

1 Study on Influence of Medical Representative in Conversation of
2 Doctor's Prescription in India

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6

7 **Abstract**

8 Objective to investigate whether medical representative has an effective role in making doctor
9 to convince about their company's product with outcome that are favorable to pharma
10 companies or whether medical representative does not much effect in selection of drug by the
11 doctors. Pharmaceutical marketing is all together different selling concepts from all other
12 business because of its target consumer is doctors and that faculty consider as the most
13 knowledgeable and highly updated with current product scenario and their results. While
14 majority of the business target customers directly, pharmaceutical company designs different
15 promotion strategy mainly targeting doctors. Drug promotion by medical representatives is
16 one of the factors that influence physicians' prescribing decisions and choice of drugs. Drug
17 promotion is all information and persuasive activities by pharma companies and distribution,
18 as a result of which that influence the prescription, increase supply, purchase or use of
19 medicinal drugs.

20

21 **Index terms**— medical representative, product, prescription, promotion strategy, doctors prescription,
22 effective detailing, personal selling.

23 **1 Introduction**

24 Communication is a core to any successful relationship. It is much more than a common talk between two parties.
25 It usually means speaking and writing or sending the messages to another person. The promotional activities by
26 medical representatives (MRs) of the pharmaceutical companies can impact the prescribing pattern of doctors
27 and MRs has given a decided doctor list to visit them on regular basis ex. Some may visit doctors on monthly, half
28 monthly or three times in a month. Hence, the interaction between doctors and medical representative is coming
29 under increasing scrutiny and comes with the result of doctors prescription of companies drug. Doctors share very
30 strong and unusual relationships with Medical Representatives because of their continuity and drug updating
31 along with different promotional tool. Medical Representative is essentially a catalyst who conveys knowledge
32 on most recent trends in medical diagnostic and treatment to the doctors. However, medical representatives
33 are being treated only as sales personals, but in reality they are channel for conveying information to medical
34 fraternity. Doctor who often interacts with MR said "most of the MR is just sales persons, only few maintain their
35 subject knowledge deeply & share updates about the medicines. Because there is a lack of dedication towards
36 profession on the contrary MRs integrity with them because of their persistency. Personal detailing forms the
37 backbone of the entire marketing activities. MR meets doctors, chemists and stockists to influence prescription
38 pattern of doctors in favor of their brand.

5 A) PRAMOTIONAL STRATEGY OF PRODUCTS

39 2 II.

40 3 Personal Selling

41 In general sales product has to sale via a different communication tool but in pharmaceutical marketing pharma
42 company appoint Medical Representative and they has to do personal selling while meeting the doctors and
43 ultimately make the doctors to prescribe his company's product on the basis of his regularity, communication,
44 follow up and following companies communication strategy. The main advantage of personal selling is that we can
45 make better relations and have good contacts with the customers which ultimately leads to maximum doctors
46 prescription. As we know that it is only sales force that facilitates the movement of products and brands in
47 the market and promotes the organization by multiplying customers and making profitable relationships, hence
48 it is all about the way how we communicate with the customers and make them ready to buy our products
49 (Today Cut). The MRs is the only person who drives all movements of the product and company appoint all
50 the MR on the basis of their specialty target audience. So it becomes mandatory for the sales person to be
51 dominant, creative and strategist. The MRs is not only an achiever in sales but also has all the personality
52 traits for making lifelong relation with the doctors. For this the sales person is having some of selling styles like
53 need satisfying , problem solving , friendly and hard selling to entice the customers(Brand Speak), RCPA (Retail
54 counter prescription analysis). The personal selling is eight steps process of managing the relations and getting
55 the profit which includes Prospecting, Pre-approach, Approach, Assigns the needs, Presentation, Meeting out
56 the objections, Gaining the profit and Follow up. The prospecting includes the right approach of sales person
57 and indenting the potential doctors of the territory. After prospecting just plan for the preapproach strategy
58 for doctors call and then present the product with defined strategy. During presentation try to solve all the
59 objections of your customers and to make them involve fully with your product and try to get follow up and
60 manage routine visit to get updated with your customers. Personal selling becomes more easy tool when we
61 follow the 4 c's i.e. convince, convert, consolidate and consistent approach. 1 Personal meeting to doctors means
62 exposure to brand message with the communication tool like visual aid, literature, laptop, or tablet. How this
63 exposure gets converted into increase in sales and how much it makes impact on the customer's prescription
64 habit will depend on the and involved by the pharmaceutical companies. The significant change in mentality to
65 make a quantum leap in the business lies in answering to the questions-What does exactly a customer want and
66 need? How can we fulfill these needs? Unique Selling Point and Unique Perceived Benefits are the tools being
67 adopted by the pharmaceutical companies that consider the business as a never ending activity. Whereas RCPA
68 identifies potential of the customers, segmentation and targeting, on the other hand, helps in preparing Master
69 Call List. Traditional methods such as "personal selling" and the modern technique like e-detailing and digital
70 marketing" run simultaneously to achieve the goal. Daily Call Report ensures better supervision, management
71 and accountability of sales team. It becomes a reliable feedback to evaluate their efficacy without which quantum
72 increase in sales (the ultimate goal of fruitful communication) may remain a far -fetched dream.

73 4 III. How Medical Representative Increase Drug Sales by 74 Influencing Physicians

75 For the common people to belive that drug representative can convert prescription of product is not practical.
76 Its very hard process but generally happens all the time. Doctors are also human being and they also notice
77 the visit, regularity, character and company of the MRs even though doctor's priority are first their patient and
78 quality of products but medical representative role is equally important in fetching their product prescriptions.
79 "Drug reps increase drug sales by influencing physicians, and they do so with finely titrated doses of friendship."
80 2 Following are the tool through which MR influence doctors and get more number of prescriptions.

81 5 a) Pramotional Strategy of Products

82 Today in this competitive era promotion with unique marketing strategy plays a vital role in promotion of products
83 and services. Pharma Company appoints special product management team for the promotion and decision
84 making of upcoming drug to the market and they are considered as the brains of the company. In India many
85 pharmaceutical companies who are registered in the industry competing with each other having a same products
86 and try to cover the market through the different promotional strategy, medical representative training, and
87 communication and using different tools through customer relationship management. Pharmaceutical companies
88 are changing their marketing strategies to cope up with new challenges in the business environment. For last
89 decade the Marketing strategies have changed significantly in Indian pharmaceutical industry. The companies are
90 hugely advertising may be in the conference, medical journals and other ways to promote their products in the
91 market. Marketing is defined as fulfilling requirements of doctors through an exchange of medical information.
92 This leads to greater the benefit provided the higher transactional value an organization can charge. ?? This
93 communication between MRS and doctors is often referred to as "marketing and promotion." Without it, doctors
94 would be less likely to have the latest, precise information available regarding prescription products, which play
95 an increasing role in effective health care. 5 Pharmaceutical marketing can have direct effects and indirect effects.
96 Direct effects, also called reminder effects, are effects that directly influence physician adoption of drugs, here
97 goodwill, achieved by constant interaction between pharmaceutical representatives and physicians, influences the

98 preferences for certain drugs and products 6 Pharmaceutical promotion often assumes that small promotional
99 items are unlikely to influence prescribing behavior because generally doctors priority are patient so they may
100 forget new product so small brand reminder gifts plays a vital role in making remember the doctors about their
101 products and MRs effectively follow it. 12

102 **6 b) Gifts as a Tool to Influence Doctors Prescription**

103 More than 5,000 drugs and 45,000 formulations are available in India. 8 One of the tools used by pharmaceutical
104 industry is to give gifts to the doctor and this tradition comes from the long way. The variety of gifts include
105 table top, table clock, reminder bag, academic journals , books, paper folders, medical instrument like BP meter,
106 weight scale, household items, personal and innovative items. [9] The list includes small and big -alarm clocks to
107 air-conditioners, calendars to cars, rubber bands to refrigerators, telephone index to television and office items to
108 overseas trips. [9] Although this apparently innocuous practice is generally accepted as a norm many doctors feel
109 uneasy about its ethical repercussions. 10,11 Physician accepts a gift, an mutual understanding of relationship
110 is established between the doctor and the corporate or its MRs and there is an some kind of reward in the term
111 of Rx to respond to the gift.

112 Exposure to promotion influences prescribing some doctors realize ?? 7 Volume XVIII Issue III Version I Year
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114 **7 c) Effective Detailing**

115 Communication is the core heart of the products. Doctors easily remember on the basis of detailing done by
116 MRs. Special training has been provided by the company to sales personal for the updating of the molecule, their
117 references and latest research of the products. Pharmaceutical detailing is the major marketing and promotion
118 tactics utilized by the pharma companies to promote their brands to the doctors and to influence the prescribing
119 habit by creating interest. It's an important tool for creating awareness of product among the doctors. This
120 detailing process directly has financial links which, after all, helps in the culmination of a big business. Most of
121 the pharmaceutical companies' emphasizes on detailing part as it plays a vital and decisive part in marketing.
122 . As we know that new trends have come up in the market for improving the detailing part like e-detailing,
123 and other online services but these digital tools will be discussed later on. Let's have a look on the traditional
124 detailing pattern to understand the main concept in true spirit. Till now, we all are following the traditional
125 ways of using templates and medical journals which require detail / discussion face to face so as to create the
126 magnetic relations with doctors and force out the products from their territory by improving the sales. Now a
127 days e journals are also consider as a best tool to upgrade doctors about latest research or trail and publications
128 of the products.

129 **8 d) Involvement of Medical Representative Inside and**

130 Outside Clinic Every pharmaceutical company employs and trains medical representatives to promote and sell
131 drugs, using printed product literatures, drug samples and gifts. The size of worldwide sales force of different
132 companies ranges from 2,500 to 8,000 13 and the number has been increasing. In India, an estimated 80,000
133 representatives are employed by the industry. Company specify their area of working on the basis of zone, district
134 or specialty of doctor wise. Besides the salaries, they also receive incentives, Increment in salaries, aboard tour,
135 promotions for achievement of sales targets, which might tilt the balance in favor of aggressive drug promotion.
136 Many company now motivate their employee by providing lucrative incentive like international trip, car, bike
137 and many more things to full fill their companies desired goal so that MRs works with full integrity and achieve
138 their goal by meeting and converting maximum numbers of doctors through their prescription. While doctors
139 uniformly deny that their understanding of drug is influenced by the activities of industry, there is considerable
140 evidence to support the efficacy of the personal encounter with medical representative in shaping doctors' attitude
141 towards drugs.

142 The number of calls (including attendance at a medical meeting or a visit to follow up a report of an adverse
143 reaction) made by a medical representative each year should not exceed, on an average three visits to each doctor.
144 14 In India now the daily visit of the doctors should be twelve and four visit to each doctor in a month. Drug
145 samples can only be provided to a doctor in response to a signed request and should not exceed four days'
146 treatment for a single patient. 14 IV.

147 **9 Conclusion**

148 There is a wide range of evidence on different topics, using a range of different designs, suggesting that promotion
149 affects attitudes and behaviour. However there are gaps in the evidence, and more high-quality studies are needed
150 to establish causal relationships between promotion and attitudes and behaviour of doctors and others, to provide
151 more nuanced information about people's attitudes to promotion, and to investigate the impact of interventions
152 to regulate or counter the effect of promotion.

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