IMPACT OF ONLINE MARKETING STRATEGIES OFPHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY ON DRUG CONSUMPTION: A STUDY IN INDIA

P.VIJAYA LAKSHMI

Ph.D, Director , Center for Translational Research& Professor of Communication and Journalism
Sri PadmavatiMahilaVisvavidyalaym, Tirupati-517502, Andhra Pradesh, India
E-mail: vijaya.cj@gmail.com

India has now seen pharma players taking the e-commerce route with an intention to offer a solution to a number of problems bothering the retail pharmacy industry. The developments in the pharmaceutical segment coupled with new media technology in India offer new ways for individuals to purchases of heath products and medicines online . Almost 31 start-ups related to online pharmacies were launched with the major chunk of investment announced by pharmaceutical companies like Netmeds ($60 million), followed by 1MG ($6 million) and Zigy ($3.2 million). This industry market estimates to be generating 3,000-4,000 orders on a daily basis (Supriti ,2015) . A better understanding of the consumer attitude and behavior would in turn help the pharmaceutical industry to formulate an effective strategy to explore the social media for a dynamic marketing plan in a developing country like India.But at the same time there are concerns about influence of the powerful marketing strategies of pharmaceutical companies on the drug consuming behavior and doctor patient relationship. Against this background, , there is a need for more critical research in this area to understand the social media marketing of pharmaceutical industry and its impact on drug consuming behavior of the public.Thus, the research paperis based on data collected by conducting online analysis of 10 pharmaceutical companies and a survey on 200 online purchasers . The paper discusses the use of social media tools by pharm industries, legal adherence , use of prescription while purchase , online sales promotion activities and profile of online drug purchasers, type of medicine and health products purchased , reasons and satisfaction levels for purchasing medicines online, etc,.

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