



## DIVERGENCE IN MARKETING TECHNIQUES ADOPTED BY PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES AMONG DOCTORS AND PHARMACISTS IN SIKKIM

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### **Abstract**

*The study is intended to examine the practices adopted by the pharmaceutical companies and the various methods of marketing strategies used by them. The study is directed to reveal the industries adhering to modern marketing techniques to furnish the information in the lucid manner both to the doctors and the pharmacists. The role of doctors and pharmacists become all the more important for pharmaceutical companies in understanding whether their practices is actually making difference or not. For this purpose, both primary and secondary data is used and a random sampling is made for the study which consists of different components of pharmaceutical industry, including doctors and pharmacists in different experience groups.. For the sampling purpose 30 doctors and 30 pharmacists are chosen as respondents and two sample t-tests is employed to the data collected from these sources for finding out that there is no significant difference in the level of marketing awareness of drugs adopted by pharma companies between doctors and pharmacist.*

**Key words:** *Marketing Practices, Digitalisation, prevailing practices.*

### **Introduction**

Marketing Technique is anything that an organization does to bring new business or increase firm's visibility and reputation. These are methods for targeting promising markets and building brands that will ultimately foster faster growth and higher profits.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the companies access marketing techniques to increase their turnover and build a solid footing in the market. The concept of adopting marketing techniques is a breakthrough in the way towards e-business.

### **Literature Review**

**John A. Gans (1992)**<sup>29</sup> has discussed the need for a particular instructions in pharmaceutical promotion and why the perspective of even should be given due weight age while framing policies and implementing promotion related activities in his research article titled "The need for guidelines in pharmaceutical promotion: A Pharmacy Perspective. This paper expects the patients receiving medication to receive maximum therapeutic from the regulators, manufacturers and the prescribers. Further, his study has examined whether the seminar conducted by the pharmaceutical companies as a medium of promotion is actually helpful for the patients to make informed choice about their health and whether the consumers are actually fetching the information that they are in need of. The companies also feel to work better by providing right information to its ultimate consumers."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://hingemarketing.com/blog/story/top-10-marketing-techniques-for-professional-services>

<sup>2</sup> Gans, J. A. (1992). "The Need for Guidelines in Pharmaceutical Promotion: A Pharmacy Perspective" *Journal of Pharmaceutical Marketing & Management*, 7 (1) 147–155.



**David, G. Adams (1992)**<sup>28</sup> in his article titled “Pharmaceutical Advertising: Education Vs Promotion has revealed the inter-relation between education and promotion and why both are of equal importance. He says in the broader perspective, promotion involves education and education involves promotion. In addition the author feels that the education has become a enjoyment as the scientific ideas are exchanged in higher education places. The author has highlighted three major educational activities FDA has a interest upon. The activities of education nature sponsored by the drug companies are directed towards

- a) The healthcare professionals
- b) The consumers and
- c) The pharmacist, each methods differing from the others.<sup>3</sup>

**Robert E. Martin (1998)**<sup>26</sup> in his research article titled “Pharmacist and Disease Management has explained the crucial role played by the pharmacist in pharmaceutical industry. The author feels that the pharmaceutical manufacturers should overlook and reconsider the pharmacist in framing a marketing policies and strategies as they have close proximity with the patients. The author pointed out that to enhance best clinical practices and to be in a equilibrium state after the product launch the physicians were chosen as a target group. However, a research conducted by Institute Care Management Program revealed that the physician community actually pose a threat to develop care management programs and to implement new innovation due to the physician extra work load and influence through various care organizations.<sup>4</sup>

**Alison Keith (1992)**<sup>27</sup> in her research titled “The Benefit of Pharmaceutical Promotion: An Economic and Health Perspective” examined critically the additional benefits extracted from the pharmaceutical promotion. The direct benefit driven from the promotion include people being able to chose the best product and services according to their need and preferences in the scarcity for need to pay. The author further reveals that the promotion has direct, indirect as well as extremely powerful effects. Promotion has direct relationship with the price. It increases competition thereby reducing the prices. It is an stimulant for innovation as it aids passage for the new products and new companies and also strengthening the quality of the product and services. In addition to the above mentioned advantages, one such disadvantage the author speaks is about the misleading or the proliferation of messages promotion provides. Hence, the author has spoken both direct and indirect benefits the promotion provides to the pharmaceutical markets.<sup>5</sup>

### Statement of the Problem

Some of the big giant pharmaceutical companies adopt marketing techniques for its products and services which are directed towards the doctors and the pharmacists. Still the awareness of marketing is not being reached out to the doctors and pharmacists as much as needed due to various reasons. At the grass root level, both the doctors and the pharmacist are an intellectual being. It is therefore

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<sup>3</sup> Adams, D. G., (1992). “Pharmaceutical Advertising: Education Vs Promotion” *Journal of Pharmaceutical Marketing & Management*, 7 (1) 53–66.

<sup>4</sup> Martin, R. E. (1998). “Pharmacists and Disease Management” *Journal of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practice*, 1, 2 (2), 61-80.

<sup>5</sup> Keith, A. (1992). “The Benefits of Pharmaceutical Promotion: An Economic and Health Perspective” *Journal of Pharmaceutical Marketing and Management*, 7 (1), 121-133.



necessary to determine the extent to which they are aware of the best products and services available and the improvement in the techniques of marketing as it is presently a expeditiously growing domain.

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To determine the difference in marketing techniques adopted by the pharmaceutical companies among the doctors and the pharmacists in the state of Sikkim only.
2. To explore if experiences of doctors and pharmacists have a control on the marketing methods.

**Research Methodology**

A pharmaceutical company primarily relies on the doctors and the pharmacists for use of their products and services. For the latest research and development activities of the pharmaceutical industry, the doctors and the pharmacists is considered to be the source of knowledge. The purpose of the present study is to understand the difference in marketing methods adopted by the companies among doctors and pharmacists and to find out the experiences of the respondents influences on the marketing methods. For this purpose, purposive sampling has been adopted. A well-structured questionnaire has been administered to around 30 doctors working in private and government hospitals of Sikkim and 30 pharmacists of Sikkim chosen randomly.

**Data Analysis and Findings**

By employing t-tests, the primary data obtained from the respondents were analyzed.

The demographic detail of the sample respondents have been used for understanding the level of awareness.

**Table 1: Demographic details of Doctors and the Pharmacists**

Particulars	No. of Doctors	No. of Pharmacists	% age of doctors	% age of pharmacists
Experience (in years)				
00-10	04	3	13.3	10
11-20	11	6	36.67	20
21-30	10	9	33.33	30
31-40	5	12	16.67	40
Gender				
Male	12	19	80	63.33
Female	18	11	20	36.67

**The following hypotheses were framed for the purpose of the study.**

H<sub>N1</sub>: There is significant difference in the awareness of marketing techniques used by the pharmaceutical companies among the doctors and the pharmacists.

H<sub>N0</sub>: There is no significant difference of marketing techniques used by the pharmaceutical companies among the doctors and the pharmacists.

**Table 2: Experience Vs Level of Awareness of the Doctors and the Pharmacists**



Experience in years	Level of Awareness											
	Strong		Fairly Know		Partially Know		Heard of		Doesn't Know		Total	
	Doctors	Pharmacists	Doctors	Pharmacists	Doctors	Pharmacists	Doctors	Pharmacists	Doctors	Pharmacists	Doctors	Pharmacists
00-10	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	1	1	4	3
11-20	1	0	4	2	3	0	2	2	1	2	11	6
21-30	1	1	2	1	2	3	3	1	2	3	10	9
31-40	0	1	1	2	2	1	2	4	8	8	4	10
Total	2	2	7	5	9	5	8	8	4	10	30	30
% age	6.67	6.67	23.33	16.67	30.00	16.67	26.67	26.67	13.33	33.33	100	100

Table 2 indicates that 6.67 percentages of doctors and the pharmacists are strongly aware of the marketing techniques followed by the pharmaceutical companies. As compared to the pharmacists which are 16.67 percentages, 23.33 percentages of doctors fairly know about the marketing techniques. 30 percentages of doctors partially know and 16.67 percentages of pharmacists partially know. Further, 26.67 percentage of both the respondents have heard of and 13.33 per cent of doctors does not know at all and 33.33 per cent of pharmacists does not know at all of the marketing techniques followed by the pharmaceutical companies.

Using Minitab 21.10 version, the hypothesis is tested by employing two sample t-tests based on the experiences of both the samples.

**Two-Sample T-Test and CI: DOC 00-10, PHAR 00-10**

Two-sample T for DOC 00-10 VS PHAR 00-10

N=Mean St.Dev SE Mean

Experience	N	Mean	St. Deviation	SE Mean
DOC 00-10	5	0.800	0.83	0.37
PHAR 00-10	5	0.600	0.54	0.24

Difference=mu (DOC 00-10)-mu (PHAR 00-10)

Estimate for difference: 0.200

95% CI for difference: (-0.894, 1.294)

T-Test of difference=0 (vs not=): T-Value =0.45, P-Value= 0.670 DF=6

On applying t-tests to two different samples of the doctors and the pharmacists having an experience of up to 00-10 years, it is observed that the standard deviation for the first sample is 0.8 and for the second sample is 0.5, t-value obtained is 0.45 and p-value is 0.670 which is greater than 0.05. This implies that the null hypothesis is accepted and hence there is no significant difference in marketing techniques followed by the pharmaceutical companies between the two respondents having an experience up to 10 years.



**Two-Sample T-Test and CI: DOC 11-20, PHAR 11-20**

Two-sample T for DOC 11-20, PHAR 11-20

N=Mean St.Dev SE Mean

Experience	N	Mean	St. Deviation	SE Mean
DOC 11-20	5	2.20	1.30	0.58
PHAR 11-20	5	1.20	1.10	0.49

Difference= $\mu$  (DOC 11-20)- $\mu$  (PHAR 11-20)

Estimate for difference: 1.000

95% CI for difference: (-0.801, 2.801)

T-Test of difference=0 (vs not=): T-Value = 1.31 P-Value= 0.231 DF=7

The response of sample respondents having an experience of 06-10 years about their awareness of marketing techniques show a standard deviation of 1.30 and 1.10 respectively. The t-value obtained is 1.31 and p-value obtained is 0.231. As the p-value is greater than the alpha value, null hypothesis is accepted and hence there is no significant difference in marketing techniques followed by the pharmaceutical companies between the two respondents having an experience up to 11-20 years.

**Two-Sample T-Test and CI: DOC 21-30, PHAR 21-30**

Two-sample T for DOC 21-30, PHAR 21-30

N=Mean St.Dev SE Mean

Experience	N	Mean	St. Deviation	SE Mean
DOC 21-30	5	2.000	0.707	0.32
PHAR 21-30	5	1.80	1.10	0.49

Difference= $\mu$  (DOC 21-30)- $\mu$  (PHAR 21-30)

Estimate for difference: 0.200

95% CI for difference: (-1.227, 1.627)

T-Test of difference=0 (vs not=): T-Value = 0.34 P-Value= 0.743 DF=6

The response of sample respondents having an experience of 21-30 years about their awareness of marketing techniques shows a standard deviation of 0.707 and 1.10 respectively. The t-value obtained is 0.34 and p-value obtained is 0.743. As the p-value is greater than the alpha value, null hypothesis is accepted and hence there is no significant difference in marketing techniques followed by the pharmaceutical companies between the two respondents having an experience up to 21-30 years.

**Two-Sample T-Test and CI: DOC 31-40, PHAR 31-40**

Two-sample T for DOC 31-40, PHAR 31-40

N=Mean St.Dev SE Mean

Experience	N	Mean	St. Deviation	SE Mean
DOC 31-40	5	1.00	1.00	0.45
PHAR 31-40	5	2.20	1.48	0.66



Difference= $\mu$  (DOC 31-40)- $\mu$  (PHAR 31-40)

Estimate for difference: -1.200

95% CI for difference: (-3.092, 0.692)

T-Test of difference=0 (vs not=): T-Value = -1.50 P-Value= 0.177 DF=7

The response of sample respondents having an experience of 31-40years about their awareness of marketing techniques shows a standard deviation of 1.00 and 1.48 respectively. The t-value obtained is 1.50 and p-value obtained is 1.48. As the p-value is greater than the alpha value, null hypothesis is accepted and hence there is no significant difference of marketing techniques followed by the pharmaceutical companies between the two respondents having an experience up to 31-40 years.

### Conclusion

There is no difference in the marketing techniques followed by the pharmaceutical companies in all the age groups between the doctors and the pharmacists. The methods for marketing of the pharmaceutical goods and services are evolving since the beginning of the industry and these methods should be changed in the future. The companies must create awareness among the doctors and the pharmacists and they need to focus more on other alternatives of strategies such as conducting seminars, conferences, digital and easy quality product information to the respondents. Pharmaceutical marketing is also on the verge of change as it has shown a tremendous growth in digital marketing expecting the bright future of this segment. <sup>6</sup> Some of the pioneers in this field have already started equipping its marketing strategies to reach its ultimate customers.

### References

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