

## Impact of Digital Marketing on Pharmaceutical Sector Growth in India

S Anush Kumar(1), \*, Nagaruru Rupashree2, Ashok Peepliwal3.

(Short Title- *Impact and Scope of Digital Marketing in The Indian Pharmaceutical Market.*)

*S Anush Kumar (1),\*,Nagaruru Rupashree2, Ashok Peepliwal3.*

1. Anush Kumar, MBA in Pharmaceutical Management, School of Pharmaceutical management, IIHMR University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

2 Nagaruru Rupashree, School of pharmaceutical management, IIHMR university, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

3 Ashok Peepliwal, School of pharmaceutical management, IIHMR university, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the IIHMR University providing us with this research.

We are grateful to Dr. Ashok Peepliwal and Dr. Saurabh Kumar Banerjee who has given us the opportunity to learn at deep level to prepare this report and supported us throughout this project with utmost cooperation and patience.

We express profound sense of gratitude and sincere thanks to the all the respondents who actively took part in the survey and provided their valuable time and support in completing this project.

### ABSTRACT

In the generation of Digitalization, information technology and marketing mix, the growth and establishment of digital marketing has gained enormous popularity and growth among the marketers in many sectors and is proved to be effective, in this era of digital evolution above 90% of the RMP has access to the internet and 76% of healthcare professionals in India use digital health records (21), where more than half of the Indian population has access to internet and are seeking medical opinion online, hence the medium of marketing cannot be ignored and the recent crisis of COVID19 has forced the Indian Pharmaceutical Marketing sector to evolve into more effective and advanced needs to adopt to the new and emerging techniques in order to reach the goals.

The current research intends to study the significance, impact, evolution, and various aspects of digital marketing in the Indian Pharmaceutical Marketing industry over other already available Traditional and/or Conventional marketing techniques.

**Key Words:** Pharmaceutical Marketing, Conventional marketing, Traditional Marketing, Digital marketing.

### I. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

#### Concept of pharma

It is generally believed that the Indian Pharmaceutical industry originated in the early 19th Century, where the medicines were imported by the British for their personal use, which led to the beginning of the pharmaceutical industry in India, later it ultimately took over the country due to the widespread use and the decline of other systems of medicine. The manufacture of surgical dressings was also taken up during this period<sup>1</sup>.

By delivering high-quality drugs at scale, the Indian pharmaceutical industry has built a strong presence in the global generics market. The industry has captured a leading share in developed economies such as the United States (1 out of every 3 pills<sup>19</sup>) and the United Kingdom by making critical drugs affordable and available. To regain its status as a world-class supplier of affordable high-quality medicines, Indian pharmaceutical companies must make bold strategic steps into uncharted geographies, products, and technologies.



Figure1-Flow of pharmaceutical product



Figure-2: Pharmaceutical Market Forecast- Overview (4)

**Marketing** –“Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with other” – Philip Kotler.

**THE PHARMACEUTICAL MARKET-**

The Indian Pharmaceutical market is ever changing as from the beginning of its origin in the early 19th Century till date, however Marketing is one of the key segments in the pharma industry considering the Legislative and Regulatory guidelines of India.

The Traditional forms of marketing are the only known techniques in the pharmaceutical

industry where the patient needs are fulfilled through the RMP and/or HCP.

Where the doctor serve as the Intermediate Customer and the patient is the End Consumer Hence it is very Vital to keep up with RMP/HCP to reach the desired goals, considering the different market segmentations and dimensions,

In the rise of the recent events and the COVID crisis there has been Significant changes the way Indian healthcare systems are responding to the same amid this the marketing segment has faced numerous challenges in meeting the HCP/RMP, for the sole purpose of marketing and brand reminder.

### Pharmaceutical Marketing Transactions

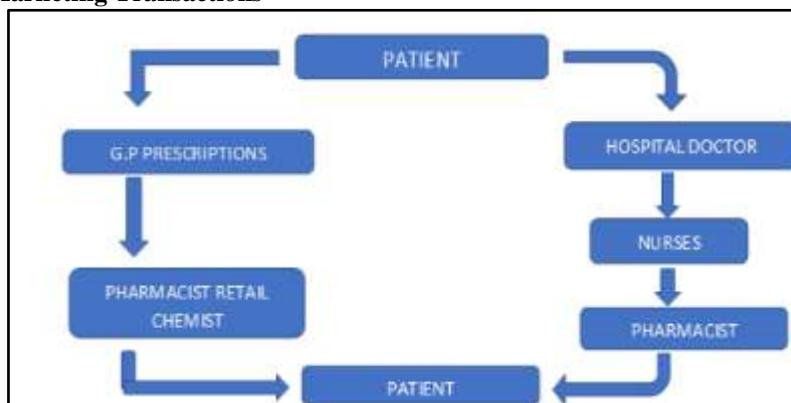


Figure-3: Pharmaceutical Marketing Transactions (5).

### Pharmaceutical Marketing -

Pharmaceutical marketing is defined as a management process that serves to identify and meet patients' needs in a profitable way. Pharmaceutical marketing is focused on making physicians as well as the public aware of new and existing pharmaceutical brands, pharmaceutical marketing include giveaway samples, detailed product literature, disease management programs, and support material for patients, internet initiatives and events/meetings for physicians.

### Traditional pharmaceutical marketing –

Traditional marketing is referred as a kind of marketing that is not online. Traditional pharmaceutical marketing structure differs from other industries. Personal selling is most important way of marketing in pharma industry. Detailing is most adopted way of marketing in which sampling and other promotional work among doctors and professionals, to secure good will and possible distribution or prescription of the product. Sales representatives are the focal resources for applying most of the techniques. The adopted tools of promotion for this technique are drug information brochures, literature, drug samples, giveaways etc.



Figure 4 – Traditional pharma marketing (1)

**Digital marketing –**

**“I think the biggest innovations of the 21st century will be the intersection of ...biology (health, medicine) and technology (digital). a new era is beginning...” -Steve jobs.**

Digital marketing, even known as online marketing, is a marketing technique that promotes

products and services via the internet and internet-based digital devices like desktop computers, mobile phones, and other modern media and networks. In addition to the technical advances, it is all about implementing novel strategies to traditional marketing.



Figure 5 – Digitalmarketing (9)

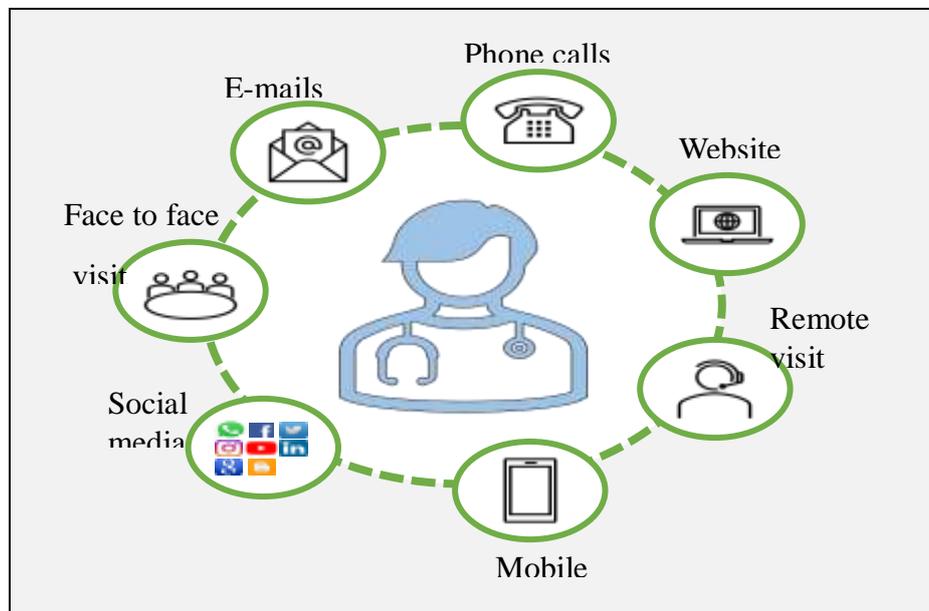


Figure-6 Omnichannel Marketing

### **Omnichannel marketing –**

The multichannel strategy centres around the HCP which offers a seamless, cohesive interface for the consumer across all networks, which is referred to as omnichannel.

Omnichannel marketing means that the message is consistent regardless of which medium the HCP uses.

The HCP has access to both networks, which are cross connected.

### **Research Problem**

Even after facing a very strict environment into traditional marketing, where an HCP was not able to meet the company representative in person, the marketing wing is forced to find better ways of meeting the HCPs amid the given COVID19 crisis and the digital evolution into the marketing segment of the India Pharmaceutical Industry, there has been a setback to achieve the desired success in the same, even after facing a very strict environment into traditional marketing, where an HCP was not able to meet the company representative in person, the marketing

At a higher pace than the rest of the world, every industry has adapted to the modern age. However, apart from the internet and apps, the pharmaceutical industry is yet to fully embrace digital marketing (8).

Even after the Innovation in the technology and advanced market mix there has been a draw back in attaining Digital marketing into the pharmaceutical sector,

So, it becomes essential to know the factors that are affecting the digitalization of pharmaceutical marketing in India, and the impact of the same over traditional marketing.

### **Research Objectives-**

1. Evaluate and understand the best marketing model in present COVID19 scenario in pharmaceutical sector with respect to the healthcare professionals and medical representatives.
2. To know which is more efficient and effective means of marketing in the present scenario of the Pharmaceutical Industry in the therapy segments of Consultant and General Physicians.
3. To study and extrapolate the different types of digital platforms used by the pharma companies for the purpose of Digitisation at the time where traditional modes of marketing could not fetch the desired results

4. To gather the opinion of healthcare professionals and pharma medical representatives regarding which modes of marketing is more convenient and acceptable in present situation and forecasting the next generation of marketing basis the opinions and results.

### **Research Introduction-**

Marketing is a tool to increase the market share, we can explain this in simple words that identifying the needs and wants of the people, and creating the product and services to meet the people needs and wants, developing a plan to take the product and services into market place, estimation of the value of the product and services, segmentation of the people, determining the way of communicating the product and services in market place, creating the a transaction for exchanging the product for value and creating the satisfaction to the buyers needs and wants<sup>9</sup>. Now Indian market started moving towards the digital marketing and adjusting, learning, and adopting the digital marketing.

In research is intended to brief the factors which are more impactfullin transforming traditional market into digital market, and factors which shows why digital marketing is needed to be implemented, present customer preferences and how their digital knowledge is favouring the digital marketing, why India cannot transform into complete digital marketing, and concept of PHYGITAL marketing.

### **PHARMACEUTICAL MARKETING**

It is all about focusing on market, physicians as well as the public awareness of new and existing pharma brands, it includes giveaway samples, detailed product literature, disease management programs, and support material for patient, internet initiatives, and events meetings for physicians.

It is a management process that serves to identify and meet patient needs in a profitable way.it mainly adopts the sales and promotion, the branch of marketing<sup>16</sup>.

### **Traditional Pharmaceutical Marketing –**

Marketing of pharma product is about introducing the pharma product in front of the customers. In this field usually they are consumers or the drug prescribers to deliver the ideas more effectively marketers should have clear understanding of target customers.

**Traditional marketing techniques –**

Advertisement-directed to consumers advertisement (DTCA) in mass media through books, journals, publications, conference electronic media. Mainly those tools include the drug information brochures, literatures, drug samples.

Sponsorships- companies try to make direct payments to the physicians in the clinical trials against national and international conferences, medical camps, and opinion leaders for health care professionals (9).

**Digital Marketing –**

India is well on the way to be the fastest growing online retail market in Asia.

The global pandemic has caused pharma companies to invest in digital marketing, as healthcare systems across the world has adapted to strict lockdown rules.

Chances of meeting doctors (face to face) became so thin, it became biggest problem to meet doctors by medical representatives.

Pharma digital marketing ration sales representatives to contact with doctors, as we know recent pandemic changed everything in upside down manner and it became more difficult to the pharma industry to get adopted to new changes, as we know that almost all industry sectors have already adopted the digital marketing, but when it comes to the pharma industry it was not that easy to adopt to new changes.

Digital marketing gave some ray of hope to reach out to the customers.

**Why digital marketing over traditional marketing.**

In simple words companies spends nearly twice as much on marketing as on the R&D.

What is more interesting, however, is that nearly all big pharmaceutical firms are now setting aside more dollars for sales and marketing than they do for research and development.

In one year alone, the 10 largest pharma companies spent a little shy of \$100 billion on marketing, with less than \$66 billion going to R&D.

Drug makers spend an average of \$3 billion annually on direct-to-consumer marketing, while the lion share of around \$24 billion goes to selling and marketing directly to clinicians and other healthcare professionals, as per PEW (12).

**Scope of Digital Marketing –**

1. Digital marketing provides better exposure for pharma companies to reach out to the customers (patients (end user), drug prescriber (doctors, (healthcare providers)). Digital marketing not only reduces the marketing and sales cost and time, also increases the target audience (2).

Pharma customers are doctors.

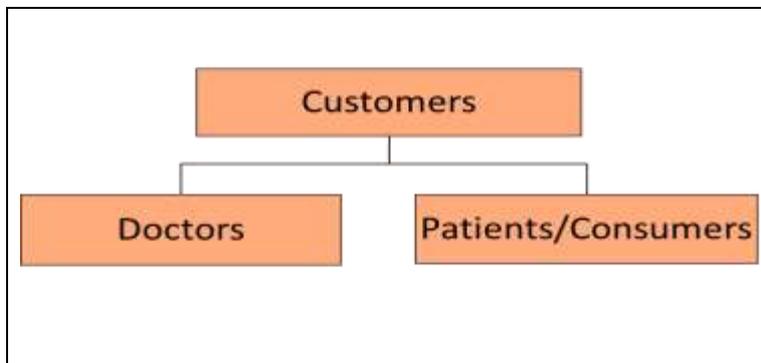


Figure7 -Pharma industry customers

2. Digital marketing increases the company competency irrespective of size of the company, it will be effective marketing strategy, well planned content and target delivery that attracts customers in pharma sector (15).

3. It helps in the impacting marketing strategies, also helps in the tracking and measuring consumer behaviour patterns, analyse consumer reviews and satisfaction. It helps in the uplift the scope for continuous improvement (16).

5. Continuous communication with customer helps in the brand development (15).

6. It gives better overall insights about customers to pharma companies (15).

#### **PHYGITAL – (TRADITIONAL+DIGITAL)**

Based on Doctors behaviour and studies we can understand that doctors are not that interested in meeting medical representative each month. Doctors feel that they are interrupting the daily schedule and they even feel they are not getting enough information in 3-5 min (average).

This explains the importance of digital marketing, digital marketing is as important as the physical marketing for better reach to the customers and health care providers it is a common platform for the better services.

As per the rules and regulations it is difficult to shift completely from traditional marketing to digital marketing, it is best way to adopt the digital marketing along with traditional this is called PHYGITAL.

There are gaps between the customer requirements and service provided by the pharma company, this can be done by bridging the gap with the help of adopting the PHYGITAL structure into the marketing.

Integrated approach will improve the overall experience of the consumer into seamless journey. According to studies a good omnichannel engagement results up to 90% retention of the customers.

Choosing the correct platform for the digital marketing is the one of the most important steps. not every social media work for every pharma company, strategy, and planning plays important role in PHYGITAL marketing, in relation with positives and negatives of traditional marketing and digital marketing, we can fill the gap with the help of PHYGITAL model (17).

#### **Research Design-**

Descriptive analysis has been used in this study. Descriptive analysis entails collecting details about activities, then compiling, tabulating, depicting, and describing the information gathered (Glass & Hopkins, 1984). It often employs visual aids such as graphs and charts to assist the reader in comprehending the data delivery, providing a comprehensive understanding of the effect of digital marketing on doctor prescribing behaviour and determining the challenges of digital marketing in the Indian pharmaceutical industry.

#### **Population of the Study-**

This study targeted Consulting and General Physician across Bangalore and Anantapur region because these two segments meet with more number of pharmaceutical/ MR as compared to that of any other speciality, and these two segment indulge more with MR than any other speciality in the Field, wherein CP and GP constitute to more amount of doctors in total as compared with that of other speciality care, Hence they would be more suitable to understand the significance effectiveness and challenges of the Digital Marketing IN THE Indian Pharmaceutical Industry

The study also targeted the working Medical Representatives since they are working continuously are now exploring the digital marketing it would be useful to understand their perception about the Digital Marketing in contrast to the response, support, and encouragement they receive from Healthcare professionals.

#### **Sample Design-**

Stratified sampling technique was used to select the units for study, where the Physician and the Medical Representatives both were stratified into smaller groups comprising of 50 doctors and 30 Medical representatives, the respondents were randomly selected from each stratum to come up with the respondent sample of 50 Doctors and 30 Medical representatives for the entire population. This way the viable sample technique since it gave the advantage of focusing on important sub population and allowed the use of different sampling technique for different subpopulation in improving the accuracy of estimation.

#### **Data Collection-**

## **II. CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

A structured questionnaire was distributed to 50 Doctors and 30 Medical Representative who were the respondents from the Bangalore and Anantapur regions, respectively, to collect primary data. The samples were surveyed online, and the given questionnaires were retrieved the next day after the respondents completed them, and the answers were used to analyse the results. To facilitate the respondent in completing the questionnaire, it included both open-ended and specific questions.

**Reliability -**

Reliability can be ensured by reducing sources of measurement error like a data collection bias. the researcher being the only one in charge of the questionnaires and standardising conditions such as displaying identical personal characteristics to all respondents, such as friendliness and encouragement, data collector bias was reduced. The investigator conducted pilot testing to find any inconsistencies in the questionnaire to reduce calculation errors and ensure accuracy.

**III. CHAPTER THREE: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This commendable response rate amid the strong second COVID19 wave was due to extra efforts that were made via courtesy calls made to remind the respondents to fill-in and return the questionnaires. The study targeted 50 respondents from Healthcare and 30 respondents from medical Sales profession amid the pandemic, out which 50 doctors and 30 Medical Representatives responded and returned their questionnaire contributing to response rate of 100%, This response rate was sufficient, and representative and conforms to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) stipulation that a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good while a response rate of 70% and over is excellent..

Region	Frequency	Percentage
Bangalore	37	74%
Anantapur	13	26%

**Table 1**Distribution of respondents by demography

Source Filed Data

As shown in the Table 1, the study sample was representative of the Consultant and General Physicians across Bangalore and Anantapur, and mid the given crisis of the pandemic 74% of the total respondents were from Bangalore and the remaining 26% of the respondents were from Across Anantapur. The respondents were asked to provide their specialization, the study findings are provided in table below Table no 1.

**Table 2**-Frequency of general and consultancy physician in Anantapur and Bangalore region

Specialisation	Frequency	Percentage	Anantapur	Anantapur	Bangalore	Bangalore
			Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Consultant Physician	27	54%	8	29.6%	19	70.37%
General Physician	23	46%	5	21.7%	18	78.26%

Source: Field Data

The findings show that the General physicians were the major respondents making up 54%, followed by the Consultant Physicians at 46% of the study respondents, the same trend is being

observed at the individual geographies of Anantapur and Bangalore collectively. The study sought to establish the average time spent per MR by an average doctor and the findings are established in the table 3.

**Table 3** Average time spent per MR (Table and average value)

Time in Minutes	Frequency	Percentage
1-2	35	70%
3-4	10	20%
5-6	4	8%
>7	1	2%

Source: Field Data

As per Table 6, over 70% of doctors spend around 1-2 minutes each MR, 20% of respondents spend around 3-4 minutes per MR call, 8% of respondents spend around 5-6 minutes per MR call, and only 2% of doctors spend more than 7 minutes

per MR call, indicating the amount of time spent every MR call.

The respondent was also asked to indicate the average number of MR per day, the study findings are illustrated in the Table 4.

**Table 4** Average MR per Day (Table and average value)

Number of MR	Frequency	Percentage
1-5	25	50%
5-10	19	38%
>10	6	12%

Source: Field Data

According to the survey, 50% of respondents would encounter 1-5 MR per day, 38% would encounter 5-10 MR per day, and only 12% would encounter more than 10 MR per day. This

shows how many MR an average physician encounters, and how time-consuming and stressful it is to meet with them.

Time in minutes	Frequency
1-2 min	35
3-4 min	10
5-6 min	4
>7 min	1

**Table 5** Average time spent by a doctor towards medical representative-

$$\begin{aligned}
 & -((1+2/2)*35)+\{(3+4/2)*10\}+((5+6/2)*4)+(7*1)/50 \\
 & -1.5*35+5*10+8*4+7*1/50 \\
 & -52.5+50+32+7/50 \\
 & -141.5/50 \\
 & \mathbf{2.83 \text{ min -Average time one MR get to meet a Doctor.}}
 \end{aligned}$$

Source: Field Data

The study indicates that on an average time one MR gets to meet a doctor is 2.83 minutes.

**Table 6** Average number of MRs meet a Doctor per day.

Number of MR	Frequency
1-5 members	25
5-10members	19
>10	6

$$\begin{aligned}
 & - ((1+5/2) *25)+\{(5+10/2)*19\}+(10*6)/50 \\
 & -3.5*25+7.5*19+10*6/50 \\
 & -87.5+142.5+60/50 \\
 & -290/50 \\
 & \mathbf{-5.8 - Average no. of MRs meet a Doctor per day.}
 \end{aligned}$$

Source: Field Data

Study indicates that on an Average 6 MRs meet a doctor per day.

**Table 7-** average time spend by a doctor towards medical representative in a day.

Average time one MR get to meet a Doctor -2.83 minutes.
Average no. of MRs meets a Doctor per day- 5.8.
Average time duration total MRs get in Doctor’s schedule per day – 16.41 minutes.

Source: Field Data

Above calculations have been done based on the data, which indicates that on average one doctor spend nearly 17 min per day with total representatives.

The study's first goal was to assess and outline the challenges of digital marketing in the pharmaceutical industry. It also sought to determine doctors' willingness to meet with MR on

various platforms in the first place, where they would engage in effective discussions with MR about therapy, product, or a social problem, to establish the mean.

The respondents were asked to provide about their Convenience with respect to their schedule in meeting the MR the study findings are illustrated in the table 7.

**Table 8** Schedule and Convenience of a doctor in meeting the MR.

Mode of meeting	Frequency	Percentage
Traditional	17	34%
Digital	14	28%
Hybrid	16	32%
None	3	6%

Source: Field data

According to the findings, 34% of respondents wanted to meet the MR in traditional modes, which include face-to-face interaction, 32% wanted to meet the MR in Hybrid mode, which includes both face-to-face interaction and meeting in digital modes, and 28% wanted to meet only on digital platforms.

This indicates the interest in respondents towards the pharma companies is positive for both Digital and Traditional modes of marketing which is the HYBRID Mode of Marketing.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	29	58%
Maybe	15	30%
No	6	12%

**Table 9** Comfortable to meet the MR on digital platforms.

Source: Field Data

As per the study, 58 percent of respondents are comfortable meeting the MR via digital platforms, which has increased exponentially since the pre-COVID19 pandemic scenario. However, 30 percent of respondents are unsure if they are comfortable meeting the MR via digital platforms, which gives the pharma

marketing industry an extra edge in configuring the MR via digital platforms. are reluctant towards meeting the MR, via digital platforms and there needs to be a different approach for these types of respondents to meet them face to face and then enable digital meets.

The study sought to identify the different platforms that were used by the pharma companies MR to meet with customer especially during

lockdown, and the findings of the same are shown in the Table 10.

**Table 10** Platform used to meet the MR Online during the Lockdown of the first waveCovid19.

SI.no	Platform	Frequency	Percentage
1	Phone calls	42	84%
2	Digital (Zoom, WhatsApp call)	28	56%
3	Emails	24	48%

Source: Field Data

According to the findings, 84 percent of the respondents were contacted by the MR via phone calls, 56 percent used the ZOOM and WhatsApp applications to communicate with the MR, and the remaining 48 percent were emailed to meet the periodic reminders by the MR and Pharma Companies.

The study's second goal was to distinguish between traditional and digital marketing in the

context of pharmaceutical marketing in the therapy segments of Consultant Physician and General Physician. The respondents were asked if they would be comfortable with a complete shift from traditional face-to-face marketing to digital marketing, and the results are presented in the table below

**Table 11-** Comfortable with the complete shift to the digital marketing

Response	Frequency	Percentage
YES	12	24%
NO	27	54%
MAYBE	11	22%

Source: Field Data

Table shows that 54 percent of respondents are not comfortable with the pharmaceutical industry's complete shift to digital marketing; this is concerning because doctors are not comfortable with digital marketing alone, and there is a need for new and evolved techniques in Indian pharmaceutical marketing; however, 24 percent of respondents said they would be comfortable with the complete shift to digital

marketing., As a result, comparing the 46 percent of people who are comfortable or might be comfortable versus the 54 percent who aren't, it's clear that a balance of both kinds of marketing is required to achieve a marketer's goal.

The respondents were further asked if they thought it was time consuming to meet the MR, the study findings are illustrated in the table 12.

**Table 12** Time Factor to meet an MR % Chart.

SI No	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	30	60%
2	Maybe	12	24%
3	No	8	16%

Source Field Data

As a result, comparing the 46 percent of people who are comfortable or might be comfortable versus the 54 percent who aren't, it's clear that a balance of both kinds of marketing is required to achieve a marketer's goal.

To determine whether marketing strategy is more effective in the current pharmaceutical marketing environment in the Gastroenterology and General Physicians therapeutic categories.

The study's third goal was to determine whether marketing strategy is more effective in the current pharmaceutical marketing landscape in the Consultant and General Physician therapeutic segments. Respondents were asked if they were satisfied with the digital marketing services provided by an MR, and their responses were summarised in Table – 13.

**Table 13** Satisfaction with respect to digital marketing by an MR

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	29	58%
Maybe	12	24%
No	9	18%

Source: Field Data

According to the table, 58 percent of respondents are satisfied with digital marketing by an MR, which is a positive sign for the digital marketing's future evolution, while 24 percent said they might be satisfied with digital marketing by an

MR, and the remaining 18 percent said they are not at all satisfied with digital marketing by an MR.

The respondents were asked which mode they would prefer to meet the MR in the new normal, the results are tabulated in the Table 14.

**Table 14** Meet in the New Normal

	Frequency	Percentage
Digital	30	60%
Traditional	14	28%
Hybrid	6	12%

Source: Field Data

According to the study, 60 percent of doctors would prefer to meet the MR in digital platforms in the new normal due to safety and strict schedules, whereas 28 percent of doctors would prefer to meet the MR in person, which is traditional modes in the new normal, indicating that digital means are also required to engage with traditional modes.

Apart from the doctors the study aimed to establish the challenges that are existing in the traditional means from the Medical Representative who are the first point of contact to the customers and warriors for the successful functioning of pharma marketing if they were finding it difficult to meet the doctors during the Pandemic. The finding from the study was tabulated in the table 20.

**Table 15** Difficult to meet the doctor.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	29	96.66%
No	1	3.33%

Source Field Data

In the above table – has made a strong establishment that 99.66% of the field workers aka Medical Representatives are finding it difficult to meet the doctors in person to reach their call objectives, whereas only 3.33% of the field force disagrees.



Figure 8 - Difficulty faced by medical representatives during lockdown.

#### IV. DISCUSSION-

The study established to find the Impact and challenges for digital marketing in the Indian pharma industry suggested that the doctors or more precisely the physicians who are the respondents of the survey spent approximately around- 2.83 minutes per call with an MR, where one must make the maximum in under 3 minutes of the time, which is in loop with the IQVIA HCP Space survey, In 2019, pre-COVID19 pandemic days, 39 percent of physicians said they spent an average of 3 - 5 minutes with a medical official, and 27 percent said they spent less than 3 minutes. (Ref The Role of Digital Technology in Sales Team Performance and Development .18which practically is a tough job on the MR. The study found that there has been tremendous increase in the convenience by a doctor in meeting an MR on digital Platforms and there has been considerable changes in how the doctors were approached via Non Virtual platforms and the Traditional means of meeting a doctor in new normal considered a grave risk and challenge given the current COVID19 pandemic, government and Hospital regulations this also indicates that costumers are interested and Co-operative towards Digitisation This data abides with IQVIA Data which suggest there is high adoption of non-face to face engagement modes between HCPs and Pharmaceutical companies since Covid19 which is indicating that the HCPs have accepted the change and embraced the new normal

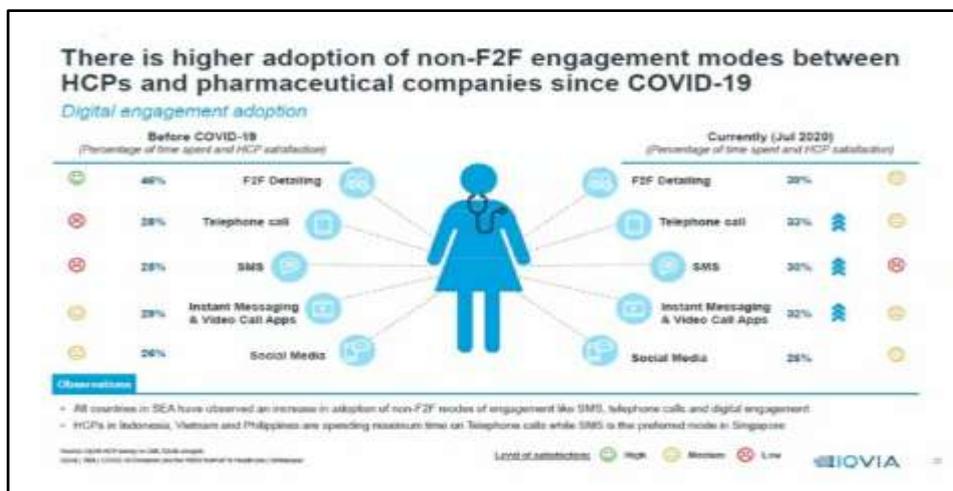


Figure 9- Digital Engagement Adoption.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the various platforms used for digitization, and the results of the survey were shared with IQVIA Regional level, revealing platforms that are actively used and well received in facilitating pharma HCP engagement, with Zoom, phone calls, SMS, and WhatsApp being the most used platforms, followed

by E mails to the respondent. The study discovered that during the current Lockdown, most MRs made phone calls to contact a doctor, which corresponded to IQVIA data indicating that 85 percent of HCPs are willing to continue using telemedicine post COVID19.

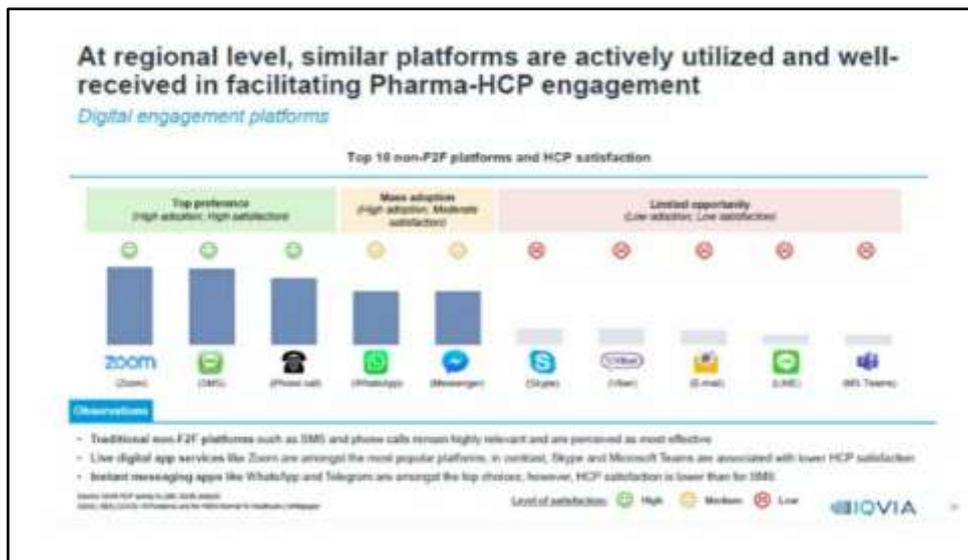


Figure 10- Most actively utilized platforms.

The survey's findings show that while HCPs are comfortable and convenient in meeting with MR on digital platforms, they are not happy with the entire digitalization of pharmaceutical marketing. This is due to the abundance of web resources available to today's clinicians for learning about new medications. According to the e-Pharma Physicians Annual Study, 51% of doctors are already aware of the drug information provided by representatives. They now want reps to go above and beyond the fundamentals to provide value to their practice (19).

Some pharma marketers wrongly link digitising with detailing, but e- detailing is simply one piece of a bigger, more comprehensive digital strategy, which is why doctors are apprehensive for complete digitisation in the new normal. For digital to benefit, it must become a mentality across functions and hierarchies. pharma-physician collaboration 19 As a result, the Doctor does not want to waste any more of his or her valuable time hearing a brand name or information that he or she already knows, so they frequently ask or insist that the MR just give the brand name and not waste any more of his or her time, so it is critical for pharma

companies to place a strong emphasis on content on digital platforms, not just an E-detailing and the adequate strategies with respect to the same.

So, at a time when most doctors believe that meeting with an MR takes too much time and that some doctors even refuse to meet with an MR, one must understand that handling objections in sales, particularly in pharmaceutical marketing, is the most difficult part that every salesperson must face, but it will provide you with a new opportunity to represent your brand in a different way to handle objections. Handling objections correctly opens some crucial company accounts and increases sales (Medicine Man, 2012), and there needs to be a suitable strategy for both digital and traditional ways of marketing, and this current condition of no to meeting an MR can be overcome by impending a doctor with Customer centric approach rather than only Product centric approach. And give the customer beyond the pill experience.

The study found that majority of the respondent said that they were satisfied by the current digital marketing but one has to carefully understand that this is in contrast to the Pandemic and the pre Covid19 Traditional marketing where

they were still given an information they are well aware off and that it is still considered time consuming to meet an MR even if it is for less than 3 minutes and also they are reluctant toward the Shift to the digitization, this indicates that Digitization alone might not be the solution and Not finding it convenient in traditional means that it is hight time that the Pharma Combine both and develop a mode where Efficiency and Effectiveness are both met that is PHYGITAL.

The study Finding was found to be in Contrast with the study conducted by Accenture: Reinventing Relevance New Models for Pharma Engagement with Healthcare Providers in a COVID-19 World, Accenture Healthcare Provider Survey May 2020(22).

People who see the physician, dentist, pharmacist, and nurses with the purpose of influencing these healthcare professionals to buy, recommend, or prescribe a product. They are called as Medical Representatives (MR) / Pharmaceutical Sales representatives (PSR) / Pharmaceutical Company Representatives (PCR). Medical rep is the vital communication link between the drug manufacturer and the medical professional. He/she is the most reliable source of feedback on what is happening to a company's product in the competitive market, the customer's perception, and sales strategies. Medical representative act as a link between a company, stockiest and customers and ensures the smooth working of the entire network (19).

With that said the data it is seen than only less than 4% of the respondent considered it is not difficult to meet the Doctor whereas the remaining 96% agree that it is difficult to meet the doctor on only Traditional or on only Digital platforms which is huge and hence there needs a new and better ways where an MR can meet with the doctor and still develop the Rapport and this can be enabled by the PHYGTAL model where both on and off the field engagement with the customer is carried out, and the expectation by the customers could be reached making use of adequate strategies and with active CRM in right time and place (The present qualitative study found that the majority of the physicians had positive interactions with medical representatives. The physicians' main reasons stated for allowing medical representatives' visits are the social contacts and mutual benefits they will gain from these representatives. They also emphasized that the meeting with representatives provides educational and scientific benefits. A few physicians stated that the main reasons behind

refusing the meeting with medical representatives were lack of conviction about the product and obligation to prescribe medicine from the representative company. Most of the physicians believed that they were under marketing pressure to prescribe certain medicines (20)

#### CHAPTER FOUR: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Introduction-** This chapter presents summary of findings, conclusion, and recommendations of the study in line with the objectives of the study.

**Summary-** The study found that the impact of digital marketing in the prescribing behavior of the doctor was dependent on various parameters such his or her personal interest in meeting an MR on Digital Platforms we found that on an average a doctor spend around 3 minutes per MR call and this time is very valuable looking into the investment per call which is of variable with respect to the pharma companies and it is of utmost important to make the best use of these 3 minutes of call duration by an MR, and as we had hypothesized the regulation and legislative by the government impose much of a challenge, but was proven wrong as this hypothesis might stay strong in terms social media marketing and not for the digital marketing as we see there are significant digital campaigns running under the speculated framework from the government, and as we had also hypothesized that the absence of face to face interaction with the customers who are the doctors would lead to significant changes in the prescribing behavior of the doctors this hypothesis has been proved right and also we found that traditional alone is not an effective option however when the respondent confirmed that they are comfortable in ,meeting an MR on digital platforms at COVID19 situation but are not comfortable in the complete Digitization by the pharma companies, it was concluded that the doctors though are comfortable in the meeting the MR on digital Platforms but would not wish to be completely engaged only via digital platforms there comes the concept of HYBRID MODEL called as PHYGITAL MARKETING where a doctor is engaged on online platforms with effective strategies, the long running traditional Marketing should also be equipped with new innovation of Customer centric and Content Driven engagements with that the face to face interaction would also be enabled, and helpful in maintain the rapport from the study we can say that

Phone calls, ZOOM calls, WhatsApp and SMS were the prominent platforms used by the Pharma Companies in order to meet with the doctor of Bangalore and Anantapur with the sole purpose Brand reminder and it is this digital and only Brand centric approach that has made them reluctant to the Digitization of the Pharma marketing.

**Conclusion-** The study objective was to evaluate the impact and challenges for the digital marketing in the Indian Pharmaceutical Industry at the therapy segment of Consultant and General physicians of Bangalore and Anantapur, it was found that on an average a doctor spends 3 minutes per call by an MR and is satisfied with the call in the opinion where the sole purpose of the call is for Brand reminder, there has been a significant changes in the functioning of the Pharma Marketing in the new normal and is also posing a great opportunity to the pharma companies to adopt to the next gen marketing techniques, while 38% of the doctors wanted to meet the MR in traditional face to face mode, 32% of the doctors wished to meet the MR on Hybrid model that is PHYGITAL MARKETING, and 28% of the doctors wanted to meet the MR on digital Platforms.

The study Concluded that the doctors considered it to be time consuming to meet the MR where the sole purpose of the call is Brand reminder, and are convenient in meet the MR on Digital Platforms which also pose a major challenge since they are satisfied by the digital call but are reluctant toward the complete digitization of the Pharma Marketing this could be due to the reason that doctors say that they already know the contents what an MR has to deliver to the doctor and as they say that it is time consuming to meet the MR it is really necessary for the pharma Companies to work toward the Content they have to provide to the doctor and have an costumer centric approach and convert the opinion of time consuming into Informative calls, The study further concluded that the doctors are consider it to be time consuming to meet the MR and are comfortable in meeting an MR on digital platforms it is now that the pharma Companies should combine both the modes of marketing and create a PHYGITAL MARKETING environment where Omnichannel marketing is utilized effectively and doctor is met on digital platforms and Traditionally the main difference is that the CONTENT IS THE KING in this type of marketing and customer centricity is enabled along with Beyond the pill experience to the doctor should be provided and with that alone there can be a change in the MR and Doctor relationship is

functioning, The study Further concluded that the doctors have embraced the change in the marketing by the pharma company as they were engaged via the Phone Calls, ZOOM Call , WhatsApp and SMS during the recent transition into the digitization and OMNICHANNEL marketing is to be still incorporated by the Pharma Marketing due to the COVID19 pandemic which is loop with IQVIA data and suggests that they have accepted the changes but there need to be more effective strategies in order to meet the sole purpose of CONSUMERISM and Brand Growth

#### REFERENCES –

- [1]. Subba Rao Chaganti, Pharmaceutical Marketing In India, For Today And Tomorrow, 5th Ed, New Delhi, Bio-Green Books (2019), Isbn 10: 9388305388 Isbn 13: 9789388305389.
- [2]. The Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, The Indian Pharmaceutical Industry, The Way Forward, Mumbai, Ipa, June 2019.
- [3]. Digital Marketing For The Pharma And Healthcare Sector Url: <https://www.smartinsights.com/tag/digital-marketing-for-pharma-sector/>
- [4]. Digital Transformation In Healthcare In 2021: Key Trends. January 2021.
- [5]. Digital Strategy Consulting. Accelerating Pharmaceutical Brands And Their Teams, 2009.
- [6]. Raghunandan H, Parimal Nagtode, Integrated Digital Marketing, The Key To Understand Your Customer, Tata Consultancy LiveScience's. <https://images.template.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/09060701/Free-Pdf-Format-Integrated-Digital-Marketing-Strategy-Template.Pdf>.
- [7]. AIJRPLS Volume 1, Issue 1 (2017, Jan, Feb, March) (Issn-2456-3889) Online Anveshana International Journal of Research In Pharmacy And Life Sciences.
- [8]. Parekh Dhara, Dr Kapupara Pankaj, Dr Shah Ketan, Digital Pharmaceutical Marketing: A Review, Volume 9 Issue1, Indian Journals.Com, Research Journal Of Pharmacy And Technology, 2016.

- [9]. Masood I\*, Ibrahim Mim\*\*, Hassali Ma\*\*\*, Ahmed M\*\*\*\*, Evolution Of Marketing Techniques, Adoption In Pharmaceutical Industry And Related Issues: A Review,3(6), Journal Of Clinical And Diagnostic Research, Research Gate, Dec 2009.[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/230899819\\_Evolution\\_Of\\_Marketing\\_Techniques\\_Adoption\\_In\\_Pharmaceutical\\_Industry\\_And\\_Related\\_Issues\\_A\\_Review](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/230899819_Evolution_Of_Marketing_Techniques_Adoption_In_Pharmaceutical_Industry_And_Related_Issues_A_Review).
- [10]. Dhara Parekh, Pankaj Kapupara, Ketan Shah, Digital Pharmaceutical Marketing, A Review, Volume 9 Issue 1, Rajkot, Research Journal Of Pharmacy And Technology, 2016 <https://rjptonline.org/htmlpaper.aspx?journal=Research%20journal%20of%20pharmacy%20and%20technology;Pid=2016-9-1-9#:~:Text=Digital%20marketing%20in%20any%20sector,Engagement%20with%20prescribers%20and%20physicians>.
- [11]. Mopharma, Digital Age – A Boon For Pharma Digital Marketing In India,2020, Gurukul Of Digital Marketing And Research, March 8, 2020.<https://mopharma.com/blogs/pharma-digital-marketing-12.html>.
- [12]. Codrin Arsene, A How – To Guide To Marketing To Physicians And Consumers, Digital Authority Partner, May 1, 2021 <https://www.digitalauthority.me/resources/pharma-marketing-guide/>
- [13]. Aparna Bhagat, To Study The Limitations Of Traditional Marketing Strategies In The Indian Pharma Industry, Volume 1 Issue1, Anveshana International Journal of Research In Pharmacy And Life Sciences, Mar 2018 <http://publications.anveshanaindia.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/To-Study-The-Limitations-Of-Traditional-Marketing-Strategies-In-The-Indian-Pharma-Industry-4.Pdf>
- [14]. Wbs, Top 6 Digital Marketing Challenges In Healthcare. <https://www.web-behaviour.com/top-6-digital-marketing-challenges-healthcare/>
- [15]. Ad syndicate, Digital Marketing For Pharma Sector, <https://www.adsyndicate.in/industries/digital-marketing-for-pharma-sector/>
- [16]. Docplexus, 9 Reasons Pharma Should Adopt Digital Marketing For Doctors, Content Marketing & Strategy, Digital Pharma Marketing, June 5,2019 <http://www.docplexus-insights.com/blog/9-reasons-pharma-should-adopt-digital-marketing/>
- [17]. Docplexus, Phygital, The Holy Grail Of Next-Gen Pharma Marketing, Digital Pharma Marketing, Oct 8, 2019.<http://www.docplexus-insights.com/blog/physical-digital-phygital-way-pharma-marketers/>
- [18]. Raj Sevilimedu, The Role Of Digital Technology In Sales Team Performance And Development, Amesha Blog, Iqvia, Oct 11, 2019. <https://www.iqvia.com/blogs/2019/10/the-role-of-digital-technology-in-sales-team-performance-and-development#:~:Text=The%20time%20available%20for%20medical,They%20spent%20less%20than%203.>
- [19]. M. Sreenivasan, Dr T. L. Narasimha Reddy, A Study On The Evolution Of Pharmaceutical Marketing Communication Channels, International Journal Of Science And Research, Oct 2018 <https://www.ijsr.net/archive/v7i10/art20191695.pdf>
- [20]. Mohmoud Abdullah Al-Areefi, Mohamed Azmi Hassali, Mohamed Izham B Mohamed Ibrahim, Physicians' Perceptions Of Medical Representative Visits In Yemen: A Qualitative Study, Pmc Article, National Library Of Medicine, Aug 20,2013
- [21]. Healthworld.Com, 76% Of Healthcare Professionals In India Use Digital Health Records, Et Health World, The Economic Times, Aug 22,2019
- [22]. Accenture, Reinventing Relevance, New Models For Pharma Engagement With Healthcare Providers In A Covid-19 World, Accenture, Now Next, May2020