

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusions

The study shows that the physicians are more favorable towards non-commercial as their source of drug information and source of influence in their prescribing practice. One of the possible ways for the pharmaceutical companies to obtain more favorable preference from physicians is to review their business conduct as other study shown that physicians in general hold negative opinion towards pharmaceutical companies.

The study also successfully identified the usefulness of each common sources of information for physicians as well as the physicians' attitudes and habits related to direct mail, clinical papers and sales representative visit. The levels of influences on prescribing practice of each common promotional tactics used by pharmaceutical companies are also identified. There is no fixed rules and best ways that fits to every product and marketing effort. It is important that managers should always use the findings of this study to optimize the marketing and promotion campaign.

5.2 Suggestions for Additional Research

This study provides findings that may benefit the pharmaceutical industry as a whole. In particular, the study provides evidence to the sales and marketing division on how they can plan and implement a more effective marketing campaign. Individual sales representatives are also benefit from this study as the findings give better understanding regarding their prime clients – the physicians.

There are some areas that deserve additional researches,

- 1 Further study to investigate the root cause of the physicians rated pharmaceutical companies lower as source of drug information and

source of influence would provide clearer directions to pharmaceutical companies in improving their business.

- 2 This study provides findings that show what respondents think what they are. There is no evidence to support their answers. Further studies can aim to clarify, e.g. (1) whether the number of visits of a sales representative correlates with the prescription of the related drug. (2) Whether a published scientific finding (clinical paper) correlates with the pattern of prescription.
- 3 As the pharmaceutical companies primarily rely on sales representatives as their connections with the physicians, further studies can aim at the relationships between sales representatives and physicians, i.e. the style of detailing, different ways of conveying messages, negative vs. positive message (when comparing competitor's product), what physicians like and dislike about the conduct of the sales representatives and the influence of personal relationship, etc.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

Due to the broad distribution of general practitioners and other specialist clinics, this study does not cover general practitioners and physicians operating in their own clinic setting. Thus, the findings from this study may not be applicable to this group of doctors.

Gift, sponsorship and recreation activities constitute a significant part of promotional activities and are common tactics used by the pharmaceutical companies. Many of these transactions are regarded as unethical. This study does not solicit data about these kinds of transactions. As the trend of pharmaceutical business is towards ethical practice, which would eventually eliminate these kinds of business transactions.