

Editorial:

Aggressive Medicine Promotional Activity of Pharmaceutical Industry All Over the Globe: Who Will Do the Highly Risky Job to Defy the Monstrous Financial Tyrant?

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“The proliferation of medical advertising is a symptom of the nation’s all-against-all vision of medicine as just another commodity.”¹

The pharmaceutical industries (PI) around the globe are belligerently intricate with medicine promotional, with a definite intention to transform the prescribing habits of medical doctors in favor of their marketed product to maximize the profit but not promote the healthcare system either locally or internationally.²⁻⁴ The current medicine promotional activities, especially in the Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs), are at an extreme perturbing stage as very often LMICs regulatory agencies not much strong to control these urgent issues.⁵⁻⁸ Additionally, promotional activities frequently inspire self-purchasing medicine even those are prescription-only drugs.^{9,11} Antimicrobials are regularly available over the counter in many LMICs because of poor regulatory. Thereafter, both the PI and pharmacy/medicine shop took the opportunity to maximize the profit.¹²⁻¹⁵

“The pharmaceutical industry spends roughly 15 billion dollars annually on detailing – providing gifts, information, samples, trips, honoraria, and other inducements – to physicians in order to encourage them to prescribe their drugs.”¹⁶

It has been created a lot of discussion regarding the physician-pharma industry underhand relation for multiple decades.¹⁷⁻¹⁹ Acceptance of gift worth of millions of local or international currency from pharma rep has usual practice, and many occasions, physicians have a much positive attitude towards acceptance. Physicians around the planet do not at

all feel this is immoral, unethical, unprofessional, practice. Moreover, they had the opinion that they are helping the community, and it is their right.²⁰⁻²⁶ It was assessed that 84% of medicine-industry promotional activities are focused on the road to make medical doctors happy.^{21, 27, 28} As a medical doctor and other health professionals are principal influencing bodies to choose medicine to be prescribed. Thereafter, medical doctors play the significant role in opening the floodgate to promotes drug sales, whether it is of need or no need.²⁹⁻³³ Pharma-industry and their rep adopt different strategies according to the social structure of the country. Nevertheless, the primary intention remains the same to change the prescribing habit of physicians and maximizing industry profit.^{16,17, 34-37} Subsequently, the promotional, publicizing, broadcasting, and advertising activities comprise medicine detailing, providing gifts to medical doctors, patronage of the social and cultural program, and funding of educational seminar, the conference ended with travels to touristic locations, stayed in a fabulous resort, company-funded exotic meals from very high priced exclusive restaurants, and sponsoring industry produced medicine-related research.^{17, 36, 38-40} Thereafter, branded medicine sales increase enormously, although the cheaper generic version is available, which in turn increases the cost of healthcare both at the personal level and of community. Additionally, multiple studies around the globe violate the World Health Organization’s (WHO) guidelines regarding the manufacturer’s drug promotional literature.⁴¹⁻⁴⁶ Pharmaceutical manufacturing companies are the most powerful industrial and financial transnational group around the planet.^{47, 48} The worldwide

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proceeds for pharma-company were over 1.2 trillion U.S. dollars in 2018, and it goes up to \$100 billion from 2017.^{49, 50} Additionally, it has been projected that pharmaceutical product spending will reach 1.5 trillion U.S. dollars by 2023.⁵⁰ The supervisory body for common people and consumers of the USA named Public Citizen group to consider Big Pharma, as the major fraudster of the US Federal Government law (False Claims Act).⁵¹ On multiple occasions, the drug industry has been identified for many types of unethical work that include swindle, financial corruption, complaints and charges, and disgraces.⁵² Nevertheless, the pharmaceutical industry continues to exist and making an improbable and impossible profit with all these illegal, unlawful activities and court verdicts and punishment.^{53, 54} Additionally, only 28% of the US nationals have a good view regarding Big Pharma.⁵⁵ The second utmost abhorrent industry considered by US citizens is the giant pharmaceutical industry just behind the tobacco industry.⁵⁵ The pharma-industry born promotional pieces of literature in both high-income countries (HICs) and LMICs often act as the principal source of information, especially for newly marketed medicine.^{27, 56-58} LMICs often suffer poor resources for healthcare and, in parallel, had contemptible

regulatory drug control systems. Thereafter, peoples of LMICs are regularly exposed to aggressive, non-authentic, unethical drug promotional activities and its harmful effect with self-purchasing.⁵⁹⁻⁶⁸ Thereafter, medicines are prescribed by medical doctors, and pharmacists vend and distributed with the intention of patients' benefit and healthcare interest are lost. This situation reflects the healthcare system of that community has been failed to abide by the elementary medical ethics, regular and average processes, customs, laws, and guidelines.⁶⁸⁻⁷⁰ As medical doctors are the most considerable elements in pharmaceutical transactions by choosing the specific brand of medicine for their patients.⁷¹ Subsequently, there is an urgent need to develop scientific, ethical, and professional medicine promotional activity. Drug promotional activity needs to be monitored, and pharmaceutical companies should be accountable to regulatory bodies and peoples of the country. Drug industry should also develop social accountability and responsibility towards consumers and common people. In this regard, the state-controlled regulatory bodies and medical professional societies need to act proactively with cooperation to promote public health and people's healthcare rights.^{5, 27, 68}

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