as non-ethical by this report, which negatively affects physicians prescribing behavior and, in turn, negatively affects patients' health, rings a warning bell. When treating patients, doctors consider quality, dependability, and cost, but they must also acknowledge that patients are completely helpless when it comes to sickness and healthcare. When medicines are prescribed and dispensed based on the prescribers' and dispensers' financial interests rather than the needs of the patients, the system's ability to hold individuals and entities accountable for following basic medical ethics, standard procedures, norms, laws, and regulations is compromised. A shift in the industry is unavoidable if everyone embraces this as a slogan and acknowledges it as a problem. Patient safety is paramount, and it is here that a patient-centered approach thrives; no financial goals are more essential than healthcare. By doing so, improvements can be made at every stage of the health-care delivery process. Regulatory and professional organizations both have a role to play a significant role. Issues of public health and consumer rights will remain peripheral unless drug promotion becomes more transparent and accountable.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- Due to covid19 and time constraint the present study was restricted to a limited number of samples
- This study is limited only to Calicut district in Kerala.
- There is a possibility that the responses offered by the respondents are biased.
- The study reflects current data, not forecast data.
- This study was unable to capture the customer's choice on medicine purchases since they were not interviewed.

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