CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction:

This chapter deals with the research objectives, hypotheses, scope, limitations and research methodology applied in the research study for collecting and analysing data. The success of the research mainly depends up on research methodology applied for the data collection and data analysis.

Another important part of this chapter is review of literatures that deals with the analysis of various literatures from books, journals, magazines, newspapers, etc. which helps to define the research problem more precisely as well as to evolve the research design, to prepare the data collection instruments, define the sources as well as to solve the research problems and hypotheses systematically.

2.2 Research Objectives:

1. To analyze the changes in marketing scenario of prescription-based medicines in the last decade in Ahmednagar district.
2. To study the impact of changing marketing scenario in prescription-based medicines on stakeholders in Ahmednagar district.
3. To know the expectations of stakeholders in Ahmednagar district from pharmaceutical companies marketing prescription-based medicines.
4. To predict the future marketing trends of pharmaceutical companies marketing prescription-based medicines.

2.3 Hypotheses:

1. Stakeholders in Ahmednagar district are not satisfied with the changing marketing trends in prescription-based medicines.
2. The changing marketing scenario in prescription-based medicines has adversely affected the prescription habits of Doctors in Ahmednagar district.
3. Chemists and Stockists are not satisfied with the trade-margins and promotional schemes offered by pharmaceutical companies.
2.4 Research Methodology:

2.4.1 Research Design:

The research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement & analysis of data. As this research involves, “An Analytical Study of Changing Marketing Scenario in Prescription-based Medicines and its Impact on Stakeholders in Ahmednagar District” (2001-2010) therefore, the research design is essentially a Descriptive as well as Exploratory Research types.

It is a Descriptive kind of research as it describes the changes occurred in the marketing scenario of prescription-based medicines as well as it involves studying the impacts of changing marketing scenario in prescription-based medicines on different stakeholders in Ahmednagar district in the last decade.

The research is also of Exploratory in nature as it tries to get detailed insights about expectations of Stakeholders from pharma companies and also explores the probable future marketing trends in prescription-based medicines in India.

2.4.2 Data Collection:

The data for the research study was collected through following sources –

1. **Primary Data:**
   
The primary data has been collected from following stakeholders having at least ten years of experience in the field of prescription medicines from Ahmednagar district using personal interviews and schedules with the help of four structured Questionnaires from -
   
   1. Allopathic Practicing Doctors,
   2. Chemists,
   3. Stockists, and
   4. Medical Representatives & Managers.

2. **Secondary Data:** Secondary data was collected from-
   
   1. Journals of Marketing Management and Commerce,
   2. Magazines like Pharma Bizz, Express Pharma Pulse, Pharma Chronicle, etc.,
   3. Newspapers like Economic Times, Business Standard & other local papers,
   4. Pharmaceutical Marketing, Marketing Management & Research books, etc.,
   5. Internet websites related to pharma industry, Govt. of India websites, etc.,
   6. Ph.D. Thesis related to pharmaceutical marketing, etc.
2.4.3 Sampling Design:

i. **Universe**: 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, Stockist, 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.**

2.4.4 Research Instrument:

The data collection was done using personal interviews and schedules from selected Stakeholders using 4 different pre-coded and structured questionnaires prepared for- i) Doctors, ii) Chemists, iii) Stockists and iv) MRs & Managers.

2.4.5 Data Analysis:

Before conducting data analysis, data preparation was done using editing & coding. Close-ended responses were first coded and quantified; then all of the responses are tabulated and analysed. After the data was collected by the methods above, it was systematically analysed. This was done by writing all the key things in a systematic order, as is done in a questionnaire designing. After viewing the key themes, the views and answers were written down. Then different responses were studied and analysed for each question.

For the analysis and interpretation of data following tools and methods are used:

- Coding, tabulation, classification, percentage & average and graphs / pie-charts.
- The responses of open ended questions were categorized in to groups and then analysed systematically correlating with the objectives and the hypotheses.
2.4.6 Scope of the Study:

1. The scope of the study is restricted to the topic entitled “An Analytical Study of Changing Marketing Scenario in Prescription-based Medicines & its impact on Stakeholders in Ahmednagar District. (2001-2010)”
2. The research was conducted in Ahmednagar district therefore the scope of the study and the conclusions & recommendations of the study are restricted to Ahmednagar district in Maharashtra only.
3. The researcher has selected only limited stakeholders like Doctors, Chemists, Stockists, Medical Representatives and Managers. Therefore the scope is limited to these stakeholders only.
4. The researcher has focused very specific aspects of pharma marketing like analysing the changes, understanding its impact on stakeholders, understanding expectations of stakeholders and ascertaining future marketing trends in prescription-based medicines.
5. The scope of the study is restricted to study of changing marketing scenario of prescription-based medicines only, other type of medicines like Over the Counter medicines, are not considered for this study.

2.4.7 Limitations of the Study:

1. The research study is limited to the selected Stakeholders like Doctors, Chemists, Stockists, Medical Representatives and Managers in Ahmednagar District. Other Stakeholders like Shareholders, Business Partners and Patients are not selected for this study. Hence results may or may not vary with change in stakeholders, their sample size as well as change in the research area.
2. The study was done for the selected time period of last decade and was completed in the stipulated time. Therefore limited time and time-frame are other limitations of study.
3. Sometimes because of business confidentiality or other issues, some stakeholders might not have disclosed the real information. Therefore the conclusions are based upon the information provided by the respondents.
4. Some other limitations includes refusal of some respondents to participate in the study, non-cooperation in providing required information and giving biased or misleading information. Even though researcher has taken utmost care in
collecting the genuine data required for the research but he might have fall short somewhere due to lack of expertise in conducting such researches.

5. Hence, selected stakeholders, specific research area, limited sample size, limited time & time-frame and secrecy are the major limitations of this study.

2.5 Review of Literatures:

Certain researchers have studied changing marketing trends in prescription-based medicines. Some of them have attempted to understand the impact of changing marketing scenario on Doctors, Chemists, Stockists and Medical Representatives. The review of some of these important literatures is given below-

2.5.1 Review of Books:

1. **Uday Raj Sharma and Divakar Goli (2012)** in their book, ‘Pharmaceutical Marketing Management’ have stated the unique aspects of marketing prescription medicines. These are:
   - Influence of non-buyers i.e. Doctors, on the buying habits of consumers.
   - Authorization powers of physicians- consumers need a prescription to purchase prescription medicines.
   - Professional licensing required for stocking and selling pharma products.
   - Records of every transaction are kept that are specific to Patients, Physician, and Product.

2. **Kumardatt Ganjare (2011)** in his book on ‘Pharmaceutical Marketing: Strategies & Practices’ has mentioned three main thrust areas for pharma companies for the successful marketing of prescription-based medicines, they are: i) Sales Force- including Medical Representatives, Field Managers & Product Management Team, ii) Chemists & Stockists, and iii) Doctors.

He has recommended that to attract and retain good quality MR’s & Mangers, pharma company should offer them attractive salary packages as well as performance based incentives, Accidental & Family Medical Insurance, Festival Bonus, Leave Travel Allowance & Other Retirement Benefits.

At Chemist & Stockist level, the company should focus on attractive promotional schemes and trade discounts, short listing books and special gifts. Other aspects like quick delivery of goods, sufficient stock availability and timely settlement of expiry & breakage of goods, are equally important.
At Doctors level, he has recommended to use Physician’s Samples, Product literatures, Quality Gifts, Conference sponsorships, Group Meetings, CME Programmes, O.P.D. Camps, Mails and Advertisement in Journals.

3. **Subba Rao Chaganti (2008)** in his book on ‘Pharmaceutical Marketing in India’ has aptly described Indian pharma market as ever changing! He has further mentioned that due to this dynamic pharma marketing field, some companies have progressed a lot whereas others are left behind drastically. From the success stories of winning companies as well as from the declining companies, it can be learnt that the market place is unforgiving in nature and certainly not known for its tolerance. Only the vigilant and the alert companies those are quick on the draw will emerge victorious in the market. He has given a broad view about the market changes and its logic but one should identify in particular, how does it happen so?

He has also mentioned the universally acknowledged ingredients of successful prescription generation; they are: precise positioning backed by relevant segmentation strategy and tactics, perceptible product differentiation, creative & target specific communication and above all persuasive detailing by MR.

4. **Roy Joseph & Bhavana Chaudhari (2011)** in their book, ‘The Sales Capsule’ mentioned that advertisement & sales promotion are basically the two important features used to promote the sales of pharmaceutical products. For prescription-based medicines the advertisement is done by the pharma companies at Doctors level only and the sales promotion is done at chemists and stockists’ levels.

### 2.5.2 Journals:

1. **Neeti Kasliwal & Ispita Bansal (2013)**, in their research paper on “Influence of Pharmaceutical Promotional Tools on Doctors’ Prescribing behavior: an Exploratory Study, in Indian Journal of Marketing, Aug 2013, have identified certain factors which influences the prescribing behavior of Doctors. These factors are MR Rapport, MR Personality trait, MR Product knowledge, free drug samples, Leaflets, brochure distribution, CME / Academic sponsorships, new drug information from MR and New drug information from colleagues. But they further mentioned that the impact of these promotional tools may vary from
Doctors to Doctors depending on their specialty of practice, their age group, years of work experience, and employment status of Doctors.

2. **Abhay Bora & Nilesh Berad (2013)** in their research paper on “Marketing prescription-based medicines: Salesperson’s Feedbacks” in International Journal on Concept Management mentioned that MR’s & Managers plays a very crucial role in marketing prescription-based medicines by executing the innovative strategies designed by the pharma companies. They further added that pharma companies are employing large variety of promotional means for Doctors ranging from prescription pads, pens, books & journals to high value gifts like music systems, mobiles, cameras as well as sponsorships for conferences and family tours, etc. Among all these, regular MR visits, MR rapport with Doctors, high value gifts and sponsorships are found to be most effective tools for effective marketing of prescription-based medicines.

3. **Irfan Inamdar & Malhar Kolhatkar (2012)** through their research article on “Doctor’s expectations from pharmaceutical companies: which will influence their prescription behaviour” in the International Journal of Business and Management Tomorrow, have recommended four important factors to be considered by the pharmaceutical companies for designing effective marketing strategies for prescription based medicines; these are-
   1. Knowledge updating sponsorship, like CME, Journals, updates & Conference
   2. Scientific Information updates support, like product Information.
   3. Promotional Inputs like Gifts, brand reminders & samples and
   4. Reputation of Company, i.e. company image or standard.

4. **Shahu Ingole & Radha Yegnanarayan (2011)**, in his article on ‘Attitudes of Medical Students Towards Relationship with Pharmaceutical Company: Do We Need A Change?’ in the International Journal of Pharma Sciences and Research (IJP`SR), found that for better or worse, strategies of pharma companies do seem to affect medical students’ attitude. Drug samples, gifts and even industry designed CME alter the perceptions of medical students in favor of pharma industry. Many students were not conscious of the goals of pharma marketing strategies and potential subconscious expectations of give-and-take relationships.
5. **Abhay Bora & Nilesh Berad (2011)** in their research article on ‘Marketing Prescription-based Medicines: Doctors Feedbacks’ in International Journal of Advances in Management, Technology & Engineering Sciences, concluded that Doctors considers Low Cost, Better Quality and Better Results while prescribing medicines to their patients. Doctors also admitted that Good Brand Promotional Inputs and Special Reminders are also influencing their Prescription habits.

6. **Shahu Ingole & Amol Dube (2010)**, in their exploratory study tried to find out how physician’s drug prescribing gets influenced by the drug promotions done by medical representatives. The study was conducted with structured questionnaire and interview with 60 physicians with the mean age of 30 years and practicing from 5-15 years. The study revealed that the sales representatives of different Pharma companies are the commonest source of information and latest updates on drug developments. The information provided by the medical representatives is brief and can be considered for initial information but should further clarify with other reliable source of information. 50% of the physicians said that the MR actually provides newer and latest updates on medicines which influence their prescriptions. Sales promotion and gifting strategy could compromise on physician’s decision making while selecting a brand. Physicians expects that governments, pharma industry and academies should work together to improve the quality of information about prescribing drugs, which will benefit patients.

7. **Irin P. et al. (2009)** emphasized the need for continuous marketing research. There is a real need of continuous pharmaceutical analysis, because it is essential for success to understand the uniqueness of the pharmaceutical industry benefiting of the complex and iterative process that carefully builds a pharmaceutical data warehouse, this being considered a necessity to the strategic direction of any pharmaceutical company facing increased competition and external pressure.

8. **Thomas George (2010),** in his editorial article on “Gifts to doctors, scientific information and the credibility gap in the Medical Council of India” in the Indian Journal of Medical Ethics Vol. VII No 2 has clearly mentioned that gifts from pharma companies adversely affects the prescription habits of Doctors. Therefore the new rule in India bans all gifts to doctors above Rs.1,000 values.
9. Anita Mishra (2009), in her study emphasized on the communication process between company and the customers. How the communication between doctors, patients, retailers and wholesalers i.e. supply chain is important to fulfil the requirement of marketing mix strategies. Indian pharma industry is one of the fastest growing industries and hence Indian and MNC’s are competing with each other intensively to make a place in the mind of customers. Communication is the process which helps the company to ensure to pass the unified message consistently reinforced to their customers. How differently and aggressively their sales force can do it, helps the doctors to remember their company brands, which doctors can Rx to their patients. Hence the author concluded that, sales promotion through vital communication strategies helps the company to make an impression long lasting in the mind of customers.

10. Girish Taneja & Usha Arora (2007) in their paper, “Physicians’ perception Towards Promotional Tools Offered by Pharmaceutical Industry: A Comparative Practicing Status-wise Analysis”, ICFAI Journal of Marketing Research, have mentioned that physicians in private service assigned significantly greater importance to various kinds of sponsorships like sponsorship for conferences, medical equipment & personal gifts whereas physicians in government service have given significantly greater importance to medicine samples & personality of Medical Representative. So they recommended that pharmaceutical companies should plan different kinds of promotional tools & strategies for physicians based on their practicing status. Thus they have considered only one aspect of considering the practicing status of physician while designing the marketing strategies by pharma companies.

11. Nobhojit Roy (2007), Drug Promotional Practices in Mumbai- A qualitative study, in Indian Journal of Medical Ethics, mentioned that the study was conducted on 101 samples & with an open ended questionnaire; the objective of the study was to investigate the alliance among the pharma companies, doctors, retailers & the medical representatives, whether favoring patient’s health conditions or un-favoring with the aim of only maximizing profits. The findings of the study showed that-
   i. The MRs provides only little information to doctors on effectiveness of the drugs and tries to hide adverse effects to protect prescription from doctors.
ii. Doctors’ receive various promotional materials and incentives from the Pharma companies to prescribe for the respective companies.

iii. Incentives in terms of schemes, bonuses and discounts are provided to chemists for bulk purchasing of drugs, which either bypassing thro’ doctor’s prescriptions or substituting the doctor’s prescriptions is sold to patients.

iv. Such heavy stocking of drugs may be through schemes and discounts for the chemists from the companies or the representatives is given for the slow moving, nonmoving or near expiry products.

The authors concluded the study saying that, there is an unethical alliance among the said group and unethical promotional activities held in Mumbai at the cost of patients.

12. R. Mukhopadhyay (2007) in his paper, “Target-Maintenance-Exposure Product Model: A Proposition for Effective Pharma Selling’ in ICFAI Journal of Marketing Mastermind, has proposed that pharmaceutical companies should ensure ‘Right product and right Doctor’ match to improve the effectiveness of their business success. He further mentioned that a certain product should be planned as target product, another product for which company is already getting good prescriptions should be considered as maintenance product & the product which doctor is not prescribing for the company should also be continuously communicated to Doctor as Exposure Product as future business prospect for the company. He has identified few ways to cope up with changing marketing scenario in prescription medicines to improve business of pharma companies.

13. Barbalee Symm, Michael Averitt & Cheryl Preece (2006) in their study, hypothesized that family physicians who distribute free drug sample medications are more likely to prescribe these medications than those who do not. A study involving 23 physicians from Scott and White multispecialty hospital was conducted for the period of 30 days. 8 of these physicians distributed free samples to their patients and 15 of them have not. Total 2771 prescriptions of these selected physicians were analysed. The study revealed that the free drug samples distributed for medications is for 3 reasons-

i. To reduce the cost of high cost medications as a service to the patients,

ii. Samples helps for immediate beginning of therapy to the patients,
iii. Free sample medication also helps to evaluate the tolerance dose for the patients and also to adjust the dose therapeutically suitable for the patients. Looking in to all these parameters, the authors concluded their study by saying that, some family physicians have accepted to have influence of free drug sample distribution strategy of Pharma companies on their prescriptions.

14. Morgan M. A. et al (2006) found that acceptance of drug samples was judged to be ethical by almost all respondents and acceptance of a lucrative consultant ship by just over a half. Respondents seem to believe that the average doctor is more likely to accept most items and is more likely to be influenced in his or her prescribing practices by accepting an item than they are.

15. Bansal R. K. and Das Sanjay (2005), in their research article emphasized on the unethical practices done by the medical practitioners through their communication with pharmaceutical companies. Medical professional from their college days, internship or when they are resident doctors, come in contact with MR’s of various companies. From small gifts like pen, pen stand, pads to dinner’s sponsorship for conferences or other medical activities conducted for the doctors. Many of doctors do not consider accepting small gifts as unethical and these types of inputs influence their prescription pattern. Some doctor agreed that these types of expensive gifts and financial support activities are the aggressive marketing strategies of pharma companies. Since we are getting benefited then we must also give benefits to pharma companies in return. Finally authors concluded that, this is an open secret of accepting benefits from pharma companies and then prescribing brands of these companies. But if this comes to know to the patients, they may lose confidence in their doctors. But as the competition is increasing in medical profession and pharma companies, these types of practices will go longer.

16. Verma S.K. (2004), in his article on "Physician-Pharmaceutical Industry Interaction: Changing Dimensions and Ethics", Indian Pediatrics, Vol.41, has highlighted one of the important point of give and take relationship as per his study. Social scientists describe that the pharmaceutical industry follows the, "norm of reciprocity" i.e., the obligation to help those who have helped you, as one of the fundamental guiding principle of human interactions. It is not surprising, therefore, that pharmaceutical companies rely on this principle of
human nature by giving gifts to doctors in hope that they will prescribe their firm's product in return.

17. Rajan T. D. (2004) in his research article on “Getting in to the Physician’s mind”, believed that the regular visit by a medical representative is not only sufficient. According to him, “Name is not all what it takes to get into the mind space of a busy doctor. Every product, old or new, requires extensive marketing. Any busy consultant will vouch that if a particular company’s medical representative (MR) fails to show up for over a month, he suspects the availability of the products of that manufacturer.”

18. Charlene Prounis (2003) has excellently expressed that the relationship between pharma field force and doctors is very important and crucial part Major changes are in the works for sales force and pharma company relations with doctors. If companies fail to address sales reps ‘negative image, physicians- and possibly governments- are likely to further restrict, or even terminate, the doctor– rep relationship. But companies can take steps to strengthen that bond. Doctors may be unhappy about Pharma Company’s huge field force, but they understand that medical reps have a job to do. Better pharma marketing will make doctors and reps happier and both sides will be benefited.

19. Allan S. Brett, Wyane Burr and Jamaluddin Moloo, (2003), in their research article tried to find out the views of physicians on gifts and sponsorships provided by the pharma companies to them; its impact on their prescription pattern, whether is ethically problematic and to compare the views of senior physicians and physicians in training.

Finding of the study showed that, most of the physicians responded that the gifts are moderate to very problematic. Faculty physicians are more concerned about these ethical issues as compared to resident physicians, who were more comfortable with the culture of personalized activities of gifts and sponsorship at the beginning of their career. Both faculty and resident physicians agreed that recreational gifts are more problematic than educational gifts of that value. The drug company sponsored lectures favoring company’s product are considered to be more problematic than lectures without favoring discussion.
20. Gonul et al. (2001) explored the impact of visits by sales representatives and samples, on prescribing. However, the study also showed that excessive detailing or samples did not increase sales further and that doctors who saw a high proportion of Medicare or Health Maintenance Organization patients were less influenced by promotion.

2.5.3 Review of Newspapers:

1. Khomba Singh (2012) in his article on ‘Drug Companies Gifts to Docs may End Soon’ in The Economic Times, clearly mentioned that “The Department of Pharmaceuticals have finalized the Drug Marketing code for the Pharma companies which aims to end the wide-spread practice of Pharma companies giving gifts & incentives to Doctors to prescribe their medicines. It restricts companies from offering or promising gifts, pecuniary benefits of any kind, directly or indirectly, to physicians or suppliers.”

2. Gauri Kamat (2011), in her article on “A solution to Marketing Strategies of Pharmaceutical companies” in Navbharat Times, has clearly mentioned the draft code issued by the Pharmaceutical Department of Government of India mentioning that pharma companies can’t give high value gifts to Doctors. Even companies are even informed not to organize Foreign Tours for Continuous Medical Education Programs or Drug Trial Meetings for Doctors. This article focuses on a particular aspect of pharma marketing in India. A great scope is available to look in to another such aspects also.

3. M.T. Special Reporter (2011), has written an article on “Fix the Medicine prices,” stating that pharmaceutical companies are giving lot of benefits to the Doctors by exploiting the patients. To stop this, government should intervene by fixing the least and maximum prices of the medicines.

4. Jayakumar, P.B. (2008), in his article on "Drug firms may stop freebies to doctors", in the Business standard, 22nd July’2008, has mentioned the usual marketing practices followed by most of the large and mid-sized companies include valuable gifts, arranging foreign trips with family and complimentary tickets and memberships for social activities to doctors.
2.5.4 Review of Theses:

   - The Marketing Success of the most of the pharmaceutical companies depends up on their ‘Product Management Teams’ which are working behind the screen at the Marketing Offices of the Companies. They help in designing the most effective & innovative marketing strategies for the success of Pharmaceutical Companies with changing time.
   - Different pharmaceutical companies have different Marketing Strategies for their various brands. But generally, it was found that most of the Multi National Pharmaceutical Companies design the most creative & extraordinary Marketing Strategies than that of Indian Pharmaceutical Companies as they make high Investments in their Product Management Teams and they also have a very good access to the advanced global technology.
   - The product management teams of pharma companies which have designed innovative marketing strategies in the past have grown by leaps and bounds.

2. **Dr. Seema Dande** (2014) in her thesis entitled “Study on impact of advertising effectiveness and event management in ethical pharmaceutical marketing” concluded that-
   - Doctor’s prescription habits get affected by events and Journal advertisements. It is more due to event management like CMEs, Symposia etc.
   - Visual aid, Print Detailers and Leave behind Literatures (L.B.L.) used by Medical Representatives are the most effective promotional tools for ethical pharma marketing.
   - Medical Representatives are more effective for brand recall to Doctors than direct mailers by pharma companies.
   - CME’s, Conferences and Branded gift utility items are more effective in brand recall even than printed literatures like L.B.L.
   - E-detailing / Digital marketing can’t substitute the need of a Medical Representative in the future.
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Websites:

6. http://aerzteblatt-international.de/10m0392