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A STUDY OF PERSONAL SELLING AND RELATIONSHIPS

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Abstract:

Effective personal selling addresses the buyer's needs and preferences without making him or her feel pressure. Good salespeople offer advice, information, and recommendation to customer. Salespeople help buyers to save their money and time during the decision process. The seller should give honest responses to any question or objection that buyer has risen. He should take care more about fulfill the buyer's needs than making the sale. Attending to these aspects of personal selling contributes to a strong, trusting relationship between buyer and seller. Personal selling uses in-person interaction to sell products and services. This type of communication is carried out by sales representatives, who are the personal connection between a buyer and a company or a company's products or services. Salespeople not only inform potential customers about a company's product or services, they also use their power of persuasion and remind customers of product characteristics, service agreements, prices, deals, and much more. In addition to enhancing customer relationships, this type of marketing communications tool can be a powerful source of customer feedback, as well.

Keywords: *personal selling, products and services, communication, customer relationships*

Introduction:

Personal selling uses in-person interaction to sell products and services. This type of communication is carried out by sales representatives, who are the personal connection between a buyer and a company or a company's products or services. Salespeople not only inform potential customers about a company's product or services, they also use their power of persuasion and remind customers of product characteristics, service agreements, prices, deals, and much more. In addition to enhancing customer relationships, this type of marketing communications tool can be a powerful source of customer feedback, as well.

Effective personal selling addresses the buyer's needs and preferences without making him or her feel pressure. Good salespeople offer advice, information, and recommendation to customer.

Salespeople help buyers to save their money and time during the decision process. The seller should give honest responses to any question or objection that buyer has risen. He should take care more about fulfill the buyer's needs than making the sale. Attending to these aspects of personal selling contributes to a strong, trusting relationship between buyer and seller.

Sinhagadpharma Pvt. Ltd is a diversified distributor /wholesaler of highly recommended pharmaceutical products. This project is titled as "A Study of Personal selling and relationships" and tries to find out different aspects of personal selling with respect to medical representative and wholesaler. Therefore the paper will focus on how personal selling is carried out by medical representative while considering distributor/wholesaler.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

Present study has undertaken the following objectives

1. To study the concept of personal selling with respect to distributor/wholesaler.
2. To determine the impact of personal selling on maintaining the relationship with distributor/wholesaler.
3. To find out the effectiveness of personal selling in collection of information and making report.
4. To analyse the different methods to search out and obtain new customers.
5. To examine the contribution of personal selling (medical representative) in achieving targets of company and of wholesaler.
6. To give meaningful suggestions if required.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Methodology is a systematic procedure of collecting information in order to analyse and verify a phenomenon. The organization necessary data is collected through the primary and secondary source.

A. Primary data:

Primary data of medical representatives is collected through schedule and direct interview with structured questionnaire.

B. Secondary data:

Secondary data like company profile, employees personal detail, different facilities and incentives provided by organization to the employees is collected through company brochures and company documents and theoretical information from various books.

C. Sample Design:

a) Sample Size–

The sample size for study is 30 medical representatives and 1 wholesaler. In this

sampling size all medical representatives working from various branded companies were included.

b) Sampling Method–

Random sampling method is used for collection of data.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The scope of the study is described as follows. Geographical Scope of the study is limited to the "SINHAGAD PHARMA PVT LTD. " PUNE. The study is undertaken in "SinthagadPharmaPvt Ltd." Pune. While in the analytical Scope, data is analyzed by using Simple Random sampling method and graphical presentation. Conceptual Scope of the study focuses on Personal selling and its process, concept, meaning, definition, methods, etc. It shows how distributor and medical representatives work together in link with each other.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE:

The Sinthagad Pharma Pvt Ltd. is based on partnership deed. The company has 4 directors / key management personal Rahul Ramesh Deshpande, Sanjay Manohar Shah, Vinayak Shrinivas Bandewar, and Mohan Jaysing Deshmukh. The Sinthagad Pharma Private Limited is listed in the class of company and classified as Non-Govt. Company.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Here, the data is collected from employees in the organization, through schedules as well as the data is obtained through filling up the questionnaire. Then it is analyzed by using different analytical tools.

Questions to Medical representatives:

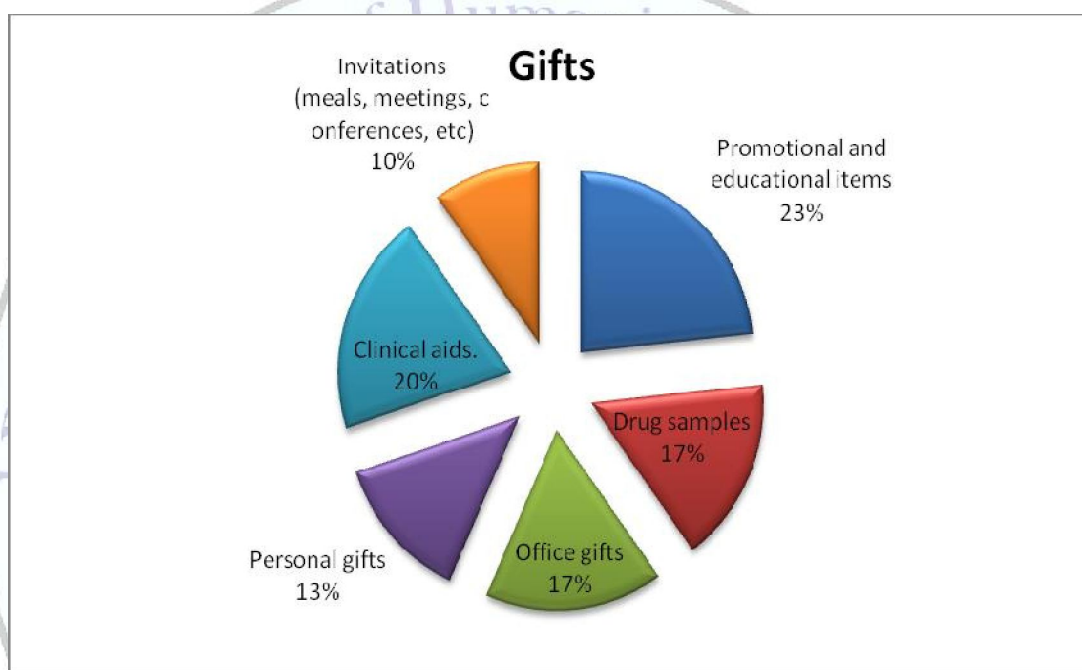
1. How many times does a MR visit doctors in a week?

Sr. No.	Particular (no. of doctors)	No. of respondents (MR)	Percentage
1	2 – 4	12	40.00%
2	4 – 6	10	33.33%
3	6 – 8	5	16.66%
4	8 – 10	3	10%
	TOTAL	30	100%

From the above table, it is seen that 40% of MR or personal sellers frequently i.e. 2-4 times a week keep visiting to the doctors. As well as it is observed that 40% of MR or personal sellers frequently i.e. 13 -15 times a week keep visiting the doctors.

2. What kind of different gift vouchers do you receive from pharmaceutical companies?

Sr. No.	Particular	No. of respondents (MR)	Percentage
1	Promotional and educational items	7	23.33%
2	Drug samples	5	16.66%
3	Office gifts	5	16.66%
4	Personal gifts	4	13.33%
5	Clinical aids.	6	20%
6	Invitations(meals, meetings, conferences, etc)	3	10.00%
	Total	30	100%

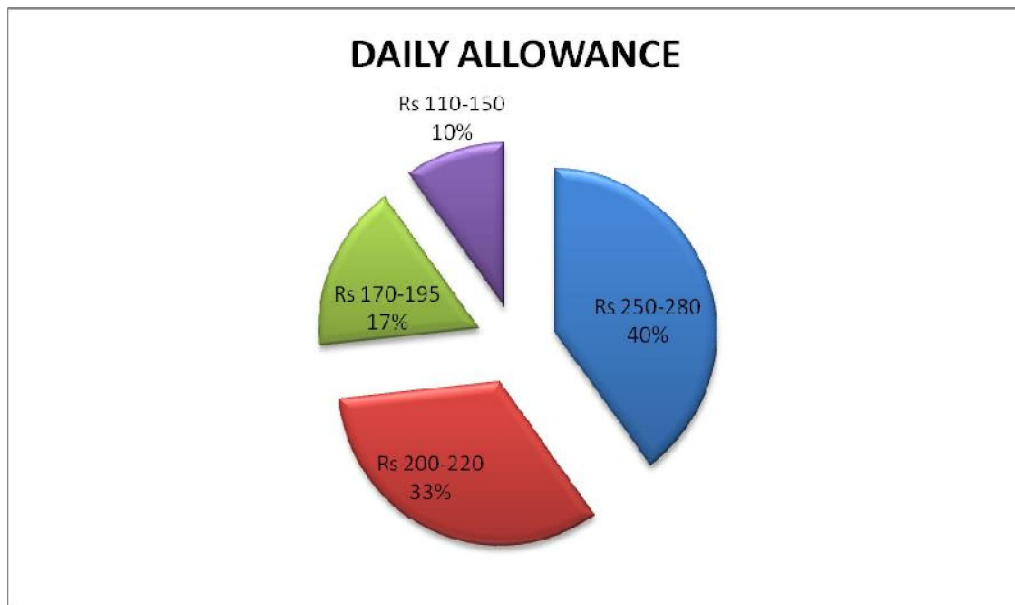


Analysis & Interpretation:

From above pie chart we can see that medical representatives receive various types of gifts from their respective companies. These are promotional and educational items as well as clinical aids were received in more quantity.

3. How much daily allowance does MR get?

Sr. No.	Particular (Daily allowance In Rs.)	No. of respondents (MR)	Percentage
1	250 – 280	12	40.00%
2	200 – 220	10	33.33%
3	170 – 195	5	16.66%
4	110 – 150	3	10%
	TOTAL	30	100%

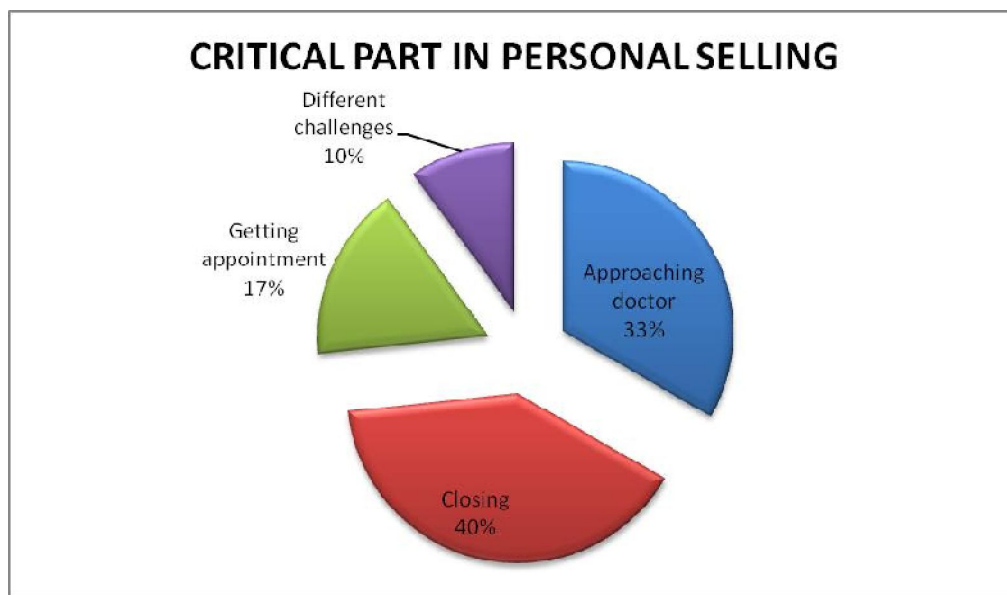


Analysis & Interpretation:

From above pie chart we get the idea in how much range does medical representatives get their daily allowance. It is observed that 40% of medical representative receive about Rs. 250-280 daily allowance from their respective company. It generally depends on how the MR complete their monthly target, so if they continuously keep achieving the targets there incentive/daily allowance will increase. Daily allowance also differs from branded to local companies.

4. What is the most critical part of personalselling?

Sr. No.	Particular (critical part)	No. of respondents (MR)	Percentage
1	Approaching doctor	10	33.33%
2	Closing	12	40.00%
3	Getting appointment	5	16.66%
4	Different challenges	3	10%
	TOTAL	30	100%



Analysis & Interpretation:

Above pie chart shows the different critical part in personal selling or to the medical representatives. CLOSING STAGE is very difficult in personal selling because it involves obtaining a purchase commitment from prospect. Approaching doctor, Knowing product profile of drug, collect all information, obtain doctor's card, his personal information, writing habits, class, getting appointment, prescribe the products, To greet the doctor upon his visit and all this is daily routine of medical representative.

5. How should MR approach doctor?

- I. He should work on his appearance of a medical representative, the bag, clothing, nails, hairstyle...etc...
- II. He should always carry Doctor's card, know about personal information, writing habits, etc.
- III. He should have the ability to convince/persistent/credibility.
- IV. The frequency of visits, to set a program for visits.
- V. Planning: Yearly, every 6 months, every 2 weeks or daily.
- VI. A plan is set by medical rep., then approved by regional managers, then by the promotion department.

Analysis & Interpretation:

Above listed are values or ethics like how a personal selling or medical representative should follow. It is concluded that medical representative or personal selling person should approach doctor in good condition and in well manner, with proper planning and proper schedule.

6. What specifications about drug/medicines do MR provide to doctors?

- a. Product profile: all studies done, all information collected.

- b. Drug information.
- c. Updated info.
- d. Competing products.
- e. Shelf life of drug
- f. Ph and stability of medicines
- g. He must have detailed information about how your drug can be helpful and how it differs from other drugs.
- h. He should know details about the disease

Analysis & Interpretation:

Above listed are specifications of drug/medicines those MR should provide to doctors. It is observed that medical representative or personal sellers should have correct and proper information about the drug and competing products as well as have proper knowledge about their company they are working in.

7. Why doctors may not prescribe your specific product?

- a. No frequent visits.
- b. If he is not convinced with your product.
- c. Previous trial failure of the drug.
- d. Simply because he does not like you.
- e. Negative opinion or bad relations with your company
- f. There is no product in your company that matches his needs.
- g. His loyalty to other company
- h. If MR is not having enough information concerning the drug.
- i. He is used to other specific drugs.

Analysis & Interpretation:

Above lists shows that what mistakes should medical representative should avoid. So it is essential that medical representative should get proper training by the companies.

FINDINGS:

It is found from informal communication with distributor that maximum research is carried out through email communication and phone contacts. Maximum times medical representatives pre approaches the customer. Variety of gifts is received from the pharmaceutical companies but maximum gifts received are promotional and educational items. Sinhagad Pharma Pvt. Ltd Pune. has good and various types of pharmaceutical brands available at them. Sinhagad Pharma Pvt. Ltd. Pune, takes proper measures/steps to improve their performance.

- 40% of MR or personal sellers frequently i.e. 2-4 times a week keep visiting the doctors.

- 40% of MR or personal sellers frequently i.e. 13 - 15 times a week keep visitinthedoctors.
- Promotional and educational items as well as clinical aids are received in morequantity.
- 40% of medical representative receive about Rs. 250-280 daily allowance from their respectivecompany.
- Closing Stage is very difficult in personal selling because it involves obtaining a purchase commitment fromprospect.
- Medical representative or personal selling person should approach doctor in good condition and in well manner, with proper planning and properschedule.
- Medical representative or personal sellers should provide correct and proper information about the drug and competing products as well as have proper knowledge about their company they are workingin.
- Medical representative should be provided proper training by thepharmaceutical companies.

SUGGESTIONS:

- I. It is suggested that tie up with more and more consultants from multiple segments to attract largevolume.
- II. It is suggested to the pharmaceutical companies to give free demonstration and give the details about the offersto their sales teams orcustomers.
- III. It is essential to develop an e-mail marketing program for communicating regularly withdistributors.
- IV. It is suggested to distributors that they should provide case studies to help salesmanto sell the products by illustrating examples of where and how the product worked well in specific targetmarkets.
- V. Medical representatives should have detail product information as they need to present products in front of their customers.
- VI. Medical representatives should attend regularlythe sale conference that brings together distributors and personal sellingpeople. It will positively affect their productivity.

CONCLUSION:

The study investigated the effect of personal selling on organizational sales volume, where in the result shows that there is a relationship between personal selling and organizational sales volume. This implies that personal selling when effectively carried out influences and boost the sales rate of an organization. By personal selling we imply the direct relationship between a sales representative and a customer, the intention of which is to communicate the existence of a product as well as its basic functions. This result therefore shows that when personal selling is in place, the customer intention tends to arouse thereby causing an impulse buying and this in turn increases

organizational salesvolume.

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