

A STUDY ON CONSUMER PSYCHOLOGY TOWARDS HOMEOPATHY MEDICINES

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Abstract

Consumer psychology is a specialty area that studies the thoughts, beliefs, feelings and perceptions influence how people buy a medicines. The pharmaceutical sector is one of the largest sectors in India after agriculture. India has the most unorganized pharmaceutical market in the world. The retail pharmaceutical industry in India is today amongst the fastest growing industries with several players entering the market. This sector was unorganized in the initial stage, now it is growing as high level of marketing. According to consumer, buying a medicine in the pharmacy is a simple. Behind the scenes though, psychology is used a lot to define what products to buy.

Keywords: *psychology, treatment, homeopathic, Unreliable, Unethical, Social Factors*

Introduction

Alternative medicine has developed two hundred years ago, homeopathy has three main principles at its foundation. Similarly law-substances of animal, vegetal and mineral origin produce certain symptoms to the healthy subject to whom these have been administered, administered in sub molecular doses as homeopathic remedies to a sick subject with similar symptoms, these substances had a curative effect.

Individualized treatment: The treatment is based on the symptoms the patient describes and must take into account that each personality and perception of the same symptom are unique.

Minimal dose law: Infinite doses of substances are used; not diluted these substances are toxic for the organism, whereas diluted, their effectiveness and potency increases directly with their dilution. These basic principles of homeopathy are completely different from the scientific fundament of current modern medicine and have been thus considered implausible. Lacking a proven mechanism of action, they have been gradually rejected by the remarkable progress in medicine, pharmacy and chemistry in the last two hundred years; culminating with the decision taken in November 2009 by the Science and Technology Committee of Great Britain which declared that homeopathy “Useless Unethical and Unreliable”. It should not be confused with other forms of complementary therapy such as herbal medicine based on herbal preparations, which, however, also contain some active principles.

Objective of the Study

- To study the consumers psychology
- To study about the organized marketing sector for homeopathy medicine
- To study the consumer psychology towards alternative medicine

Review of Literature

The possibility of using measures of personality to guide marketing action, for example in segmenting markets psychographically, tailoring new brands to the susceptibilities of innovative consumers and repositioning mature brands, has encouraged a large volume of research. Few significant relationships, which would be of interest to marketing managers resulted from the research which concentrated upon the search for links between aspects of consumer choice (such as brand selection) and highly specific personality traits (such as sociability). However, the investigation of personality types, broad bundles of complementary traits which describe an individual's general pattern of behavioural response has shown more promise in the quest to describe and predict consumer behaviour. Thus, the success of personality research is also partly attributed to the simultaneous widespread dissatisfaction with psychoanalytical techniques of motivational research. Attitudes are predispositions felt by buyers before they enter the buying process. The buying process itself is a learning experience and can lead to a change in attitudes (Politz - 1958). Thus, attitudes do not automatically guarantee all types of behaviour. They are really the product of social forces interacting with the individual's unique temperament and abilities. Thus, as discussed above, social influences determine some but not all of the behavioural variations in people. Two individuals subject to the same influences are not likely to have identical attitudes, although these attitudes will probably converge at more points than those of two strangers selected at random. Most researchers agree that an attitude has three components: affect, behaviour, and cognition.

Factors affecting consumer buying behaviour

Consumer buying behavior is influenced by the major three factors:

- a) Social Factors
- b) Psychological Factors
- c) Personal Factors

Social factors refer to forces that other people exert and which affect consumers purchase behavior. These social factors can include: Culture & Sub-Culture, Role & Family, Social Class & Reference Groups.

Psychological factors are internal to an individual and generate forces within the influence the people to behavior of purchasing. The major forces include motives, perception, learning, attitude and personality.

Personal factors include those aspects that are unique to a person and influence purchase behavior. These factors include demographic factors, lifestyle and situational factors.

Customer Psychological Factors**Motives:**

A motive is an internal energizing force toward satisfying a need or achieving a goal. Actions are effected by a set of motives, not just one of them.

Perception:

Perception is the process of selecting, organizing & interpreting information inputs to produce meaning. Information inputs are the sensations received through sight, taste, hearing, smell and touch.

Ability & knowledge:

Need to understand individual capacity to learn. Learning changes in a person's behavior caused by information and experience. Therefore to change consumers behavior about the medicine, need to give them new information.

Attitudes:

Knowledge and positive and negative feelings about an object or activity may be tangible or intangible, living or non-living. Drive perceptions individual learns attitudes through experience and interaction with other people. Consumer attitudes toward a firm and its drug products greatly influence the success or failure of the firm's marketing strategy.

Personality:

All the internal traits and behaviours that make a person unique, uniqueness arrives from a person heredity and personal experience. Traits affect the way people behave. Marketers try to match the store image to the perceived image of their consumers.

Lifestyles:

Lifestyles are the consistent patterns follow in their lives.

Research Methodology

Research means a scientific and systematic search for permanent information on a specific topic. Research is careful investigations on inquiry especially search for new facts in any branch of knowledge. Research comprises of defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or suggested solutions collecting, organizing and evaluating data, making deduction and reaching conclusions and at last carefully testing the conclusion to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis.

Conclusion

To successfully fulfill the demands of their profession towards the consumers requesting homeopathic remedies or information regarding their effectiveness, pharmacists must advise the clients on the possibility of choosing from a palette of classic, conventional drugs and inform them that homeopathy is just a form of alternative therapy, different from plant based on the cures, used only for minor symptoms and never for severe conditions. The current codes of ethics and deontology for pharmacist compel pharmacists to be competent in

any field regarding medication. In the case of homeopathy, these codes emphasize that the pharmacist must counsel the patient concerning the controversial effectiveness of these remedies. Knowing conceptual elements of homeopathy, the ethical role the pharmacist plays is to assist the patients in their decision on homeopathic remedies by providing pertinent information.

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