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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE ROLE OF PROMOTION POLICIES IN MARKETING THE JORDANIAN THERAPEUTIC PRODUCTS (A FIELD STUDY OF JORDANIAN THERAPEUTIC COMPANIES)

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ABSTRACT

This research can be summarized as follows: This study clarifies the theoretic bases that medicinal promotion is based on as well as the specific quality of this product, and unveiling the most important affecting elements of promotions to choose the mixture of drug promotion, which might help to follow a right and beneficial promotion policy to market the Jordanian therapeutic products. It introduces the promotion activity in the Jordanian drug firms and identifies the most important elements and promotion procedures in order to inspect all the obstacles that prevent following the suitable promotion policy. It also compares what does exist with what should be existed, so as to extract the results and give some suggestions which can activate the promotion spirit in marketing the Jordanian therapeutic products.

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INTRODUCTION

The promotion is one of the most effective and influential marketing elements, since it is important to highlight the role of making good persuasive communication between the company and its products as well as the targeted market. Also, it could be argued that it is important for promotion to interact with the rest of other elements of marketing to achieve the desired goals of promotion activities such like the delivery of products and services to consumers. The value of promotion lies in the field fact which says "even legend drugs- the varieties and the deep-rooted therapeutic brands that were found in the market since the beginning of therapeutic industry - they need intensive efforts to identify them, and generate interest to get them". The promotion is an effective tool that works towards introducing the legendary and non-legendary products. One more important thing, the therapeutic companies spend huge amounts of money on promotion, and these amounts represent a large proportion of the total budget of other marketing activities.

Most organizations, especially the industrial therapeutic ones, are operating in the circumstances of competition, technical and technological progress in addition to the constant change in

tastes of consumers, so the management of organizations should interest in the strategy of promotion in general and decisions related to the promotion mixture in particular, to be able to access the promotion policy that is effective and make the marketing process successful as a whole.

Research problem

The problem of research lies in touching the following problems:

1. Lack of understanding the recent trends of promotion.
2. Neglecting a number of promotion mixture elements.
3. Lack of enough budget for promotion.

We can do with the problem of research by answering the following questions:

1. Are the concerned departments in the public and private therapeutic facilities planning and organizing integrated promotion campaigns and completing effective marketing communications with the targeted markets?
2. Are these facilities using the latest promotion tools, following market developments, and training the promotion staff?

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3. Are these facilities doing field marketing researches to identify market requirements, and using the results in planning the promotion campaigns?

The importance of research

The importance of this research is the following:

1. It determines the scientific and objective basics to be adopted in the therapeutic promotion mixture.
2. It presents scientific evidence based on factual information about modern methods of therapeutic promotion, which can help local manufacturers to penetrate in the foreign markets optimally.
3. It contributes to activate the promotion activity of therapeutic industries whose products are special ones and differ from other types of products economically and socially.

Objectives of research

The objectives of this research can be summarized in the following points

1. Unveil the promotion activity practiced by some Jordanian therapeutic facilities in the public and private sectors as well as show the extent of using modern concepts of promotions by those facilities.
2. Identify the elements and methods of promotion used by those facilities in addition to the effective factors of selecting them, and how compatible they are with modern basics and concepts of promotion.
3. Identify the most important administrative, legal and financial constraints that negatively affect the efficiency of promotion activity in the Jordanian therapeutic facilities.
4. Present a set of findings and recommendations that will activate the role of therapeutic promotion process in Syria in order to achieve the producer, consumer and community interest.

Hypotheses

After reviewing the available references, research and literature related to the subject of the research, in addition to conduct personal interviews with a number of people who are concerned in marketing the Jordanian drugs, we formulated the following hypotheses about the reality of the promotion performance in the Jordanian therapeutic facilities:

The first hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between the promotion policies at our therapeutic facilities and the efficiency of marketing operation.

The second hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between the budget allocated to promotion and the degree of focus on selecting the most suitable promotion mixture elements in the Jordanian therapeutic facilities.

The third hypothesis: There is a variation in the promotion policies in the public and private Jordanian therapeutic

facilities and the degree of using the recent trends of promotion. The third hypothesis is not only for comparing between the public and private sector facilities, but also for detecting the extent of using modern promotion concepts by the two sectors and determine the level of promotion activity in these companies.

Determinants of the study

This study encountered a range of difficulties and obstacles or limitations which notably:

- A- The financial and human resources in addition to the time of researcher were all limited.
- B- Some marketing managers are not convinced by the importance of scientific research and its role in the development of marketing performance of our therapeutic facilities.
- C- Some marketing managers refuse answering the questionnaire because they fear the information will be exploited by government or competing sides.

The study methodology

This study uses the descriptive analytical approach in describing the promotion process that is carried out by the therapeutic facilities in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, based on the personal observation and sources of reference and specialized studies, in order to determine all aspects related to the promotion of the Jordanian therapeutic products, as well as to know their position in reality.

The study population

The study population is restricted only to therapeutic companies in some Jordanian governorates where most therapeutic companies exist, and this is due to the researcher thinks that the therapeutic society is a harmonious one regardless of location.

The study sample

The study sample consists of a number of therapeutic companies that were randomly selected from the public and private sectors, the sample consisted of 5 public companies and 15 private ones noting that the number of Jordanian therapeutic facilities in both sectors is around 50.

The study tool

The data collection is based on two main types of sources:

- A- The academic survey of research and previous studies and data related to the subject of the research, in addition to all of Arabic and English books that can enrich the research.
- B- Field data collected by personal interviews, direct observation and questionnaires, where (250) questionnaires were distributed and (229) of them were returned. These questionnaires were distributed as the following:

- (100) questionnaires were distributed in the public facilities; to officials and a group of individuals who work in commercial, marketing and planning departments, where the number of returned questionnaires were (89). (150) of them were distributed in private facilities to sales managers and a group of individuals who work in marketing departments, and the returned questionnaires were (140).

Data processing: The data is processed on the computer using (SPSS) program for data dump, processing and analysis, and this is contributed to test hypotheses optimally, as well as provide a set of positive proposals and recommendations, which would guide pharmaceutical Jordanian companies to adopt effective promotional policy in marketing these products.

Hypotheses test and the discussion of results

The first hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between the promotion policies used in the Jordanian therapeutic facilities and their efficient marketing operation.

After infilling and analyzing the data related to this hypothesis, it was shown that 5.24% of respondents confirmed that their companies resort to institutional advertisement in order to enhance the company's image in the minds of the public. Moreover, 69.40% of respondents confirmed that their companies use the promotion means only at the beginning of launching their products into markets, and 75.10% of respondents confirmed that their companies restrict the promotion activities only to the distributors, and 40.17% of respondents confirmed that their companies ask salesmen to visit doctors and pharmacists. Thus, this is sufficient evidence that using such promotion policies in achieving the efficiency of marketing is negative and accordingly, this proves the first hypothesis.

Based on the above, using the institutional advertisement by our therapeutic facilities is very weak, while international therapeutic companies constantly seek on enhancing its image in the minds of the public by the institutional advertisements. Also, our therapeutic facilities promote to their products when launching them into markets, and they neglect the constant need to shed light on their products, however, the therapeutic industry is a highly competitive one, also there are multiple alternative products. Our therapeutic facilities adopt the payment policy and neglect the policy of attraction. In another words, they focus on distributors and dealers, and neglect doctors and pharmacists who are the most important decision-makers in the purchase of drug.

The second hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between the budget allocated to the promotion activity and the degree of focus on selecting the most suitable elements of promotion used in the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry facilities.

After infilling and analyzing the data related to this hypothesis, it shows that 87.40% of respondents confirmed that their choice of promotion means depends on the size of allocated budget, and 65.50% of respondents confirmed that they use the least expensive promotion means since the budget is limited.

Also, 50.65% of respondents confirmed that they determine the allocations of promotion on the basis of percentage of sales, 63.75% of them rely on estimation; moreover, 40.17% of them rely on how much the company can afford, and 10.48% of them rely on competitors' expenses. Also, 52.40% of respondents confirmed that there are recommended sides in their companies influence on determining the size of budget allocated to promotion. Thus, this is evidence that there is a strong relationship between the allocated budget and the possibility of the company's focus on the most suitable promotion elements, and this is enough to prove the validity of the second hypothesis.

Based on the previous data, our therapeutic facilities do not have sufficient flexibility to put the promotion budget that helps them to do the promotion activity perfectly, and this is contributed to the interference of recommended sides in the percentage of old companies, and the manager of the company is the only one who determines the budget allocated to promotion in the private sector. Also, our therapeutic facilities determine the budget allocated to promotion on the basis of ratio of current or potential sales or estimation, and at the same time they neglect allocating the needed budget to promotion according to how much the competitors spend.

The third hypothesis: There is a variation in the promotion policies used in the Jordanian therapeutic facilities according to the degree of coping with the modern trends of promotion.

After infilling and analyzing the data related to this hypothesis, it shows that 100% of respondents of old companies confirmed that they do not have a specialized department of promotion, 94.28% of respondents emphasized that they do not have a specialized department of promotion, and it is shown that 98.87% of the old companies and 80.71% of the new ones confirmed that their companies do not make a promotion field research. Also, 10.11% of old companies and 5.71% of the new companies confirmed that their companies depend on specialized companies for marketing and promotion research to make promotion activities. Moreover, 15.73% of old companies and 23.58% of new ones confirmed that their companies depend on advertising in specialized medical journals, in addition to 8.98% of old companies and 13.57% of new ones confirmed that their companies hold specialized exhibitions and to doctors and pharmacists. Also 74.15% of old companies and 91.42% of new ones confirmed that their facilities depend on salesmen, gifts, samples and free offers for promotion. While 11.23% of old companies and 24.28% of new ones confirmed that their companies use direct mail, websites and the Internet. 21.34% of old companies and 37.14% of new companies confirmed that their companies conduct training courses for salesmen. Accordingly, this is sufficient evidence that there is a clear difference between our public and private therapeutic facilities in terms of promotion policies and the extent of using the recent trends in promotion and thus, this is enough to prove the validity of the third hypothesis.

As previously stated, the objective of this hypothesis is not only for making a comparison between the public and private companies, but also for detecting the level of the promotion

activities used by these companies. In this context, based on previous data, it is shown that the performance of new companies is somehow better than the old ones in using recent trends and concepts in promotion, and this is normal because they have greater flexibility that enable them to deal with the environmental and marketing variables. Generally, we can say, according to the previous results, our public and private therapeutic facilities suffer from the lack of using recent trends of promotion in addition to that, there is no a specialized department of promotion in the public facilities, as well as the private facilities in this area depend on the accumulated experiences of some people. As for using the promotion methods, both sectors facilities primarily depend on personal selling, samples, discounts and free offers, and they neglect some sophisticated methods of promotion such as establishing specialized exhibitions to invite doctors and pharmacists, and they also neglect the use of websites and internet networks in promotion activities, however, global drug companies conduct promotion negotiations and talks via the internet, and even without the intervention of salesmen. Also, there is a great lack of holding training courses for salesmen, although the privacy of such products needs continuous and high-level training courses for salesmen to be able to deal with them.

The results

By studying the reality of promotion activity in the Jordanian therapeutic industry facilities, we can come out with the following conclusions:

1. There is a lack of sufficient awareness and perception about the recent trends and concepts of promotion by those in charge of marketing activities at old and new therapeutic facilities.
2. The Jordanian therapeutic industry facilities focus on the payment policy and neglect the policy of attractions, which means that most of old and new therapeutic facilities direct their promotion policies towards distributors rather than doctors and pharmacists.
3. The old and new Jordanian therapeutic industry facilities suffer from the lack of adequate promotion budget to use the latest techniques of promotion.
4. There are recommended sides, especially for the public sector, directly or indirectly affect the process of determining the budget of promotion, which prevents the implementation of the promotion process to the fullest.
5. Most of our therapeutic facilities focus on some promotion means such as personal selling, gifts, and free offers, and neglect other means which are very important such as promotion via the Internet, direct mail and advertising in professional journals.
6. The Jordanian therapeutic industry facilities lack the existence of a specialized department of promotion that organizes promotion campaigns.
7. Most of the public and private Jordanian therapeutic industry facilities suffer from a non-existing promotion staff who trains the salesmen.

Proposals and recommendations

According to the findings of the study, we can put proposals and recommendations that will contribute to solve many problems which are addressed in this study:

1. Directing the Jordanian therapeutic facilities to make more efforts in the field of therapeutic promotion such as holding lectures, seminars, and training courses under the patronage of universities and research centers to identify the needed elements of promotion that shows the importance of therapeutic facilities, and here we emphasize the need to exploit scientific and specialized staff in the economic faculties at Jordanian universities, who have qualified efficiencies to do this role when needed.
2. It would be useful for new companies and the recommended sides of old companies if they found a specialized department to plan, organize, implement, and evaluate the promotion activities and campaigns by using the possible promotion resources optimally.
3. The therapeutic companies need to establish Internet networks in order to improve the interaction among employees in different departments and provide excellent services to the targeted clients with the emphasis on participating in international marketing networks.
4. The need to allocate sufficient budget for the promotion activities in the therapeutic companies and re-examine the budget in order to use the technique of goals and duties and their advantages which are consistent with the objectives of the company.
5. The need to take advantages of specialized marketing and promotion companies in the area of their capabilities and expertise in planning, organizing and implementing promotion campaigns.
6. Activating the participation process in trade exhibitions, and the need of therapeutic companies to invite doctors and pharmacists to visit them to learn about their products.
7. Encouraging the creation of specialized promotion institutions or agencies similar to the advertisement agencies which would make and implement the promotion process including putting the most appropriate promotion mixture for each company, especially when entering new markets or introducing new products.

The need to reduce the routine procedures and restrictions on the old companies that may impede work and delay making decisions and to give these companies greater competences which are suitable with the responsibilities they burden.

Adopting the traditional methods of promotion process in the age of globalization based on the internet and web technology can limit the spread of knowledge of the product and its properties which in turn can reduce the profits to be replaced by alternative products in the time of international competition. In brief, this study recommends the therapeutic companies to adopt modern methods of promotion by choosing good information systems that manage relations with customers as well as plan and apply electronic promotion activities that meet with customers' needs and visions through:

- 1- Sharing customers their new products.
- 2- Developing the strategy of product and promotion activity.
- 3- Create new content.
- 4- Providing services based on information by using all digital means that go with technology and contact with current and future customers.

- 5- Appreciate the services presented to customers by using systems of customer relations management.
- 6- Analyzing the markets' data that develops the factories' relations with customers.
- 7- Providing marketing and selling decisions that can be efficiently used.

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Questionnaire

Greetings for you, ladies and gentlemen, then

Be sure that the data and information you are going to give to us through your answers on questions of this questionnaire will be used for the purposes of scientific research. So we hope that your answers express your conviction to serve the research since you are the selected sample to do it. I hope to see your cooperation and attention and thank you.

Personal information:

Gender: Male: _____ Female: _____
 Age: between 18-25 _____ above 25: _____
 Qualification: High school or less _____ College or more: _____
 Experience: Less than 5 years _____ More than 5 years: _____
 Type of company: Public _____ Private _____

Private research topic Information

Here, we hope that you just put a sign in the field which you see it compatible with your mind

No.	The Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The First hypothesis	1- to increase sales, in the area of promotion, your company focused on: A- The institutional advertisement, which aims to enhance the company's image in the minds of the public B- Using promotion means when the products are launched in the market. C- Using promotion policy exclusively to distributors.					
	D- The salesmen visit doctors and pharmacists to define the company's products for them.					
	1- Your company uses the less expensive promotion mean when the budget is limited. 2- the allocations of promotion are limited on the basis of: A- Percentage of sales. B- Estimation. C- What the company can afford. D- How much competitors spend.					
The Second hypothesis	3- There are recommended sides affect the size of budget allocated to promotion.					

No.	The Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Third hypothesis	1- Your company does not plan to create specialized management of the promotion operations.					
	2- Your company is doing the promotion operations through: A- Marketing management. B- Promotion management. C- Other management.					
	3- Your company does not do promotion field researches and use the results in planning and organizing the promotion campaigns.					
	4- In the case of doing the promotion research, your company depends on specialized companies of marketing and promotion research and studies.					
	5- Your company is based on the following promotion tools: A- Advertising in professional journals and medical research magazines. B- Exhibitions and inviting doctors and pharmacists to visit. C- Sales representatives, gifts, samples and free offers. D- Direct mail, websites and Internet.					
	6- Your institution conducts training courses for salesmen.					

Appendix

Frequency distributions and percentages tables

The first hypothesis:

The first question:

The first option:

	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
The Frequency	12	2	215	229
The Percentage	5.24%	0.8%	93.88%	100%

The second option:

	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
The Frequency	159	1	69	229
The Percentage	69.40%	0.4%	30.13%	100%

The third option:

	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
The Frequency	172	-	57	229
The Percentage	75.10%	-	24.89%	100%

The fourth option:

	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
The Frequency	92	5	132	229
The Percentage	40.17%	2.18%	57.64%	100%

The second hypothesis:

The first question:

The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	
229	75	4	150	The Frequency
100%	32.75%	1.74%	65.50%	The Percentage

The second question:

The first option:

The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	
229	104	9	116	The Frequency
100%	45.41%	3.93%	50.65%	The Percentage

The second option:

The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	
229	81	2	146	The Frequency
100%	35.37%	0.87%	63.75%	The Percentage

The third option:

The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	
229	129	8	92	The Frequency
100%	56.33%	3.50%	40.17%	The Percentage

The fourth option:

The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	
229	204	1	24	The Frequency
100%	89.08%	0.43%	10.48%	The Percentage

The third question:

The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	
229	103	6	120	The Frequency
100%	44.97%	2.62%	52.40%	The Percentage

The first and second questions:

The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Old companies
89	-	-	89	Frequency
100%	-	-	100%	Percentage
The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	New companies
140	5	2	132	Frequency
100%	3.57%	1.42%	94.28%	Percentage

The third question:

The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Old companies
89	1	-	88	Frequency
100%	1.12%	-	98.87%	Percentage
The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	New companies
140	17	10	113	Frequency
100%	12.14%	7.14%	80.71%	Percentage

The fourth question:

The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Old companies
89	80	-	9	Frequency
100%	89.88%	-	10.11%	Percentage
The sum	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	New companies
140	122	10	8	Frequency
100%	87.14%	7.14%	5.71%	Percentage

The first option:

Old companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	15	10	64	89
Percentage	15.73%	11.23%	71.91%	100%
New companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	33	5	102	140
Percentage	23.57%	3.57%	72.85%	100%

The second option:

Old companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	8	1	80	89
Percentage	8.98%	1.12%	89.88%	100%
New companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	19	-	121	140
Percentage	13.57%	-	86.42%	100%

The third option:

Old companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	66	2	21	89
Percentage	74.15%	2.24%	23.59%	100%
New companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	128	-	12	140
Percentage	91.42%	-	8.57%	100%

The fourth option:

Old companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	10	3	76	89
Percentage	11.23%	3.37%	57.14%	100%
New companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	34	1	105	140
Percentage	24.28%	0.7%	75%	100%

Old companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	10	3	76	89
Percentage	11.23%	3.37%	57.14%	100%
New companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	34	1	105	140
Percentage	24.28%	0.7%	75%	100%

The sixth question:

Old companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	19	3	67	89
Percentage	21.34%	3.37%	75.28%	100%
New companies	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	The sum
Frequency	52	9	79	140
Percentage	37.14%	6.42%	56.42%	100%
