
SELECTING THE MOST EFFECTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE MARKETING MIX AND THEIR ROLE IN INCREASING SALES VOLUME - A SURVEY STUDY IN THE GENERAL COMPANY FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF MEDICINES AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES IN SAMARRA

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the impact of marketing mix elements (product, price, promotion, distribution) on sales volume in the General Pharmaceutical Company in Samarra city. The importance of the study lies in highlighting how to use marketing mix elements effectively to enhance sales and achieve success in a competitive business environment, especially in the pharmaceutical sector, which is characterized by the diversity of its products and strategic importance. A hypothetical study plan was adopted through which the study objectives and hypotheses were determined. The researcher used the descriptive analytical approach in order to reach the results, as data were collected using a questionnaire designed specifically for this purpose. (352) questionnaire forms were distributed to a sample of employees in the General Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company. The study field was determined as the Samarra Pharmaceutical Laboratory, and the questionnaire forms were retrieved in full. The data were analyzed using a set of descriptive and analytical statistical methods, including the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, simple correlation coefficient, and simple linear regression coefficient, using SPSS version 27.

The study reached several important results, the most prominent of which are: the existence of a statistically significant positive effect of each element of the marketing mix (product, price, promotion, distribution) on sales volume.

Keywords: Marketing mix, sales volume, pharmaceutical company.

Introduction

In today's world of accelerating change and fierce competition, the ability of organizations to adapt and differentiate themselves has become vital to their survival and growth. At the heart of this challenge, the marketing mix emerges as a powerful strategic tool that enables organizations to chart their path to success in a volatile and ever-evolving marketplace.

The marketing mix, with its four main elements, Kevin Dorsey Product, Price, Promotion, and Distribution (3P+D) represent the organization's compass in its journey towards achieving its marketing objectives. These elements, when harmonized, form an integrated symphony that plays the tune of success in the minds of customers and draws the organization's image in the market. But the question that arises is: How can organizations play this symphony perfectly in light of the constantly changing market conditions? This is what our current study seeks to explore. The study also seeks to identify the elements of the marketing mix that most affect sales, and explore ways to improve each element to maximize its impact on marketing performance, providing a framework that companies in the pharmaceutical sector can benefit from to enhance their sales. Taking the pharmaceutical company in Samarra as an applied model.

The importance of this study lies in the fact that it highlights how organizations can use the elements of the marketing mix as precise tools to formulate effective strategies that enable them to enhance their competitiveness in the market. In order to significantly increase their market share, improve their mental image among customers, And achieve sustainable growth in sales and profits.

First. The problem of the study

There is a fundamental problem facing the company's management, most of which was related to sales that had an impact on the company's competitive level and its market share. After the researcher confirmed the existence of a real problem that deserved research and investigation, he conducted a field survey (unstructured interviews) on the pharmaceutical company in Samarra, due to the importance of this sector, which is considered a basic source of medical industries that are needed by all segments of society and their various activities. The researcher concluded that the problem can be summarized as follows:

1. Is there an impact of the effectiveness of the marketing mix on the sales volume of the general pharmaceutical company in Samarra?
2. Do drug prices and geographical location have an impact on increasing sales volume?
3. Is there a relationship between the marketing mix and its dimensions and sales volume?

Second: The importance of the study

The importance of this study is highlighted by:

Scientific importance: This study is considered one of the important studies in the fields of scientific research related to marketing and management, as there is a lack of Arab studies related to the elements of the marketing mix and sales volume for specialists and workers in the same sector, to the best of the researcher's knowledge.

Practical importance: The importance of this study lies in the fact that it helps managers and employees in pharmaceutical service companies to discover the importance of the elements of the promotional mix and their impact on sales volume and how to address and solve all problems arising from these elements.

Third: Study objectives

1. The study aims to identify and analyze the basic elements of the marketing mix (product, price, promotion, and distribution) and their impact on sales volume in the General Company for Medicines in Samarra, which contributes to enriching marketing knowledge in Arab libraries.
2. The study seeks to measure and evaluate the extent of the impact of each element of the marketing mix on sales volume, and to determine which is more effective in achieving sales objectives.
3. The study aims to understand and clarify the relationship between each element of the marketing mix and sales volume, and how these elements combined affect the organization's sales performance.
4. The study aims to identify the elements that have the greatest impact on increasing sales volume, and to rank them according to their importance and effectiveness.
5. Based on the analysis results, the study aims to provide recommendations and suggestions to improve and develop the marketing mix to ensure its increased effectiveness in increasing sales volume.

Fourth: Study hypotheses

There is a significant influence relationship between marketing mix strategies and sales volume, and the following hypotheses branch out from it:

1. There is a significant influence relationship of product strategy on sales volume.
2. There is a significant effect relationship of price strategy on sales volume.
3. There is a significant influence relationship between the promotion strategy and sales volume.
4. There is a significant effect relationship between distribution strategy and sales volume.

Fifth: Limits of the study

1. Temporal boundaries: The temporal boundaries of the study were the period 2023-2024.
2. Spatial boundaries: The spatial boundaries of the study were represented by the General Company for Medicines in Samarra.
3. Cognitive boundaries: The cognitive boundaries of the study were limited to two variables: (marketing mix elements, sales volume) and the sub-dimensions they include.
4. Human borders: It included a number of employees and administrative leaders in the General Company for the Manufacture of Medicines and Medical Supplies in the city of Samarra in Salah al-Din.

The first topic

The theoretical framework of the marketing mix

First: The concept of marketing

Marketing is defined as the process of planning, implementing, presenting, promoting, exchanging and physically distributing goods and services to satisfy the needs and desires of individuals to achieve the organization's goals. It is defined by (Azzam et al., 2011: 29) as a set of integrated and diverse activities related to goods and services and their flow from the producer to the consumer in the form and manner that leads to satisfying the needs and desires of consumers through exchange processes that include the development and improvement of goods, products and services, pricing and promotion. Marketing is defined as an integrated system or business activity in which a set of activities and processes deal with it that aim to plan, price, promote and distribute, which seeks to flow goods and services from the producer to the consumer and create an exchange process that meets the needs and desires of consumers (Kafi, 2018: 18)

Moreover, marketing is viewed as a social and managerial process through which individuals aim to

Second: Marketing objectives

Marketing objectives refer to the final results that the organization wants to achieve through marketing activity. These objectives include: Profit is at the forefront of the goals that organizations seek to achieve and maximize those profits.

Marketing contributes to achieving the goal of survival, growth and expansion of organizations within the market and achieving competitive advantage by increasing sales and increasing market share.

The organization's survival in the market and the continuation of its activity through searching for new marketing opportunities, developing marketing information systems, predicting the needs and desires of individuals, achieving a high level of satisfaction, and achieving high levels and rates of economic growth. The success of the organization depends on its ability to know and identify the desires, needs and tastes of customers and target markets and the extent to which these desires and needs can be satisfied better and more effectively than the product's competitors in the market (Qandouz, 2015, 154)

Third: The concept of marketing mix

The marketing mix is based on the basic idea that a single component or element is unable to achieve the required goals and objectives. Therefore, the idea of the marketing mix emerged, which means mixing a group of parts or elements with each other in order to obtain a mixture that is more capable of meeting the goals and achieving the objectives set by the company. The marketing mix has become composed of the four basic elements, which are (product, price, distribution and promotion). Each element of the marketing mix is considered a mixture in itself, and it is in fact a mixture of a group of parts and components. The marketing mix is a set of interconnected, intertwined and complementary elements in order to obtain a mix that is more capable and effective in achieving the company's desired goals that were set instead of using a single element. The marketing mix consists of four elements

(product, price, distribution and promotion) that interact with each other to form plans, policies and decisions that ultimately aim to satisfy the desires and needs of customers and consumers and achieve profits. The marketing mix constitutes the main pillars of marketing activities and then an analysis of marketing opportunities based on the elements of the marketing mix. The marketing mix defines a set of marketing variables that the organization provides to provide a response to market desires, which include product, price, place and promotion (Azzam et al., 2011: 46-47). One of the most important functions of marketing management is to manage the marketing mix through its four elements, which are product, price, promotion and distribution. These elements are intertwined and intertwined with each other, and it is difficult to make a decision in isolation from the other. Therefore, we need a comprehensive and complete view and reach a correct and effective collection of the elements of the marketing mix (increases, 2014 : 24-26).

Fourth: Elements of the marketing mix:

First. Product: The essence of marketing and meeting consumer needs. The product is the cornerstone of the marketing process, going beyond the concept of a tangible commodity to broader horizons. It is a unique combination of tangible and intangible elements, aiming to satisfy consumers' desires and meet their diverse needs. The product is characterized by its multifaceted nature; it may be tangible as a physical commodity, or intangible as a service or idea. This diversity gives the product unique characteristics, including the difficulty of storage in some cases, and the challenge of assessing quality before actual consumption, especially in the field of services. Organizations face a challenge in designing products that meet the increasing expectations of customers. Here comes the role of smart marketing strategies that take into account the product life cycle, enabling companies to make continuous adjustments to ensure the continued attractiveness of their products. The concept of the modern product goes beyond purely physical characteristics, to include other elements such as attractive packaging and a distinctive brand. These elements combined form the identity of the product and its distinction in the market. In essence, the product is a promise to provide value to the consumer. It represents a solution to a problem, or the fulfillment of a need, or the fulfillment of a desire. In this sense, a successful product is one that addresses both the mind and heart of the consumer, offering a harmonious blend of material and moral benefits (Al-Barwari and Al-Barzanji, 2004).

Second - the price

It is the cash amount paid in exchange for obtaining the product or service that is provided to customers, as pricing aims to increase the number of customers and achieve a high level of quality to maintain the status quo, enhance the competitive aspect and maximize the return in the short term as well as maximize the profit, so organizations focus when establishing their pricing policy on four points in calculating costs: priceability, improving quality and direct contact with customers (Haddad , 2014:35). The price represents the cash or in-kind value paid by the consumer or buyer in exchange for obtaining the product or service (and the price is known as the amount of money or cash paid and spent and spent to obtain a commodity, product or service in order to acquire and purchase it (and it is known as (Al-

Barwari (Al-Barzanji , 2004 : 186) The price is the sum of the values that the consumer relies on to own the commodity or benefit from the product through the benefits achieved during a specific period of time by paying money or its equivalent of products or things of scarcity subject to economic laws. Pricing is considered the umbrella under which the price falls. It is a marketing activity linked to the goals and directions of the organization. The price of the product is determined according to a set of foundations linked to costs, the market, supply and demand for the product, market policies, competitors, and marketing policies followed within the organization and consumers, as the price is considered the most liquid and affected by the material aspect of the organization compared to other elements of the marketing mix.

Third - Promotion:

It is one of the forms of communication used by the organization to convince the customer of the necessity of purchasing the product offered by the organization. The importance of promotion is clearly evident in the event of intense competition between organizations and working to increase awareness among customers and change the customer's purchasing decision. As for the objectives of promotion, they are represented in providing customers with the necessary information about the services provided by the organization and how to obtain them and the benefits they can obtain when purchasing the product, in addition to confronting competing promotional campaigns. This can only be done through many communication tools used by the organization to promote its services, such as advertising, publishing, personal selling, publishing, sales activation, and public relations (Zagai, 2010, 108)

Fourth: Distribution

Pharmaceutical distribution is the backbone of the healthcare system, ensuring that medicines are delivered to patients at the right time and with the required quality (Al-Khafaji, 2018: 45). This process is complex and includes many steps and procedures that start from the pharmaceutical companies' factories and end with the final consumer, whether a pharmacy, hospital or medical clinic.

The second topic

Conceptual framework for sales

First : The concept of sales

The company's sales are affected by the economic conditions and the conditions of the industry market in which the company operates. Sales fluctuate as a result of the industry market being affected by economic fluctuations or business cycles. If the economy is expanding and growing at high rates, all companies will benefit from this and their sales and profits will increase, but to varying degrees. These degrees are determined by the extent to which the industry in which the company operates benefits from the economic boom. Likewise, if the economy is declining, most companies will be affected and their sales and profits will decrease, but to varying degrees also determined by the severity of the impact of the economic recession on each industry. This means that there are industries that are highly affected by the economic cycle, such as electronics, automobiles, machinery and equipment

industries, which are all durable goods . There are fewer industries . Affected by the economic cycle, such as food industries and public utilities. Sales fluctuations lead to fluctuations in profits, which in turn affects market value during times of economic boom and recession (Al-Saheb and Shamkhi, 2020: 92-93)

Second: The concept of sales volume

It is a measure that provides the opportunity to achieve economies of scale and benefit from the experience and learning curve, accordingly organizations can draw their competitive position, double their sales and reduce unit costs. One of the pillars of success and excellence for any economic organization is determined by its ability to produce and sell in a scientifically efficient manner by carrying out tasks and activities with high performance to achieve the organization's goals, since sales represent the main source of revenues, as sales are the essence of the marketing process at the present time . Increasing the volume of sales and investing in marketing opportunities requires organizations to focus on innovation in order to provide products that meet the needs of the market in the long term. The organization's continued competition depends on the type of products it offers, through which it can distinguish itself from its competitors and then seize the opportunities available in the market that maximize their value (Cass & sok , 2015:137)

Third: The importance of sales

When organizations introduce or develop their products, they realize that this effort must be enhanced by sales management in selecting salesmen who are able to achieve sales goals and continue in the market, while he believes that organizations have realized the importance of sales volume through the following:

Nothing can be sold if there is no one to buy it, meaning that the activity of production and marketing organizations depends on the role of sales management workers by contacting buyers, providing them with information, and urging them to make a purchase decision, by providing sufficient information about the needs and desires of buyers.

The sales department, through its employees, plays an important role in monitoring market movement, factors affecting sales volume, and the directions of competing buyers, identifying problems, developing appropriate solutions that enable employees to achieve sales goals, qualifying a team of salesmen, and building interactive relationships that enable them to achieve the specified goals.

Topic: Third

Practical framework of the study

This topic includes three paragraphs. The first paragraph includes a test of the normal distribution to ensure the possibility of conducting parametric tests. The second paragraph includes a test of the correlation relationships between the study variables. The third paragraph contains a test of the impact relationships between the study variables, as follows:

First: Normal distribution test

The researcher used the Shapiro- Wilk test. To test the normal distribution , because the sample size is more than 50, we note from Table (1) that all data follow the normal distribution, and this is evident from the Sig value being greater than (0.05), which generally indicates that the normal distribution condition is met in general, and therefore parametric tests are not used.

Table (1) Normal distribution test

Tests of Normality						
Shapiro-Wilk			Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			
Sig.	df	Statistics	Sig.	df	Statistics	
0.004	352	0.987	.200 *	352	0.043	Marketing mix strategies
0.286	352	0.995	.200 *	352	0.038	Product Strategy
0.665	352	0.997	.200 *	352	0.035	Pricing Strategy
0.508	352	0.996	.200 *	352	0.026	Promotion strategy
0.171	352	0.994	.200 *	352	0.034	Distribution strategy
0.326	352	0.995	.200 *	352	0.036	Sales volume
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.						
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Source: Prepared by the researcher using the results of SPSS V.27 program

Second: The main hypothesis, which states: (There is a significant effect of marketing mix strategies on sales volume)

Table (2) Analysis of the impact of marketing mix strategies in their various dimensions on sales volume

Significance	Sig	value (t) Calculated	value (F) Calculated	coefficient of determination (R ²)	The value of the marginal slope coefficient (β)	Constant) value ^a (Dimensions of the independent variable
moral	0.001	6.853	46.957	0.118	0.328	2.542	Product Strategy
moral	0.002	3.182	10.122	0.028	0.175	3.100	Pricing Strategy
moral	0.001	3.545	12,569	0.035	0.186	3.073	Promotion strategy
moral	0.001	6.267	39.277	0.101	0.284	2.712	Distribution strategy
moral	0.001	4.579	20.971	0.057	0.252	2.831	Marketing mix strategies

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS V 27 program

Show that the calculated value of (F) for the simple linear regression model reached (20.971), which is statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01), indicating the stability of the regression coefficient (β = 0.252), i.e. a change of one unit in the marketing

mix strategies affects the sales volume by (0.252), which means the stability of the significance of the simple linear regression model, i.e. the marketing mix strategies have a significant effect on the sales volume, and the value of the interpretation coefficient (R^2) reached (0.057), which means that the marketing mix strategies explain (5.7 %) of the changes that occur in the sales volume, while the remaining percentage of (94.3 %) is due to the contribution of other variables not included in the current study model, so the second main hypothesis will be accepted, which states (there is a significant effect of the marketing mix strategies on the sales volume).

1. Testing the first sub-hypothesis, which states: (There is a significant effect of product strategy on sales volume.

Show that the calculated value of (F) for the simple linear regression model reached (46.957), which is statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01), indicating the stability of the regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.328$), i.e. a change of one unit in the product strategy affects the sales volume by (0.328), which means the stability of the significance of the simple linear regression model, i.e. the product strategy has a significant effect on the sales volume, and the value of the explanation coefficient (R^2) reached (0.118), which means that the product strategy explains (11.8 %) of the changes that occur in the sales volume, while the remaining percentage of (88.2 %) is due to the contribution of other variables not included in the current study model, so the second main hypothesis will be accepted, which states (there is a significant effect of the product strategy on the sales volume

2. Testing the second sub-hypothesis, which states: (There is a significant effect of the price strategy on sales volume

Show that the calculated value of (F) for the simple linear regression model reached (10.122), which is statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01), indicating the stability of the regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.175$), i.e. a change of one unit in the price strategy affects sales volume by (0.175), which means the stability of the significance of the simple linear regression model, i.e. the price strategy has a significant effect on sales volume. The value of the explanation coefficient (R^2) reached (0.028), which means that the price strategy explains (2.8 %) of the changes that occur in sales volume, while the remaining percentage of (97.2 %) is due to the contribution of other variables not included in the current study model. Accordingly, the second main hypothesis will be accepted, which states (there is a significant effect of the price strategy on sales volume).

3. Testing the third sub-hypothesis, which states: (There is a significant effect of the promotional strategy on sales volume

Show that the calculated value of (F) for the simple linear regression model reached (12.569), which is statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01), indicating the stability of the regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.186$), i.e. a change of one unit in the promotion strategy affects the sales volume by (0.186), which means the stability of the significance of the simple linear regression model, i.e. the promotion strategy has a significant effect on the sales volume, and the value of the explanation coefficient (R^2) reached (0.035), which means that the promotion strategy explains (3.5 %) of the changes that occur in the sales volume, while the remaining percentage of (96.5 %) is due to the contribution of other variables not

included in the current study model, so the second main hypothesis will be accepted, which states (there is a significant effect of the promotion strategy on the sales volume).

4. Testing the fourth sub-hypothesis, which states: (There is a significant effect of distribution strategy on sales volume)

Show that the calculated value of (F) for the simple linear regression model reached (39.277), which is statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01), indicating the stability of the regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.284$), i.e. a change of one unit in the distribution strategy affects the sales volume by (0.284), which means the stability of the significance of the simple linear regression model, i.e. the distribution strategy has a significant effect on the sales volume, and the value of the interpretation coefficient (R^2) reached (0.101), which means that the distribution strategy explains (10.1 %) of the changes that occur in the sales volume, while the remaining percentage of (98.9 %) is due to the contribution of other variables not included in the current study model, so the second main hypothesis will be accepted, which states (there is a significant effect of the distribution strategy on the sales volume).

Conclusions

This research will present the conclusions in light of the results reached in the theoretical and practical aspects of the study within two axes, which are:

1. Company adopts a marketing orientation towards the product by focusing on the price strategy in the first place.
2. Aims The company aims to increase sales by focusing on sales activities and procedures in the first place.
3. There is a significant correlation between marketing mix strategies and sales volume.
4. There is a significant effect of marketing mix strategies on sales volume.
5. There is a significant effect of product strategy on sales volume.
6. There is a significant effect of price strategy on sales volume.
7. There is a significant effect of the promotion strategy on sales volume.
8. There is a significant effect of distribution strategy on sales volume.

Recommendations

Based on the study that analyzed the role of marketing mix strategies in increasing sales volume for the General Pharmaceutical Company in Samarra, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The company should enhance product quality and develop product lines to meet customer preferences and improve their experience by conducting periodic customer preference surveys, investing in modern manufacturing technology, and forming a product development team focused on innovation.
2. The company should conduct new studies to evaluate prices and ensure price competitiveness with competing companies.
3. The company should implement flexible pricing strategies that allow the company to respond to changes in the market and demand by establishing a specialized unit for market research and price analysis, implementing a dynamic pricing system that responds to market

changes, and offering various pricing options (such as quantity discounts or loyalty programs.)

4. The company should leverage social media and digital marketing to increase brand awareness and boost sales by creating engaging marketing content across social media platforms, developing an interactive company website, and implementing targeted online advertising campaigns.

5. The company should organize integrated promotional campaigns targeting potential and current customers to increase their awareness of the products and services provided by the company by designing customer loyalty programs, organizing events and workshops to introduce the company's products, and launching seasonal offers and distinctive product packages.

6. The company should expand its distribution network to cover new areas and increase product availability to customers by partnering with new distributors in different geographies, developing an efficient product delivery system, and improving the design and organization of points of sale to facilitate the market experience.

7. The company should work on improving the customer experience at the point of sale to enhance loyalty and increase sales volume.

8. The company should establish a system to continuously monitor and evaluate the performance of marketing mix strategies by applying software to analyze data and prepare reports, holding periodic meetings to review key performance indicators, and appointing a team specialized in analyzing the effectiveness of marketing strategies.

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