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# CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	<b>IMPACT OF FACEBOOK USAGE ON STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF WOLLEGE UNIVERSITY</b> <i>V.P.S. ARORA &amp; SARFARAZ KARIM</i>	1
2.	<b>A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AMONG WOMEN EMPLOYEES OF ITES COMPANIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SELECTED COMPANIES IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT</b> <i>DR. S. GANESAN &amp; SUKANYA.L</i>	7
3.	<b>IMPACT OF VILLAGE INFRASTRUCTURE INITIATED BY KORBA COALFIELDS OF CHHATTISGARH (INDIA) ON VILLAGERS' WAY OF LIVING</b> <i>A S BABU &amp; SUKANTA CHANDRA SWAIN</i>	11
4.	<b>REVENUE MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED</b> <i>DR. U. PADMAVATHI</i>	18
5.	<b>DIGITAL MARKETING – WAY TO SIGNIFICANCE</b> <i>SEMILA FERNANDES &amp; VIDYASAGAR A.</i>	22
6.	<b>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN SUGAR INDUSTRIES</b> <i>M. SARADADEVI &amp; K. YASODA</i>	28
7.	<b>FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT INFLOWS, TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLED HUMAN BEHAVIOR: A MULTIVARIATE GRANGER CAUSALITY STUDY – EVIDENCE FROM FRANCE</b> <i>DR. BHUMIKA GUPTA &amp; DR. JASMEET KAUR</i>	32
8.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF INTER QUARTILE RANGE (IQR) CONTROL CHART USING PROCESS CAPABILITY FOR STANDARD DEVIATION</b> <i>DR. C. NANTHAKUMAR &amp; S.VIJAYALAKSHMI</i>	35
9.	<b>EQUITY SHARE PERFORMANCE OF AUTO MOBILE INDUSTRY IN BSE</b> <i>M. NIRMALA &amp; P. PAVITHRA</i>	39
10.	<b>TURN OF THE MONTH EFFECT IN INDIAN METAL SECTOR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BSE METAL INDEX</b> <i>J. SUDARVEL &amp; DR. R. VELMURUGAN</i>	43
11.	<b>ROLE OF MAHILA SAHKARI BANK IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT</b> <i>DR. R. P. AGRAWAL &amp; AJITA SAJITH</i>	46
12.	<b>STRESS AMONG IT SECTOR EMPLOYEES</b> <i>SABARI GHOSH</i>	49
13.	<b>MOBILE BANKING IN INDIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON HDFC BANK AND AXIS BANK</b> <i>N. NEERAJA</i>	54
14.	<b>LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS TO MANAGE GLOBAL BUSINESS</b> <i>DEEPA NATHWANI</i>	58
15.	<b>A STUDY ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG TEACHERS IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS OF DINDIGUL DISTRICT</b> <i>DR. R. RADHIKA DEVI &amp; SOUNDARYA.N.</i>	63
16.	<b>A STUDY ON CONSUMERS OPINION TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY</b> <i>NITHYA M &amp; T. RAHUL PRASATH</i>	67
17.	<b>AN EVALUATION OF SERVICES BY DOCTORS PROVIDED BY PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES</b> <i>MENKA TRIPATHI &amp; DR. PRATIBHA JAIN</i>	74
18.	<b>OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES TO TOURISM INDUSTRY: A CASE STUDY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR</b> <i>MUNEER A KHAN, SHAHNEYAZ A BHAT, SUHAIL A BHAT &amp; MUDASIR AHMAD WAR</i>	79
19.	<b>PERCEPTION OF STUDENT TOWARDS FATE AND LOCUS OF CONTROL AT HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL: A STUDY IN PERCEPTION</b> <i>P. THANGARAJU</i>	83
20.	<b>SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF HANDLOOM WEAVERS: A STUDY OF KARIMNAGAR DISTRICT</b> <i>ANKAM SREENIVAS &amp; KALAKOTLA SUMAN</i>	85
	<b>REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK &amp; DISCLAIMER</b>	96

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**AN EVALUATION OF SERVICES BY DOCTORS PROVIDED BY PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The healthcare delivery in India includes the interaction between physicians and the pharmaceutical companies. The physicians rely on drug firms for information on appropriate prescribing. The relationships between the drug industry and medical community have resulted in delivering important benefits for patient care. The interaction extends from providing different commercial and non-commercial promotional sources. Between the two sources of promotion commercial sources include detailing, drug samples, gifts tours and travel and have lots of ethical problems, on other hand non-commercial sources do not address a certain drug but rather tackle a general health problem. The non-commercial sources of promotion included in this study are patient information system, training programs, seminars, conferences on healthcare technologies, sponsorships on medical journals, new drug development and market updates, hospital management. So in present study researcher is trying to find out how the physicians evaluate these non-commercial promotional methods, services and these can be used to benefit the patient as well as industry. Although promotion acts as primary informational and educational source of valuable drug information for physician consequently the pharmaceutical promotion should be focused on making the physician a better managed one and capable to making rational prescription choices.*

**KEYWORDS**

detailing, patient information system new drug development, hospital management.

**INTRODUCTION**

J namdar & Kolhatkar, 2011) state that relationship of physicians with pharmaceutical companies is receiving a good attention since last few years. The reason being quite simple that pharmaceutical marketing begins and ends up at the doctor's place. Most of the time, personal selling is used as the one of the most important part of pharmaceutical marketing. Although there is a unique feature of pharmaceutical marketing that here customer and consumer are totally different, decision about consumption and purchase of medicine is taken by doctor. So physician being in focus, all the marketing efforts of companies are directed in maintaining good relationship with them. In pharmaceutical marketing communication main objective is to create impression. In today's competitive environment the national and multinational companies have developed fine marketing strategies for relationship building by providing different services. Relationship cannot be maintained until we understand the customer. If company will understand how a doctor will receive and what is the evaluation for particular service, half battle is already won. The bonding between industry and doctors will come by fulfilling the customer's desire by giving exactly what he wants in terms of knowledge, communication, and updates on recent innovations. In this study we have made an effort to understand the same. If industry understands how to satisfy their customer, we are confident that it will helpful for developing a long lasting relationship with their customer and patient benefit as well.

**OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

To evaluate services which are offered to the doctors from the pharmaceutical companies.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research design: Exploratory research design is used.

Sampling: convenient

Methods of data collection: survey

Instrument used: questionnaire

Sample size: 118 doctors

Technique: personal interview

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

(Manchanda & Honka, 2015) Say that pharmaceutical industry is a large and important industry worldwide, where its practices have direct impact on the welfare of patients in specific and the society in general.

(World Health Organization, 1988) defines pharmaceutical promotion as "all information and persuasive activities executed by pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors, attempting to affect the prescription, supply, purchase, and/or use of medical drugs". (Spiller & Wymer, 2001)

(Williams.J.R, 1991)explained that, pharmaceutical promotional push elements can be further classified into commercial and non-commercial informational channels. Commercial sources are informational channels initiated by pharmaceutical companies and the focus is on delivering direct promotional messages on a certain drug and this is known as marketer controlled sources of influence. The commercial informational sources mainly used are detailing, drug samples, gift premiums, journal advertising, and direct mail. Non-commercial sources, on contrast, are usually initiated by clinical researchers, public health critics, academic physicians, and pharmaceutical companies. Non-commercial sources do not necessary promote a certain drug but rather focuses general health problem or medical condition. Non-commercial sources are known as non-marketer controlled sources of influence because they are not directly under the authorization of pharmaceutical managers. The commonly used non-commercial promotional sources are journal articles, clinical trials, colleagues' recommendations, conferences and medical meetings

(Alssageeri & Kowalski, 2012) say that pharmaceutical companies maintaining relationships and promotional activities involve a large proportion of the budgets and employees in pharmaceutical companies are engaged in marketing and creating good will activities. To establish or maintain their relationship with prescribers, PCRs employ many techniques like promotional printed material, Simple gifts, Drug samples, Sponsored items. many of respondents in their study acknowledged that they had received sponsored items (travel, luggage, assistance with conference attendance or provision of meals.

(Ingole & Yegnanarayan, 2011)studied the attitudes of medical students towards relationship with pharmaceutical companies and drug promotion by them.



As the industry and medical profession both are dependent on each other with a common objective. The very first objective of this joint effort is to rule out pain and suffering. The second objective is to be getting rewarded for this effort. The drug industry expectation is for profit making and the physician expectation is to get recognized through a suitable reward. There is nothing improper in these objectives.

(Anderson S E, 2002) say that Implementation of a single drug prescribing sheet, used by physicians to write all medication orders and by nurses during dispensing and administration of medications, may improve the quality of health care primarily by reducing the number of drug prescribing errors. So need arises for a patient record system.

(Morgan, Dana, Loewenstein, Zinberg, & Schulkin, 2006) Studied the opinions and practice patterns of obstetrician-gynecologists on acceptance and use of free drug samples and other incentive items from pharmaceutical representative. The study shows that most respondents thought it proper to accept drug samples, an informational lunch, an anatomical model or a well-paid consultant ship from pharmaceutical representatives. A third (34%) of respondents agreed that interactions with industry should be more strictly regulated.

(Rodwin, 2010) say that in past, physicians often relied particularly on drug firm advertising for information on drug use. Today, physicians rely on drug firms for continuing medical education (CME). Reveals connections between these two different ways commercial interests have influenced the information that physicians receive and points the way to needed reforms.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

1. Summary of demographic profile of respondents:

**FREQUENCY**

**GENDER**

S, No	Frequency	Percentage
Male	83	70.3
Female	35	29.7
Total	118	100

**AGE GROUP**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20 - 40	29	24.6	24.6	24.6
	40 - 60	62	52.5	52.5	77.1
	60 and Above	27	22.9	22.9	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	

**EDUCATION**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Graduate	55	46.6	46.6
	Post Graduate	63	53.4	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0

**PROFESSION**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Self Employed	56	47.5	47.5
	Government Job	37	31.4	78.8
	Private Job	25	21.2	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0

**HOSPITAL TYPE**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Multispecialty Hospital	14	11.9	11.9
	Nursing Home	45	38.1	50.0
	Clinic	59	50.0	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0

**HOSPITAL LOCALITY**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Income Group	10	8.5	8.5
	Middle Income Group	75	63.6	72.0
	Low Income Group	33	28.0	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0

**NO OF PATIENT ATTENDED PER DAY**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 20	30	25.4	25.4
	20 - 50	32	27.1	52.5
	50 and Above	56	47.5	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0

**Q.2 EVALUATION OF SERVICES**

**A. ASSISTANCE TO DOCTORS TO DEVELOP PATIENT INFORMATION SYSTEM**

Patient Information System Awareness		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	59	50.0
	No	58	49.2
	Total	117	99.2
Total 118		118	100.0

Patient Information System rating		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Neutral	7	5.9
	Quite Use full	82	69.5
	Very Use full	29	24.6
	Total	118	100.0

The above graph shows that 50% of doctors are aware about the patient information system services provided by companies, 50% of doctors used the services and 24.6% doctors found the services to be very useful.

**B. PARAMEDICAL STAFF TRAINING**

Paramedical Staff Training Awareness		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	18	15.3
	No	100	84.7
	Total	118	100.0

Paramedical Staff Training Use		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	4	3.4
	No	114	96.6
	Total	118	100.0

Paramedical Staff Training Rating		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not Useful at All	33	28.0
	Some What Useful	9	7.6
	Neutral	26	22.0
	Quite Useful	21	17.8
	Very Useful	29	24.6
	Total	118	100.0

The above analysis states that awareness is only 15.3%, usage of the service is 3.4% and 24% say that this is very useful.

**C. PROVIDING DIAGNOSTIC AND OFFICE SUPPORT EQUIPMENTS TO DOCTORS**

Diagnostic and Office Equipment Awareness		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	93	78.8
	No	25	21.2
	Total	118	100.0

Diagnostic and Office Equipment Use		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	59	50.0
	No	59	50.0
	Total	118	100.0

Diagnostic and Office Equipment Rating		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Not Useful at All	5	4.2	4.2
	Some What Useful	20	16.9	16.9
	Neutral	26	22.0	22.0
	Quite Usef ul	25	21.2	21.2
	Very Use full	42	35.6	35.6
	Total	118	100.0	100.0

78% of respondents were aware about the service of providing diagnostic and office support equipment, 50% respondents are using the service and 35.6% say that this service is very useful.

**D. CONDUCTING SEMINARS ON NEW DEVELOPMENT IN HEALTH CARE TECHNOLOGIES**

Seminar on Healthcare Technology Awareness		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	92	78.0	78.0
	No	26	22.0	22.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0

Seminar on Healthcare Technology Use		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	57	48.3
	No	61	51.7
	Total	118	100.0

Sponsorship for Conferences Awareness		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	105	89.0
	No	13	11.0
	Total	118	100.0

Seminar on Healthcare Technology Rating		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Neutral	29	24.6
	Quite Use full	29	24.6
	Very Use full	60	50.8
	Total	118	100.0

The above tables show that 78% of respondents are aware about the conduction of seminar on new healthcare technologies, 48.3% have used this service and 50.8% say that this can be very use full.

E. SPONSORSHIPS FOR CONFERENCES AND MEDICAL JOURNALS

Sponsorship for Conferences Use		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	54	45.8
	No	64	54.2
	Total	118	100.0

Sponsorship for Conferences Rating		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not Use full at All	13	11.0
	Some What Use full	19	16.1
	Neutral	27	22.9
	Quite Use full	29	24.6
	Very Use full	30	25.4
	Total	118	100.0

89% of respondents are aware about the sponsorship provided for medical conferences, 54.2% are using the sponsorships, and 25.4% rate it as a useful service.

F. PERIODIC INFORMATION ON NEW DRUG DEVELOPMENT AND MARKET UPDATES

Periodic Information About Market Updates Awareness		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	54	45.8
	No	64	54.2
	Total	118	100.0

Periodic Information About Market Updates Use		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	31	26.3
	No	87	73.7
	Total	118	100.0

Periodic Information About Market Updates Rating		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not Use full at All	1	.8
	Some What Use full	4	3.4
	Neutral	30	25.4
	Quite Use full	56	47.5
	Very Use full	27	22.9
	Total	118	100.0

48.8% are aware about the services 26.3% are using the periodicals and 47.5% term it as useful services.

G. CONDUCTING SEMINAR ON HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT

Seminar on Hospital Management Awareness		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	49	41.5
	No	69	58.5
	Total	118	100.0

Seminar on Hospital Management Use		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	22	18.6
	No	96	81.4
	Total	118	100.0

Seminar on Hospital Management Rating		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not Use full at All	1	.8
	Some What Use full	3	2.5
	Neutral	33	28.0
	Quite Use full	47	39.8
	Very Use full	34	28.8
	Total	118	100.0

Awareness level for seminars on hospital management is about 41.5%, 18% have used the service and 30% rate it as useful service.

H. INVOLVEMENT IN CLINICAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

Involvement in Clinical Research Awareness		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	102	86.4
	No	16	13.6
	Total	118	100.0

Involvement in Clinical Research Use		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	15	12.7
	No	103	87.3
	Total	118	100.0

Involvement in Clinical Research Rating		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not Use full at All	11	9.3
	Some What Use full	35	29.7
	Neutral	54	45.8
	Quite Use full	15	12.7
	Very Use full	3	2.5
Total		118	100.0

About 86.4% are aware about clinical research projects only 12.7% are using the services and 12% rated as it as very useful.

#### I. ASSURANCE OF PRODUCT AVAILABILITY

Assurance of Product Availability Awareness		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	112	94.9
	No	6	5.1
	Total	118	100.0

Assurance of Product Availability Use		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	111	94.1	94.9
	No	6	5.1	5.1
	Total	117	99.2	100.0
Missing	System	1	.8	
Total		118	100.0	

Assurance of Product Availability Rating		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Some What Use full	1	.8
	Neutral	4	3.4
	quite Use full	25	21.2
	Very Use full	88	74.6
	Total	118	100.0

94.9% are aware about the services, about 94% are using the services 74.6% term it as very useful.

#### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- The awareness for the patient record system is due to less focus of the company towards the doctors who have less no patients attended per day. The service was rated useful because of Ease towards handling patients.
- Paramedical staff training given by companies are used by less number of respondents. Although some respondents rate it as useful service as it can save time of both patients as well as doctors.
- Providing diagnostic and office support equipment is promotional scheme used by companies since long time that's why awareness and use level is high. The doctors rate this service this as useful one.
- Majority of respondents are aware and use about seminars on healthcare technologies, and the service is rated very useful by half the percentage of respondent because it updates them with use of new technologies.
- Awareness level is very high for the sponsorships for conferences and medical journal, use is not at very high level and there is mixed response about the rating.
- Periodic information and market updates are less provided by the companies so use level is low, but response say that that it can be prove to be quite useful it companies focus on this.
- Seminars on hospital management is rated to be mixed response as respondents say they prefer their own way about the management of their hospitals.
- Majority of respondents stay neutral about the involvement in clinical research and their use due to strict legal interventions.
- Majority of respondents are using the service assurance of product availability and rate it as very useful because they want their prescriptions to be honored. The executive assures the product availability by showing the medicine and naming the chemist to the doctor.

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