PREFACE

Information Technology has heralded a new era of vision and greatly enhanced capabilities. To enhance and improve its impact on our lives Information Technology has been very keenly observed and investigated by a whole lot of researchers. Many of them have shown interest in understanding its potential to make marketing a more meaningful proposition. Marketing, as we know has assumed prime importance in our socio-economic sphere.

This research work is aimed to study the role of Information Technology in marketing of pharmaceutical products. The research work has been undertaken to understand the response of Pharmaceutical Industry in general and Indian Pharmaceutical Industry in particular, to comprehend the barriers they have to cross to harness its benefits; to analyze the trends of use of IT for marketing pharmaceutical products; to grasp the causes of successful and failed strategies attempted so far and to formulate clear guidelines for a smooth, enriched and purposeful integration of IT with pharmaceutical marketing practices. The emphasis of this study is on prescription drugs.

The researcher considers it a relevant and significant study as healthcare has immense value for human happiness and availability of right medicines at right prices and at right time is an important component of healthcare system. It can certainly help in attaining such an objective.

The hypothesis for this work is, power of IT has been portrayed as larger-than-life and hence its promises may fail to live up to our expectations. IT will not change the traditional practices of marketing pharmaceutical products dramatically. This is not to deny the legitimate contributions that IT is and will be making to the pharmaceutical marketing. The researcher hopes to make a realistic assessment of the potential that IT brings forth to strengthen and consolidate pharmaceutical marketing.

Keeping in mind the macro nature of the scope of study a multi pronged methodology was planned. It involves collecting primary information from pharmaceutical marketers of representative companies and physicians
through personal/telephonic interviews. Both structured and unstructured interview schedule were used. Information was also collected online from global market experts by joining an exclusive e-mail networking community organized by Pharma Marketing Network owned and operated by VirSci Corporation. It involved collecting relevant case studies also. Secondary information was collected from internet, journals, magazines and news dailies.

The information collected helped to understand the influence of information technology on market strategies, market segmentation, positioning strategies, advertising, pricing decisions, distribution, sales force management, product development, retailing, legal and ethical aspects of pharmaceutical marketing.

The research work is divided into four chapters. Chapter One, the Conceptual Framework contains three sections. Section One is devoted to Information Technology. Similarly Section Two and Three are devoted to Marketing and Pharmaceutical Products respectively.

Chapter Two entitled Methodology contains Objectives, Nature of Study Research Design, Review of Literature; Universe/Population; Sampling Frame; Sampling Methods; Observational Units; Sources of Data; Data Collection Methods; Analytical Methods; Hypotheses; Limitations of the Work Undertaken and Profile of the Companies.

Chapter Three entitled Observations, Analyses and Findings contains General Observations and findings related to marketing mix for pharmaceutical products and analyses of data.

Chapter Four entitled Conclusions, Recommendations And Suggestions contains the final conclusions drawn by interpretation and findings and observations also the recommendations for successful application of information technology for marketing pharmaceutical products and suggestions for future researcher.

12 Appendices are appended. Appendices include email conforming acceptance of researcher's membership as Appendix I; List of experts consulted as Appendix II; Details of online correspondences as Appendix
Ill; Copy of certificate recommending support for the research work, issued by Mr. S. D. Joag, Secretary, Indian Pharmaceutical Association, as Appendix IV; Names and contact details of companies visited as Appendix V; Details of companies and person contacted as Appendix VI; Copy of the Interview Schedule-I meant for marketing executives of pharmaceutical firms as Appendix VII; Copy of the Interview Schedule-II meant for physicians as Appendix VIII; Interview Schedule-III meant for physicians reluctant to meet MRs as Appendix IX; List of journals and magazines that were mainly referred for secondary information as Appendix X; Names and contact details of organizations/individuals who provided valuable primary information online to complete this research work as Appendix XI; Details of papers presented and published have been shown as Appendix XII.

Bibliography in the form of references is appended at the last.

Finally, as no research work is free from limitations, so the same happened with this work. The researcher has made all possible efforts to minimize the effects of limitations and to make the thesis free from typing errors, even than the researcher undertakes full responsibility for such limitations and mistakes. The researcher unhesitatingly admits that he should alone be blamed for faults, errors and mistakes that might have crept into the work. Notwithstanding, this work, which is an out come of in-depth study of last five years, may hopefully be useful to future researchers who are interested in pharmaceutical marketing.

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