# EFFECT ON PHARMACEUTICAL SECTOR MARKETING ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

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## ABSTRACT

The pharmaceutical sector plays a critical role in healthcare, and its marketing strategies have far-reaching implications for patient well-being. This study investigates the influence of marketing practices within the pharmaceutical industry on customer satisfaction. In a rapidly evolving and highly regulated environment, understanding the relationship between marketing efforts and customer satisfaction is essential for both industry stakeholders and healthcare consumers. This research employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Quantitative data is collected through surveys administered to pharmaceutical industry stakeholders, including healthcare professionals, patients, and pharmaceutical representatives. Qualitative data is gathered through in-depth interviews and content analysis of marketing materials and practices.

The findings of this study reveal that pharmaceutical sector marketing has a significant impact on customer satisfaction. The marketing practices employed by pharmaceutical companies, including advertising, detailing to healthcare professionals, and direct-to-consumer advertising, are associated with varying degrees of influence on customer satisfaction. Factors such as transparency, accuracy of information, ethical considerations, and patient education are identified as critical determinants of customer satisfaction. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between pharmaceutical sector marketing and customer satisfaction, shedding light on the ethical and practical dimensions of marketing practices within the industry. The insights gained from this study may inform regulatory decisions, corporate strategies, and healthcare consumer choices, ultimately leading to improved healthcare outcomes and patient satisfaction.

**KEYWORDS:** Pharmaceutical sector, marketing, customer satisfaction, healthcare, transparency, ethics, patient education.

## INTRODUCTION

The pharmaceutical sector stands as a cornerstone of healthcare, responsible for the research, development, and distribution of essential medications and healthcare products. In recent years, the sector has evolved not only in terms of scientific advancements but also in its approach to marketing. The impact of pharmaceutical sector marketing on customer satisfaction has garnered significant attention due to its potential to influence not only business outcomes but also the well-being of individuals. This introduction provides an overview of the multifaceted relationship between pharmaceutical sector marketing and customer satisfaction. Pharmaceutical sector marketing is a complex and dynamic field that encompasses a wide range of activities, from advertising and promotion to information dissemination, educational campaigns, and public awareness initiatives. While the traditional objective of marketing is to increase sales and market share, in the pharmaceutical industry, it carries an additional ethical and moral dimension. At its core, pharmaceutical marketing is about facilitating access to vital medications and healthcare solutions while ensuring their safe and effective use.[2]

The pharmaceutical sector's marketing strategies have a profound impact on how customers perceive and interact with healthcare products. These strategies are designed to convey information about medications, their benefits, risks, and usage guidelines. Informed customers are better equipped to make choices that align with their healthcare needs.[3] Consequently, the quality and transparency of information presented through marketing channels can significantly influence customer satisfaction. Moreover, marketing strategies affect customers' perceptions of product availability, accessibility, and affordability. The ease with which individuals can obtain the medications they need directly impacts their satisfaction. Pricing strategies and discounts, highlighted through marketing channels, can either alleviate or exacerbate the financial burden of healthcare, further affecting customer satisfaction.

Top 10 Pharmaceutical Companies[4]

• Johnson & Johnson – 82.1 billion U.S. dollars

• F. Hoffmann-La Roche – 63.85 billion U.S. dollars (61.47 billion Swiss francs)

• Pfizer – 51.8 billion U.S. dollars

• Bayer – 48.770 billion US dollars (43,545 million euros)

• Novartis – 47.5 billion U.S. dollars

• Merck & Co., Inc. – 46.8 billion U.S dollars

• GlaxoSmithKline – 43.26 billion U.S. dollars (33,754 million British pounds)

• Sanofi – 40.69 billion U.S. dollars (36,126 million euros)

• AbbVie Inc.- 33.266 billion U.S. dollars

• Abbott Laboratories – 31.9 billion U.S. dollars

**Data Collection**

Quantitative Data: Surveys will be distributed to a diverse sample of pharmaceutical sector customers to gather quantitative data. The surveys will include questions related to customer satisfaction, awareness of pharmaceutical marketing, and the influence of marketing on their healthcare decisions.

Qualitative Data: In-depth interviews and focus group discussions will be conducted with a subset of survey participants.

These qualitative data collection methods will provide more nuanced insights into customer perceptions and experiences.

1. Primary Data Four structured questionnaires were used to gather primary data from the following stakeholders in the Ahmednagar district who have at least ten years of experience in the field of prescription medicines:

Allopathic Practising Doctors; 2. Chemists; 3. Stockists; and 4. Medical Representatives & Managers.

Personal interviews and schedules were used to gather the data.[5]

2. Secondary Data

1. Journals of Marketing Management and Commerce were the source of secondary data.

2. Periodicals such as Pharma Chronicle, Express Pharma Pulse, Pharma Bizz, etc.

3. Local newspapers as well as publications like the Business Standard and Economic Times

4. Books on research, marketing management, and pharmaceutical marketing, etc.

5. Websites of the Ahmadabad government, the pharmaceutical business, etc.

3. Sampling Design

i. Allopathic universe Modes: All allopathic Doctors, Chemists, Stockists, Medical Representatives and Managers working in Ahmednagar district having ten years of experience in healthcare or Pharma industry.

ii. Sampling Frame: The list of all allopathic Doctors, Chemists, Stockists, Medical Representatives and Managers in Ahmednagar district having ten years of experience in healthcare or Pharma industry.

iii. Sampling Element: Every allopathic Doctor, Chemist, Stockists, MR and Manager working in Ahmednagar district having ten years of experience in healthcare or Pharma industry.

iv. Sampling Unit: Every town in Ahmednagar district having allopathic Doctors, Chemists, Stockists, Medical Representatives and Managers.

v. Sampling Method: The respondents were selected by Simple Random & Purposive Sampling Method from Ahmednagar District.

vi. Sample Size: i) Doctors-190, ii) Chemists-95, iii) Stockists-30, iv) MRs and Managers-95. Total Sample Size is – 410.[5]



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**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

**Q.1) On a scale of 1 to 5, how satisfied are you with the information provided by pharmaceutical companies about their products and services?**

| 1 (0-1) | 6.7% |
|---------|------|
| 2 (1-2) | 13.3% |
| 3 (2-3) | 53.3% |
| 4 (4-5) | 26.7% |

**Q.2) Have you been influenced by pharmaceutical advertising in your decision to use specific medication or health products?**

| Yes | 93.3% |
|-----|-------|
| NO | 6.7% |

**Q.3) What channels of pharmaceutical marketing do you find most effective in providing valuable information?**

| TV Commercial | 6.7% |
|---------------|------|
| Online ads | 20% |
| Healthcare professionals | 60% |
| Recommendations | 13.3% |

**Q.4) How often do you feel overwhelmed by the amount of pharmaceutical marketing you encounter in your daily life?**

| Frequently | 18.8% |
|------------|-------|
| Occasionally | 68.8% |
| Rarely | - |
| Never | 6.3% |

**Q.5) Do you believe that pharmaceutical marketing practices contribute to better awareness of available medical treatment and options?**

| Yes | 100% |
|-----|------|
| N0 | - |

**Q.6) Have you ever had a negative experience with a pharmaceutical product or service after being influenced by marketing materials?**

| Yes | 18.8% |
|-----|-------|
| No | 81.3% |

**Q.7) Are you more likely to trust pharmaceutical companies that engage in educational marketing campaign about health issues and treatment?**

| Yes | 93.8% |
|-----|-------|
| No | 6.3% |

**Q.8) Do you feel that pharmaceutical marketing plays a significant role in the cost of healthcare and medication?**

| Significant | 56.3% |
|-------------|-------|
| Moderate | 37.5% |
| Minor | 6.3% |
| None | - |

## CONCLUSION

This research aims to provide valuable insights into the intricate relationship between pharmaceutical sector marketing and customer satisfaction. By utilizing a mixed-methods approach, it will offer a comprehensive understanding of the various factors at play and their impact on customers' well-being and healthcare choices. The results of this study can inform pharmaceutical companies, policymakers, and healthcare professionals about the best practices in marketing to enhance customer satisfaction and overall public health.

- Increased Awareness and Education: Pharmaceutical marketing can raise awareness about health conditions and available treatments. This educational aspect can lead to higher customer satisfaction as patients are better informed about their options.

- Trust and Brand Loyalty: Effective marketing campaigns can build trust in pharmaceutical brands. Customers who trust a brand are more likely to be satisfied with its products and services.

- Access and Availability: Marketing efforts can also affect how accessible pharmaceutical products are. Better accessibility can lead to increased customer satisfaction, especially in cases of chronic conditions where continuous access to medication is vital.

- Ethical Concerns: Some pharmaceutical marketing practices have faced criticism, particularly direct-to-consumer advertising. Unethical or misleading marketing can erode trust and result in customer dissatisfaction.

- Regulatory Impact: Government regulations play a significant role. In some countries, strict regulations on pharmaceutical marketing exist to ensure customer safety and prevent over-promotion of medication.

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