

IMPACT OF ADVERTISEMENT OF DIRECT TO CONSUMER AYURVEDIC PROPRIETARY MEDICINE

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ABSTRACT

Now a day's Direct to Consumer Advertisement [DTC] are becoming very good source of income for industrialist, Everybody can compromise for their daily needs but health can't be compromised by people because it interrupts the daily activities. Industrialists are using this need and fascination to tempt the innocent and needy people to purchase their own products. The amazing fact is that they are getting excellent benefits from this way of income. Initially it was thought that advertisement can be a good way to reach the common people and a way to aware people for *ayurveda* and *ayurvedic* products. This aim helps the people and aware them for alternative medicine. Here we are explaining that advertisements are now targets on economical benefits rather public benefits are not considered by Pharmaceutical companies. Advertisement is the best way to avail the products for people but they should not claim extraordinary benefits.

INTRODUCTION

Our Daily newspapers contain the maximum number of advertisements related with *ayurvedic* products. These products are advertised by famous heroes and heroines of film industries in fact some of the channels show special programs of specific pharmaceutical products. This is sufficient enough to attract and engulf the innocent and needy people to purchase their own products. Especially children and adolescents are more indulged for purchasing these products. Patients have not need to consult for having such advertised drugs so products are directly provided to the consumer, This way of intake known as direct to consumer [DTC]. The Availability of DTC products are becoming very easier by internet banking or by simple phone call. Advertisement gives high return in terms of money;

Pharmaceutical companies are spending more on medical drug advertising than on research and drug development¹.

Advertisement are not limited to the television or newspaper but increased towards websites, online videos, social networks, mobile devices and many other ways. The pharmaceutical companies allocate their majority of budgets to traditional offline media such as television, newspaper, magazine and radio marketers, hospital display and service items such as educational films and photographs, booklets distributed in health related fairs, exhibitions and the like. Some of the companies spend to digital activities like website etc. Consumers are specially shifted to new media sources for health and pharmaceutical information. Over 145 million US adults looked up health information online in 2008. So it's obvious that pharma-

ceutical companies have maximum earning by advertisement even though drug quality is superior or not. Pharmaceutical drug advertisers are continuing to increase the amount of money spent on DTC advertisement which increase of 330% from 1996 to 2005.²

Market value of *Ayurvedic* Drugs

OTC is over the counter drugs are medicines which sold directly to consumer without a prescription from health care professional, Government allow manufacturer freedom to formulate ingredients of new medicine³. Indian OTC market has been valued at approximately 2 billion as per Nicholas Hakk, DB6 2012 database India, In which *ayurveda* based OTC products contributed more than a quarter to the total sales. The Top five brands in Indian OTC market are Dabur chyawanprash, Boroplus, Vicks vaporub, Revital and Zandu balm⁴. Gastrointestinal and analgesic categories contributed the highest [26 percent] to the OTC *Ayurvedic* market. Analgesic *ayurvedic* market is comprised only of topical analgesic *ayurvedic* formulation contributed over 70 percent to the total OTC sales of topical analgesic. In fact, the top brands in the topical analgesic market [Zandu Balm, Moov and Amrutanjan] are *ayurvedic* drugs competing closely with diclofenac brands like Volini. Traditional digestive remedies in the gastrointestinal category also follow a similar strategy.

According to the latest report released by AdEx a division of TAM media research Print advertising volumes of over the counter medicine grew 14% during January to September in 2013 compare to the same period last year. 8 out of 10 top advertisers are engaged in the manufacture of *ayurvedic* proprietary medicine. The

value of Indian OTC market is 7500-8000 crore with an expected compounded annual growth rate of 18-20 %. These all data shows the Direct to consumer *Ayurvedic* products are highly demanding.

Regulation on Advertisement

Advertisement standard council of india⁵, which is self regulatory organization maintain and enhance the public confidence in advertising. Their mandate is that all advertising material must be truthful. ASCI got 251 misleading claims related with health and personal care in the last 6 months According to Ananad Sharma chairman ASCI that ASCI tie up with AdEx a division by TAM that screens almost every single piece of TV and print advertising, has result in NAMS [National Ad monitoring service]. Every month, NAMS sends ASCI 1000 plus suspect ads that vetted by complaints council. If great harm can be caused either to consumer, they can suspend the ad till the council meets to give it final decision. The other key area of course is monitoring ads that are online. But shashi Sinha, CEO-India, IPG Medibrands admits that Digital is under ASCI purview but not under cable act. Hence there's no legal standing: only self regulation⁶.

Some *Ayurvedic* pharmaceutical companies came under the council's scanner⁷

- Dabur india was told to pull out its ad for fem turmeric herbal bleach which claimed that it is herbal, mild and ammonia-free.
- An Ad by Himalaya Drug Company for its complete care toothpaste claimed 'antioxidant' health benefits. Not only did it kill the germs and it also removed toxins and further strengthened the gums and teeth. The council upheld the complaint and the company removed the Ad.

- ASCI upheld complaint against Emami fairness cream ad, which then had to withdraw.
- ASCI Upheld complain against Slim fast herbal capsule, it claim to make someone more slim, and smart with no exercise, no side effect, no dieting.

Many *Ayurvedic* pharmacovigilance centers are established but the Indian people and physician are not active enough to inform the adverse effect of these drugs so due to lack documentation of adverse reaction, resultants the vast majority of products are advertised and sailed. According to Venkat MD and CEO Birla wellness and health care⁸, the reason behind the mushrooming of the industry is the absence of patent laws also the industry produce abundant drugs for life style diseases.

Merits of *Ayurvedic* products advertisements

Ayurveda has been traveled from long way of eras. It was flourished in *Veda*, *Brahmin*, *upanishada*, *samhita* etc, but this science has been destroyed by *Mugals* and *ayurvedic* physicians who have tendency to hide the knowledge. Now Commercialization of *ayurveda* gained new identity in society despite the recognition of *ayurveda* as a traditional system of medicine by the WHO and favorable financial support given to *ayurvedic* drugs as alternative medicine.

Demarits of advertisement to *ayurvedic* drugs

- Globalization of *Ayurvedic* drugs needs standardization and quality assurance of in-use-drugs. Besides developing new drugs and formulation for more resent indication, that classical *ayurvedic* formulation seem to be losing ground is evident from drastic cuts in production and sale of classical drugs by most *ayurvedic* drug companies⁹.

- Advertised products contain some information of drug. This information is not enough to use the product in various condition, this less information misguide the people.

- OTC increased market value of *ayurvedic* products but reduce practical application of *ayurveda* like; *panchmahabhut*, *tridosha* and many other essential concepts

- OTC or advertized drugs are emphasizing to intake the medicine according to the complaints that can harm the patients. In *ayurveda* this type of treatment strategy called as *Ekdeshika*¹⁰, physician prescribing the drug or patient intake medicine without observing causes, sign, symptoms and drug this way of treatment will be less effective because diagnosis is as important as treatment. *Ayurveda* believes that treatment is effective, when prescribed not only according to disease but also after observing the patient body and soul.

- Mushrooming of the *Ayurvedic* pharmaceutical companies are developing thousands of new products daily. Every product is assured to cure the disease. Like much hair oil are advertized daily, which should be better or best for consumer, nobody knows. Products are launched without any clinical researches and standardization. The consumers self purchase the medicine and start the trial on their own sometimes it will be beneficial or sometimes not and sometimes it can be harmful.

- Majority of OTC *Ayurvedic* products are analgesic, laxative, digestive. These all products are advertised as miraculous drug like in advertisement one man is suffered from headache he used the balm and completely relived from pain with in a second. Lots of laxatives are available in market,

Sharangdhara samhita classified laxative according to their function but not any advertised laxative product named according to their function. Constipated patient starts to intake the laxative without considering the causative factor of constipation. These products help the patient but not cure the disease. This mild relief is sufficient for common people; effectiveness of such products crosses one man's mouth to another one, the product becomes highly popular. Although it may contain argemone mexicana, operculina terpenanthum etc drug which will harm the intestine besides that the drug sailed popularly.

- Very important concept of *ayurveda* given by *Acharya Charaka* that *Ayurvedic* science should not be used in terms of money¹¹ but it will be used only for health promotion. We can't say that *ayurvedic* drugs should be prescribed or purchased free of cost but these sciences should not be known as good business but they will be recognized as essential health science.

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda achieved new identification by advertisements. It changes the general thought of people that *Ayurvedic* drugs are not always like bitter powder or *ayurvedic* practitioners are like old saints can give the *ayurvedic* medicine. Now the globalization and commercialization of *ayurveda* attract the multinational companies towards *ayurveda*. General herbal drugs are known as side effect free and effective, pharmaceutical companies started to develop new herbal remedies. *Ayurvedic* practitioners are not well acquainted with research and standardization of *ayurvedic* products so they launch the product without going through the clinical trial, drug analysis etc.

Ayurvedic physicians are not in habit to stress on *panchnidan*, *samprapti vighatan*, and diagnostic tools for disease in *ayurveda*, that's why they used to prescribe the non patent drugs which are based on symptomatic treatment. OTC market is also providing those drugs to consumer which is not standardized on ethical parameters. These all things collectively affect consumers or patients. They have to pay more for those things which is not worthy.

Advertisements affect by two ways

- 1- The misleading advertisement can harm the consumers
- 2- Advertisement is emphasizing the intake of *ayurvedic* herbals remedies but not emphasizing on the full *ayurvedic* approach regarding disease.

CONCLUSION

Advertisement is a bridge between pharmaceutical companies and consumer, so this connectivity should be truthful and beneficial for both. If the pharmaceutical companies are getting best return in terms of money, then they should also consider the good health of consumers.

Ayurveda is Indian traditional science; this science faces so many ups and downs since many years. Now *ayurveda* achieved higher market value by advertisements but without soul of *ayurvedic* concept. Data shows that OTC also increased the market value of *Ayurvedic* proprietary drugs. Although it is an achievement for Indian traditional medical science but it is not complete development, because the concepts like *Dosha*, *prakriti*, *Srotasa*, *vikriti* etc are still not encouraged and emphasized. Experts are emphasizing only the *Ayurvedic* medicine marketing by drug research, standardization but it is time to develop the whole *ayurvedic*

science. This will not only increase market value but good health will also be promoted.

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