SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IN THE PHARMACEUTICAL SECTOR : OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN MANGALORE CITY AREA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Main Purpose of the research is to identify the opportunities and challenges that are faced by the Pharmaceutical industry in the city of Mangalore for social media marketing.

Design: In order to collect adequate information on social media marketing and its trends as well as opportunities and challenges, the Primary data collection method has been taken into consideration. A survey method has been employed and data has been collected from 50 research participants with the help of 15 survey questions.

Findings: It has been found from the overall result of the survey that, some of the research participants believe that there can be several challenges faced by the pharmaceutical industry in order to implement social media marketing. Lack of stocks, less trained staff, and discounts all can be the major issues to implement digital marketing within the industry.

Keywords: Digital marketing, social media marketing, Challenges, Pharmaceutical industry

1. Introduction

In contemporary times, social media has become one of the predominant mediums of promotion in different sectors. This can be considered as one of the "huge" things that most markets strive for in order to accelerate the growth of the business. As there are near about 120 million population who are active social media users, it is beneficial for a sector to promote the business over social media and make efforts to boost the traffic to the websites. However, the present study focuses on the challenges and opportunities that prevail in Mangalore city for Social media marketing. In the last few years, the dimension of Indian consumers seems to have changed and shifted towards internet shopping and social media promotion. In these circumstances, it can be beneficial for the pharmaceutical industry to shift the docs on social media marketing as well.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Marketing Equities theory

One of the well-known theories to understand the process of social media marketing is the ***Marketing Equities Theory***. As mentioned by Zarei,Farjoo& Bagheri Garabollagh (2022), the marketing equities theory can be accommodating for identifying the positive impact of digital media marketing on customer preference and enhancing the growth of the firm. The main focus of the theory is to promote the brand and enhance the customer interaction base. In the present scenario, it can be appropriate order to enhance the customer base of the Pharmaceutical industry within Mangalore city. Moreover, the theory focus on the various aspects of the social media marketing that is convenient in promoting the business.

3. Previous works

Source	Focus area	Significance
Sharma *et al.* 2020	Social media marketing in India	The research focuses on Social media marketing and its impact on the customer-brand relationship. With the help of social media marketing, trust can be built on a specific brand or organisation that can be helpful for strong purchase intention.
Gao *et al.* 2021	Social media marketing in the pharmaceutical industry	It can be stated that social media "pharmacovigilance" can influence the

		speed of recalling drugs. Moreover, social media may promote the drug recall process.
Parwani*et al.* 2019	Social media marketing and opportunities for the industry	Marketing with the help of different social media platforms such as Facebook, and Twitter can help to get opportunities and proper feedback from the consumers.

4. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework in accordance with the hypothesis of the study has been developed to understand the relation between the variables. The conceptual framework that has been presented here give an overview of the relation of digital medial market with the factors such as lack of adequate knowledge in technology used for social media marketing and cost-effectiveness of the procedure. On the other hand, growth of sales and manufacturing can be seen as another variable for the study.
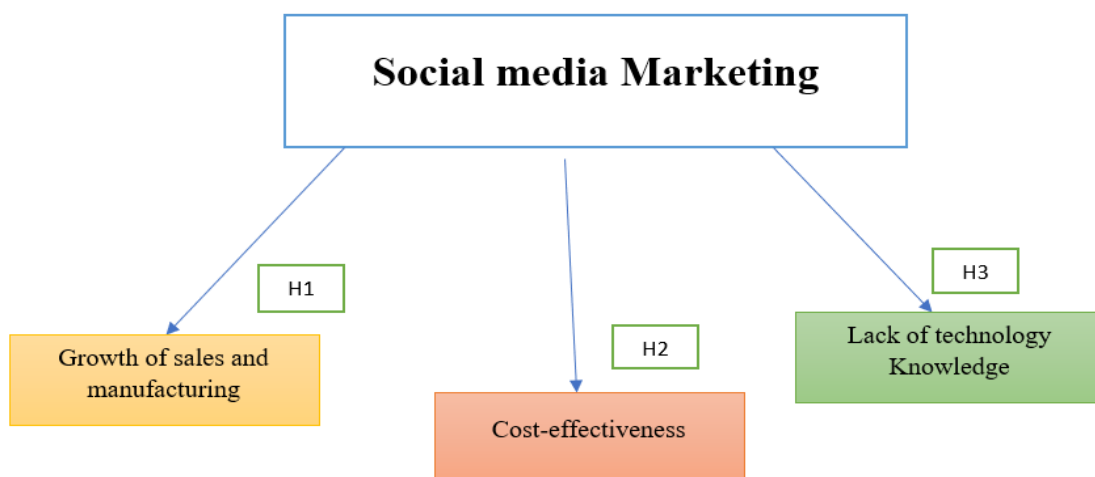

Figure 4: Conceptual Framework

(Source: Learner)

5. Research gap

In the context of the present research, it can be seen that there may be a number of issues that prevailed due to the social media marketing of the Pharmaceutical industry. On the other hand, a number of drugs that are not specifically meant for everyone to use may be misused as they will be well-known after social media marketing. These issues need to be rectified to ensure the safeguard of common people. It is important to highlight the issues in the present research.

6. Research agenda

In order to mitigate the gap in the previous research, the main agenda that has been taken by the researcher are-

● How Social media marketing can be beneficial for serving the purpose of accelerating growth in the pharmaceutical industry.

● What steps can be taken to prevent the misuse of drugs by general citizens

● What are the opportunities for social media marketing in this sector?

7. Objectives of the research

The predominant aim of the research is to identify the opportunities and challenges of social media marketing in the Pharmaceutical sector in Mangalore city. The objectives of the research are-

● To identify the issues that prevailed in social media marketing in the pharmaceutical industry of Mangalore city.

● To analyse the cost-effectiveness of digital marketing on manufacturing and sales.

● To determine the coordination of sales and manufacturing with the help of social media marketing.

8. Hypothesis for the research

Following is the hypothesis that is framed based on the objectives of the research-

● H1: Social media marketing has a positive relationship with the growth of sales and manufacturing.

● H1: Cost-effectiveness can be influenced by digital marketing in the pharmaceutical industry.

● H3: Several challenges can be faced due to less technical knowledge.

9. Methodology

The present study has been conducted among **50 *research participants*** from Mangalore city of India in order to get an idea of digital marketing and its challenges and opportunities within the Pharmaceutical industry. In the present study, a ***Primary survey data collection method*** has been used to collect data from the research participants. In accordance with Nayak, S. D. & Narayan (2019), the survey method can be accommodating in order to get adequate data from the research participants and the data collection process

can be convenient. Google form has been used in the research to gather data from the participants and *15 questions* were asked to the participants.

10. Analysis of results

10.1 Gender

In the present research, a total number of 50 participants were taken into consideration to gather data on digital media marketing. In these circumstances, it can be seen participants were Male & female.
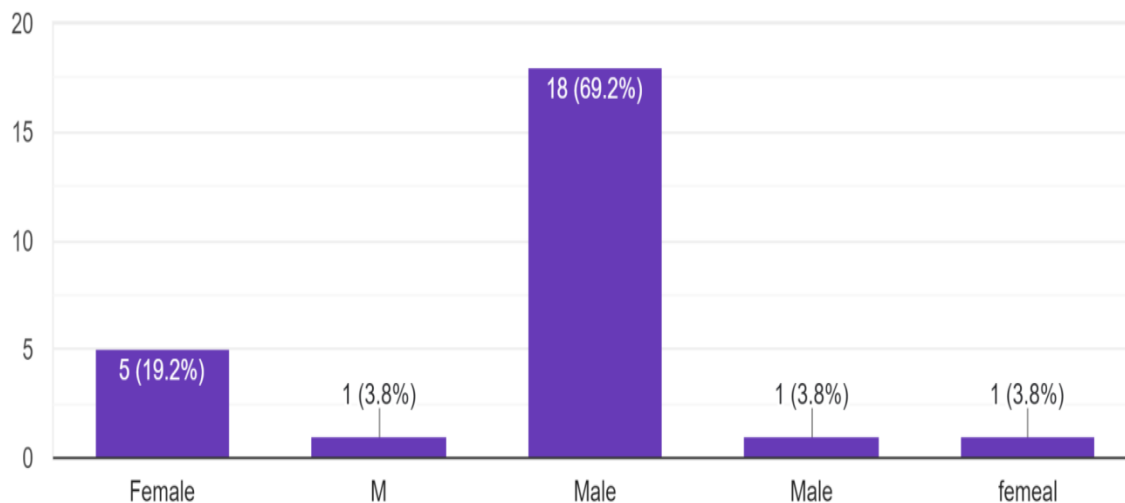

Figure 10.1: Gender

(Source: Google survey)

10.2 Job description

As per the data that has been collected from the participants, it can be said that there were participants from different job roles in the pharmaceutical industry. Some participants work as Area Sales Managers, Promoter, and Senior Dispenser in this industry. However, it has become useful as participants were holding different positions and can get adequate information.
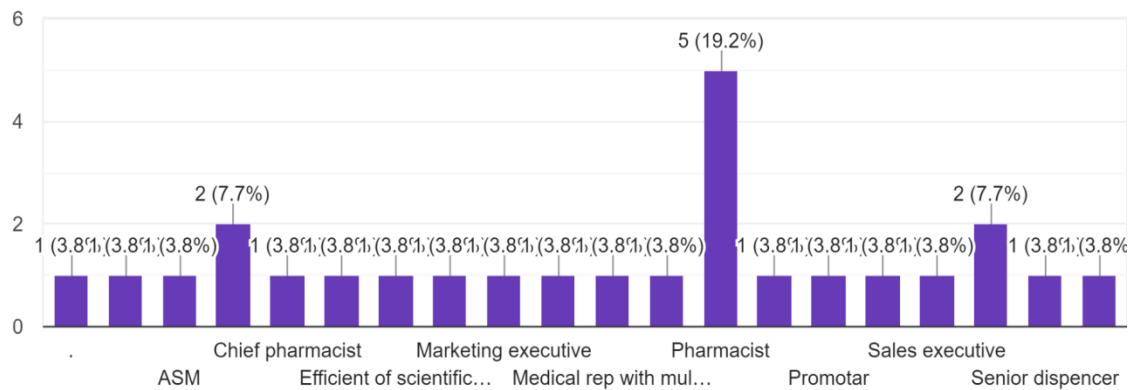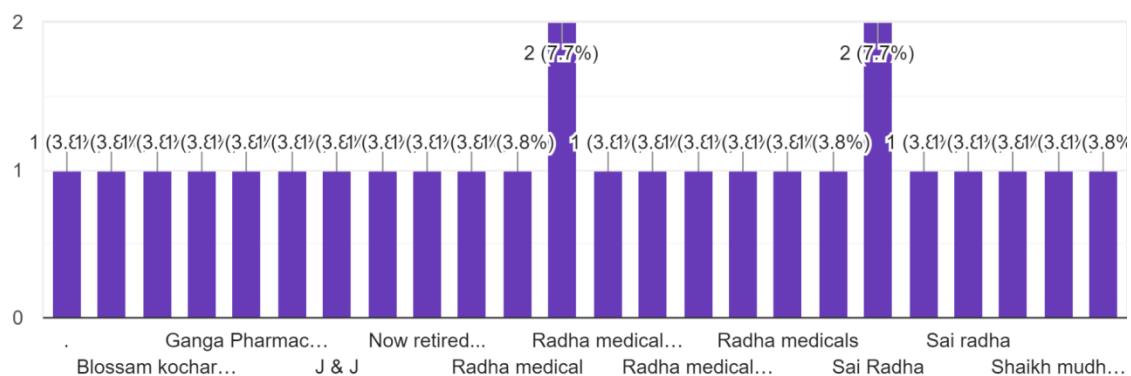
Figure 10.2: Job description

(Source: Google Survey)

10.3 Company Name

The participants of the study were from different Pharmaceutical companies in Mangalore city. It can be seen from the survey result that, participants were from companies such as *Ganga Pharmaceutical Ltd., Radha Medical Kankanady, Radha Medicals, Blossom Kochar Aroma magic, and others*.

10.3: Name of the companies

(Source: Google survey)

10.4 Sources of marketing used

As per the information gathered from the participants of the research it can be seen that different online marketing sources have been used by the participants or the company they are working for. It can be seen from the figure (figure 10.4), that *38.5% of the participants stated that they have used E-commerce as the source of the online market, on the other hand, almost 57.7% of the participants stated that E-marketing*

is the basis of their digital marketing. In accordance with Mukherjee *et al.* (2021), E-marketing can be seen as the most important platform among other social media platforms that can be used to promote the digital marketing of a company.
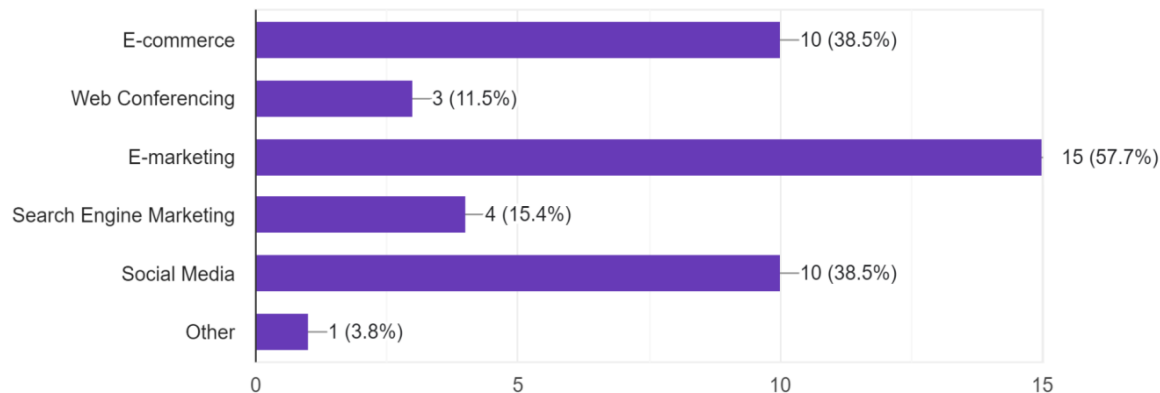

Figure 10.4: Sources of digital marketing

(Source: Google survey)

10.5 Digital marketing process and cost-effectiveness

All the 50 participants were asked questions about the digital marketing model and cost-effectiveness process of digital marketing within the industry. It can be seen from the responses that, some of the participants believed that the digital marketing model can not be useful for manufacturing and improvised by coordination of sales by stocks. On the other hand, some of the participants believe that digital marketing can have a nominal effect on manufacturing but can be useful for branding. As opined by Chheda (2019), segment-oriented digital marketing can be beneficial for the cost-effectiveness and sales process of a firm.

10.6 Challenges of digital marketing

According to the responses of the research participants, it can be seen that most of the participants feel that managing digital media can be hectic for the industry as there is a need for everyday management of the websites as well as *identifying proper and appropriate technology* is needed. As mentioned by Mishra (2020), in order to improve strategy and focus more on digital media-oriented results, it is important for a business to choose appropriate digital marketing tools and trained the employees accordingly to manage the same. On the other hand, the *nonavailability of stocks can be a problem* as per the responses of one of the research participants.

11. Conclusion

As a concluding remark of the present study, it can be seen that there are opportunities as well as challenges prevailing in digital media marketing in the pharmaceutical industry. Moreover, challenges such as discounts on products, non-availability of products, and lack of technical knowledge to maintain websites can be problematic for the industry. Nonetheless, it can be recommended for the pharmaceutical industry to focus more on the online marketing model and hire more trained staff.

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