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Salesforce Automation and Product Optimization of Sales Employees in Pharmaceutical Industry

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Abstract

The technological innovation is highly innovative approaches in the industry, and it is very important to address the many critical issues in the industry. As well as product optimization is also an innovative approach in many industries in the world. Based on the above two concepts, this study has developed to examine the automation and product optimization on sales force management in the pharmaceutical industry. Therefore, the purpose of the study is reviewing the literature of sale force automation and product optimization appliances of sale employees in the pharmaceutical industry. This paper is developed using the context of 24 peer-reviewed and author reviewed article between 2000 and 2020 and the respective cross-references. Those sources were analyzed using narrative analysis method. According to the outcome of the study, it has found that the sale force automation and the product optimization can be utilized innovatively face to the current pandemic situation to maintain a minimum physical interaction between stakeholders and to increase the revenue of the pharmaceutical business reducing some of the significant cost factors of the business.

Keywords: Salesforce Automation, Product Optimization, Pharmaceutical Industry

1. Introduction

The LinkedIn State of Sales Force Report (2020) emphasis that the virtual selling is an emerging trend of the sales in most industry and it proves that technological appliances are a key area of modern busines world. Which means information technology contributes an industrial revolution in the modern business world (Hilbert, 2016). The development of information technology creates a higher independency to the organizations with making easier the implementation of effective corporate strategies in the organization (Asante, Kete, Miike, & Yin, 2013). The specific software packages have been developed by the organization to enhance the efficiency of selling and sale force automation is a such kind of development to assist to the sales and administrative activities of the organization (Morgan & Inks, 2001). The sales force automation is not just a software activity and it is an integration of both software and hardware together and mobile phone, email, web browsing, etc. are widely using hardware devices of sale force automation (Ko & Dennis, 2004). The history of sale force automation goes to 1980s and in present days, it is a popular concept among different industries (Buttle, Ang, & Iriana, 2006).

The optimize means making a perfect, effective or functional as possible using different techniques (Jain, Progress in Controlled and Novel Drug Delivery System (1st Ed.) , 2004). The disciplined approach of product development is called as the product optimization and it is conducted through different processing conditions and formula. The product optimization is a valuable tool in present days, and it is used to reduce the time, cost and risk of the product development (Baxter, 1989; Box, Hunter, & Hunter, 1978; Gordon, 1965). The product optimization is an experimental process which is used to improve the product and also a systematic approach to recognize the best combination of product and process (Jain, 2006). The product optimization is an important practice on present and future manufacturing process (Yoshimura, 2008).

With the highly competitive nature of the different industries and the technology advancements, the product development is one of significant aspect of most of industries (Mehralian, Zarenezhad, & Rajabzadeh, 2015; Dadfar, Dahlgaard, Brege, & Alamirhoor, 2013). Among them pharmaceutical industry is rapidly growing and highly sensitive industry segment with significant amount of Research and Development Expenditure. According to the historical data in the pharmaceutical industry, the Research and Development Expenditure is varied between 14% to 18% from annual sales (Subramanian, Toney, & Jayachandran, 2011). However, those different product developments attempts, and technology appliance

are challengeable tasks because of low productivity and higher cost of the Research and Development, tight regulation, unpredictable market conditions and limited qualified number of human resources (Blau, Pekny, Varma, & Bunch, 2004).

1.1 Purpose of the Study

This study is an integration of two concept called, automation and the product optimization on sales force management in the pharmaceutical industry. As a highly competitive industry, pharmaceutical companies should highly concern on modern technological appliances and the product development to sustain in the market. The main purpose of this study is reviewing the literature of sale force automation (Jelinek, 2018) and product optimization (Giacalone, 2018) appliances of sale employees in pharmaceutical industry. In that sense, it is mainly discussed the current and future trends of those two concepts related to the pharmecutucal industry using the view and outcome of past researchers' activities. The expected outcome of the study is to understand the issues and contribution of the salesforce automation and product optimization for long-run of pharmaceutical industry, and how it is important to face to current pandemic situation of the world.

1.2 Methodology

The study conducts using the deductive approach to achieve main focus supporting theories, models and empirical evidence of the respective research area and the industry. The main research tool is reviewing literature and the context of peer-reviewed and author reviewed articles used as the research instruments to conduct the study. It was analyzed 24 research articles between 2000 and 2020 and the respective cross-references to achieve the research purpose. The narrative analysis technique was used as the method of reviewing the literature. The final outcome of the study was delivered as a conceptual review paper including discussion-based empirical evidence in terms of sale force automation and product optimization of the pharmaceutical industry.

2. Literature Review

The review mainly focuses on two key concepts of the research, sale force automation and product optimization and finally it will be narrowed down to the industry specific context.

2.1 Sale Force Automation

In the present context, the buyer and the seller relationship are a very important aspect even they did not meet physically (Speier & Venkatesh, 2002). Also, the relationship between

buyer and the seller mainly depends on the trust and the commitment of those two parties to maintain a sustainable relationship (Speier & Venkatesh, 2002). The digitalization is not a new concept further and it is a most common application in almost all the industries world. It has constantly involving to new product development and making opportunities (Vedder & Guynes, 2016). Among them, automation is one of related concept to the digitalization and several areas in the businesses such as product, process, services, etc., are automating to provide efficient services to their customers (Hofmann, Caroline, & Urbach, 2020). Integrating that two-concept digitalization and the buyer and seller relationship, it has developed the technology customer relationship management to make better relationship of buyer and seller (Holloway, D. Deitz, & John D., 2013). The automation is one technique which can be used to make a better customer relationship and sales force automations is used to make productive and efficient customer relationship to make quick return on investment (Holloway, D. Deitz, & John D., 2013). The sale force automation is a result of one significant effort taken by the organization investing to the techno-innovation improving firms' ability to maintain a better customer relationship (Jelinek, 2018). However, the user acceptance is one of key concern to implement the salesforce automation productivity and efficiently in the business management (Holloway, D. Deitz, & John D., 2013). The sale force automation is one of key application of improve the sale functions through the speed and quality of information among the integrated parties (Speier & Venkatesh, 2002).

2.1.1 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Customer Relationship Management is called as CRM in shorter form and it is a software package which is used to integrate the whole channel into one place (Sirk, 2021). There are several benefits in CRM. Those benefits are, to improve customer service, sale increase, retaining customers, making better analytics, higher efficiency, better knowledge sharing, higher transparency, etc. (Sirk, 2021). Moreover, Sirk (2021) stated that CRM are normally designed to streamline and develop the customer attraction, conduct and improve the sale process and to run the marketing campaigns. This process is conducted to workflow enhancing against sale pipeline with automating tasks and analyzing data. In the theoretically sound CRM processes have three key stages called initiation, maintenance and termination as well as, those CRM processes positively associated with both perceptual and objectives firm performances (Reinartz, Krafft, & Hoyer, 2004). According to the Sale force automation can be considered as a part of customer relationship management process (Jelinek, 2018).

2.1.2 Resource Based View (RBV)

The resource-based view can support to explain the value of Information Technology (IT) to process standard inputs with reducing transaction cost (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993). It means the resource-based view is a good organizational theory to help to understand the different values of the IT for different industry context (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993). IT resource can be categorized into two categories as IT assets and IT capabilities (Kohli & Grover, 2008). In the resource base-view, Sale force automation technology is strategic alternative which developed using IT base resources to make competitive position (Buttle F. , 2006). The paper-based processing systems have very law processing speed and it is a difficult approach to the current competitive market to sustain in the busines world (Buttle F. , 2006). According to that the resource-based approach can explain that importance of resource allocation and development on salesforce management and product development for business sustainability.

2.1.3 Process-oriented Model

Process-oriented model is a success model of the IT to create the success of the business from intermediate level to higher level (Byrd, Lewis, & Bryan, 2006). This model mainly focuses on the success of the process with making higher level of revenue, return on investment, return on assets and the market share. In the process-oriented model, information technology customizes according to the organization environment and competitive environment to create an operational and management process with creating a business value (Mooney, Gurbaxani, & Kraemer, 1995). The main aim of the process-oriented models of IT business is to recognize and segregate economic impact of the lower responsible units in an organization on IT (Barua, Kriebel, & Mukhopadhyay, 1995). According to that the process-oriented approach can explain that importance of process-development related to the salesforce management and product development for business sustainability.

2.2 Product Optimization

Optimization can be defined as the ensuring the likelihood of the process and the scale of the exposures and individual number of exposes as low as achievable within the social, economic and environment aspects (Jain, 2006). Giacalone (2018) stated that the product optimization is an important of the product development process. Optimization is the one of key element in the product development and the disciplinary approach with different process and the formulas (Yoshimura, 2008). In that the sense, the product optimization is one of key element in the sustainable product development projects because product development is mainly

focused on optimize their products into next level to reach to the business goals rather then improving the other features or quality of the products (Slinevica, Lgavens, & Amantova-Salmane, 2016). The optimizations are a scientific process which is used to improve the level of the project to sustain in the existing market as well as to enter into a new market or market segment (Jain, 2006).

The product optimization based on few aspects like design project to make the sustainable approach to the product development with protecting their new and existing customers to take a sustainable return (Cagan, 2016). Every product in the market has a financial focus and people try purchase them for their day-to-day requirements (Krasowski, 2002). Companies should sell those products for competitive price to their customers and most important thing is consideration to protect the fundamental of the product when selling to the customer (Kaplan & Cooper, 1998). The main factor when considering the product optimization is product cost and the product cost should be maintained within the sustainable range without damaging to the fundamentals of the product (Männel, 1997). In other senses, in order to face the competitive market, product optimization address to the shortage of innovation and the product life cycle to develop a diversified product range using product optimization approach to increase the sale performances (Lucey, 2003).

3. Empirical Review on Sale force Automation and Product Optimization in Pharmaceutical Industry

Delone and McLean (2003) emphasis that the important and the impact of the digitalization and automation concept and they have suggested the different models and the validation to the enhance the original business framework using those innovation (Delone & McLean, 2003). By the study of Delone and McLean (2003) has suggested six factors should be considered to develop an automated system called system-quality, information-quality, service-quality, usage, user-satisfaction and net benefit of the development. BenMoussa (2006) emphasis that most of salesforce automation project are fail because of lack of planning and gap between management and the salesforce in perception and usefulness. However, BenMoussa (2006) found that the perception of the salesforce is the salesforce automation can be provided the necessary support to the salesforce to deal with performance barriers of the business. On the other hand, the pharmaceutical marketing is mostly doing using personal selling strategy (Alowi & Kani, 2018). Therefore, salesforce have significant responsibility to convince the client to close their business. The salesforce automation is a very important innovation to manage the client by the sale representatives as well as manage

the sale representatives by the company (Wahyuningsih, 2018). The automated systems mostly provide the services related to the lead management, contact management, activity management, opportunity management, sale forecast, viewing commissions, etc. (Sabir, Rehman, Bahadur, Aziz, & Ejaz, 2013). Those options can assist to provide better service to their clients, and it will be supported to improve the service sale performances of the pharmecutucal business too (Wahyuningsih, 2018).

According to the context of pharmaceutical industry, Chowdary and Shankar (2016) stated that the product optimization is centered into making best possible drug composition or innovating a new operational condition. In the sense of drug formation is a complex task in the pharmaceutical industry because even though finding a new drug formular, it is somewhat difficult to distribute without proper approval from the drugs regulatory authorities. However, when considering the role of pharmaceutical distributors, the product optimization is a one of important implementation which can be utilized to make a proper product distribution with minimum distribution errors. Therefore, the product optimization of the pharmaceutical industry needs to be implemented without any serious product changes. Garg and Singhvi (2015) stated that the optimization is the choosing of best possible alternative among available options. The quality by design is a one of significant approach of the pharmaceutical product optimization and it is developed based on the predefined objectives to optimize the product and the process using sound science and quality risk management. As well as the pharmaceutical product optimization approaches should be enhanced the assurance of safe, effective supply of the pharmaceutical product to consumers (Singh, Kumar, & Ahuja, 2005). The mean of the pharmaceutical product quality is to deliver the product free contamination and the therapeutic benefit promised to consumer through the product labels (Garg & Singhvi, 2015). The quality by design product optimization has several benefits such as better process understanding, low batch failures, efficient and effective change control, flexible regulatory approaches, better innovation with increasing product quality, etc. (Garg & Singhvi, 2015).

According that both sales force automation and the product optimization are significant to improve the salesforce performances in the Pharmaceutical Industry.

4. Conclusion and Further Direction

The technology appliances are one of key innovation in any industry in the modern era and most of industries effort to make innovative approach using different technologies to improve

their production and sale process. Among those innovative approaches, automation is a one key technological approach made by the different industries to enhance their productivity to face the industry competition. More specifically, the automation of the salesforce activities is highly sensitive and innovative area of the modern business world to enhance the product revenue generation with reducing cost element to make higher profit from the business. The product optimization is another key concept which is using in the operational sense to improve the day-to-day business operations with higher product attraction among the respective customer segments. When considering the automate salesforce, the optimize product range is highly important aspect to long-run of the industry.

According to all above innovative approaches, pharmaceutical industry is highly sensitive industry in the modern era. Specially, when considering the current pandemic situation, healthcare and pharmaceutical industries are most popular in the world because of their direct involvement to manage the spread of the pandemic and creation of significant requirement to pharmaceutical supply for the house of the customers. Therefore, it has created a huge requirement to deliver the product to the house of the customers. However, most serious issues which was faced by the pharmecutucal companies is the higher responsibly which is created and delivering products using limited available resource. Therefore, the salesforce automation and the product optimization can be used as the innovative and well focused strategies overcome those issues of the pharmecutucal industry.

In the context of future direction, both concepts can be utilized innovatively to address to the current pandemic situation and new normal condition in the world supplying their services with less interaction among each stakeholder in the circle. Also, salesforce automation and respective product optimization of the pharmaceutical can be developed further as a low cost and high revenue generating techno innovative approach to the industry with overcoming practical challenges in the world.

In addition to that the concept can be researched in different avenues further. It is important to research continuously to upgrade the automated salesforce future. As well as there is a limited experiment related to the product optimization and should be conducted more research related to the product optimization of the pharmaceutical industry. All those further investigations should be focused on revenue growth and revenue generation to make better business performances in pharmaceutical industry. The outcome should be customized to face existing new normal situation because of COVID-19 pandemic.

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