



An Analytical Evaluation of Consumers' (North-West Indians) Opinion towards Pharmaceutical Advertisements

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ABSTRACT: According to the guidelines under Drug & Cosmetics Act and DCGI, India, every medicinal brand cannot be advertised except few like disprin, oral contraceptives like i-pill, and vitamin supplements like Revital etc. But it was observed that consumers are not well aware about it. So the current study is to evaluate analytically the opinion of consumers towards pharmaceutical advertisements. Data was collected using North-west Indians as respondents and advertisement focused were of I-pill, Revital, Zhadhu Balm, Crocin and Disprin. The observations comes after statistical study led us to conclude that the advertisement of Disprin, I-Pill, Revital, Zhandhu Balm and crocin are not up to mark and should be improvised. © 2011 IGJPS. All rights reserved.

KEYWORDS: Pharmaceutical Advertisement; Market Study; Media; Drug & Cosmetic Act.

INTRODUCTION

There is a difference between the advertisement of the consumer (FMCG) products and the pharmaceutical products. Regarding advertising of pharmaceutical products, WHO has resolved as- “the advertisement of pharmaceutical products should be truthful, scientifically correct and proved, there should not be any wrong statement regarding its contents and its percentage, it should provide full details regarding the action and uses, proprietary as well as generic name, and dosage form, mode of administration, side effects, precautions and contra-indication.

The generally used methods for advertising pharmaceutical products are; direct mailing (is the method which is used as internet advertising), news papers, professional

magazines and journals (it is a form of print media to inform general public), television, radio and other audio visual media (the type of visual media), personal contact or detailing (a face to face communication by the organizational representative), outdoor advertisement (a form of media used to deliberate the information by using paper presentation or catalogue), some other miscellaneous methods.

I-pill: I-pill is the product of the mankind pharmaceuticals by its special mankind division. It is used to stop the pregnancy. Special Mankind launched in January 2007 is poised to meet OTC requirements. This division is pioneer in launching of

premium category condoms, toothbrush, sanitary napkins & sweeteners.

The product is advertised in many ways such as; newspapers, magazines and journals. The most famous way of advertising is ad on the television with the help of well known television star and by using attractive presentation to increase the awareness of the product.

Revital: Revital is the product of the Ranbaxy labs limited. It is used as an energy booster. As far as their advertising strategy is concerned they employ multiple ways to advertise the product. Some of them are; newspapers, magazines and journals. The most popular way to advertise is the ad on the television with the help of glamorous cricketer Yuvraj Singh and by using attractive exhibition to increase the awareness of the product.

Crocin: Crocin is the product of the Glaxosmithkline pharmaceuticals. It is used as antipyretic, anti-inflammatory. The advertisement strategy of Glaxo includes media such as newspapers, magazines and journals. The commonly used medium for advertisement is television to increase the awareness of the product. The keen point of the advertisement is that a single dose produce the action.

Dispirin: Dispirin is the product of the Reckitt Benckiser plc. It is used to relieve the headache and pain. Reckitt uses media for advertising are; newspapers, magazines and journals. Television is considered to be the popular way to advertising. The Unique Selling Point (USP) of the ad is that they show that one tablet dissolves in a glass of water quickly and the solution directly works on the mind as soon as the patient swallows it.

Zandhu Balm: Zandhu balm is the product of the Zandhu pharmaceuticals. It is an ointment used to relieve from the pain and only external use. The advertising media vehicle Zandu uses includes newspapers, magazines and journals. The

television is observed as the most effective way. The USP of the ad is that it is easy to use and acts as quick pain reliever.

Beyond all pharmaceutical advertisements are subject to various limitations such as; it increases the cost of production. It multiplies the needs of the people by inducing them to buy things which they do not really need or cannot afford to buy. It involves a huge wasteful expenditure because the most of the advertisements either distract the attention of the people or are ignored by them. Many a times the facts are misrepresented in the advertisement by which consumers suffer from them.

METHODOLOGY

The study was based on Descriptive method that consists of random sampling of respondents. Structured questionnaires were used to gather the data. The methodology for collecting the information and data required to carry out the study was from both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data were obtained from the customers (North-West India) through self administered questionnaire. Secondary data was collected from articles published in various National and International journals and through internet search.

A structured and disguised questionnaire was prepared so as to avoid introduction to any bias of the respondents in the survey. Questionnaire contained open and closed ended questions to collect responses. Convenient sampling process was followed to select the sample. Survey was conducted among the laymen who often using medicine. Survey was conducted among the various parts of North West India.

Sample size consists of a representative unit of 200 respondents. The sample size based on non-probability sampling and was calculated by using market research software.

Data was collected by approaching each individual and was asked to respond to the questionnaire. The responses were noted down separately for each individual and these

responses were analyzed. The analysis of data is totally objective and unbiased of the interviewer. The followings were taken into consideration for the current study.

Q.1 Which one out of the following will be considered as the reliable advertisement informing well about risk and benefits?

Q.2 Advertisement(s) of which product gave the clear information about the 'direction of use'?

Q.3 Advertisement(s) of which brand is not misleading?

Q.4 Which product(s) according to you fulfill its claims?

Q.5 Which product(s) would you prefer to use in future?

Q.6 Which advertisement(s) gave you clear picture about the condition for which the drug to be used?

Q.7 Which advertisement(s) you find as consumer friendly?

Q.8 After exposure from these advertisements, which product(s) you prefer to recommend to someone?

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The study reveals that 15% (Disprin), 21% (Crocin), 12% (Zandu Balm), 11% (I-Pill), 10% (Revital) and 31% (none of these) customers were of opinion that advertisement of these mentioned brands give reliable information about risk and benefits of the medicine. This indicates that majority were of same opinion that advertisement of Disprin, crocin, zandu balm, i-pill, revival were not giving significant information. 21% were in the favor of advertisement of crocin (Figure 1).

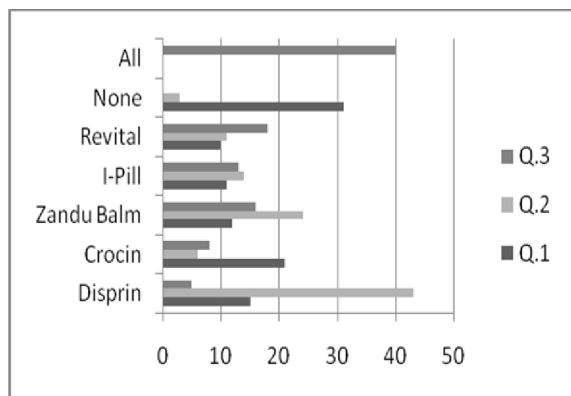


Figure 1 Statistical Results of Q.1, Q.2 & Q.3

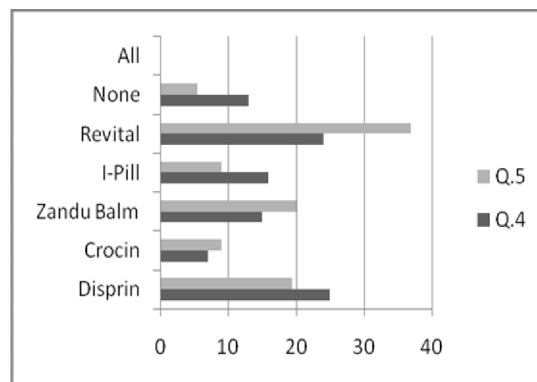


Figure 2 Statistical Results of Q.4 & Q.5

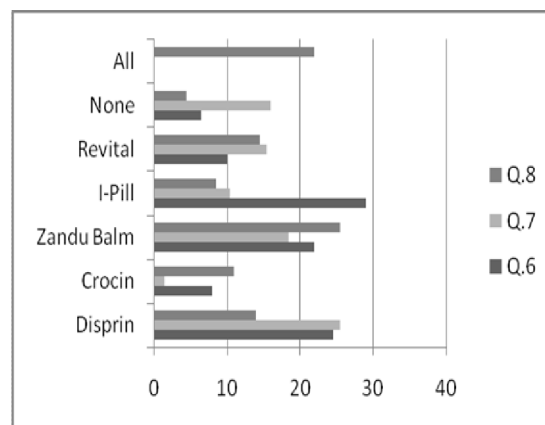


Figure 3 Statistical Results of Q.6, Q.7 & Q.8

43% (Disprin), 06% (Crocin), 24% (Zandu Balm), 14% (I-Pill), 11% (Revital) and 03% (none of these) customers were of opinion that advertisement of above mentioned brands gave the clear information about the 'Direction of Use'. This part reveals that only disprin and zandu balm give information regarding direction of use and that too below 50% stats (Figure 1).

05% (Disprin), 08% (Crocin), 16% (Zandu Balm), 13% (I-Pill), 18% (Revital) and 40% (all of these) customers were of opinion that advertisement of above mentioned brands were not misleading. This indicates that 40% of respondents were of opinion that all the above surveyed brands were not misleading (Figure 1).

25% (Disprin), 07% (Crocin), 15% (Zandu Balm), 16% (I-Pill), 24% (Revital) and 13% (none of these) customers were of opinion that advertisement of above mentioned brands fulfilled its claims. Stats revealed that none of the surveyed brands were completely fulfill its claims (Figure 2).

19.5 % (Disprin), 09% (Crocic), 20% (Zandu Balm), 09% (I-Pill), 37% (Revital) and 5.5%(none of these) customers were of opinion that they were influenced by these brands so that one can use the same in future also. Majority were in the favor of revival(**Figure 2**).

24.5% (Disprin), 08% (Crocic), 22% (Zandu Balm), 29% (I-Pill), 10% (Revital) and 06.5%(none of these) customers were of opinion that advertisement of above mentioned brands gave oneself clear picture about the condition for which the drug to be used(**Figure 3**).

25.5 % (Disprin), 13.5% (Crocic), 18.5% (Zandu Balm), 10.5% (I-Pill), 15.5% (Revital) and 16%(none of these) customers were of opinion that advertisement of above mentioned brands were consumer friendly. Stats are very poor(**Figure 3**).

14 % (Disprin), 11% (Crocic), 25.5% (Zandu Balm), 8.5% (I-Pill), 14.5% (Revital) and 4.5 % (none of these), 22% (All of these) customers were of opinion that advertisement of above mentioned brands influenced them so much that they can recommend these drugs freely(**Figure 3**).

CONCLUSION

Advertising is an art to familiarize public with the product by informing of its description, uses, source of availability and price. Majority of pharmaceutical products are ethical products and their direct advertising is prohibited under "Drugs and magic remedies act" however FDA encourages direct to consumer advertising of certain drugs under specific

regulations that the advertisements cannot be false or misleading; must present a fair balance between the risk and the benefits; mention the drug name; the condition it is intended to be used for and should be in consumer friendly language. The present study was to analyze whether the pharmaceutical advertisements were fulfilling all these requirements and how much conveying language it would be having. The given statistics gave a very poor picture of the pharmaceutical advertisements. None of the above selected advertisements of pharmaceutical products completely fulfill all aspects. This survey can be extended further throughout India and even at international level for appropriate findings.

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