

**Influence of Promotional Materials on Drug Prescription:
A Comparative Study between Government and Private Hospitals in Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia**

Master of Business Administration (MBA) Research Proposal

Submitted to

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Definition of terms

Drug' means any substance or mixture of substances or medical equipment or supplies, used for human and animal health care (i.e. diagnosis, treatment, mitigation or prevention of diseases or symptoms) including poisons, narcotics and psychotropic substances, chemicals, blood and blood products, vaccines, sera, radioactive pharmaceuticals, medicated cosmetics and sanitary products, household and industrial pesticides, medicated food stuffs, and Animal feed additives.

'Promotion' includes any representation such as sound, word, sign, image, electronics or other means whatever, for the purpose of promoting directly or indirectly the prescription, sale or dispense of any drug.

'Medical representative' means a representative of a manufacturing firm directly or through the distributor, licensed by the Authority to conduct promotional activities through provision of information on the drugs manufactured by the firm.

'Health professional' means medical practitioners and veterinaries, Health officers, Pharmacists and druggists.

'Authority' means the Food Medicine & health care Administration and Control Authority.

Generic drug: - these are drugs that are no longer protected by patents, and are marketed by companies that have usually not developed the drugs themselves

Patent: - a set of exclusive rights granted for a fixed period of time in exchange for the regulated, public disclosure of certain details of an invention

Rational drug use This principle seeks to ensure that people receive medications that take into account best available clinical evidence of efficacy and safety, appropriate to their clinical needs, in doses that meet their own individual requirements, for an adequate period of time, and at the lowest cost to them and their community

Samples: - Units of prescription drugs that are not intended for sale. Samples are often provided free of cost by a drug company as a promotional tactic to increase eventual sales figures

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Fig 1 Different types of promotional materials –





“Medical Representatives bring with them many creative ideas for drug promotion. I observed this for the first time when I visited one of my professors. A signboard next to the door read “Doctor is IN-DIGENE” (Digene is a brand of antacid). After going inside, I noticed that there was at least one big poster promoting a pharmaceutical company on every wall. On the table was a beautifully handcrafted name board with the professor’s name in golden letters. The side facing the professor had the brand name of a drug in equally stylish lettering.”

1. Introduction –In Ethiopia drug promotion is only done by pharmacists who are authorized for their competence by food, Medicine. Health care administrations and control authority (FMHACA). FMHACA is the government body responsible for the issuance of certificate for drug promotion. Only medical representative who has been guaranteed a certificate of competence from the authority is entitled to promote drugs to health professionals.

In this materials Promotion definitions and the influence of the promotion on prescriptions, the way how drug promoters are promoting, the legal liability and professional responsibilities of pharmacy professionals in regards to promotion, the current status of promotion in private health sectors and government health sectors are considered as the main body of this study

The findings of the study may create awareness on pharmacist responsibility and legal liability among educators, students, drug manufacturers, importers, wholesalers, prescribers, patients and all other concerned individuals; and It may help all concerned bodies in addressing some of the problems related to violation of professional and legal responsibilities by pharmacists; The findings of the study may help as a basis for further research and discussions and this study may contribute to the sum total of the body of knowledge.

The present study is undertaken to find out the promotional strategies followed by the pharmaceutical Companies, attitudes and responses of physicians towards these promotional activities and influence of using gifts as promotional materials on the prescribing behavior of the physicians.

There are several sectors on which Ethiopia can be proud of and undoubtedly the pharmaceutical sector is one of them. At present, there are only 5 drug manufacturing companies in Ethiopia, three of them are owned by the government and 2 of them are private and Only 10% of the total national requirement of medicines is fulfilled by the local pharmaceutical companies and the remain pharmaceutical demands are covered by the import division of private sectors. At present drugs are imported from Europe, India, China, USA, Turkey, UAE, etc. and very few drugs are exported from Ethiopia to two African countries.

1.2 Poor regulation by governments –In developing countries the systems and resources to effectively monitor and regulate the marketing of medicines are not necessarily in place. In 2004, the World Health Organization established that less than one-sixth of countries had a well-developed system of drug regulation, and one-third had little to no regulatory capacity. Therefore, frameworks to enforce unethical, irresponsible or even illegal promotion to consumers are a major problem in the context of developing and emerging economy countries.

2. Statements of the problem

–In most cases the promotional materials and gifts are influencing the prescribers and they prescribe that drugs promoted with gifts or any materials associated with the specific drugs. However in developing countries like Ethiopia, the awareness creations and efficient practices of the pharmacists has not yet developed very well. This approach, unlike in many developed countries, appears to be illegal drug promotions. It is hypothesized that some promoters in Ethiopia are misleading the prescribers by

- ◆ Gifts that doesn't have relations to the drugs
- ◆ Promotional materials that influence them on decision
- ◆ Presentations and offering of free gifts of sample brand drugs that can be sold

Generally it is observed that some private and government hospitals have been violating the promoter's professional responsibilities for the sake of personal interest. Therefore the purpose of this study is to find out the practice of prescription in private and government hospitals exercising the professional and legal responsibilities. Also this study is designed to explore whether the consequences of violation of these responsibilities by the two parties is exposed and prosecuted at all.

3. Objective

3.1. General Objective

- –To see the legal concepts of drug promotion and awareness on legal liabilities and professional responsibilities of drug promoter with the extent of influence of promotional materials and gifts so that to provide information on the relationship

between drug promotional works and drug prescription to concerned legal and professional bodies

3.2. Specific objectives

- To find out promotional strategies followed by pharmaceutical companies,
- To understand attitudes and responses of physicians towards these promotional activities and influence of using gifts as promotional materials on the prescribing behavior of the physicians.
- To assess the believes of most pharmaceutical companies on promotional gifts,
- To understand the motivation of physicians in prescribing those drugs promoted with gifts,
- To study the preference of physicians in promotional materials,
- To assess the current situation of pharmaceuticals promoted by their quality and availability
- To evaluate the international standards of promotion and see their comparative advantages in of Ethiopia,

Research question

Accordingly the research will have a bench marks questions

What are the contributions of drug promotions?

What significant changes have been observed in prescription of drugs before and after promotion on prescribers?

How do manufacturers or importers recognize the changes on the marketing of drugs based on promotion? –

Scope of the study

The study mainly focused on medical doctors and health officers who mainly prescribe drugs to the patients and drug promoters who usually contact the prescribers –

4. Promotion and promoters

4.1. Concepts of promotion

Marketing (trade promotion) is the lifeblood of the products we are going to sale and creates for brands. These create a trial and repeat purchase of a product by customers and create an important Impulse sale. Impulse, all of those items that a customer purchased that were not on their shopping list!

knows retail marketing, he was the Senior Grocery Director at Whole Foods Market headquarters in Austin, Texas and was responsible for national buying and merchandising. Do you think he can tell us how to transition promotional ideas into Innovative Retail Marketing Strategies? You bet!

One universal business goal is to sell the business's products and services. This is usually best accomplished by positioning the business in front of the target audience, and offering something they can't refuse or find elsewhere.

To this end, one of the smartest things a business owner can do for their business is take the time to develop a business marketing plan that will set them apart from the competition. A marketing plan clearly outlines how we will reach our ideal customers by effectively implementing our marketing strategy.

There are thousands of ways that we can promote our business. With the right mix of activities, we can identify and focus on the most effective marketing tactics for our business.

Here is a list of business marketing ideas to get us thinking about all of the different ways that can promote our business.

Marketing Planning

Update or create a marketing plan for the business, A marketing plan is a comprehensive blueprint which outlines an organization's overall marketing efforts. A marketing process can be realized by the marketing mix.

The marketing plan can function from two points: strategy and tactics. In most organizations, "strategic planning" is an annual process, typically covering just the year ahead. Occasionally, a few organizations may look at a practical plan which stretches three or more years ahead which also needs to revisit or start the marketing research and conducting a focus group with a unique selling proposition (USP) for a defined and target audience with expansion of the product and services offerings.

Marketing Materials

Update and make the business card stand out from the rest. Eye-catching business cards, ever get a business card that you knew was printed on a home ink jet and designed in PowerPoint? If you noticed, so can everybody else. Business cards are another one of those "first impression" marketing expenses you need to splurge on. A potential customer might not know you existed until you hand them a card, but the viability of hiring you can hinge on something as simple as font selection and color scheme.

Another overlooked marketing item, but one you can use on pretty much anything. From invoices to thank you letters, letterhead can provide a polished, established presence. What you put on your letterhead is up to you, but can include:

- **company logo, address, tagline/motto and a picture of a ferocious bear**

We do it with friendships and dating all the time, but it's often overlooked in the small business world. The first impression is a lasting one, so make sure to do it right. Get creative with promotional products and give them away at the next networking event that attend you've got the pretty letterhead, but what are you going to put it in? When your customers are sorting through their junk mail, make sure your correspondence doesn't get trashed. Most people end up ordering basic white envelopes with their logo and address on them, but you're not most people right? If you can dream it, you can most likely do it, from full color designs to custom envelope sizes.

Create or update the brochure. Let's say our potential client doesn't have web access, and doesn't trust our business card alone. We're going to need some sort of printed document that says what we do. A professionally designed marketing document can change a "maybe" to "when can I give you money" Printed materials can really be anything we want, from brochures to one-pagers. The key is to look sharp and sound like we know our profession.

So bullet or bold the parts we definitely want potential customers to read. Pretty pictures on our materials might even sell our business better than words, so we don't make any choices lightly and create a digital version of the brochure for the website.

Explore a focused, well-designed website, it's a new era. Businesses are now defined by their online presence. Many potential customers will Google us before they even walk in our door. Consider a website for our first and best chance of making a sale. If our website looks outdated, under-developed, or lacking of basic functionality (such as a web form for customers to contact us), then our visitors just might decide to hire our competitor instead

Don't worry; our website doesn't have to provide everything in the world if we don't want it to. If we don't feel comfortable with blogs or Twitter, we don't feel obligated to include them. But we will need a few essentials, such as information about ourselves, the services we provide, and how customers can get in contact with us.

In-Person Networking, Networking in person is something that people take for granted all too often. Most people recognize that they interact with individuals all throughout their day. So, inevitably, people come to the conclusion that they *must* have a natural "nack" for networking, Networking is a culmination of many skills that transform an individual from being a "talker," or someone with the "gift of gab," to a "networker" that everyone wants to know and connect with

In-person networking can be done through registering for a conference, rent a booth, plan local business workshop, joining local chamber of commerce and self-Introduction with other local business owners,

Direct Mail, Direct mail encompasses a wide variety of marketing materials, including brochures, catalogs, postcards, newsletters and sales letters. Major corporations know that direct-mail advertising is one of the most effective and profitable ways to reach out to new and existing clients.

Contacting carefully targeted prospects with tailored offers or promotional materials such as brochures, newsletters, on one to one basis via ordinary mail, these mailings almost always carry a response mechanism such as a toll-free number, web site address, and/or a business-reply card.

In this system, several promotional tools can be used that are known to

- Launch a multi-piece direct mail campaign.
- Create multiple approaches, and split test the mailings to measure impact.
- Include a clear and enticing call to action on every direct mail piece.
- Use tear cards, inserts, props and attention-getting envelopes to make an impact with mailings.
- Send past customers free samples and other incentives to regain their business.

Advertising it is: "Advertising is the nonpersonal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media

NONPERSONAL First, what is "nonpersonal"? There are two basic ways to sell anything: personally and nonpersonally. Personal selling requires the seller and the buyer to get together. **There are advantages** and **disadvantages** to this. The first advantage is time: the seller has time to discuss in detail everything about the product. The buyer has time to ask questions, get answers, and examine evidence for or against purchase. **A second advantage** of personal selling is that the seller can see you, see your face, see how the sales message is getting across. If you yawn or your eyes shift

away, you're obviously bored, and the seller can change approach. Seller also sees if you're hooked, see what features or benefits have your attention, and emphasize them to close the sale.

Finally, the seller can easily locate potential buyers. If you enter a store, you probably have an interest in something that store sells.

Disadvantages do exist. Personal selling is, naturally enough, expensive, since it is labor-intensive and deals with only one buyer at a time.

In addition, its advantage of time is also a disadvantage. Personal selling is time-consuming. Selling a stereo or a car can take days, and major computer and airplane sales can take years.

There are different methods of advertisements like Advertise on the radio, yellow pages, billboard, Use of stickers or magnets to advertise on the car, take out an ad in the local newspaper, local cable TV station, social Medias like Facebook, LinkedIn, a relevant website and use of a sidewalk sign to promote the specials.

Internet Marketing

Start a Google awards pay-per-click campaign and Microsoft advertise center pay-per-click campaign so that to comment on a blog post, record a video blog post, upload a video to you tube, check online directory listings and get listed in desirable directories, set up Google analytics on the web and blog, Review and measure the set upped Google Analytics statistics, Restore a new domain name for a marketing campaign or a new product or service, Learn more about local search marketing, Track the online reputation,

Email Marketing

Create an email opt-in on the website or blog, offer a free download or free gift to make people willing to add their email address, send regular emails to registered contact list. Start a free monthly email newsletter, use A/B testing to measure the effectiveness of the company email campaigns, perfect the e mail signature, add audio, video and social sharing functionality to the emails.

Contests, Coupons and Incentives

Start a contest, create a coupon, a "frequent buyer" rewards and client appreciation program by selecting customer of the month bases and give away to a free sample and start an affiliation program.

Relationship Building

Send out a customer satisfaction survey, Ask for referrals and make a referral.
Help promote or volunteer time for a charity event. Sponsor a local sports team.
Cross- promotes the products and services with other local businesses.
Join a professional organization.
Plan the next holiday promotion.
Plan holiday gifts for the best customers.
Send birthday cards to regular clients.
Approach a colleague about a collaboration.
Donate branded prizes for local fundraisers.
Become a mentor.

Marketing with Content

Plan a free teleconference or webinar.
Record a podcast.
Write a press release.
Submit the press release to various distribution channels.
Rewrite the sales copy with a storytelling spin.
Start writing a book.

Marketing Help

Hire a marketing consultant.
Hire a public relations professional.
Hire a professional copywriter.
Hire a search engine marketing firm.
Hire an intern to help with daily marketing tasks.
Hire a sales coach or salesperson.

Unique Marketing Ideas

Get a branded tattoo.

Create a business mascot to help promote the brand.

Take a controversial stance on a hot industry topic.

Pay for wearable advertising.

Get a full-body branded paint job done on the company vehicle.

Sign up for online business training to revamp, expand and fine tune all of the marketable skills.

4.2. Overview of retail marketing strategy and Tactics

Getting into the consumer - Gaining new clients to buy the product

"When we have a relatively new product, we have to get placement or display outside of the normal department is a key strategy. In our Activation Markets, we get our staff on the ground to get placement outside of the deli where we are normally merchandised. This tactic helps to attract new people that have never seen our product."

Influencing existing customers to purchase more drugs

Frequency - Or Getting existing customers to buy more Often Is the lifeblood of consumer foods. Examples of how we do this?

"Microscope is a multi-use product. So in addition to being a great standalone, it's great for dipping and can be paired with slides, lancets, gloves, syringes etc. this example shows we are a great base for that like an appetizer .Our demos show people how to use it in more than one way

Getting existing customers to purchase more during a given shopping trip helps to block the competition

Using promotional price points to get more customers for new products

It is all about the price point. Most retailers have accepted the multiple price point therefore we can use a 2 for 5 methods than 2.49 for each. If we have a 2-for, type it is almost guarantee that every customer will buy the multiple."

Trade Commitment - getting the maximum number of shoppers near our brand.

"It all starts with having a relationship with retail buyers, supporting their important merchandising programs. Too many brands fail to ask "what is important to us as a retail buyer" If a certain promo is important to the retailer, we have to support them The retailer may then be more inclined to support us in the future! Don't be "all about me... be all about us!"

Stopping the shopper - Big, Colorful and Simple

Our in-store displays need to be big enough to attract attention. It is suggested that arranging the display based on the colors of the packaging and create vertical or horizontal blocks

"Additionally, we should have an assortment of our best seller on display. It absolutely makes our display shop-able! This is to mean grab multiple bags or products without the display falling apart always are cognizant of store volume when we build a display. Our display should be able to survive several hours of shopping before a refill is needed."

Now, customer count is something a store may not give us since this is very proprietary. So we have to consider visiting the store several times and count people within a 2 or 3 hour period. It is called field research, it may not be fun but it sure returns great benefits of increased knowledge of our customer.

Focus on discount related claims - it has to be a compelling price point. Not the lowest but compelling and relevant to the consumer. If we were our consumer, what would incentivize us as a price point... just we have to be honest with ourselves in this question.

Promotional mechanism claims - Partner with another brand. Buy something and get something free. "We had a promotion that was buy 2 bags of chocolates and get a

container of hummus free that was very successful. So whatever our product, look for brands that have synergy to ours and contact them to see if we can partner on co-promotions."

Price reduction method and promotional lift

Temporary Price reductions, that tag on the shelf this combo drives volume. We don't need a really big discount for a product. Sometimes just a \$.20 cents price reduction does it because the tag attracts attention... we will get "Lift" and the buyer needs to see Promotional Lift", Promotional Lift means "So if we normally sell 10 units a week and we sold 20 units on promotion, we have a promotional lift of 10 units and a lift percentage of 100%. Buyers also have another term, called Raised Base.

Buyers want to see our promotional lift translate into higher non promotion base sales. So in our example, if we had a promotional lift of 10 units per week, the buyer might want to see our post promotion base sales increase to 13 to 15 units per week. This raised base shows conversion of new customers with our promotions."

4.3. Drug promotion, materials and technique used, and their influence

4.3.1. Drug promotion and promotional materials

Doctors are the main targets for the promotional activities of drug companies in developing countries. With the power to prescribe and a high status in society their opinion of a drug very often determines its sales success. It is therefore not surprising that the majority of marketing spend by industry leaders goes towards direct-to-doctor (DTD) promotion. Health professionals are targeted by companies mainly via medical representatives and advertisements placed in medical journals or brochures that are sent directly to the doctors. that the main conduits of promotion in are: "advertising, detailing (visits from sales representatives), direct mail, sales promotion, publicity and public relations. Among them, detailing dominates most. "These marketing practices are common to most contexts whether in developing countries or developed. However some issues are of particular concern to developing countries where health budgets are smaller and resources have to stretch much further. For instance in developing

countries the lack of government funding for professional development activities for health professionals can make drug company sponsored meetings more valuable. Lack of resources for surgeries and even personal medical resources can also make offers from drug companies more inviting. The sheer volume of promotion as well as the types of cases we have come across in our research raises serious concerns about whether drug companies are able to regulate their promotion activities effectively, while ensuring high standards of consumer protection. The following section of this report shows how doctors in developing countries can be faced with a barrage of gifts, visits from sales representatives' and print advertising.

4.3.2. Promotional materials and their influence

- ❖ the influence of materials in drug prescription and introductions of drug promotion,
- ❖ definitions of promotional materials and particularly materials used in drug promotions
- ❖ promotional tools and gifts used for drug promotion
- ❖ definition of drug prescriptions and definition of prescribers

4.3.3. Means of promotion

4.3.4. Common practice of using gifts as promotional materials in the marketing of pharmaceutical products

4.3.5. Current status of drug promotion and promotional gifts in Ethiopia

Among the promotional tactics employed by pharmaceutical companies is the practice of giving gifts to doctors. In developing countries, like Ethiopia these range from small items such as gifts, pens and notebooks to expensive foreign holidays, televisions, air conditioners and even jewelry. Domestic companies in countries like India, Venezuela and Indonesia are also engaged in similar practices. However an added ethical dilemma is presented for multinational firms. In taking advantage of poor economic conditions and lax regulations to influence the prescribing patterns of doctors in developing

countries, while simultaneously adopting a “softer” approach with doctors in Europe, North America and Australia they can be viewed as being guilty of double standards.

4.3.6. The most common Promotional gifts given by Pharmaceuticals companies in Ethiopia

- **Low cost:** pens/pads/diaries/calendars.
- **Medium cost:** stethoscope/books/briefcases.
- **High cost:** air conditioners/laptops/desktop computers/

4.3.7. Who promote drugs in Ethiopia?

- ❖ Legal liabilities and professional responsibilities of pharmacist as drug promoter in Ethiopia
- ❖ Legal liabilities and professional responsibilities of prescribers in Ethiopia
- ❖ Problems related to violation of professional and legal responsibility by pharmacists
- ❖ Promotional strategies of pharmaceutical companies in Ethiopia
- ❖ The believe of most pharmaceutical companies on promotional gifts
- ❖ The motivation of prescribers prescribing those drugs promoted with gifts,
- ❖ Promoters view on drug promotion

4.3.8 Drug promotion and regulation in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia drug promotion is regulated by FMHACA and the following drugs are allowed to be promoted on Mass media, Newspapers, and billboards.

a) The following products are allowed By Electronic and Print Media-TV, Radio, Newspaper

- Oral contraceptives
- ORS
- Condoms
- Vitamins,
- Food additives
- Analgesics, Anthilemntics,

- Medical Equipment's
- Medical supplies including self-test for pregnancy and Hypertension but not self-test for HIV
- Medicated & Non medicated Cosmetics
- Sanitary and Beautifying agents eg. Tooth paste, diapers, Modes,
- Industrial & Household Insecticides, pesticides
- Disinfectants

4.3.9 Products allowed promoting By Billboards are

- Condoms
- Oral contraceptives (one month)
- Sanitary and beautifying agents e.g. Tooth paste, diapers, Modes,
- Vitamins
- Cosmetics
- Sanitary and Beautifying agents e.g. Tooth paste, diapers, Modes,

The information content of the drugs to be promoted shall be strictly evaluated by the Authority and the information content of promotion in media for Analgesics, Anthilemntics shall include the right source of availability and shall state that the advice of health professional is required. The information content of promotion in media for Cosmetics shall include the necessary precaution to be taken during application. For Industrial & household insecticide and pesticides shall state that

Foods and liquids are covered before spraying!

The person should cover his mouth and nose during spray!

They are not to be sprayed on fire!

4.3.10 Guideline for the regulation of Promotion & Advertisement of drugs

They are to be kept away from the reach of children for all medicines

The place should be closed for 30-40 minutes after spray to the insecticide spray

Skin contact with the insecticide and pesticide should be avoided.

All Drugs except as indicated above shall not be advertised by:

- Radio, television, press, or in films;

- Means of aircraft, ship, boats, cars, vans and all other transport vehicles.
- means of posters and billboards in places accessible to the public except advertising of non-prescription drugs intended for the public shall be limited to poster and stickers displays in pharmacies, licensed private and public health institution.
- illuminated signs
- Telephone, SMS
- organizing competitions or sponsorship
- The provision of leaflets of detachable inserts in non-health or pharmaceutical publications.
- The display in theatre or role play
- Door to door advertising.

4.3.11 Drug prescriptions

A prescription drug (also prescription medication or prescription medicine) is a pharmaceutical drug that legally requires a medical prescription to be dispensed. In contrast, over-the-counter drugs can be obtained without a prescription.

Some medications have psychoactive (mind-altering) properties and, because of that, are sometimes abused—that is, taken for reasons or in ways or amounts not intended by a doctor, or taken by someone other than the person for whom they are prescribed. In fact, prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs are, after marijuana (and alcohol), the most commonly abused substances.

The classes of prescription drugs most commonly abused are: opioid pain relievers, such as Vicodin or Oxycontin; stimulants for treating Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), such as Adderall, Concerta, or Ritalin; and central nervous system (CNS) depressants for relieving anxiety, such as Valium. The most commonly abused OTC drugs are cough and cold remedies containing dextromethorphan.

People often think that prescription and OTC drugs are safer than illicit drugs, but that's only true when they are taken exactly as prescribed and for the purpose intended. When abused, prescription and OTC drugs can be addictive and put abusers at risk for

other adverse health effects, including overdose—especially when taken along with other drugs or alcohol.

4.3.12. How Are Prescription Drugs Abused?

Prescription and OTC drugs may be abused in one or more of the following ways:

Taking a medication that has been prescribed for somebody else. Unaware of the dangers of sharing medications, people often unknowingly contribute to this form of abuse by sharing their unused pain relievers with their family members.

Most teenagers who abuse prescription drugs are given them for free by a friend or relative.

Taking a drug in a higher quantity or in another manner than prescribed

Most prescription drugs are dispensed orally in tablets, but abusers sometimes crush the tablets and snort or inject the powder. This hastens the entry of the drug into the bloodstream and the brain and amplifies its effects.



Taking a drug for another purpose than prescribed All of the drug types mentioned can produce pleasurable effects at sufficient quantities, so taking them for the purpose of getting high is one of the main reasons people abuse them.

ADHD drugs like Adderall are also often abused by students seeking to improve their academic performance. However, although they may boost alertness, there is little evidence they improve cognitive functioning for those without a medical condition.

How Do Prescription and OTC Drugs Affect the Brain?

Taken as intended, prescription and OTC drugs safely treat specific mental or physical symptoms. But when taken in different quantities or when such symptoms aren't present, they may affect the brain in ways very similar to illicit drugs.

For example, stimulants such as Ritalin achieve their effects by acting on the same neurotransmitter systems as cocaine. Opioid pain relievers such as OxyContin attach to the same cell receptors targeted by illegal opioids like heroin. Prescription depressants produce sedating or calming effects in the same manner as the club drugs GHB and rohypnol. And when taken in very high doses, dextromethorphan acts on the same cell receptors as PCP or ketamine, producing similar out-of-body experiences.

When abused, all of these classes of drugs directly or indirectly cause a pleasurable increase in the amount of dopamine in the brain's reward pathway. Repeatedly seeking to experience that feeling can lead to addiction.

What Are the Other Health Effects of Prescription and OTC Drugs?

Opioids can produce drowsiness, cause constipation, and—depending upon the amount taken—depress breathing. The latter effect makes opioids particularly dangerous, especially when they are snorted or injected or combined with other drugs or alcohol.

Opioids and Brain Damage

While the relationship between opioid overdose and depressed respiration (slowed breathing) has been confirmed, researchers are also studying the long-term effects on brain function. Depressed respiration can affect the amount of oxygen that reaches the brain, a condition called hypoxia. Hypoxia can have short- and long-term psychological and neurological effects, including coma and permanent brain damage.

Researchers are also investigating the long-term effects of opioid addiction on the brain. Studies have shown some deterioration of the brain's white matter due to heroin use, which may affect decision-making abilities, the ability to regulate behavior, and responses to stressful situations.

Stimulants can have strong effects on the cardiovascular system. Taking high doses of a stimulant can dangerously raise body temperature and cause irregular heartbeat or even heart failure or seizures. Also, taking some stimulants in high doses or repeatedly can lead to hostility or feelings of paranoia.

CNS depressants slow down brain activity and can cause sleepiness and loss of coordination. Continued use can lead to physical dependence and withdrawal symptoms if discontinuing use.

Dextromethorphan can cause impaired motor function, numbness, nausea or vomiting, and increased heart rate and blood pressure. On rare occasions, hypoxic brain damage—caused by severe respiratory depression and a lack of oxygen to the brain—has occurred due to the combination of dextromethorphan with decongestants often found in the medication.

All of these drugs have the potential for addiction, and this risk is amplified when they are abused. Also, as with other drugs, abuse of prescription and OTC drugs can alter a person's judgment and decision making, leading to dangerous behaviors such as unsafe sex and drugged driving.

5 Methodology

5.1. Study area and source of data

As the capital city of Ethiopia thought to represent the health services standard of the country and the promotional activities are concentrated in Addis Ababa.

Sources of data for the study were both primary and secondary. The primary data will be collected from the administrative department of employees of both government and private health institutions by using questionnaire and interview method to the random individuals. Secondary data will be gathered from published and unpublished theoretical literatures and empirical studies.

5.2. The study designed and targeting

Research design is essentially a statement of the object of the inquiry and the strategies for collecting the evidences, analyzing the evidences and reporting the findings.” Both quantitative and qualitative research methods will be used to approach the study subjects Physicians, Health Officers, and other prescribers found in government and private health institutions ten pharmaceutical importing and manufacturing companies in Ethiopia will be randomly selected for data collection

5.3. Study participants

Randomly selected 100 promoters from Pharmaceutical importing companies, 100 prescribers from Government health institutions and 100 prescribers from private health sectors will be used

5.4. Survey method

The survey instruments will be two separate questionnaires for prescribers and promoters in the pharmaceutical importing companies for the physician there will be a multiple choices questions like most that helped them to prescribe a product. The same type but separate questionnaire will design and given to each companies under the study based on the responses received from the prescribers and the promoters. All data

will be entered in to a computer transformed if needed and analyzed using appropriate statistical tool

5.5. Data quality control

According to Kothari, (2004), sound measurement must meet the tests of validity, reliability and practicality. In fact, these are the three major considerations one should use in evaluating a measurement tool. “Validity refers to the extent to which a test measures what we actually wish to measure. Reliability has to do with the accuracy and precision of a measurement procedure ... Practicality is concerned with wide range of factors of economy, convenience, and interpretability ...” Therefore, we briefly take up the relevant details concerning these tests of sound measurement. To ascertain the data quality and reliability questionnaire will be translated to Amharic which is an official language of federal government of Ethiopia.

5.4. Duration of study

The duration of the study will be 5 months - from March 2015 to August 2015.

QUESTIONARE

Prescribers respond on promotional materials

I. Introduction

Dear Prescriber,

Good day! This prescriber's opinion on promotional materials is survey which is conducted for the partial fulfillment of MBA and aimed to know the influence of promotional materials on drug prescriptions. in this brief survey, your answers will be helpful in enhancing our services and meeting the prescription needs. Your response will only be used for survey purposes.in case you have any questions regarding the survey, please call at +251911514595.

Thank you very much for your time and suggestions

I. Demographic Data

Notes: This section is optional. The questions asking for demographic data should be relevant to the survey goal and must point to the characteristics of the target population.

Name (optional): _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Qualification: _____

Working at Government _____ Private _____

Years of experience as a prescriber/promoter

- 1-2
- 3-5
- 6-10

- More than 10

II. Questions

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of these statements regarding the influence of promotional materials on drug prescriptions. Place “x” mark in the box of your answer

Q.1 Prescription trends of prescriber based on the generic and brand preference

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
Prescription has to be written in the drugs generic name					
Prescription has to written in the drugs brand name?					

Q.2 How do you rate the way promoters act on drug promotion and the materials they offer you?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
Promoters are contacted you					

Promotional material received					
Promotional materials you're received have full information's about the drug?					
Promotional materials received have direct relation to the drug?					

Q3. How would you rate your overall experience in drug promotion?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
satisfactory					
Unsatisfactory					

Q4. What could we do to make promotion based on the products information? The promotional material and their influence on prescriber

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
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Promotion do not require on drugs					
Promotion has to be done without any gift					
Promotion are required on drugs					
Promotional gifts has to be value less or having very small value in terms of money					
promotional materials received from promoter are influential on prescription of drug to patients					
Promotional materials received from promoter do not influence on prescription of					

drug to the patients					
Drug promotion do have significant importance to the knowledge of the prescriber					
Before and after promotion of specific drug there is a significant change in prescription of that drug					

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
Promoters are contacted you					
Promotional material received					
Promotional materials your received have full informations about the drug?					
Promotional materials received have direct relation to the drug?					

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