

Effect of Pull and Push Marketing Strategies in the Pharmaceutical Field

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Introduction: Marketing principles have been changing through decades, being influenced by different environmental factors and advanced technologies. Even how we define marketing is changing, and what we expect from successful marketing campaign is also changing. The latest definition of marketing is; it is an exchange process, where needs and wants are satisfied, competing for the purchasing power of consumers (Brunswick, April 2014). Marketing is based on good coordination, planning and targeted campaigns to specific audience, to achieve major objectives which are exceeding the competitors' strategies after being monitored and analyzed (different marketing strategies for OTC products). Other objects of promotional marketing are; informative, create and increase demand, differentiation through enhancing the product value, maintain and stabilize sales which leads to business development and growth. These objective could be achieved through, advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations and personal selling.

The pharmaceutical market is considered an indirect market since the decision of purchasing is not related to the end user, for that reason the marketing campaigns should be targeted to the physicians (in case of prescription drugs) and to both patients and physicians (in case of OTC (over the counter) products), although pharmacists can prescribe OTC products yet, sometimes patients refer to their doctors pulling a prescription of a medication which caught attention due to a poster, flyer or heard of it from a friend/ family with same disease who benefited from a certain medication (Sharma, April 2012). The role of pharmaceutical marketing is educational whether for doctors or patients, awareness for diseases such as breast cancer screening, increases compliance, and patients are satisfied with the outcomes. Examples of pharmaceutical marketing are; free samples, sales representatives presenting articles and studies, continuing education through conferences and symposiums, gadgets, gifts...

In this paper, we will discuss the different marketing strategies used in pharmaceutical field, advantages and disadvantages, when to use every marketing strategy depending on product life cycle and type of product (OTC, prescription).

I. Literature review

Marketing Strategies:

Different definitions were linked to marketing strategies, but we can assert that marketing strategy is the process where a company should take advantage of the available resources to increase sales and achieve a competitive advantage over other firms within the same field, satisfying the needs of the customers (Chavan).

Managers over the globe agree on the importance on implementing different marketing strategies, to compete effectively worldwide. Any marketing strategy is composed of different interrelated elements; first is the market selection, and it is the most important one. Second, what the company sells, what is the product line and the design of the offerings. Third, the distribution system, suppliers, retails, and distributors, and how the product reaches the appropriate customers. Fourth, the communication strategy the company uses in order to advertise their products either through television, mails, or personal selling. Finally, the pricing and it is linked to the value creation for the shareholder (Mongay, October 2012).

In addition to the different elements that constitute a successful marketing strategy, there are different types of marketing strategies chosen based on different product classifications. Marketing strategies should be based on product segmentation, targeting and positioning. After specifying the characteristics, the distribution system and the price of the product, the marketing campaign should be launched through different types of advertisement such as mass communication channels, personal selling, or sales promotion are implemented to start with selling our product (Marketing Strategy - Marketing Process - Kotler's Description).

A successful marketing process is composed of 4 different steps. First, analyze marketing opportunities and this is done through marketing research where the marketer should detect future opportunities in the long-run and what would the market need and how to satisfy these needs which it could be through introducing new products. Second, develop a marketing strategy, based on the data collected in the first step a strategy is set based on one or two important features to position the product in such a way the brand should be directly linked to the customer's need satisfaction. Third step, a marketing program should be implemented and make use of the

resources and marketing tools any firm has. These marketing tools are categorized into, 4 P's; product, price, place and promotion. Product and it is related to the quality, design, packaging...the price should be set compared to the competitors, the discounts or the commissions given for the retailers and wholesalers. Place, and it is related to the firm's decision how would the product reach the final consumer, and it could be through online sales, outlets, giant malls, etc... Finally promotion, and it could be through either mass media advertisement, or social media activities... (Marketing Strategy - Marketing Process - Kotler's Description, December 2011).

The main objective of any marketing strategy is to create an added value for the customers compared to the competitors, and this value should be measured from the customer's point of view. For example, setting the price of a product is very difficult since the firm should consider maximum profit parallel to high sales levels, but at the same time the price of the product should match the customers' satisfaction from the delivered value (Mihalj Bakator, June 2016).

As shown in figure 1, any marketing strategy should start with the market analysis, the company itself (SWOT analysis), the competitors; how the company would differentiate itself, the general conditions; example cultural, political, economic conditions and finally the consumer mainly what are the customers' expectations from the product. The second step is market segmentation, select attractive segment to target. Then the marketing mixed strategy, price, place, promotion, and product. Third the customer decision process, how to convince the customer to use the product, evaluate, use... and finally the outcomes are assessed and evaluated, according to the customers, firm and the society.



FIGURE 1: MARKETING STRATEGY (MIHALJ BAKATOR, JUNE 2016).

There are two ways to deliver information to the customer, either through pull or push marketing strategies. In the push strategy, the suppliers push their products toward the customers and this strategy focus on the intermediaries and facilitate the delivery of products to the customers. Unlike the pull strategy, the customers search for the products that satisfy their needs and in this case the customer is the main focus in this strategy (Brocato, 15 December 2010). Push marketing is concerned with short term sales whereas pull marketing seeks to create loyal customers (robertson).

As shown in figure 2, in the pull strategy, starts form the market and moves to the company in such a way the market pulls the product from the company(it is a two-way strategy from customer to the firm and back to the customer). Unlike the push strategy, where the company designs a product and promote the need for it, and the firm seeks distributors to ensure its sustainability (one-way strategy form firm to customers) (Corniani, 2008).

Step No.	Pull (inbound)	Push (outbound)
1. Need recognition		create the need for a new initiated product TV, radio, emails, highlight on the need
2. Search for info.	Customers search for info mainly through web (where info are easily updated and added) or through friends and family or through added reviews through blogging or the firm's page	
3. Evaluation	Because of the accessibility of info through the web, customers can easily compare the competitive products, in this case, videos and pictures could be used to convince the customer	In parallel, firm could show the superiority and differentiate its product versus the competitors, and could simplify the comparison between the products
4. Purchase decision	The video or picture or review added to the blog or website helps the customer to take the final decision	Encourage the purchase decision through for example a message that store X is having a black Friday.
5. Post- purchase	Daily updates on the reviews and the on-site action: help customers take the right decision	Emails are sent, messages or even customer service calls the customer to make sure that the customer is satisfied and to make sure that the customer will buy the product again

TABLE 1: IMPLEMENTATION OF PUSH AND PULL STRATEGIES ON THE FIVE DIFFERENT STEPS OF BUYING PROCESS

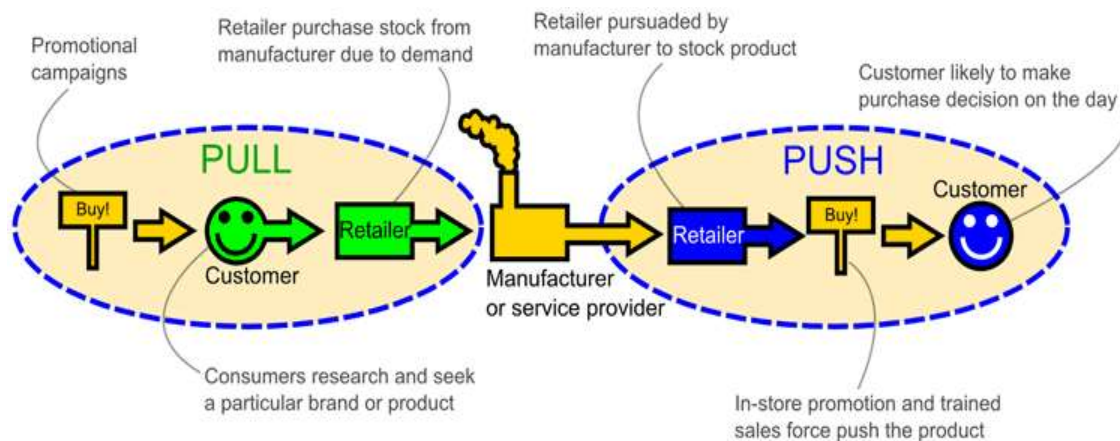


FIGURE 2: DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PULL AND PUSH MARKETING (ROBERTSON).

Finally any successful marketing strategy should include both pull and push strategies, new products should be pushed for customers to be used through correct distribution and increase availability, and in the same time brand awareness is essential to gain the trust of the customers and encourage them to try the new recommended product (robertson).

According to Kotler, every buyer pass through a five-step buying process. First step is need recognition, and it varies in the level of obviousness, from the need for tissue papers to life insurance and it is the role of the marketer to clarify the customer's need or even create it. Second step is search for information, in this stage customers search how they can satisfy this need and where to find the essential product and how much it costs. Third step is to evaluate the different available products and options through weighing advantages versus disadvantages. In this level the marketers' job is to highlight the advantages of the product versus others and the added value offered or served. Fourth step is the purchase decision, and in this stage the customer evaluate similar products and find out which product mostly matches their needs. Finally the post-purchase behavior, what was the impact of the customer on product, to what extend it satisfies his need, does he recommend the product for others, would he buy it again, etc... (Powell).

To link the five different steps for buying process, refer to table 1. Need recognition is covered by the push strategy through marketing channels through; radio, TV, emails, direct sales, etc... as for the pull strategy after knowing that the customer need or searching for a service, the needed service is offered, for example if the customer is searching for medical or life insurance, google search → different blogs would be offered as options for the customer who are related to life insurance.

N.B: COLORED PINK BOXES ARE THE MAJOR TECHNIQUE USED IN THE MENTIONED STEP (POWELL)

Advantages and disadvantages of pull and push strategies:

Push system is the classic approach, it is based on high inventory either finished products or in progress, since manufacturing or stocking is based on annual forecast which may not match the actual sales, in this case risk of loss is present either due to extra stocking or due to shortage of stock. Because of the importance of high inventory volumes it is not easy to meet changing demands rapidly or even offer perfect customer service (Hunt, February 04, 2019). Push marketing strategy can reach wider audience, promoting and increasing awareness of a product specifically if the product is newly launched. Although it would reach people with different ages, and save time to get the product recognized but such campaigns are costly. Pull approach is relatively new, it is based on just-in time inventory with rapid and high flexibility to changing markets or demand due to low inventory volume, which eliminates the advantage of economies of scale which is present in push strategy (Hunt, February 04, 2019). Pull marketing strategy is targeted toward certain customers building good relations, leading to loyal customers, no need for huge advertising campaigns because the customers already know the product and know what they expect form it. But it lacks exposure to new customers (limited exposure).

II. Pharmaceutical marketing strategies

Pharmaceutical industry is the world's largest industry due to its revenues of 2.8 trillion dollars which made it one of the attractive field to work within and increased its competition (kalotra, 2014). Due to this competition, marketing strategies is very important, example according to the official website of ministry of health we have 26 different brands of atorvastatin (one of several drugs to treat hyperlipidemia) in a field of four million inhabitants, so choosing the right marketing strategy is essential to gain the required differentiation to get the highest market share in this high competitive market. In general there is different marketing strategies used in the pharmaceutical field such as, physicians' targeted promotions, direct to customer advertising, through research based campaigns, etc... (Chiu, 2005). Unfortunately, in the presence of this high competition, most pharmaceutical companies are deviating from the ethical practices, in such case the used marketing strategies are; unethical recruitment of physicians, data manipulation in clinical trials (Chiu, 2005).

Pharmaceutical companies spend approximately 35% of the total revenues on marketing, due to the presence of high competition and absence of regulatory controls, around two third of the world's countries don't have laws to regulate pharmaceutical promotion (Vydehi Maheshwaram, 2017).

Pharmaceutical marketing tools varies depending on the doctor style, the product life cycle stage, type of medication... The major used tools are; clinical promotional mix, detailing aid, leave behind material, samples, gifts, out-of-clinic promotional material (small group discussions or presentations), clinical studies, seminars, sponsorships, advertisements, public relations, e-marketing and mobile applications... Based on the marketing strategy (whether it is pull or push marketing strategy), the relevant tool is selected.

Pharmaceutical products are classified into first prescription products (prescribes by the doctor) example; anti-hypertensive drugs (drugs that regulate blood pressure), this type of drugs are marketed to the physicians directly by the pharmaceutical companies. Second over the counter products (prescribed by the pharmacist or

requested by the patient directly), example analgesics (pain relief), this type of drugs is marketed to the customer directly (the patient) (Rizwan Raheem Ahmed, 2014).

Pharmaceutical marketing strategy development takes place through different steps, parallel to the batch testing to ensure the effectiveness of the medication;

No.	Stage	Details
1	Market overview	Segment size, patient profile, potentiality
2	SWOT analysis	Strength, weakness of the company + opportunities and threats in the market
3	Competition analysis	Number of competitors, expected market share, market leader
4	Product profile	Classification, mode of action, dosage form, dosage regimen, structure...
5	Clinical profile	Safety profile, indication, efficacy, indications...
6	Product positioning	Major use/ advantage,
7	Marketing/ sales objectives	Qualitative (awareness) and quantitative (increase sales)
8	Promotional strategies	Marketing tools to be used; samples, seminars, communicated messages...
9	Sales strategy	Areas to be covered, doctors to be visited, indications to be focused, distribution strategy...

TABLE 2: MARKETING STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT, STEPS TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN A PHARMACEUTICAL MARKETING STRATEGY (RIZWAN RAHEEM AHMED, 2014).

Some companies may decide to undergo a marketing trial pre-launch or post-launch depending on the product nature and the market as whole (competitors, market share...) and it is used to enhance the confidence of the product and proof the effectiveness of the product. Positive results are used as an important promotional tool for the company (Rizwan Raheem Ahmed, 2014).

Every product passes through a life cycle (product life cycle), and same applies to the pharmaceutical products. It involves five different stages; first, product development; initiate a new product. Second stage is introduction, start introducing the product to the doctors/customers, in this stage sales are still in slow growth. Third, growth and it starts when rapid sales growth occurs due to market acceptance. Fourth, maturity where the product sales growth starts to slow down due to the frequent usage by most of the customers. Fifth, decline and it occurs when the profits start to decrease (Rizwan Raheem Ahmed, 2014).

As shown in table 3, the product passes through variations in different stages of life- cycle, where the company should take into consideration when selecting the right marketing strategy. Example, the distribution of a product differ in different stages such that new products are not highly distributed at the beginning of the launching phase, to prevent expired products due to low customer awareness □ low demand □ leading to expired products, but when the customers either patients or doctors know more about the product and is available in different dosage forms or strengths it is important to increase the product distribution to satisfy the demand.

	Stage	Introduction	Growth	Maturity	Decline
Product		Whether to start with all the dosage forms or strengths	come up with new flavors, or dosage forms or strengths	maintain and identify new indications to increase market share	wait as long as you can benefit the society and then withdraw
Price		in this case the price should be set by the regulatory bodies	keep the price fixed in this stage	it is preferred to fix the price in this stage also but some companies prefer to reduce the price to maintain/ gain market share	it is preferred to fix the price in this stage also but some companies prefer to reduce the price to face erosion of market share
Place		selective	extensive for OTC and selective for prescription products	extensive for OTC and selective for prescription products	selective
Promotion		Heavy samplings to support the trail phase focus on KOL doctors (key opinion leaders), brochures, gifts...	Moderate sampling, reminder gifts, moderate advertising...	sampling only when requested, focus on loyal customers	selective and focused promotion to maintain market share as long as possible

TABLE 3: PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE IN PHARMACEUTICAL FIELD THROUGH FOUR DIFFERENT STAGES (RIZWAN RAHEEM AHMED, 2014).

Although the end users are the patients, but in the pharmaceutical field, physicians are the decision makers especially for the prescription drugs, and the most important player in this cycle since they are the reference for their patients. For that reason pharmaceutical companies focus on influencing them to initiate and increase sales. Influencing the physicians’ takes place through several channels such as; direct interaction with the pharmaceutical companies, research, patients and public or private insurance companies. These activities are done in two different ways through push and pull strategies. Pull strategies is done through mass media promotions and it doesn’t target the physicians. Whereas the push strategies, are mainly focused on doctor’s promotions through daily visits by the medical representatives (Punchibandara, August 2010).

Pull strategies are more common in USA, New Zealand, since pharmaceutical companies have the provision to advertise their drugs on social media. This type of marketing is called direct to customer advertisements (DTCA), where customers are more informed and enables them to understand better the available therapeutic options and become partners in the decisions related to their health. DTCA allow the consumers to pull prescription drugs after referring to their physicians asking them for what they have learned from the advertisements. Push strategies are more used and followed since most countries prohibit drug advertisements to consumers (Punchibandara, August 2010).

The major question is whether to implement a push or pull strategy... companies take into consideration several factors to decide which strategy to follow. Some of these factors are; type of product (OTC or prescribed medication), product life- cycle stage (introduction, growth...) and type of business (B2B or B2C) and different promotional tools are used accordingly. For example, B2C companies depend on pull strategies, they prioritize advertising, then sales promotion, personal selling and finally public relations. As for B2B companies they use push strategies, as they prioritize personal selling, then sales promotion, advertising and finally public relations (Punchibandara, August 2010). In addition to that we can say that products at the early stages of the product life cycle, should be promoted differently to produce high awareness, so advertising and public relation are useful, and sales promotion can support in this phase. In the growth phase there is no need for sales promotions to

reduce incentives to the next stage where the sales promotion is needed in the mature stage parallel with the advertising, to remind the customers of the product who already know the product. In the final stage, in the decline level, advertising is kept at a reminder level, public relations are dropped but sales promotion are stronger in this phase (Punchibandara, August 2010).

As mentioned before the used marketing strategy that is mainly used in the pharmaceutical field with the OTC products is the pull strategy where patients are the ones who pull the prescription form their physicians. The pull strategy used in this case is either through DTCA (creating pull directly) or through internet (creating pull indirectly), backed up by the pharmaceutical companies. Creating indirect pull strategy is through online pharmacies that enables patients to buy their medication online, without restrictions or correct guidance how to use the medication (Punchibandara, August 2010).

The major pharmaceutical marketing strategies for OTC products used by pharmaceutical companies are (pharmaceutical companies) (Dadhich, January 2015):

1. Divest strategy; keep on investing in a product until it faces competition, and redirect the savings to other brands that either still have the patent protection or are not facing high level of competition. This strategy doesn't build a brand since it didn't support the brand in different challenges, example price. The survival of this brand is dependent on the level of customer loyalty and doctors' habit to prescribe the product.
2. Value of money; add emotional or functional consumer benefits to create an added value when compared to competitors which will justify price versus other more affordable competitors. Example, Panadol (paracetamol), they create a huge portfolio where Panadol could be used for bone pain (Panadol joint) or in sinusitis (Panadol sinusitis) in flu (Panadol cold and flu day/ night)... Adol (Panadol competitor) could compete with Panadol since they didn't have this diversified portfolio.
3. Invest in generics; multinational companies compete with their own products, through investing in generic products. As long as competing with generics is a must, in this case they would have a bigger market share when they have two products in the market.
4. Research molecule strategy; demonstrate effectiveness in new indications where the product can be used, through better communication on the illness and the brand. Example, aspirin was used initially as an anti-inflammatory drug, now it is used as anti-platelet (to prevent blood coagulation) (Dadhich, January 2015).

Categorization of OTC products differ from one country to another, in general it ranges from analgesics (pain relief) to anti- histamines. OTC products are promoted to patients, doctors, and healthcare providers based on ethical standards, such as advertisers should be trustful, honest, non-deceptive, and backed up with evidence (Dadhich, January 2015).

Different promotional strategies are used to sell OTC products such as;

1. Applying the push marketing strategy on OTC products, starts from the manufacturer promoting the drug to wholesalers and in turn the wholesalers promote the medication for retailers and final to patients; Manufacturer → wholesaler → retailer → patients (Dadhich, January 2015).
2. As for the pull marketing strategy implementation, it takes place through promoting the drug among the targeted market, then let the patients ask for the product forcing the wholesalers and retailers to stock the product (Dadhich, January 2015).
3. Sales promotion, this strategy is used with different intensities based on different product life cycle level, it guarantees short term sales.
4. Direct consumer advertisements; in this case pharmaceutical companies are responsible to spread awareness among end users with high levels of transparency and honesty, to alert the patients to the availability and uses of an OTC product or the launching of a new form or flavor, example, launching Strepsils for diabetic patients (sugar free) (Dadhich, January 2015).

Customers' buying decision- Impact on consumer

Pharmaceutical companies have three main different strategies that may affect the customers' decision in buying the product (MichaelS.Wilkes, 2000):

- First, health seeking advertising: spread the awareness of a disease, helps patients to recognize signs and symptoms to refer for their physicians without mentioning the name of the product (MichaelS.Wilkes, 2000). Example, in November 2018, Hikma Pharmaceuticals along with the patronage of the Lebanese ministry of health launched iron deficiency anemia awareness campaign, to educate patients about signs and symptoms of anemia, how to prevent anemia through eating certain types of food through flyers distributed for patients in clinics, malls, and hospitals. In this way, although Hikma pharmaceuticals has an intravenous iron supplement, yet they didn't promote it to patients, they used the pull marketing strategy and expected patients to pull the prescription from their physicians..
- Second, advertise the drug with minimal information, without mentioning its effectiveness or safety profile, teasing the patient through mentioning the use or indication and pull the patient to ask for more details.
- Third, advertise a drug therapy by name, mention effectiveness and safety profile of the drug. Most advertisement falls within this category (MichaelS.Wilkes, 2000).

Pharmaceutical companies should consider that the majority of the population are not of medical background, the DTCA (direct to be a relation between the messenger (pharmaceutical company), the message (advertisement) and the recipient (consumer). If the consumers were unable to understand and evaluate properly the delivered message, this could lead to confusion and inexact appreciate of the product specifically its effectiveness and safety. DTCA with clear and direct messages increases the awareness of consumers, it is good to mention that females are more aware of drug advertisement than males, and patients who are suffering from the advertised drug-related disease are more attracted to the advertisement. Elderly are interested in DTCA more than youngsters since they perceive medication as a source of good health not as a sign of illness (MichaelS.Wilkes, 2000).

Legally pharmacists are allowed to prescribe a certain category of drugs without a prescription, these are OTC products. Although in Lebanon, online advertising is prohibited yet pharmaceutical companies are directly promoting their products in the pharmacy through pull strategies using one or more from the following marketing tools; posters, flyers (with informal attractive slogans), samples to use (experiential marketing), gifts, gadgets... Patients get attracted to these marketing strategies and either they try the product based on the pharmacist advice or either they refer to their doctors. The perfect pharmaceutical marketing strategy especially for OTC products should cover both medical fields; pharmacists and doctors to get the synergistic opinion from both healthcare providers this will enrich patients' trust in the product. Patient experience with the drug will be an internal source of information that he would mostly rely on (Chaipradermsak, 2007). Based on Sacramento survey, 56% of respondents read carefully a DTC advertisement. Thirty five percent of them referred to their doctor to investigate more and get more information regarding the advertisement. Nineteen percent of respondents were encouraged to try the drug and asked for it. Seventeen percent were not interested at all and only nine percent called the drug company for more information (MichaelS.Wilkes, 2000).

DTCA advantages on the pharmaceutical company is increased number of prescription, this results from the hammering effect exerted on pharmacists, doctors, and customers who in turn ask for the product, whereas their effect on DTCA is: first it educates, and empower patients through informing them, not only on the advantages, or uses of the drug, but also it explains more about the related diseases, signs and symptoms, how to manage, and encourage treatment, ensuring a better quality of life for patients. Second, when the patient is informed and know better about the disease and its progression, then he is encouraged to refer to a healthcare provider asking for medical advises. Third, it facilitate the dialogue between the healthcare provider and the patient, since he is more aware and his questions are more thoughtful. Fourth, increases compliance which reduces underdiagnosed and undertreated conditions, for example meanwhile there is a lot of advertisements that encourage patients to get a full course of antibiotics or else it will increase bacterial resistance, patients now are more aware about the consequences and are more compliant on their medications (C. Lee Ventola, October 2011).

Effect of pharmaceutical marketing strategies

Pharmaceutical advertisements are spreading rapidly, for example, in Lebanon, those ads are based in the pharmacies as posters or flyers. Patients are influenced by these ads, referring to their doctors pushing selected medications (University, June 2009). In this way patients discuss their treatment options with the doctors and make the doctors aware new products (Aert). 91 % of physicians said that they felt pressure when accepting the patients request for prescribing the drug of their choice (Aert). Pharmaceutical marketing strategies affects also doctors' decisions, including posters, visits from medical representatives, gifts... Sixty percent of doctors admit that their prescription is influenced by the pharmaceutical marketing's which in turn increases pharmaceutical sales (Ijoma, 2010).

The level of patients' awareness is increasing one of the causes is the pharmaceutical marketing strategies which are attracting patients, in addition to the current economic factors patients are moving toward consulting their pharmacist rather than consulting their doctor. These factors increased the use of OTC products and customers' expectations as well (NYAMAI, November 2014). Targeted marketing strategies should be based on market research to detect what are the needs of the customers, and manage to meet the customers' expectations (Mihalj Bakator, June 2016).

III. Research methodology

Finally, based on previous studies, pharmaceutical marketing strategies can be either pull or push strategies, trying to sell either OTC or prescribed products through successful marketing campaigns. All these strategies aim to increase the sales of the pharmaceutical companies, increase awareness, and increase healthcare outcomes.



- H1: there is positive relation between the effect of pull strategy and OTC products demand
- H2: there is negative relation between the effect of pull strategy and prescribed products demand
- H3: there is negative relation between the effect of push strategy and OTC products demand
- H4: there is positive relation between the effect of push strategy and prescribed products demand
- H5: there is a positive relation between push strategy and sales
- H6: there is a positive relation between push strategy and customer awareness
- H7: there is a positive relation between push strategy and healthcare outcomes
- H8: there is a positive relation between pull strategy and sales
- H9: there is a positive relation between pull strategy and customer awareness
- H10: there is a positive relation between push strategy and healthcare outcomes

Based on a marketing research these hypothesis should be either rejected or accepted for more focused campaigns to reach better outcomes. For this research I suggest, testing both patients and doctors' perception and in the same time the pharmaceutical companies' marketing strategies. Such that ask doctors and patients which strategies or which tool mainly affect their decision, as for patients, investigate and test when do they refer to their doctor and when are they most likely attracted to a pharmaceutical advertisement. As we should investigate more which marketing strategies are most likely used by the pharmaceutical companies nowadays, benchmark with leader in the market. This study can be implemented through preparing four different questionnaires, one questionnaire to be filled by specific number of doctors, second for patients visiting the pharmacies, third for the pharmacists and the last one for pharmaceutical companies that could be filled by medical representatives or marketing managers that are aware of the marketing plans that are executed in the market. After collecting the data, we can measure the impact of marketing strategies on patients and healthcare providers and we can measure effect of every marketing strategy on the sales of every pharmaceutical company.

IV. Conclusion

Due to the availability of this high level of competition, pharmaceutical companies should plan for a marketing strategy that is based on meeting the expectations of customers. To reach this level of satisfaction, pharmaceutical companies should choose the best marketing strategy that best suits that product status, based on the product life cycle (at which stage), type of product (OTC or prescribed drug), which strategy to use pull or push strategy... targeting marketing strategy leads to increase customer awareness and reduces the dependency of patients on their physicians. The pharmaceutical marketing strategy implementation is different than other fields since it is directed toward physicians and patients using different tools to reach both categories. Trends differ from time to time, new trends are emerging and are promising in the future, such as awareness advertisement for diseases, example, iron deficiency anemia awareness campaign implemented by Hikma pharmaceuticals, early detection for breast cancer implemented by Roche and lately blood pressure control awareness implemented by Servier. So, new tools are emerging and new markets are created, through fishing for new patients, by helping them to screen their diseases.

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