

CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS PHARMACEUTICAL OTC MEDICINES IN THE PATAN CITY

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the research is to determine the factors which impact the attitude of consumer in decision making process when purchasing pharmaceutical OTC medicines and to understand the impact of advertising, cost and availability factors on the consumer decision-making process when buying OTC medicines. The market for over-the-counter (OTC) medicines in India has seen significant growth in current years. Based on the survey, it can be clearly seen that customers takes OTC medicines for Severe (short term) disease. Under the study it is seen that majority of the customers are neutral towards advertising of OTC Products and disagree that advertising distress the buying behaviour of the customers. Most of the customers perceives that OTC medicines have lower cost than prescription drugs. During the research study, it can be seen that the there is an increase in the purchase of the OTC medicines as compared to the last year and customers thinks that OTC products are easily available than prescription products.

KEYWORDS: OTC medicines, Consumer Behaviour, Pharmaceutical Advertisement, Availability, Cost.

1- INTRODUCTION

Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines are drugs that are sold directly to consumers without a prescription from physicians. The market for over-the-counter (OTC) medicines in India has seen important growth in recent years. Instead of final product OTC medicines are regulated according to active pharmaceutical ingredient (API)¹. OTC drugs are available in general stores, supermarkets in many countries.

According to a report by Global Data, the Indian OTC healthcare market is expected to grow by 7.85% between 2023 and 2028, resulting in a market volume of \$10.17 billion in 2028.

As per a research article published in the International Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the Indian OTC market was valued at \$1,773 million in 2017, with a share of 23% .The regulation of OTC drugs is overseen by Food and Drug Administration (FDA). FDA put the requirement that every OTC drug should be labeled with set of facts which includes the following.

- Active ingredients
- Inactive ingredients
- Indications • Purpose
- Safety warnings
- Directions for use

Growing ageing population suffering from various diseases, occurrence of diseases among young people due to daily lifestyle, access to these generic medicines, affordability and increasing patient awareness are driving the market. Moreover, generic medicine manufacturers are increasingly aware of the need for affordable health solutions for people suffering from unhealthy eating habits. The digital availability of OTC medicines along with the prevalence of online pharmacies is driving the market growth. Self-medication is the practice of taking medications to treat self-diagnosed symptoms without a doctor's prescription.

This trend toward self-medication is expected to strengthen the domestic OTC cough and cold, gastroenterology, painkillers, multivitamins, and dermatology segments. The increasing occurrence of the elderly increases the demand in the market. OTC medications are most commonly used for fever, headache, toothache, acne, constipation, musculoskeletal pain, and colds, coughs, and flu.

The launch of new and updated customer-focused products is accelerating the growth of the over-the-counter (OTC) market, such as alcohol, dye-free, cough or cold containing honey, non-sedating cold and cough preparations, oral raft-forming suspensions, oral and topical analgesics, naturally extracted creams and acne treatment lotions. However, many patients do not have access to the drugs they need due to factors such as lack of a health facility, workforce disparities or shortages of trained medical professionals, and time or economic constraints. As a result, patients often live with their symptoms, which affects their quality.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mayyada Wazaifya, Carmel M Hughesb , Eileen Shieldsb and James C McElnay(2005) shown research on Societal perceptions on over-the-counter (OTC) medicines. during this study, they examine that Over-the-counter (OTC) medications are gradually used for self-medication, but the products can be misused/abused. It found that most people in Northern Ireland were most aware of the misuse potential of some over-the-counter medicines.

George N. Lodorfos, Kate L. Mulvana, John Temperley(2006) had study on Consumer Behaviour, Experience, Price, Trust and Individual Norms in The OTC Pharmaceutical Market. This study examined the theory of planned behaviour to study the factors affecting to an individual's brand choice decision within the over-the-counter (OTC) pharmaceutical market. It found that direct experience with the brand, price acceptance, brand loyalty and the opinions of others are important factors of replication purchase behaviour of OTC products.

Katarina Bostrom (2011) studied Consumer behaviour of pharmacy customers that the three main reasons why a consumer selects a pharmacy are location, range and staff. He concluded that almost all consumers usually buy the same product again and most occasionally buy products they recognize through advertising. Most bought an over-the-counter medicine or vitamin/supplement at the pharmacy, even if it wasn't planned.

Dr.Rajesh Kanthe,Ms vaishali P.Pawar,Rajendra Mohite(2012) studied research on sale of over the counter (OTC) drugs via post offices-a consumer perception. During this study, they

examine that Medico-marketing is a business in the arena of advertising or other support for the sale of over-the-counter medicines. This article is an try to create a new marketing process for post offices in selling OTC products to the area where postmen come.

Erol Kohli, Allison Buller(2013) studied research on Factors affecting consumer buying patterns of generic versus brand name over-the-counter medicines which they concluded that American buyers spend more than \$20 billion a year on over-the-counter medicines. Generic and brand-name OTC drugs share the similar active ingredients and are subject to the identical rigorous FDA approval process. However, branded formulations continue to lead the OTC market with a higher market share.

Abinaya Ravichandran and Asha Basava Reddy (2016) taken research on Perception of pharmacists regarding over-the- counter medication. Under this research, they did questionnaire-based study was taken to measure the knowledge, attitude, and practice among pharmacists regarding OTC medications. Painkillers were most commonly used OTC.OTCs were safe to dispense, according to 90% of the pharmacists; 50% expressed that the consumers should first consult doctor.

Abhishek Dadhich, Dr.Kavaldeep Dixit(2017) studied research on Consumer Selection and Buying Behaviour Towards Over the Counter (OTC) Medicine in Jaipur City. In this study, the researcher examines the perception and behavior of consumers in choosing over-the-counter drugs and the impact of different marketing policies adopted by major pharmaceutical companies. This article also sets out how advertising tools, marketing mix and overall company policies are integrated for pharmaceutical OTC marketing.

Aniruddha Bhowmick, Dr. Mridanish Jhadid(2017) his research on the study of consumer behavior towards over the counter allopathic medicines using cohesive behavioral model. The study has inferences in developing a new way of thinking for pharmaceutical houses to develop marketing policies to penetrate the Indian over-the-counter allopathic medicine market. Factors affecting consumer buying behavior over antidotes were considered by personal approach, subjective norms, and perception.

Damilola Grace Rasheed, George Oludare Diyaolu, Ali Tobi Raji (2018) done research on the Influence of Physicians Word of Mouth Advertisements on Consumer Behaviour towards Over-The-Counter Medicine. During this, they involved that Over the past 30 years, direct marketing for medical products (DTCA), including the promotion of over-the-counter medicines, has increased. This study examines and determines the effect of doctor prescribing on patient behavior towards OTC medicines in Nigeria.

Srdan Sapic, Milan Kocic, Katarina Radakovic(2019) had taken research on Creating Consumer Faithfulness in the Field of Using Over-the-Counter Products. During this study, they concluded that medical marketing places special emphasis on researching over-the-counter products. They are trying to find out which factors has the biggest effect on loyalty to these products. Perceived risk and pharmacologist expertise have a statistically important impact on consumer faithfulness. There is a significant relationship between consumer loyalty and willingness to buy.

Chowdhury, Saifur Rahman(2019) studied research on Attitude towards OTC drugs consumption in which they determined that a total of 72 random sample size samples were taken to conduct this study. The maximum consumers of OTC medicines are those aged 18 to 26, and the next highest percentage of consumers are those aged 27 to 35. 58.3% of people do not prefer OTC medicines, but 61.1% of people shop between them. OTC medicines do not work properly in the human body.

Aniruddha Bhowmick(2020) conducted research on the Factors Influencing Consumer Preferences for Over-The-Counter (OTC) Allopathic Medicine. During this research, he examines consumer purchasing behavior with respect to over-the-counter allopathic analgesic topical medications. It concludes that perceived behavioral control plays a critical role in determining consumers' intention to purchase an over-the-counter drug. Demographics have minimal or nominal influence on the consumer decision- making process, while income has the highest degree of impact.

Shafinaz Binti Ali Jinnah,Ahasanul Haque,Mohammad Aizat Jamaludin(2020) conducted research on Consumer Behavior Towards OTC Medicine Purchase. During this, they concluded that Universal drug scheduling is changing due to the frequent introduction of new and generic drugs to the market. This study integrates reextended TPB theory to effectively measure research constructs. The results presented that customers' attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control towards OTC medicine have a very helpful significance, while perceived risk is not significant.

Mr. Rohit Ravindra Landge, Dr. Purushottam Petare (2021) did study on consumer behaviour in covid pandemic with respect to OTC medicine (2021). During this study, they determined that Self-treatment plan coordinated with guaranteed health problems irrespective of their occupation in all age groups. Information is collected from 120 respondents of Ichalkaranji. Strong and illative measurements reveal that respondents prefer OTC allopathic medicines to remedy normal ailments.

Lisa Aufegger, Celine Yanar, Ara Darzi and Colin Bicknell (2021) did his research on The risk-value trade-of: price and brand information impact consumers' purposes to purchase OTC medicines ,under this they determined that Direct-to-Consumer (DTC) advertising is an important means to improve buyers' awareness of the availability of diverse OTC drugs. Consumers' purchase intentions are affected by unawareness and fallacies, past experiences, and advertising as a decision-making tool.

Listya,Yeshika Alversia(2021) conducted research on the Influence of Experiences, Benefits, and Barriers Toward OTC Medicine Behavior. During this research, they observe the factors affecting consumer behavior in the use of OTC medicines. The study examines that both perceived benefits and perceived risks significantly influence behavior for both OTC and herbal medicines. Perceived trust and experience factors do not have a significant impact on use.

Anita Kotwani, Jyoti Joshi, Anjana S Lamkang, Ayushi Sharma, Deeksh Kaloni (2021)conducted examines on Knowledge and behavior of consumers towards the non-

prescription purchase of antibiotics. During this research, they determined that consumers often buy (OTC) antibiotics from retail pharmacies. This exercise leads to the unsuitable use of antibiotics, which is an important driver of the development of antimicrobial resistance. A better understanding of consumer views on this thoughtful public health problem is essential for the development of evidence-based intervention programs.

2- PROBLEM STATEMENT/RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to identify perception towards OTC medicines in the Patan city

3- OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1- To examine the influence of attitude on consumer in decision making process when purchasing pharmaceutical OTC products
- 2- To understand the impact of cost and availability factors on the consumer decision-making process when purchasing OTC products.

4- RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1-Research Design-

This research is based on Descriptive Research method.

5.2- Sources of Data-

For this research, Primary data and secondary data is used.

5.3- Data collection Method

In this research, we use Survey and Questionnaire methods for data collection.

5.4-Sampling Method:

Simple Random Sampling method is used.

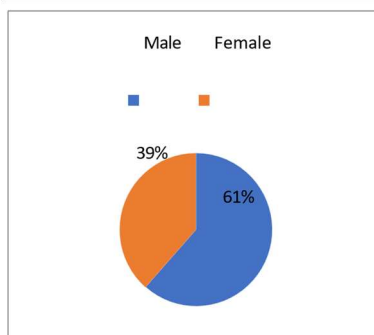
5.5-Sampling Frame:

The sample size for the research includes 100 respondents from Patan city

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

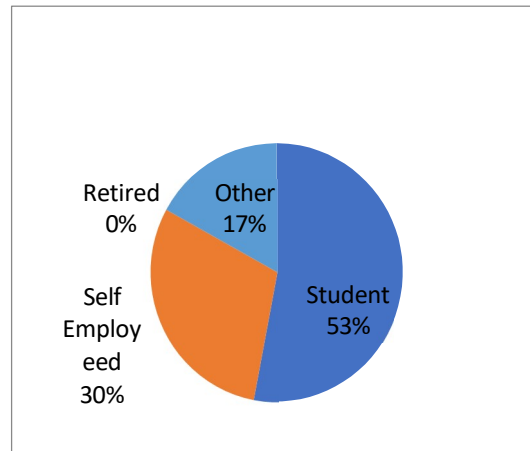
Gender

Option	Male	Female
Count	61	39



Occupation

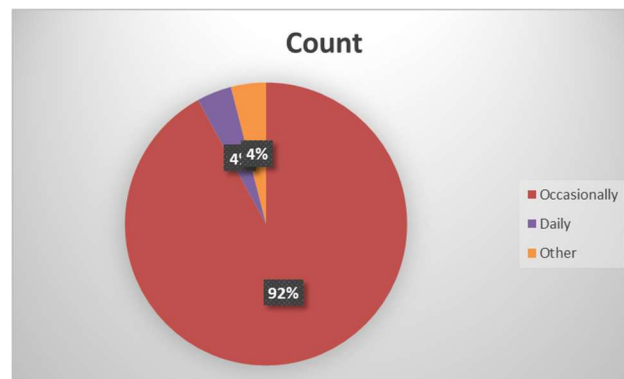
Option	Student	Self Employeed	Retired	Other
Count	53	30	0	17



This survey includes students(53%), self employees(30%), others(17%) who gives there reviews on the survey.

When the customers take Pharmaceutical OTC Products?

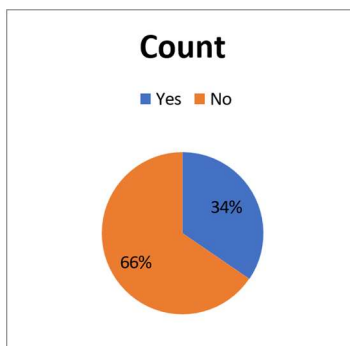
Option	Occasionally	Daily	Other
Count	92	4	4



Under this survey, out of 100 respondents, 92% customers takes OTC Products Occasionally. Only 4% of customers takes OTC Products daily and there are 4% of customers who do not take either occasionally or daily.

Does the customer know about side effect of OTC Products?

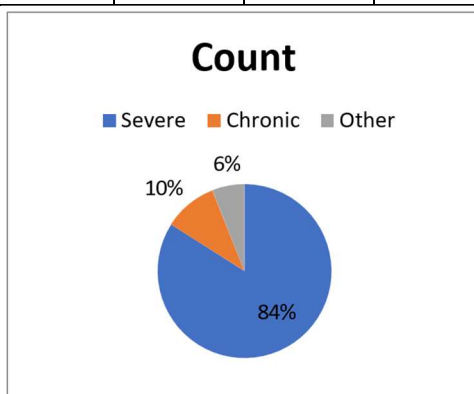
Option	Yes	No
Count	66	34



Under this survey, from 100 respondents, there are 66% customers who are not aware of the side effects of OTC medicines. There are only 34% customers who knows about the side effect of OTC Products.

For what type of disease, customers prefer OTC Products?

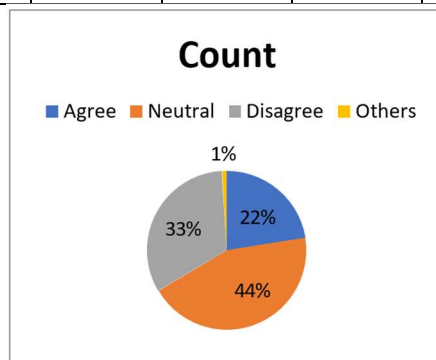
Option	Severe	Chronic	Other
Count	84	10	6



There are 84% of customers out of 100 respondents, who takes OTC Products for Severe disease. And there are only 10% customers takes OTC Products for chronic disease.

Does advertising of OTC products affects the buying behaviour of customers?

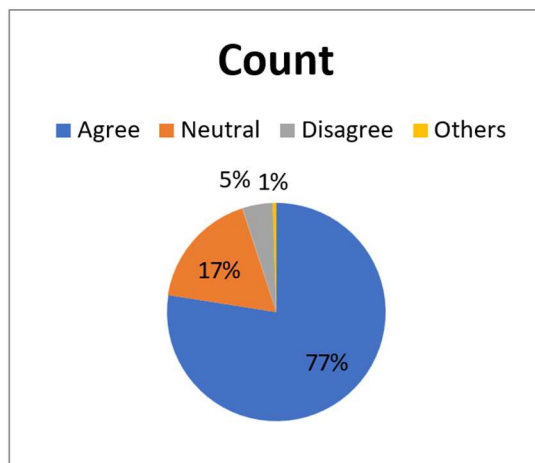
Option	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Others
Count	22	44	33	1



Under this survey, there are 22% of customers are agree on the fact that advertising of OTC products affects the buying behaviour of customers and 33% customers disagree from this and there are 44% of customers who are neutral that sometimes they buy products on seeing advertising and sometimes not trusting on advertisement.

Cost of OTC Product is lower than Prescription Products.

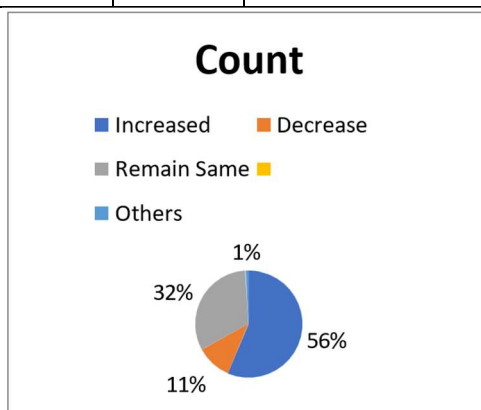
Option	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Others
Count	77	17	5	1



Under this survey, out of 100 respondents, there are 77% customers believe that OTC products have lower cost than prescription drugs. There are only 5% customers believe that Prescription drugs have lower cost than OTC Products.

Comparison of purchasing OTC products by customers in present and last year.

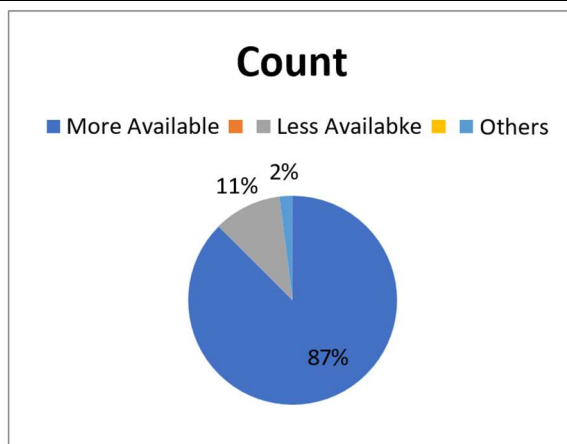
Option	Increased	Decrease	Remain Same	Others
Count	56	11	32	1



Out of 200 respondents, 56% customers say that their consumption of OTC products has been increased as compared to last year and 11% customers think that their consumption of OTC

products has decreased and 32% customers thinks that there consumption of OTC Products remain same as compared to last year.

Option	More Available	Less Available	Others
Count	175	21	4



There are 87% customers believes that OTC products are more available than Prescription products and only 11% customers believes that OTC Products are less available than Prescription products.

CONCLUSION

From our results and discussion, it can be concluded that the majority of our respondents were male users, and most of them were students. During this research, we find that most of the customers prefer OTC medicines occasionally and a few of them take OTC products on daily basis. Majority of the customers do not know about the side effect of the OTC Products and a very few are aware of the side effects. Based on the survey, it can be clearly seen that customers takes OTC Products for Severe (short term) disease and very few customers use OTC Products for Long-lasting (long term) disease. Under the study it is seen that majority of the customers are neutral towards advertising of OTC Products and disagree that advertising affect the buying behaviour of the customers. Only very few customers thinks that advertising can influence the customers. Majority of the customers thinks that OTC Products have lower cost than prescription drugs. During the study, it can be seen that the there is an increase in the purchase of the OTC Products as compared to the last year and customers thinks that OTC products are easily available than prescription products.

LIMITATIONS

The study relied on participants' integrity to respond honestly to questionnaires, which would have exceeded the purpose of the experiment.

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