

BRAND ATTRIBUTES, ITS APPLICATION LEADING TO SUSTAINABLE BRAND LEADERSHIP IN PHARMACEUTICAL AND BIOPHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

India is recognised at delivering quality pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical products to the world. India's growth is commendable for the last decade in the given industry attributable to the implementation of the brand management policies in pharma/bio-pharma organizations. India is 3rd in volume, 13th in value in the global pharmaceutical market- a leading player in biopharmaceuticals with the revenues of \$ Bn 45.50 in March 2022. ¹(Pharmaceutical Industry, 2021), ³ (EP News Bureau, 2021). Brand management processes takes into account various systems which facilitate physicians to use specific brands across specialties and therapeutic segments of the organizations operations. Brand management process is followed diligently and taken seriously by the MNCs and top Indian companies. The following study captures the intent, market/attributes identification, elements and the role of a brand manager in a successful brand management process for brand leadership.

Keywords

Biopharmaceutical Pharmaceutical brand management, Indian pharmaceutical industry, Brand management process, Brand leadership, Brand manager, Biotechnology

Introduction

In year 2022, Indian pharmaceutical market revenue figure was \$45.5bn, today the stands at \$55bn revenues globally, \$25bn in the domestic market. ¹(Pharmaceutical Industry, 2021), ² (Jayakumar, P. B. (2025, November 30).

This is attributed to large production capacity for pharmaceutical, biopharmaceutical products (including vaccines). The “ethical” pharmaceutical promotion route is widely accepted by Indian as well as the MNCs operating in this industry. There are various factors that affect the brand management in this industry. This includes the epidemiology, deep customer insights, market dynamism (competitors, generic onslaught, more cheaper medicines, patent expiries and emerging branded generics), innovation of newer diagnostics and drug therapies.

The Basic Concept

Biopharmaceutical industry adapts as any other industry, same principles of scientific marketing & branding. Certain nuances are specific to the biopharmaceutical industry, the comparison with the consumer industry is as given in Fig-1. ¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

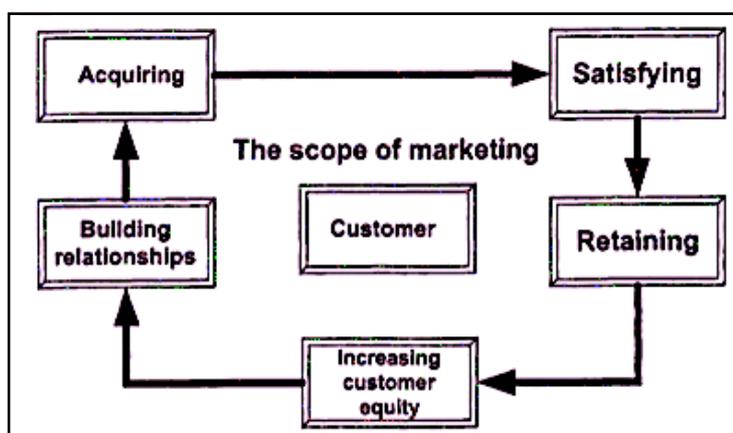
Figure-1: Differences-Biopharmaceutical/Pharmaceutical & Consumer Products

	Pharmaceutical	Consumer
The consumer is the decision maker	Not true	True
The consumer pays directly for the product	Not true	True
Product brand loyalty	Higher	Lower
Importance of ethics	Higher	Lower
Degree of government regulation	Higher	Lower
Liability considerations	Higher	Lower
R&D complexity	Higher	Lower
R&D on humans necessary	Yes	No
R&D costs	Higher	Lower
Price sensitivity	Lower	Higher

Source: Pharmaceutical Marketing, Dimitri Dogramatzis ¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

AMA (American Marketing Association, most recent) defines marketing as “The activity, set of institutions, processes that conceptualises, creates, designs, communicates offerings that create exchanges that offer value to customers and satisfies the customers, stakeholders and society at large”. The basic prerogative of marketing is to satisfy the needs, wants, safety, desire of the customers through the product offerings. These aspects from the needs to desires are well explained by Maslow in 1943. The functional, operational, tactical plans are chalked out and execution plan is charted out for strengthening the marketing/branding programmes with the help of the marketing flow as depicted above in Fig-2. ¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b), 11 (Odhiambo, C. A. 2012)

Figure- 2: The Scope of Marketing-The flow



Source: Pharmaceutical Marketing, Dimitri Dogramatzis ¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

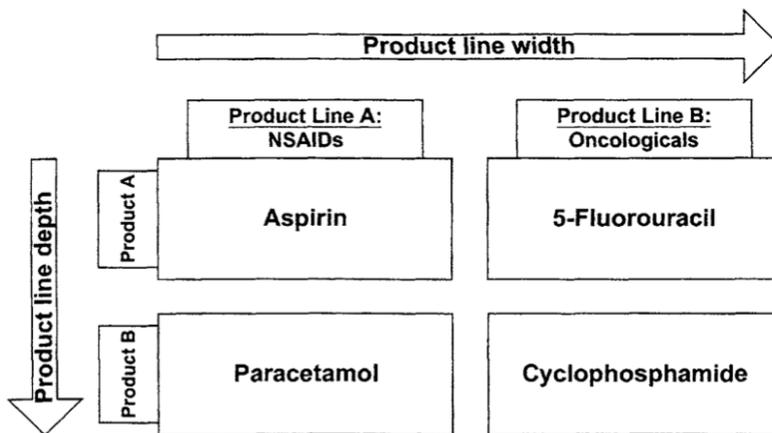
The marketing management process is depicted in Figure-3¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b). The monitoring process is through departmental or organizational processes like the KRAs (Key Result Areas), KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and in some sophisticated biopharmaceutical companies adopt the Balance Score Card (BSC) systems.

Figure-3: Marketing Management Process



Source: Pharmaceutical Marketing, Dimitri Dogramatzis¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

Figure-4: Biopharmaceutical Product Line Width/Depth



Source: Pharmaceutical Marketing, Dimitri Dogramatzis¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

The Figure-4 depicts the concept of the product line and depth with regards to the biopharmaceutical products. This exists in organizations with generally large portfolio. The horizontal portfolio depicts different therapy areas (category of treatments) whereas, the depth indicates different products in the same therapies (same categories).¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

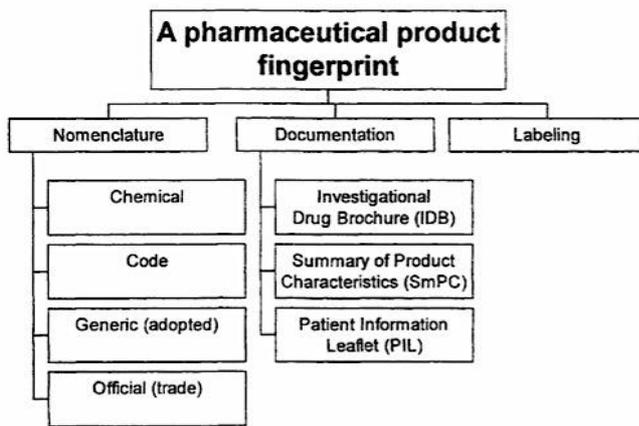
Figure-5: Evolving Nature Of Biopharmaceutical Products

Source: Pharmaceutical Marketing, Dimitri Dogramatzis¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

View	Description	Customer Benefit
Old	Blood cholesterol-reducing pill	Cholesterol lowering
Modern	Revolutionary, efficacious, and safe active substance plus	Efficacy and safety
	Patient-friendly administration device plus	Painless use
	Disease management services plus	Treatment guidelines
	Innovative disease prevention ideas plus	Prevention
	Patient well-being-minded employees plus	Caring
	Patient-, environment-, and cost-minded organization plus	Affordability, Ecology
	Product availability for all mankind (not market-restricted)	Universal access

The Figure-5 explains different approach toward the marketing paradigms that evolved during the past decades in the biopharmaceutical industries. The old pattern represents the description of the features of the drug in the product or the brand and its benefit was the indication that it treats. In the contemporary times (Modern times) concept of Features Advantage Benefits (FAB) has come into the corollary of identifying the ‘Final Benefit’ that the customer experiences. Nowadays the internet, information explosion and the social marketing concepts have a complex play on the brand management process. ¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b), 7 (Austin, M. 2008), 11 (Odhiambo, C. A. 2012), 12 (Powel Maxwell Worimegbe, A. I.2020)

Figure-6: A Biopharmaceutical Product Fingerprint



Source: Pharmaceutical Marketing, Dimitri Dogramatzis¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

The Figure-6, The product blueprint or fingerprint of the researched product will include the official nomenclature and the necessary approval documentation from the relevant drug authority in the country or region where it will be used. This ensures the prevention of counterfeiting and supports the creation of a unique identity for the product. This is significant in entire marketing & branding process.

¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b), 7 (Austin, M. 2008), 9 (Jantunen, I. (2015), 11

Figure-7: Characteristics of Biopharmaceutical Products

Product Components		Economic Components	
Core values	Augmented values	Price-related	Nonprice-related
Efficacy	Ease of use	Actual price	Distribution channels
Safety	Temperature stability	Competitive pricing	Channel intensity
Tolerability	Shelf life	Price-value relationship	Channel length
Speed of action	Patient education	Discounts	Channel integration
Quality	Physician information	Return-on-investment	Promotional level
Cost	Patient association support		Promotional channels
	Mail delivery		Advertising intensity
	Company Web site		Personal selling effort
	Branding		

Source: Pharmaceutical Marketing, Dimitri Dogramatzis¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

The Figure-7 shows core values which are intrinsic values, augmented values for customer choices/insights. These product attributes enhance its value and contribute to the growth of the product's or brand's equity. ¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

Figure-8: Marketing Mix Variables for Biopharmaceutical Products



The above Figure-8: Marketing mix components, basis of marketing brand plans.

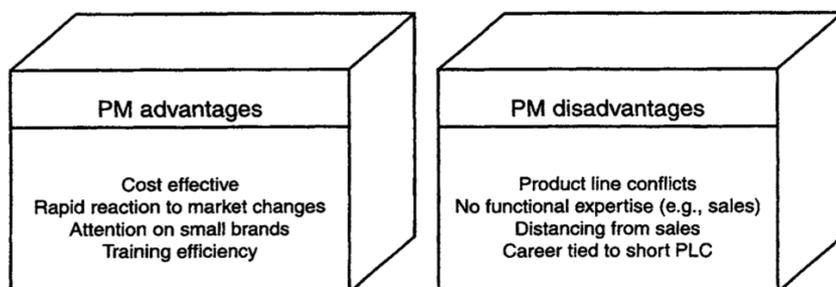
Figure-9: Overview of Biopharmaceutical Environment

Internal				
Influencing Factors	Players			
	Suppliers	Intermediaries	Customers	
Financial resources	Raw material producers	Distributors	Physicians	
Mission	R&D material producers	Advertisers	Nurses	
Structure	Equipment manufacturers	PR firms	Patients	
Technology		Financial services	Hospitals	
Culture			Wholesalers	
R&D			Pharmacists	
Quality/Leadership/Creativity			General public	
External Factors				
Political	Economic	Social	Technological	Natural
Legislation	Inflation rate	<i>Demographic:</i>	New products	Shortages
Government agencies	Interest rate	Age structure	New markets	Renewable
Lobbyists	Credit availability	Family	Increased efficiency	Energy costs
<i>Governments are:</i>	Disposable income	Race	Robotics	Pollution
Regulator	Propensity to save	Geography	Biotechnology	Emissions
Purchaser	Reimbursement	Ethnic	Genomics	Packaging
Supplier	HMOs	Religion	Internet	Government intervention
Competitor		Education		
		Occupation		
		<i>Culture:</i>		
		Basic values		
		Perceptions		
		Preferences		
		Behaviors		

Source: Pharmaceutical Marketing, Dimitri Dogramatzis ¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

In the Figure-9 illustrates the external and internal elements that shape the strategy for both the market and the brand, along with the supporting factors outlined in the preceding tables. ¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b), ¹⁰ (Low, G. S., & Fullerton, R. A., 1994), ¹³ (Ropo, J.-P. 2009)

Figure-10: Product Management Advantages & Disadvantages



Source: Pharmaceutical Marketing, Dimitri Dogramatzis ¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b)

Brands elements are the names, symbols, logos, experiences, services, individual, corporate offerings that create a specific tangible identity for the customers. The brand attributes are physical, emotional, behavioural and abstract. ¹⁰ (Low, G. S., & Fullerton, R. A. 1994)

The STPD (Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning, and Differentiation) strategies are integrated into the brand strategy for effective communication, brand's value and benefits to the end customer. Depicted in Figure-10, a product manager typically focuses on marketing operations, such as CRM and sales support. In contrast, brand management involves more qualitative tasks, including brand communication, maintaining the brand's market position, and reinforcing the values the brand represents. ¹⁰ (Low, G. S., & Fullerton, R. A. 1994). Therefore, the brand manager or product manager is an essential resource. Globally, this role remains central to biopharmaceutical departments, driving strategies that blend both offline and online approaches, effective communication, and brand awareness. These aspects are shaped by the brand management process, with the brand manager playing a key role in brand leadership. ¹⁵ (Dogramatzis, 2002b), ¹⁰ (Low, G. S., & Fullerton, R. A. 1994), ¹⁴ (Susanne Schwarzl, M. G.2015)

Discussion

For India to thrive in the global arena, the following key aspects must be considered:

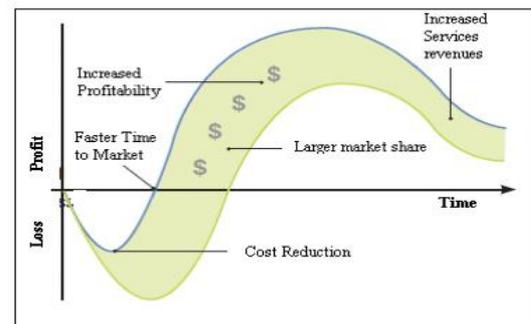
1. Pharmaceutical industry started with Bengal chemicals and pharmaceuticals, Calcutta in year 1901. Now, India is one of the leading producers of generic medicines, world's largest producer of DTP vaccines, more than 2400 pharma producers, registered 24,000 pharma companies in India. In 1999, 26,000 products were launched in India, and this number has been increasing since then. ⁵ (Gunjan et al., 2016)

2. New product launch systems and line extensions: Brand extensions leverage the established equity of both the brand name and the company. Line extensions or brand extensions are integral to the product/brand life cycle strategy. This approach helps prolong the brand's life and revitalizes it with a fresh lease of vitality. ⁵ (Gunjan et al., 2016)
3. The right go-to-market strategy involves a brand-life-cycle design to after-sales learnings. Fast product launches spells better success rates ⁵ (Gunjan et al., 2016)

Fig-71: Time to market curve

Source:

RRJPPS | Volume 5 | Issue 1 | January-March, 2016 ⁵(Gunjan et al., 2016)



5. Parameters-product development: innovation, being the first to market, cost-efficiency, leveraging customer insights for development/promotion ⁵(Gunjan et al., 2016)
6. Successful launch parameters- scientific, effective strategy, brand attribute matching customer insight, appropriate budgeting ⁵(Gunjan et al., 2016)
7. Challenges-biopharmaceutical industry: Competition & short opportunity chance, brand-lifecycle management, challenging customer acquisition, talented pharma-sales executives, recruiting/training/retention costs, unclear brand communication benefit communication systems
8. Regulatory -IPR and patents as per WTO, drug approval system, R&D costs for new drug pipeline (NCEs) ⁵(Gunjan et al., 2016)
9. Value-based approaches: Blockbuster strategies (high perceived value) and digital marketing. Field based efforts, -e.g drug Merck's Januvia targeting large borderline and ill-controlled diabetic population. Value buster (major customer population with less price than the block buster drug), Value buster: Targeting a smaller population with high value differentiation and premium pricing, such as Genentech's Herceptin, which delivers the best outcomes for a specific group, then, Turnaround buster (Niche population, focus on more indications, outsourcing sales) ⁵ (Gunjan et al., 2016)
10. Digital mining data indicators and diagnostics will be in the main stream. Today we have approximately 3,18,000 apps and approximately 200 apps are added each day for some application in the healthcare domain. These applications will be used in the biopharma sector or

drug development, clinical research, stake holder interactions for a better subject experiences, integrating insights for a better brand management process.⁴ (Tharmaratnam, 2018)

11. Burning issue of the biopharmaceutical industry: TRIPS regime under WTO act, which was signed by India in the year 2005. The patent laws were disputed with respect to the larger population benefit and humanitarian aspect in mind. These aspects were - Evergreening (renewal of the patents of MNCs in India to gain monopoly), Compulsory licensing (licensing a molecule to a low cost manufacturer for cost savings with little royalty to originators), Pre-grant opposition (opposition to a patent application for a larger benefit), Post-grant opposition (while a patent is being granted to a particular molecule, a provision of opposition is made in the act which can meddle in the patent granted to a particular molecule)⁶ (Liu & Racherla, 2019), 8 (Farooq, R. 2017, 10)
12. Usage of data analysis & AI tools: As the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industry is highly technical with some sensitive medical parameters; the elements, attributes and techniques presented above can be used as parameters in evaluating brand leadership for specific brands in the given industry. The matrices can be the inputs in implementation and assessing the brand leadership in data analysis and AI.
13. Analysis - predictive and diagnostic / post implementation through the following parameters:
 - a. Data Integration: Unification of data from various sources, reducing manual reporting time.
 - b. Actionable Insights: They help identify effective marketing initiatives
 - c. Real-Time Analysis: Same time analysis to save time in redundant work
 - d. Improved ROI: Optimizing marketing strategies based on data, ABC costing
14. Convenient tools used to enhance marketing performance: Marketing analytics through Google analytics, HubSpot Marketing Hub, Tableau etc.

Conclusion

The above are some of the contemporary strategies that a biopharma companies include in their brand strategy for a better outcome of their existing brand management processes gaining brand leadership. The leadership that was attained in this century due to big brands have started the core subject of brand leadership through effective brand management process.¹⁰ (Low, G. S., & Fullerton, R. A. 1994)

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