

NAVIGATING HEALTHCARE DECISION DYNAMICS AMONG PHYSICIANS:
TRANSFORMING PHARMA MARKETING STRATEGIES FROM RATIONALITY
TO RESONANCE.

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Dedication

To those who dare to challenge the status quo, who embrace complexity, and who understand that behind every decision, there is a heartbeat.

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This research is the result of curiosity, stubbornness, and most importantly a refusal to accept “this is how it’s always been done” as a valid argument. I am deeply grateful to those who stood by me (or tolerated me), who challenged me, questioned my ideas, or made me feel out of place, because without that friction, growth wouldn’t have been possible. To the few who truly believed in the vision behind this research, thank you for seeing what I saw, even when it wasn’t clear yet.

ABSTRACT

NAVIGATING HEALTHCARE DECISION DYNAMICS AMONG PHYSICIANS: TRASNFORMING PHARMA MARKETING STRATEGIES FROM RATIONALITY TO RESONANCE.

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The pharmaceutical industry faces significant challenges, within an environment that is getting increasingly competitive, where research and development costs that are constantly increasing, and many new treatments have low clinical differentiation. Traditional marketing approaches, which are mostly focused on the communication of product characteristics, find it challenging to differentiate brands. This research investigates the impact of emotional branding on physicians' prescribing choices and provides a practical framework for pharmaceutical companies to evolve their marketing strategies from primarily data-driven narratives to emotionally resonant engagement. This research uses a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative questionnaire, focus groups with senior pharmaceutical marketing experts across the globe, and case studies analysis of successful emotional branding examples. The findings indicate that although clinical data is important, other factors such as trust, empathy, and personal values, can significantly influence treatment decisions. Emotional resonance can strengthen brand

preference, build loyalty, and build physician advocates, reinforcing the brand's competitive advantage.

Several barriers to the adoption of emotional branding were identified, including internal organizational resistance, regulatory constraints, and the industry's traditional reliance on rational product messaging. Participants stressed the challenge of balancing emotional storytelling with ethical communication, emphasizing the need for marketing strategies that are both engaging and scientifically accurate, while adhering to industry rules.

Despite these challenges, the research reveals significant opportunities to increase brands differentiation, particularly in highly competitive markets where clinical characteristics are comparable across competitive brands.

The research concludes with a systematic framework for incorporating emotional elements into pharmaceutical marketing strategies. The resulting framework can hopefully support pharmaceutical companies to cultivate a culture that prioritizes emotional connection along with clinical excellence, to identify and leverage emotional drivers and ultimately develop emotionally compelling narratives that will help establish deeper relationships with healthcare professionals and patients.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I:	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research Problem	2
1.3 Significance of the Study	4
1.4 Scope of the Study	5
1.5 Research Questions	5
1.6 Research Objectives	7
1.7 Limitations and Delimitations	8
1.8 Terms Central to the Study	11
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE	14
2.1 Theoretical Framework	14
2.2 Key Concepts and Theories	15
2.3 Ethical dilemmas in the Pharmaceutical Marketing	21
2.4 Summary	22
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	27
3.1 Overview of the Research Problem	27
3.2 Rational	28
3.3 Research Approach	29
3.4 Research Paradigm	30
3.5 Study Type	31
3.6 Population and Sample	32
3.7 Data Collection Methods	36
3.8 Data Analysis Methods	42
3.9 Validity and Reliability	43
3.10 Research Design Limitations	47
3.11 Procedures	50
3.12 Fieldwork	52
3.13 Measurement and Scaling	55
3.14 Data Triangulation	56
3.15 Participant Recruitment	59
3.16 Data Coding and Categorization	61
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS	63
4.1 Introduction	63
4.2 Qualitative Questionnaire Results Analysis	63
4.3 Focus Groups Discussions	74
4.4 Case Studies	78

4.5 Conclusion	84
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION.....	87
5.1 Introduction.....	87
5.2 Summary of Study and Findings.....	87
5.3 Discussion of Research Question One.....	117
5.4 Discussion of Research Question Two	117
5.5 Discussion of Research Question Three	118
5.6 Implications of the Research.....	119
5.7 Recommendations for Future Research.....	121
5.8 Limitations of the Research	123
5.9 Conclusion	125
REFERENCES	127
APPENDIX A SURVEY COVER LETTER	137
APPENDIX B INFORMED CONSENT.....	139
APPENDIX C INTERVIEW GUIDE	141
APPENDIX D: LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES.....	144

CHAPTER I:

1.1 Introduction

Over the past couple of decades, the pharmaceutical industry faces significant challenges, such as increasing competition, public healthcare authorities' pricing pressures, a rising research and development (R&D) costs, the expiration of patents of important blockbuster drugs, modest productivity in new molecules that move to later stages of clinical trials, despite the increased R&D spending and a rising similarity among many newly introduced medications (Khanna, 2012; Fricker, 2016; www.deloitte.com, 2022). In addition, new regulatory reforms in key markets (EU pharmaceutical legislation reform and Inflation Reduction Act in US) are reshaping the industry landscape (European Commission, 2023; Phrma.org, 2025). The sustainability of the industry's traditional business model is challenged by these developments, urgently requiring creative solutions to maintain revenue and profitability in the face of these constraints (Paul et al., 2010).

Pharmaceutical companies even though they might acknowledge the significance of emotional connections, they face significant challenges when trying to adopt strategies, which are not necessarily new and they already exist in other markets, that reinforce brand differentiation and effectively engage with healthcare stakeholders (Moss, 2001).

With this research the researcher aims to highlight the impact that emotional elements can have on physicians' prescribing decision-making, and offer practical recommendations to pharmaceutical companies on how to adapt their marketing strategies in a way that can resonate more effectively in an emotional level with the healthcare providers. The main challenges in navigating this transformative journey include first of all acknowledging the strong influence that emotional connections can

have in the prescribing decision making process and second, establishing within the pharmaceutical companies an organizational culture that prioritizes emotional resonance along with clinical value, aiming to effectively differentiate pharmaceutical brands in a highly competitive marketplace. Including emotional elements into marketing strategies in an extremely regulated market and with not significant experience on this type of branding, introduces further complexity to this change. What the researcher aspires to achieve with this study is to develop a structured and comprehensive framework on how to develop pharmaceutical marketing strategies through the analysis of the emotional factors that impact the decision making process of prescribers.

1.2 Research Problem

Over the past years, the pharmaceutical industry has experienced significant changes, such as increased competition, new regulatory frameworks that put pressure to the industry with price reductions and shortened exclusivity periods for the new drugs, a reduced pace in the progress of developing new drugs, and similar clinical features among many of the new medications (Khanna, 2012; McKinsey Company, 2013; Fricker, 2016; Numerof, 2023). This context shows the need of leveraging alternative ways of establishing a strong competitive advantage and differentiating from the competition by creating emotional bonds with the customers and moving away from a conventional R&D centric business model towards brand-focused strategies (Moss & Schuiling, 2004). As a result, pharmaceutical companies need to change their marketing approach from the current one limited to product characteristics, to giving more importance to building an emotional connection with their customers. The still dominant paradigm in the pharmaceutical sector has primarily relied almost entirely on the communication of product characteristics (efficacy outcomes, safety profile, etc.). In the past, this

methodology was somewhat successful when the benefits of novel medications could be readily differentiated from those of competitors. However, considering the current situation, it is imperative to undergo a fundamental change in perspective.

The assumption that prescribing decisions are solely rational, based on factual information, is challenged by contemporary research. Physicians, key stakeholders in the decision making process of prescribing medications, are influenced not only by the clinical effectiveness and safety profiles of the drugs. Their treatment decisions are greatly influenced by a variety of emotional elements and therefore in an era where establishing emotional connections is increasingly recognised as a critical element for differentiating and ultimately achieving success, the traditional focus on rational communication of data, primarily targeted at physicians, is becoming outdated (Bednarik, 2005).

Pharmaceutical companies face significant hurdles when trying to implement tactics that not only encourage product differentiation but also emotionally connect with healthcare stakeholders. To effectively navigate this complex path, it is essential to have a solid understanding of the importance of emotional connections and their potential impact on treatment decisions. An organisational culture that prioritises emotional resonance along with clinical excellence and most importantly maintains high ethical standards is necessary.

For all the reasons already mentioned, the pharmaceutical companies are confronted with the urgent need to understand and navigate the intricate relationship between rational and emotional factors in decision making process of prescribing physicians. Understanding this, is essential not only for establishing a strong competitive advantage but also for developing lasting relationships with physicians (Akgun, 2013). This research aims to tackle the industry's challenge of how to effectively shift from a

data focused marketing approach to one that integrates emotional aspects as well. It also aims to offer pharmaceutical companies specific and practical suggestions on how to do that by creating a framework that allows companies to effectively adjust their marketing strategies to foster authentic connections with healthcare stakeholders. The proposed framework will not only illuminate the emotional triggers influencing physicians' decisions but will also offer a roadmap for crafting personalized and emotionally resonant communication strategies and ultimately differentiate their brands and build lasting connections with physicians.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The present research aspires to have significant implications for pharmaceutical companies by highlighting the significant impact that emotions can have on physicians' prescribing choices. Understanding the emotional factors that influence prescribers' treatment decision-making is essential for pharmaceutical companies aiming to create impactful marketing strategies that can more effectively communicate the competitive advantage and the unique value of their products, can further differentiate their brands, and can establish an emotional connection with their target audience. The present study aspires to empower pharmaceutical companies to develop marketing strategies that go beyond the basic communication of product information. Pharmaceutical companies can develop marketing campaigns that can be both informational and emotionally compelling by understanding the emotional drivers that influence prescribers' decision-making. This approach can significantly improve communication with healthcare providers, by creating promotional content that is more memorable and impactful. Leveraging emotional elements in marketing fosters deeper engagement with healthcare providers. Prescribers who experience an emotional connection with a specific brand are more likely to trust it,

use it and likely advocate for it, leading to an increased brand loyalty and preference. Understanding the emotional drivers behind healthcare providers allows pharmaceutical companies to market their products/medications in a manner that is consistent with their emotional needs and motivations.

1.4 Scope of the Study

With this study the researcher aims to examine the complex interconnection between emotions, marketing strategies in the pharmaceutical market, and the decision-making process of physicians in prescribing medications. This research aims to offer practical recommendations for effectively navigating the changing landscape of pharmaceutical marketing by analysing the relationship between emotions, marketing methods, and physicians' decision-making processes. The primary goal is to create a solid, comprehensive and actionable framework that would allow pharmaceutical companies to successfully incorporate emotional resonance into their branding efforts. The scope also includes understanding the difficulties that companies have when attempting to incorporate emotional aspects into their strategy, while ensuring compliance to regulatory standards and ethical considerations. This study seeks to offer practical insights and suggestions through the use of a mixed-methods approach, encompassing qualitative interviews and focus groups with highly qualified and experienced industry professionals, together with an analysis of relevant case studies.

1.5 Research Questions

As mentioned above, the objective of this study is to investigate the incorporation of emotional components in pharmaceutical marketing strategies, while examining the

challenges as well as the opportunities that this brings, and ethical factors associated with it. Having that in mind, the research will be guided by the following research questions:

1. Incorporating Emotional Elements into Marketing Strategies.

Research Question: How do pharmaceutical companies currently integrate emotional components into their marketing strategies, and what are the obstacles they encounter?

Pharmaceutical companies are becoming increasingly conscious of the significance of incorporating emotional factors in their marketing approaches. The objective of this research is to identify the challenges faced in executing these tactics, such as regulatory limitations, striking a balance between scientific precision and emotional appeal. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of these factors is essential for the development of more powerful, efficient and compliant marketing tactics in the pharmaceutical industry.

2. Establishing a unique brand identity by evoking strong emotional connections.

Research Question: How pharmaceutical companies can effectively differentiate their brands by establishing genuine emotional connections with their target audience?

Establishing a unique and distinctive brand identity is critical especially in competitive markets where many medications have comparable product characteristics. This study delves into potential strategies that pharmaceutical companies could deploy to differentiate their brands through specific techniques and approaches deployed in such way to establish emotional connections with their targeted audiences, including the use of storytelling, patient testimonials, brand images, microinfluencers, etc. and ultimately by leveraging emotional resonance. The objective is to understand how pharmaceutical organisations can build trust and loyalty with their target audiences by aligning their

brand values with the emotional needs and preferences of their stakeholders and thereby gaining a strong competitive advantage in the marketplace.

3. Ethical Marketing Practices.

Research Question: How can pharmaceutical companies ensure their marketing methods are both emotionally engaging and ethically sound?

As pharmaceutical companies incorporate emotional elements into their marketing strategies, maintaining ethical standards becomes increasingly important. This study explores the methods by which companies can effectively balance both emotional engagement and ethical standards. This work explores the importance of complying with rules and regulatory norms, offering transparent and precise information, and preventing emotional branding from overshadowing factual evidence. The research aims to uncover optimal ways for developing marketing techniques that are at the same time compelling and morally sound, thus fostering trust and credibility among pharmaceutical industry, healthcare professionals and patients.

1.6 Research Objectives

With the goal of achieving groundbreaking improvements this research seeks to provide realistic recommendations for a substantial transformation in pharmaceutical marketing. The main goal is to offer clear and actionable strategies, as an innovative attempt to transform the way the industry functions in terms of marketing with the following specific objectives.

a) Urging for a radical change in pharmaceutical marketing methods, emphasising the necessity of integrating emotional elements. Highlight how critical it is for pharmaceutical companies to acknowledge the importance and the impact that emotional factors can have in physicians' decision-making processes. b) Resonance

beyond product features: highlight the role of emotional resonance in building strong brands. Illustrate how resonance, as defined by Keller (2001), can lead to increased engagement, loyalty and a competitive edge. c) Develop actionable strategies: develop a comprehensive framework that provides pharmaceutical companies with practical and actionable strategies to seamlessly integrate emotional elements into their marketing practices. d) Emphasize the imperative for companies to move beyond conventional data driven communication methods and offer guidance on authentic brand differentiation within an increasingly competitive market. e) Address challenges posed by clinical similarity among new drugs and provide direction on effectively communicating unique value propositions that extend beyond mere product characteristics. f) Ensure the framework includes considerations for compliance with existing regulatory frameworks governing drug promotion and advertising with a focus on ethical marketing practices that avoid communicating misleading information and uphold high ethical standards in emotional branding.

1.7 Limitations and Delimitations

The following are the main restrictions identified in this study:

1. Number of interviewees and Representation: The study's restricted sample size of 35 pharmaceutical experts participating at the qualitative interviews and the focus groups could have an impact on how broadly applicable the results are. Despite efforts to include participants from throughout the world (Asia, Europe and North America) the sample size may be too small to fully capture the variety of viewpoints and methods found in the global pharmaceutical market.
2. Self-reported data: Much of the data collected relies on self-reported information from participants. Biases such social desirability bias, when respondents give

answers they think are more socially acceptable rather than their genuine sentiments or experiences, might be introduced via the focus groups. This can affect to a certain extent the outcomes and compromise the validity of the conclusions.

3. Regulatory constraints: The pharmaceutical industry is heavily regulated, and these regulations can vary significantly across different countries. It's possible that some regional regulation variations were overlooked in this study, which could have an impact on how applicable the recommendations are in certain geographic regions.
4. Scope of emotional elements: The study focuses on the emotional aspects of pharmaceutical marketing. Although this research tries to provide a thorough understanding of one critical element of marketing strategies, it doesn't take into account other important elements like technological, social, or economic aspects that may also have a big impact on the direction and results of marketing efforts and outcomes.
5. Rapidly evolving market dynamics: The pharmaceutical market is very dynamic, undergoing rapid changes in customers' behavior, market conditions, and technology. The results of this study may not fully take into account future developments that could affect the applicability of the conclusions made because they are based on the current status of the pharmaceutical industry.

The Delimitations of this study include:

1. Target population: Professionals working in the pharmaceutical sector such as marketing executives are the only ones included in the research. The main study focus excludes patients, regulatory agencies, and other stakeholders.

2. Focus on emotional elements: The incorporation of emotional elements into pharmaceutical marketing strategies is the focus of this study. It is worthy to mention that not all aspects of marketing are explored in detail. Other important elements of a marketing strategy such as pricing, distribution networks, commercial strategies and technological advancements and their influences are not in the scope of this research.
3. Geographical scope: The study is primarily focused on major pharmaceutical markets in, Europe, and Japan, however it does attempt to provide a worldwide view. The extent to which conclusions are applicable to other markets may be limited due to the lack of substantial coverage in those areas.
4. Time frame: The data, which is based on research conducted over a specific period of time, represents the conditions and practices of the industry during that time. Long-term variations and upcoming changes are therefore not fully taken into account due to this delimitation.
5. Methodological approach: The study uses a mixed-methods approach, integrating case studies analysis with qualitative interviews and focus groups with professionals in the pharmaceutical sector. This methodological approach leaves out other possible study approaches that might offer more insights, such as large-scale surveys.

With this the researcher aims to clarify the scope of the present study and the context in which the results should be interpreted by identifying these limitations and delimitations. This identifies areas that could be the basis for further research in the future and helps to appropriately frame the research findings.

1.8 Terms Central to the Study

The term "emotional elements in marketing" describes how marketing techniques use appeals to consumers' emotions to influence their behavior and decision making. Storytelling, patient testimonials, and brand imagery that appeals to patients' and HCPs' emotions are just some examples of emotional components in pharmaceutical marketing (Keller, 2001).

Companies use "brand differentiation" to set their products apart from those of their competitors. Beyond the functional qualities of the drug, effective brand differentiation includes developing a distinctive brand identity and an emotional bond with the target market (Moss and Schuiling, 2004).

"Brand Resonance" refers to the process of establishing a deep, emotional connection between a brand and its target audience. Brand Resonance assesses the degree to which individuals experience a profound emotional connection and loyalty to a particular brand (Keller, 2001).

"Ethical marketing" in the pharmaceutical sector entails compliance with regulatory mandates and ethical principles to ensure that marketing activities are handled in a morally upright manner. This entails the provision of precise and factual information, abstaining from deceptive assertions, and achieving a harmonious equilibrium between emotional persuasion and empirical evidence (IFPMA, 2019).

"Prescribing Decision-Making": This term refers to the process through which physicians and other healthcare providers select which medications to be prescribed. This process is shaped by a combination of different factors like clinical data and other product attributes, emotional factors, patient characteristics, and marketing strategies.

"Regulatory compliance" refers to the process of following the adherence to rules and regulations established by regulatory authorities that oversee the promotion and

advertising of pharmaceutical products. Compliance ensures that marketing practices adhere to the laws, uphold ethical standards, and refrain from misleading or causing harm to the public (IFPMA, 2019).

“Patient-Centric Marketing”: This approach focuses on understanding and addressing the needs, preferences and motivations of patients. It involves developing marketing tactics that prioritize patient outcomes and foster a more profound connection with the patient population.

“Behavioural Economics” is a field of study that investigates the influence of psychological, social, and emotional elements on the process of making economic related decisions and how they behave (Samson, 2014). In contrast to traditional economics, based on which individuals make rational decisions, behavioural economics acknowledges the significant influence of emotions, cognitive biases, and social factors on decision-making. Understanding Behavioural Economics is critical for understanding customers' needs and for improving customer experience as it allows companies to develop strategies that align with customers' thinking and behaviour, rather than how they are expected to behave (Renaissance.io, 2024). Behavioural economics can offer valuable insights into the impact of emotions on the prescription behaviour of healthcare professionals.

“Competitive Advantage”: In the field of pharmaceutical marketing, this word indicates the advantage that a company acquires by successfully differentiating its brand and establishing emotional connections that competitors find difficult to replicate.

“Product Similarity” refers to the situation in which new (or existing) pharmaceutical medicines show comparable product profiles and therapeutic benefits. This is a challenge for companies as they struggle to differentiate their products solely based on data and their “technical” characteristics.

“Emotional Branding” indicates an approach of establishing a strong connection between a brand and its audience to foster loyalty, trust, and long-term engagement. It goes beyond functional product characteristics by appealing to emotions, values, and personal identity. In pharmaceutical marketing, emotional branding can influence prescriber decisions by cultivating empathy, connecting with physicians' professional principles, and creating a sense of shared purpose with healthcare professionals and patients. This approach is critical in differentiating brands in competitive markets where clinical characteristics alone may not be enough for differentiation (L, Babu and Krishnan, 2023).

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The pharmaceutical industry is currently facing substantial and unparalleled challenges caused by multiple factors, such as increased competition, pricing pressures from public healthcare authorities, increasing expenditures of research and development (R&D), the expiration of patents for major blockbuster pharmaceuticals, and a modest productivity of new drugs despite the increase of the research investment (Khanna, 2012) (Fricker, 2016). These unprecedented challenges have a significant impact to its fundamental business model, as it strives to sustain sufficient innovation in order to compensate for the decline in income and earnings resulting from patent expirations (Paul et al., 2010).

More than half of the pharmaceutical products consist of medications with only minor differences from existing treatments, often targeting common or widespread disease areas (Aronson and Green, 2020). The main obstacle in many cases is to distinguish these products from competitors (McKinsey Company, 2013). To achieve this, pharmaceutical companies must develop strategies that provide distinct insights into the needs and behaviours of stakeholders. This will enable them to effectively create a tailored plan of communication for a specific target market and establish a clear competitive advantage over their competitors.

The objective of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the existing research and to inform the research topics and methodology for this Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) thesis.

2.2 Key Concepts and Theories

The pharmaceutical industry has seen significant changes in the last few years, characterised by increased competition, no increase in the development of new drugs, and similarities in the clinical profiles of many of the new medicines (Khanna, 2012) (McKinsey Company, 2013) (Fricker, 2016).

Moss and Schuiling (2004) advocate for a transition from a business model traditionally focused mainly on research and development to brand-centric methods and patent-oriented strategies that use emotional connections as a way to build a strong competitive advantage.

Behavioural economics principles question the conventional perspective of logical decision-making. Behavioural economics reveals that decision-making frequently diverges from strict rationality. The works of Kahneman, Lovallo, and Sibony (2011) and Nabhan and Feinberg (2017) highlight important findings from behavioural economics. They have demonstrated that individuals, display consistent behaviours that are impacted by cognitive biases and emotional factors (Kahneman, Lovallo and Sibony, 2011). Nabhan and Feinberg (2017) suggest that the existing research in behavioural economics in healthcare reveals that healthcare providers, as well as patients, do not always make completely rational decisions.

Gibson (2006) challenges the traditional approach and emphasises the substantial impact of emotions on financial decision-making. This observation suggests that the knowledge acquired from studying emotional dynamics can be used to many decision-making contexts, demonstrating a wider range of applicability.

As already mentioned, incorporating emotional components into pharmaceutical marketing strategies is critical in order to effectively adapt to the changing landscape where new treatments are increasingly comparable in terms of product characteristics.

The change requires a significant shift from exclusively data-driven approaches to those that promote emotional connection with healthcare providers and more specifically prescribers. Various innate biases influence their decision-making processes. Gaining a clear, deep understanding and insights into these patterns is essential for formulating marketing strategies that can effectively resonate with consumers on an emotional level. By acknowledging that physicians' decisions are impacted by cognitive biases and emotional variables, it becomes possible to create more sophisticated and personalized marketing techniques that specifically target these influences.

Alam et al. (2023) emphasise the critical distinction between a product and a brand. A product refers to a physical object that is manufactured in a factory, but on the other hand a brand consists of the way consumers perceive, emotionally connect with, and remain loyal to a certain brand. In the pharmaceutical sector, as in every other industry, it is critical to build emotional connections with customers, particularly prescribers, in order to differentiate brands, especially when it comes to treatments with significant clinical similarities.

The Customer-Based-Brand-Equity (CBBE) model, introduced by Keller (2001), provides a systematic framework to analyse brand equity, hence the overall perception that customers might have towards a specific brand. Keller's research discusses the way in which consumers' perceptions and emotions regarding a brand impact its intrinsic value and ultimately the overall success in the market. The CBBE model places considerable importance to brand awareness, emotional brand connections, perceived level of superior outcomes in the eyes of the customer, and brand loyalty. Cultivating psychological connections is crucial in this process, as it fosters strong connections with customers. This is of utmost importance in establishing strong pharmaceutical brands.

Kotler and Keller (2006) further elaborate on the CBBE model, highlighting the significant impact that emotional connections can have on customers' reactions. They suggest that fostering emotional connections is crucial for establishing brand loyalty.

Keller (2009) highlights the significance of emotional connections in addition to the benefits related to functional attributes. Within the pharmaceutical market, this combined focus can allow building brands that strongly resonate with healthcare professionals, leading into a stronger preference for a specific brand and increased loyalty.

According to Keller (2001), brand resonance is an important element that can differentiate pharmaceutical brands and companies from one another. Cultivating a strong connection with healthcare professionals can result in reinforcing brand loyalty, a critical factor in a sector where relying just on product features is not sufficient to gain a strong competitive advantage. Companies that establish strong emotional connections with their customers are better prepared to tackle competition based on price and establish strong customer loyalty, and strong advocacy (Akgün, Koçoğlu, and İmamoğlu 2013), (Binet and Field, 2013). Prosser (2003) reinforces the importance of developing brand resonance by revealing the ever-changing nature of decision making in prescribing, providing insight into how social, environmental, and psychological factors come together and more specifically the understanding of interpersonal factors and personal experience enhances the emotional aspects that impact prescription judgements. Latif (2014) also explores the need and the importance of developing brand resonance and recognises its crucial role in creating a competitive advantage for a brand. The AASAL model proposed by him, incorporates functional, emotional, and self-expressive benefits, highlighting the complexity of the strategy required for pharmaceutical brands to effectively connect with their target audience.

The research undertaken by Knapp and Oeltjen in 1972 remains relevant more than 50 years later, as it highlights the complex connection of psychological factors in the decision-making process. Their study aimed to foster a comprehensive understanding of the cognitive and emotional processes in the decision making of physicians, going beyond a narrow focus on the technical attributes of medications to include psychological and emotional factors as well.

Emotions play a significant role in the complex reality of decision-making. The combined findings of multiple studies conducted in different circumstances clarify the correlation between emotions and decision-making processes. Quevedo and Gopalakrishna (2021) challenge the belief that brand selection depends entirely on rationality, instead arguing that it is predominantly influenced by intuition, rationality, feelings, and emotions. The important research conducted by Scheff, Wentworth, and Ryan (1995) serves as a guiding principle, directing our inquiry into the role of emotions as key factors in consumer behaviours. Li, Ashkanasy, and Ahlstrom (2013) further contribute to the ongoing discussion on decision-making research by highlighting the significance of emotions in creating feelings associated with possible losses and expressing deep desires and motivations. Their argument establishes the foundation for comprehending how emotions, which cannot be separated from decision-making, are present throughout the pharmaceutical landscape.

Bradley (1992) and Kozlowski et al. (2017) conducted research that reveals the complex various aspects of prescribing decisions, which are influenced by factors not related to the product characteristics but mostly to patient expectations, doctor-patient interactions, and psychological factors. These studies also indicate that emotional engagement might have a major influence on prescribing behaviours. Bagozzi, Gopinath, and Nyer (1999) in their study argue that emotions play a crucial role as indicators,

mediators, and moderators of how customers react and take decisions. The fundamental idea highlights the need for a more emotionally resonant approach in marketing. This concept is strengthened by González Oñate, Farràn Teixidó, and Vázquez Cagiao (2018) who question the traditional communication theories and standards, underlining the dominance of emotion in driving customer behaviour.

Hansen, Carpentier, and Modicom (2011) emphasise the importance of implementing effective strategies in pharmaceutical brand communication, distinguishing between communication for medicinal products characteristics and communication for the brand itself. This differentiation becomes crucial, because it helps a brand to adapt and thrive in different environments. Primary research conducted by Bednarik (2005) among Czech psychiatrists supports the need for emotional branding. The research indicated that emotional content has the potential to differentiate pharmaceutical brands beyond clinical data and it highlights the importance of pharmaceutical brands in conveying both functional and emotional self-expressive benefits.

The study conducted by Davari, Khorasani, and Tigabu (2018) explores the relationship between physician practice change and the influence that this has on the healthcare expenditure, serving as a linking to the pharmaceutical industry. Their investigation into the various factors that affect doctors' choices when prescribing a medication, such as personal characteristics and marketing tactics employed by pharmaceutical companies, is consistent with the complex influences that shape prescription decisions. It also aligns with the broader understanding of emotional factors in pharmaceutical marketing. Ferrer et al. (2014) propose the use of emotion science in health-related decision-making, in line with the wider acknowledgment of the influence of emotions on decision-making in general, which of course resonate very well with the

proposed research into the role of emotions in physicians' decision-making when prescribing medications, emphasising the significance of comprehending emotions in healthcare decision-making.

Vecchiato et al. (2013) support this idea by highlighting the crucial importance of the unconscious and subconscious mind in marketing strategies. Their study recognises an urgent need for creative approaches in developing effective marketing strategies that align with the complex nature of the human mind. It is also worth mentioning that Brosch et al. (2013) have challenged the classic distinction between reason and emotion. They have presented psychological and neuroscientific evidence that highlight the interconnection of these two forces. Their observations emphasise the crucial function of cognitive processing in evoking emotional reactions, influencing the comprehension of how emotions impact perception, memory, and decision-making. Alsharif, Md Salleh, and Baharun (2021) investigate the underlying brain mechanisms that drive consumer behaviour, cognition, and emotions. Understanding the neurological mechanisms behind decision-making could help pharmaceutical companies in developing marketing strategies that trigger emotional resonance among physicians.

Ling et al. (2023) present a thorough analysis of Coca-Cola's emotional marketing techniques, emphasising the strong connection between brands and happy emotions. They use a powerful metaphor to illustrate this enduring association. This narrative highlights the need of establishing emotional resonance as a critical element in pharmaceutical marketing. It demonstrates how emotional strategies may establish powerful connections between companies and customers. Alemayehu's (2017) analysis of DICLODENK reflects the wider exploration of brand-building tactics in emerging markets. It is consistent with the findings of Czech psychiatrists, indicating that pharmaceutical brands communicate both practical and emotional advantages.

The literature review presented above, contains a comprehensive analysis of previously discussed articles and research, which offer strong evidence of the influence of emotions in different contexts.

2.3 Ethical dilemmas in Pharmaceutical Marketing

It is important to acknowledge the ethical challenges associated with pharmaceutical branding and the importance of a well-balanced communication approach that upholds ethical norms while effectively connecting with HCPs on an emotional level (Anker et al., 2011). The importance of ethical communication and marketing tactics cannot be undervalued, particularly when it comes to pharmaceutical branding. It is crucial to prioritise balanced messaging in order to maintain credibility, trust and ensure an appropriate and safe use of medicines for the patients (Memişoğlu, 2018).

In their investigation into the field of neuromarketing, Alsharif, Md Salleh, and Baharun (2021) try to understand the neurological basis of consumer behaviour, cognition, and emotions. Additionally, their research tackles significant ethical issues brought about by the shift in pharmaceutical marketing towards a more emotionally driven approach. Han and Lerner (2009) draw attention to the shift away from traditional cognitive frameworks and towards a recognition of the important role that emotions play in the process of decision making. The presence of biased decision-making and impulsive behaviour presents significant challenges.

The findings of Lerner et al. (2015) regarding the strength, predictability, and potential positive or negative effects of emotions on decision-making are consistent with the main topic. Anker et al. (2011) explore the implications of commercial food health branding and raise concerns about the ethical issues that may arise in pharmaceutical branding. They emphasise the need for ethical examination in this field. This serves as an

advice and caution, urging stakeholders in pharmaceutical marketing to properly manage the ethical aspects of medicinals branding.

2.4 Summary

The pharmaceutical industry is navigating a landscape filled with significant challenges. These include increased competition, pressure from healthcare authorities on prices, new regulatory frameworks that shorten the length of exclusivity, declining productivity in the discovery of novel molecules, increasing costs associated with research and development, the expiration of patents on several blockbuster pharmaceutical drugs, and a decreasing number of new drugs (Khanna, 2012). According to Paul et al. (2010), the industry's fundamental business model is in jeopardy since efforts to maintain innovation aren't making up for the losses resulting from patent expirations and other pressures imposed by the external environment.

More than 50% of newly introduced pharmaceutical products are just slightly unique and mostly focus on well-known disease areas. In order to effectively construct specific target markets and establish strong competitive advantages, pharmaceutical companies must develop strategies that offer unique insights into stakeholder demands and behaviours, as highlighted by McKinsey & Company (2013).

The way the industry is changing, highlights the need to move away from traditional marketing approaches that focus on logical product attributes and towards approaches that can create powerful emotional bonds. Moss and Schuiling (2004) support a brand-centric strategy that uses emotional resonance to create a long-term, strong competitive advantage. The conventional view of rational decision-making is challenged by behavioural economics principles, which have shown that decision-making frequently deviates from strict rationality. The influence of emotional elements and cognitive biases

on behaviour has been demonstrated by pioneers such as Tversky and Kahneman (Kahneman, Lovallo, & Sibony, 2011). Furthermore, Nabhan and Feinberg (2017) suggest that biases play a factor in the decisions made by healthcare professionals and patients, and that these decisions are not always entirely logical.

Incorporating emotional components into pharmaceutical marketing and in that sense adapting to a market where new treatments appear to be increasingly similar in terms of clinical characteristics, is crucial. It's important now more than ever, to move away from exclusively data-driven strategies towards alternatives that help prescribers develop strong emotional bonds. Effective marketing strategies can be created by comprehending the cognitive and emotional biases that influence physicians' decision making. Alam et al. (2023) stress the crucial difference between a brand and a product, emphasising the value of forming strong emotional bonds with consumers, especially prescribers, in order to set brands apart even in the face of significant clinical similarities.

A systematic framework for analysing brand equity is provided by Keller's (2001) Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model, which places emphasis on brand awareness, emotional connections, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. In this process, emotional connections must be established; robust pharmaceutical brands are built through strong customer bonds. Building upon the CBBE model, Kotler and Keller (2006) highlight the importance of emotional connections in shaping consumers' behaviour and brand loyalty. Keller (2009) stresses the significance of emotional connections in addition to functional benefits, suggesting that this combined emphasis can increase prescribers' brand choice and loyalty.

The long-lasting significance of Knapp and Oeltjen's (1972) study underlines the complex connection between psychological elements and physicians' decision-making processes. Their research supports an extensive understanding of cognitive and emotional

influences that go beyond the technical characteristics of pharmaceuticals products. Keller (2001) further develops on, adding that differentiating pharmaceutical brands requires a strong sense of brand resonance. Developing a close emotional connection with prescribers can reinforce brand loyalty, which is critical in a market where product features are not always enough to give a competitive advantage. Research conducted by Binet and Field (2013) and Akgün, Koçoğlu, and İmamoğlu (2013) show that companies that establish connections with their customers are in a better place to address price-based competition and develop a loyal and supportive consumer base.

Research by Bradley (1992) and Kozlowski et al. (2017) indicates that psychological factors, doctor-patient interactions as well as patient expectations, all can have a significant impact on prescribing decision making. These findings indicate that emotional engagement has a major influence on prescribing behaviours. The idea that choosing a brand solely relies on logic is challenged also by the research of Quevedo and Gopalakrishna (2021), which shows that emotions play an important role in decision-making. While Li, Ashkanasy, and Ahlstrom (2013) explore how emotions influence decision-making, Scheff, Wentworth, and Ryan (1995) highlight the relevance of emotions in consumer behaviours.

Emotions are mediators, moderators, and indicators of customers' reactions, according to Bagozzi, Gopinath, and Nyer (1999), which emphasises the need of emotionally driven marketing. In their review of conventional communication theories, González Oñate, Farràn Teixidó, and Vázquez Cagiao (2018) emphasise how emotion is the primary factor influencing customer behaviour. The significance of emotional branding in establishing competitive advantages and comprehending decision-making dynamics in prescribing is emphasised by Latif (2014) and Prosser (2003).

Effective pharmaceutical brand strategies that differentiate between product and brand communication are crucial, as noted by Hansen, Carpentier, and Modicom (2011). The importance of emotional branding is supported by Bednarik's (2005) study of Czech psychiatrists, which shows that emotional branding has the power to set pharmaceutical products beyond clinical evidence. Aligned with the same understanding of the emotional components in pharmaceutical marketing, Davari, Khorasani, and Tigabu (2018) investigate the association between changes in physician practice and healthcare spending. The use of emotion science to health-related decision-making is suggested by Ferrer et al. (2014), who highlight the research's relevance to the investigation of physicians' prescribing practices.

According to Vecchiato et al. (2013), marketing strategies should take into account the unconscious, strongly suggesting the importance and the need to embrace more creative approaches that take into account the complexity of the human mind. By providing evidence of their influence on decision-making, Brosch et al. (2013) go against the idea that reason and emotion are different from each other.

A balanced marketing strategy that respects ethical standards while successfully establishes an emotional connection with healthcare professionals is required to address the ethical issues surrounding pharmaceutical branding (Anker et al., 2011; Memişoğlu, 2018). The neurological foundations of consumer behaviour and the moral ramifications of emotionally driven pharmaceutical marketing are examined by Alsharif, Md Salleh, and Baharun (2021). Han and Lerner (2009) emphasise the importance of emotions in decision-making and point out that biases and impulsive behaviours present serious challenges. According to Lerner et al. (2015), there is a correlation between the investigation of emotional factors in pharmaceutical marketing and the predictability and influence of emotions on decision-making.

Anker et al. (2011) point out the necessity for ethical examination of pharmaceutical marketing by bringing up ethical challenges in health branding. The development of successful and moral marketing strategies for the pharmaceutical business is guided by the solid foundation this literature review offers for comprehending the role of emotions in pharmaceutical marketing and decision-making.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview of the Research Problem

In this chapter the researcher will try to provide a detailed description of the research methodology applied in this study. The importance of this specific chapter is linked on the methodical technique employed to examine the emotional factors that influence the decision-making process of prescribers in the pharmaceutical market, in a way that can ensure the dependability and accuracy of the results.

The ultimate objective of this research is to support and provide pharmaceutical companies a structured and practical framework in implementing new, more effective ways of differentiating their brands, by utilizing emotional components in their marketing strategies, especially in situations where it is difficult to do that by only based on clinical differences. To achieve this, a mixed-methods strategy has been utilized, which involves the combination of qualitative interviews with highly experienced pharmaceutical marketing professionals with global experience and analysis of case studies of successfully implemented emotional marketing strategies.

In this chapter you will find a detailed description of the research design, including the criteria used to select participants, the creation of the qualitative questionnaire and the focus group discussion guide used, as well as the techniques employed for collecting and analysing the data. Ethical aspects are also discussed in the course of this chapter and more specifically all the steps taken to guarantee the accuracy and privacy of the data.

It is also discussed the research process, defined in a way to guarantee that the investigation is carried out in a structured and transparent way, offering a clear pathway for reproducing the research. The results obtained from this study are anticipated to

provide pharmaceutical companies with practical approaches to develop emotionally captivating marketing campaigns and ultimately improving brands differentiation.

3.2 Rational

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, including qualitative survey, focus groups and in-depth examination of specific case studies.

The selected methodology for this study included a combination of different tools, engaging pharmaceutical marketing professionals with experience working in different geographical areas across the globe. The scope of this approach was to thoroughly investigate the impact that emotional factors can have to the decision-making process of prescribers when it comes to what treatment to prescribe and how marketing strategies can influence that.

The use of mixed-methods technique is especially pertinent to the research questions and objectives, as it offers a comprehensive and thorough approach in terms of data collection and analysis. Utilising a questionnaire facilitates the gathering of data from a wide-ranging and geographically varied group of pharmaceutical professionals. This methodology guarantees that the results may be applied to various regions and markets, incorporating a diverse variety of perspectives and opinions on the impact of emotional factors on prescription behaviours. The qualitative questionnaire has been created to collect comprehensive data on different aspects of emotional marketing, brand differentiation, and ethical factors in pharmaceutical marketing strategies.

Qualitative insights have been obtained through focus groups, in addition to those collected from the qualitative questionnaire. The focus groups engaged in extensive discussions with selected pharmaceutical experts, allowing a more in-depth examination of specific topics identified in advance but also during the survey. Focus groups enabled

an environment where participants, in an open and highly interactive way, expressed their opinions, thoughts and described their experiences (Cyr, 2015). This allowed collecting more specific contextual data, which can shed light on the intricate emotional factors that influence decision-making.

By employing these methodologies in combination, a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the study problem is ensured. The questionnaire's data provided a broad overview, while the focus groups' qualitative insights offer detailed information and more specific contextual data. By employing this methodological triangulation, the research findings are made more reliable and legitimate, since it allows for an in-depth examination of the emotional aspects that impact prescribers' treatment decisions.

3.3 Research Approach

This study follows a mixed-methods approach, incorporating qualitative questionnaire, focus groups and case studies research methodologies, aiming to further reinforce the validity and accuracy of the conclusions. The qualitative part includes the distribution of a questionnaire to pharmaceutical experts across the globe, allowing the collection of extensive and generalizable data on the impact that emotional factors have on prescribers' decision-making. Another component of the research involves running focus groups with two selected groups of highly experienced executives of pharmaceutical marketing. These focus groups aimed to gather detailed and contextual insights into the topics that have been raised in the questionnaire.

The research methodology was enhanced by adding the analysis of relevant case studies. These case studies analysed specific examples in which pharmaceutical companies have effectively integrated emotional elements into their marketing campaigns

targeting primarily healthcare professionals. By conducting a thorough analysis of these cases, the research acquires a deep understanding of the practical implementation and influence of emotional branding in the pharmaceutical industry. The case studies present tangible examples and knowledge gained, providing useful insights into best practices, possible challenges and how these have been successfully addressed in the past.

3.4 Research Paradigm

The present study uses an interpretivist research paradigm, which is very much in line with its qualitative methodology approach. Interpretivism claims that reality derives from society and may be comprehended by examining the subjective experiences and interpretations of individuals (Boas, 1995). The study aims to investigate the emotional factors that influence the decision-making process of prescribers in the pharmaceutical sector, and this paradigm is in line with that objective.

The interpretivist paradigm supports the use of the following research methods.

Survey of a qualitative nature: The survey intended to collect comprehensive insights and experiences from 30-40 senior experts in the pharmaceutical marketing. This approach enables the capture of the various perspectives and opinions of experts in the business, which are crucial for understanding the way emotional elements are incorporated into marketing campaigns and the respective challenges faced in do so.

Focus groups are organised with a particular set of professionals in pharmaceutical marketing with extensive experience from various regions across the globe. Focus groups offer a forum for participants to express their experiences, their thoughts and opinions on the emotional parameters that affect their marketing strategies and for the researcher a unique opportunity to collect qualitative insights on the drivers and barriers of implementing emotional branding in pharmaceutical marketing. The

interpretivist approach places importance on the shared meanings and the contextual data that arise from this type of group conversations.

Case Studies: The case studies provide examples and practical insights by analysing real-life situations where emotional branding has been successfully implemented in the pharmaceutical industry. This approach is consistent with the interpretivist perspective, which puts emphasis on the comprehension of phenomena by thoroughly examining specific contexts and cases.

This research dives deep into the subjective realities of pharmaceutical marketing professionals by using an interpretivist approach. This approach provides a solid framework for capturing the depth of participants' experiences. The interpretivist paradigm supports the study's main objective of providing pharmaceutical companies with practical insights and a framework that will help them in developing marketing strategies that are both emotionally and ethically sound, promote brand differentiation, and build strong and lasting relationships with healthcare professionals.

3.5 Study Type

This study is a qualitative research combining case studies and qualitative research methodologies.

Qualitative Research: In order to get solid, comprehensive insights into the emotional factors that influence prescribers' treatment decisions, this study deploys different qualitative approaches (questionnaire and focus groups) that allow us to obtain an in-depth analysis of the perspectives, experiences, and methods used by experts in pharmaceutical marketing.

35 senior experts in pharmaceutical marketing, participated at the qualitative survey. Detailed first-hand experiences of how emotional elements are incorporated into

marketing strategies have been collected through this survey. In-depth conversations have been also facilitated in two focus groups with selected marketing experts from various geographical areas, giving participants an interactive environment in which to share their experiences, opinions and suggestions.

Case Studies: An important part of this research includes looking at specific examples of pharmaceutical companies that have successfully implemented emotional branding in the recent past. These case studies offer detailed, contextualised insights into the application of marketing strategies with emotional elements in real cases and the effects that these had on prescribers' decision-making and brand differentiation but also on how the companies managed to overcome the challenges in implementing these strategies.

Combining the outcomes of these qualitative methodologies, the research aspires to provide a deep and comprehensive understanding of how emotional marketing strategies can be effectively utilised to differentiate pharmaceutical companies and their brands and ultimately create stronger relationships with healthcare professionals and patients. The reason for selecting this multi-method approach was to ensure that the research covers both the overarching trends and the specific, context-dependent observations essential for formulating effective and ethically sound marketing strategies.

3.6 Population and Sample

The broader population of this research consists of senior marketing professionals with a significant experience in the pharmaceutical market, with a particular emphasis on companies that market prescription medications. These professionals have an extensive level of expertise in marketing, particularly in companies with strong portfolio of prescribed brands.

Qualitative Research Participants: The goal of the research is to have >30 people participating in the qualitative survey. These participants are senior professionals with a wealth of expertise in their respective areas, having worked in marketing.

Focus Groups: Selected marketing experts from various locations across the globe participated in two focus groups, each one with four participants. These focus groups provided a platform for in-depth discussions as well as the exchange of experiences and opinions.

Case Studies: Two case studies have been discussed to leverage learnings from specific situations where emotional branding has been applied to pharmaceutical marketing successfully.

Qualitative survey - Inclusion Criteria:

1. A minimum of five years' experience in the pharmaceutical industry is required for participating at the qualitative survey.
2. Professionals who are currently employed by multinational pharmaceutical companies, or who have worked for them during the last two years.
3. Experts with extensive experience working for organisations with a significant portfolio of prescribed brands.

Qualitative survey - Exclusion Criteria:

1. Less than five years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry.
2. No experience working for a pharmaceutical company with international presence.
3. Not worked in the pharmaceutical industry in the last 2 years.

Focus Groups – Inclusion Criteria:

1. Professionals who are currently employed in the pharmaceutical industry at the time the study was conducted.

2. Professionals with over 8 years of experience in pharmaceutical marketing.
3. Experts in leading teams and brands with international responsibility, and/or with experience across more than 1 countries or regions.

Focus Groups – Exclusion Criteria:

1. Professionals having less than 8 years of experience in pharmaceutical marketing have not been included to ensure participants have significant knowledge and required level of expertise in the research topic.
2. Professionals who have not been employed in a pharmaceutical company in the last 2 years, were also excluded from the research to make sure that the observations and perspectives expressed are current and relevant to the latest industry standards.
3. Insufficient International experience: Professionals lacking experience in leading teams or brands with international responsibilities, or who have not worked in multiple countries or regions, have been excluded. This guarantees that participants have experiences of worldoperating in different markets and cultures.
4. Participants who have possible conflicts of interest that could influence their participation (such as those employed by competitors in a manner that could undermine the study's integrity) have not been included.
5. Individuals who display hesitation or unease in engaging in group discussions will not be included, as successful focus groups necessitate active and voluntary involvement from all members.

Proposed Criteria for the Case Studies:

The case studies involve pharmaceutical companies that have successfully implemented emotional branding strategies in prescription medicines. They provide comprehensive insights into how their emotional branding strategies have been planned

and executed as well as which have been the outcomes. They also illustrate the challenges faced and the strategies employed to overcome these difficulties.

This targeted approach, aims to facilitate the collection of insights that are relevant to the scope of the study and applicable within the specific context of pharmaceutical marketing for prescription medicines. It aims therefore to collect detailed insights that can ultimately feed and guide the creation of effective and successful marketing strategies. These insights will strengthen relationships of enhanced trust between the industry and patients and healthcare providers and build strong brand differentiation.

The sampling technique used in this research is purposive sampling. This approach was selected with the main purpose of ensuring that the sample includes participants with significant expertise and experience and that can provide valuable insights on the topic at matter.

Rationale for purposive sampling:

1. **Knowledge and Experience:** The key subjects of focus of the research methodologies are senior pharmaceutical professionals, in marketing. The participants have extensive knowledge and experience of the current standard practices of pharmaceutical marketing, the challenges faced in implementing emotional branding and of course the ethical issues surrounding the use of emotional components into marketing campaigns.
2. **Relevance to Research Objectives:** The study aims to investigate how prescribers' treatment decisions are influenced by emotional drivers and how pharmaceutical companies can create marketing strategies that leverage these emotional drivers and can ultimately differentiate their brands. To achieve this, it is critical for the research to involve people who have knowledge and practical experience of these

matters. By using purposive sampling, the researcher is able to identify and select the participants who are most qualified to provide these insights.

3. Geographical Diversity: Participants in the study combine experiences from different regions of the world resulting to a sample that captures a variety of opinions and experiences by using purposeful sampling.

Application of Purposive Sampling:

1. Qualitative Survey: >30 senior professionals of pharmaceutical marketing were the target number of participants for this qualitative survey. The selection of the participants is based on their years of experience (minimum of five years) and involvement with companies with strong international presence.
2. Focus Groups: Four Marketing experts from different regions of the globe participated in each of the two focus groups. The selection of participants was based on their current professional activities, level of experience (over 8 years), and leadership positions including international responsibility.
3. Case Studies: Two case studies examined specific examples of companies that have successfully implemented emotional branding. These examples have been selected on the basis of how successful they have been in implementing emotional branding in prescription drugs.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

A variety of instruments are used in this study to collect data, such as focus groups, case studies, and a qualitative survey. The insights generated by these tools aim to help pharmaceutical companies to create effective marketing strategies by providing comprehensive insights into the emotional factors that influence prescribers' treatment decisions.

Around 90 senior pharmaceutical industry experts have been invited to participate at the qualitative survey which targets professionals working in marketing, aiming to collect >30 completed questionnaires. The survey included both open-ended questions and predefined answers to collect comprehensive insights on how emotional elements are integrated into pharmaceutical marketing tactics, the challenges faced, and the ethical concerns involved. The key sections of the qualitative survey were the following:

Current Trends: The questions explored the most recent developments in pharmaceutical marketing, with an emphasis on emotional branding in particular.

Challenges: Participants have been asked to list the challenges they face in adhering to regulations, ethical questions, and cultural adaptation.

Successful Emotional Marketing Campaigns: Respondents provided examples of successful campaigns and the elements that made them so with a particular focus on their emotional aspects.

Brand Differentiation: The questions focused on how companies might employ emotional resonance to differentiate their brands apart from competitors.

Metrics and KPIs: In order to be able to evaluate the effect of emotional branding, the survey looked for insights into relevant key performance indicators (KPIs).

There are two focus groups with four senior pharmaceutical marketing experts each. The goal of having these focus group discussions was to dig deeper and more in detail into the topics included in the qualitative survey, facilitating interactive discussions and sharing various opinions, experiences and ideas.

The format of the focus group meeting was as follows:

Participants provided a brief introduction of themselves, their roles, and the years of experience they have in pharmaceutical industry.

Current Trends and Challenges: The topics of discussion focused on the latest developments in emotional branding in the pharmaceutical industry as well as the challenges encountered in implementing these elements into marketing strategies.

Successful Campaigns: Participants discussed and analyzed effective emotional marketing campaign examples in the pharmaceutical industry especially in regards to prescription medicines.

Brand Differentiation: The two groups explored strategies to establish a unique emotional connection with prescribers that can result in a strong brand differentiation.

Ethical Considerations: The ethical issues of emotional marketing were discussed, along with potential solutions.

To give specific examples of successful emotional branding implemented in the past in the pharmaceutical industry, two case studies have been analysed. The case studies focused on companies which have a substantial portfolio of prescription drugs. Information for the case studies were gathered using documents analysis, hence searching through online articles, studies, reports and marketing materials.

The case studies through the use of a standardised framework, examined the design, implementation, challenges, and outcomes of successful emotional branding initiatives in the pharmaceutical industry.

Using the above mentioned tools, the researcher tried to collect extensive data and insights to inform the creation of a framework that will help pharmaceutical companies to create ethical, successful, and emotionally compelling marketing strategies.

Design of Qualitative Surveys: In order to learn more about the participants backgrounds, the survey asked demographic questions about their years of experience, current role, and location. The open-ended questions in the qualitative survey were

intended to focus on the challenges that were encountered, ethical considerations, and the incorporation of emotional elements in pharmaceutical marketing.

Participants recruitment in the questionnaire survey: Senior professionals in pharmaceutical marketing were recruited through professional networks and industry connections. Invited participants received an invitation by email, explaining the goals of the study and inviting them to participate.

Questionnaire distribution: To enable a wide, international participation of responders and ensure convenience, the questionnaire was conducted online through a secure and easy to use survey platform. Participants have been given a specific amount of time of two weeks to complete the survey. Follow-up reminders were sent to the participants who had not completed the questionnaire within the initial time frame and an additional 5 working days time were given to them.

Data Collection: Responses were collected electronically and stored securely for analysis.

Focus Groups Discussion Guide Development: A discussion guide was created to facilitate and guide the discussions within the focus groups, covering topics such as current trends in pharmaceutical marketing, challenges faced in successfully implementing emotional branding, examples of successful marketing strategies, brand differentiation, and ethical considerations. The discussion guide provided specific questions and prompts to foster extensive discussions and ensure the collection of all the insights required by the study. Participants' recruitment for the focus groups was conducted by selecting marketing professionals who had strong knowledge of pharmaceutical marketing aspects, deep understanding of emotional branding and its applications in pharma and of course all these combined with an overall extensive experience in the field of pharmaceutical marketing. Invitations were sent by email,

alongside details regarding the study's objectives, the topics to be discussed, and logistics information like dates and times of the focus group sessions. The focus groups had 4 participants each and was conducted via TEAMS video conferencing to accommodate participants from diverse countries. The duration was of roughly 90 minutes. The discussion was documented (with the permission of the participants) for the purpose of transcribing and analysing it. Detailed notes were made during the focus group meetings.

Case Studies: Two case studies were chosen based on the successful implementation of emotional branding strategies in the pharmaceutical industry and related to prescription medicines. The selection criteria as mentioned above, included the availability of extensive data and its relevance to the research goals. Data for the case studies were gathered through reports, and publications. The collected data were systematically documented using a standardised methodology. The data analysis focused on important findings and valuable learnings to offer practical guidance for other pharmaceutical companies.

The research conducted a complete and accurate data collection by following a specific framework. This allowed for a thorough examination of the emotional drivers that influence prescribers' treatment decision-making. Additionally, it facilitated the collection of invaluable insights that will facilitate the formulation of effective marketing strategies for pharmaceutical companies in the course of this research.

Pilot Testing

In this research, pilot testing was considered but not conducted for the qualitative survey, focus group discussions, or the case studies. A formal pilot test was proved unnecessary for the following reasons:

1. **Participants' Expertise:** The participants recruited for this research are highly skilled senior professionals who possess considerable knowledge and experience

in the fields of pharmaceutical marketing. Their competence and experience with the topic of research minimise the probability of misconceptions or any sort of ambiguities in the questions.

2. Due to time constraints and limited resources in general, there was not enough time available in the study timetable to run pilot testing, analyse the results, and make any necessary revisions. Due to the packed schedules of the intended participants, considering though the high level of experience they have, it was crucial to simplify as much as possible the process of gathering data.
3. Pre-Test Feedback: Although a formal pilot test was not carried out, the survey and focus group discussion guides were reviewed by a selected group of industry leaders and market research experts. Their feedback was incorporated into the final versions of the tools, ensuring clarity and relevance.
4. The survey and focus groups discussions offer some sort of autonomy in responses due to their qualitative nature. Open-ended questions are formulated in such a way to collect an extensive range of opinions, hence minimising the potential risk for data collection problems that could be detected during pilot testing.

After thorough consideration of these factors, the researcher concluded that not running a formal pilot test would not have any significant impact on the accuracy of the data collected. The tools were designed with incorporated mechanisms to ensure clarity and relevance, and the expertise of the participants further reinforces the robustness of the data collecting process.

3.8 Data Analysis Methods

A thematic analysis has been used to analyse the qualitative data obtained from the questionnaire, the focus groups, and the two case studies. This method is suitable for identifying, examining, and documenting patterns (themes) within qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis allows also a detailed examination of the data, which is critical for understanding the emotional drivers in pharmaceutical marketing.

The following steps describe the process undertaken. Familiarization with the data: The initial stage was transcribing all the data collected from the questionnaire, the focus groups, and the case studies. This part of the process included a detailed reviewing of the data collected in order to become familiar with its content. Generating Initial Codes: The data were coded in a systematic way to identify and categorize specific parts of the data that are relevant to the study's objectives. Every section of text was given a code that describes its content. A single segment can be awarded multiple codes if it relates to more than one topics. Themes exploration: The codes have been analysed to identify relevant to the study patterns or themes. Themes are overarching categories that include different codes and offer valuable insights into the research questions. Codes have been organised into potential themes and sub-themes leading to the development of themes. Reviewing Themes: The identified themes have been thoroughly reviewed and refined when necessary to ensure they appropriately reflect the data collected and their relevance to the study. Thematic maps were created to visually represent the links between the different themes and sub-themes. Themes were carefully defined and labeled. The definitions provide a detailed description of the meaning of each theme and how it is connected to the research questions. Selected quotes from the data gathered have been used to illustrate each theme. Final step before completing the report included drafting the analysis. This analysis covers a detailed and thorough description of each

theme, supported by evidence derived from the data obtained. The analysis is linked to the research questions and objectives, by offering an in-depth understanding of the emotional factors that influence pharmaceutical marketing.

Software: This study used commonly accessible software tools with the appropriate capabilities to organise, code, and analyse qualitative data. Microsoft Excel has been used to organise and manage the data acquired from the qualitative survey and the focus groups and group them into categories that allowed further analysis. Its functionalities for organising, filtering, and classifying data were helpful in the data coding and theme creation. Microsoft Word has been used to transcribe the focus group discussions. Word's software has been used to transcript focus groups discussions and the coding of the data. Microsoft PowerPoint was used to generate visual representations of the findings, like for example thematic maps, charts, and graphs that illustrate the connections between various themes and sub-themes identified during the study. This allowed us to display the data in a simple and visually captivating way, simplifying the communication of the research findings.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

This study uses several techniques for improving internal, external, and construct validity. Internal validity refers to the level to which the research design and methods effectively assess the intended measurements, without being affected by other factors (Andrade, 2018).

Rigorous Data Collection Procedures: The research methodology includes a well-designed combination of qualitative survey, focus groups, and case studies to effectively collect extensive and useful insights from the participants. Triangulation was used to cross-check the data collected from these different sources, to verify the consistency and

reliability of the results aiming to minimize as much as possible the risk of potential bias and improve the reliability of the results.

Expert Review: The survey and focus group discussion guides went through review from selected experts in the field of market research to guarantee their clarity and relevance with the research objectives.

The research includes participants with experiences across different geographical areas within the pharmaceutical industry, offering a broad perspective on the research questions. The recruitment in the research of professionals with significant knowledge and expertise in marketing reinforces the external validity of the research and allows the generation of insights that can likely have broad applicability within different contexts of the pharmaceutical industry.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria: Specific inclusion and exclusion criteria are set to select participants who accurately represent the wider population of professionals in the pharmaceutical industry but also ensure the insights required are successfully collected.

Construct validity refers to the extent to which the instruments used during the study accurately assess the theoretical constructs they are meant to measure (Strauss and Smith, 2009). The research tools have defined and operationalised the constructs of emotional drivers, brand resonance, and ethical marketing practices. The qualitative questionnaire and the focus group questions and topics discussed were specifically crafted to accurately capture these elements. **Pre-Testing and Expert Feedback:** Although the researcher didn't run a formal pilot testing, the instruments were tested prior to the research official run and reviewed by experts to confirm they are well designed and in place to measure the intended constructs. Revisions based on expert's feedback helped to improve the instruments and strengthening their construct validity. The study used known

and established theoretical frameworks as well as existing literature on emotional branding, marketing strategies, and ethical practices. This further reinforces construct's validity by ensuring that the criteria are based on well recognised and accepted concepts and theories.

By using these strategies, the researcher aims to ensure strong internal, external, and construct validity and ultimately reinforce the overall credibility and reliability of the research outcomes. To ensure the reliability of the tools used in this research, the researcher used the following methods: The qualitative questionnaire, focus group discussion guide, were standardised to ensure a uniform approach in the questions asked and how these were presented to all participants. This method allows us to minimise the level of variability and guarantees that answers of the different participants can be compared between them.

Pilot Testing: Pre-Testing of Instruments: Although formal pilot testing wasn't performed, the tools were tested in advance with a selected group of experts and the feedback received was used to further reinforce the clarity and consistency of the questions and procedures among all participants. Repetition and Cross-Verification Data collection in the present research includes the use of many different methods, like qualitative questionnaire, focus group, and the analysis of relevant to the topic of the research case studies. This allows to cross-check the collected data and ensures that the conclusions remain consistent across the various sources and methodologies.

Triangulation was used to compare the data collected from the different sources, in order to identify recurring patterns and themes. This approach improves the reliability of the results by confirming that they do not depend on just one source.

To ensure the reliability of the tools and data used in this research, the researcher used the following methods: Standardised Instruments: The qualitative survey and focus

group discussion guide were standardised to ensure there is consistency in the questions asked and methods used for all participants. This minimises the amount of possible variation and ensures that the answers obtained from the different respondents can be compared. Pre-Testing of Instruments: Although a formal pilot test was not run, the instruments were tested prior to their use. Triangulation method was used to improve the reliability of the results by verifying that they don't depend just on a single source or tool. Clear Coding processes: Detailed coding processes were created for analysing the qualitative data. Specific definitions were provided for each code to ensure uniform application of the codes among various scholars. The data collected was systematically organised and analysed using commonly used tools such as Microsoft Excel and Word.

The following criteria ensure that the research findings are accurate, relevant, consistent, and unbiased. Credibility and level of trustworthiness in the accuracy of the findings: The methods employed to guarantee the reliability of this research include the following: Utilizing various methodologies, such as qualitative survey, focus group, and case studies, allows for a more thorough understanding of participants' perspectives and opinions. A systematic examination of the data enables a deep understanding of the key themes and the identification of common patterns that emerge. Leveraging data collected from different sources, serves most importantly to validate the information obtained and reinforce the reliability of the findings. Triangulation of these data reduces the probability of bias introduction and enhances confidence in the accuracy of the results obtained.

Reinforce Transferability: To enhance the ability to apply the findings in different contexts, the study incorporated the following: Providing clear explanations of the research background, participants, and settings allows readers to assess the degree to which the findings can be applied to different contexts. Transferability on the other hand refers to the degree to which the conclusions of the research can be generalised to

different circumstances (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In order to improve the ability to apply the findings to other contexts, the study incorporates a thorough overview of the research background, participants, and settings which allow readers to assess the degree to which the findings can be applied to different situations. By using purposeful sampling, the study ensures the participation of professionals who possess extensive experiences in the pharmaceutical industry, improving the relevance of the findings in the pharmaceutical market. Moreover, documenting the data collection and analysis methods helps ensure that the study can be reproduced in similar settings. To attain confirmability, the researcher has engaged in reflective practices and documented researcher's biases, preconceptions, and potential influence on the research process. This served to confirm that the conclusions are derived from the evidence rather than personal opinions. Maintaining a reflective record during the study allowed to keep track of thoughts and choices made, guaranteeing full transparency.

3.10 Research Design Limitations

Below you can find a summary of the different methodological limitations identified in this research.

Sample Size and Composition: The study includes a relatively small sample size of 35 marketing professionals in the pharmaceutical industry for the qualitative survey, two focus groups consisting of 4 participants each, and the analysis of two case studies. Although this sample offers all the necessary insights to adequately respond to the research questions, it may not completely capture the whole range of possible opinions and perspectives.

Geographical Scope: Although the participants have experiences from different countries and regions around the world, the geographical distribution may still be limited,

potentially missing regional peculiarities and practices in pharmaceutical marketing approaches.

Self-reported data, collected through the qualitative survey and focus groups, might introduce a certain level of biases, as for example social desirability bias, meaning getting responses that participants believe are expected from the other participants rather than their actual opinions.

Selection of Case Studies: The limited number of successful case studies related to the scope of this research, consisting of only two, could limit the generalisability of conclusions to the entire pharmaceutical market. Moreover, the effectiveness of emotional branding in particular cases may not accurately reflect the overall experience of the market as a whole.

Bias can appear at different phases of the research, from data collection to analysis, and has the potential to undermine the study's validity and reliability. The following biases have been identified and mitigated in the present study:

To address selection bias, a purposeful sampling method was used to ensure that professionals with significant expertise and knowledge in pharmaceutical marketing, issues were included as participants in the study.

To address confirmation bias the researcher used different data sources such as surveys, focus group, and case studies, and then triangulated the data to get an accurate and impartial understanding.

Response bias, and more specifically social desirability bias, was minimised by guaranteeing participants that their responses would be kept confidential and anonymous, encouraging them to provide honest and direct answers.

Last, researcher bias was mitigated by employing reflexivity, consistently documenting his own potential biases and how potentially influenced the study process.

The following limitations on generalisability were identified in this study:

Sample representation: The study's sample, although diverse is restricted to senior professionals in pharmaceutical marketing, mainly from companies with significant prescribed portfolios drugs. This could potentially restrict the relevance of the results to different therapeutic areas.

Specific contexts: The focus on companies with prescription drugs, implies that the results may not be entirely applicable to companies or brands in other markets and therapeutic areas of the pharmaceutical industry, like for example the over-the-counter goods (OTCs).

Case Studies Specificity: The insights generated from the analysis performed of the two case studies on successfully implemented examples of emotional branding in the pharmaceutical industry may be applicable only to specific contexts, those for example described in the specific case studies, therefore limiting the potential to extend the applicability of the results to other companies, geographic areas, or specific segments of the pharmaceutical market.

Qualitative nature: The qualitative nature of the research, although it offers a significant amount of detailed insight, inevitably limits the ability to statistically generalise the findings. Nevertheless, numerous and meaningful data were obtained that can provide significant insights and suggestions that can be adapted and used in different scenarios.

By acknowledging these limitations in the research methodology, potential biases, and constraints in generalising the results, the study aims to provide a clear and accurate description of its relevance to ultimately improve the credibility and reliability of its findings.

3.11 Procedures

Preparation Phase - Development research instruments:

1. Completed the creation of the qualitative survey questionnaire and focus group discussion guide.
2. Selected specific case studies to be examined for analysis.
3. Finalised the research methodologies and tools.
4. Participants Recruitment: Identified and contacted potential participants for the qualitative survey and focus groups.
5. Provided to the final list of participants all relevant to the research information and their role in that, arrange logistical details for the focus groups and ensured they were all fully informed while obtaining their consent to participate to the study.

Data Collection Phase:

1. Distributed the online questionnaire to highly experienced professionals in the fields of pharmaceutical marketing.
2. Regularly monitored the number of completed questionnaires obtained and sent reminders to participants to assure an adequate response rate aiming to >30 responders.
3. Planned and run two focus group meetings with a selected group of 4 senior marketing executives for each group with global experiences. Facilitated the discussions using the already prepared discussion guide and making sure all participants equally contributed to the discussion and provided the required data and insights.

4. Conducted an extensive search to identify appropriate case studies. Thoroughly analysed the selected case studies in which emotional branding has been effectively implemented.

Data Analysis Phase:

1. Transcribed and analysed the responses obtained through the qualitative questionnaire, using thematic analysis to identify key themes and recurring patterns.
2. Transcribed the focus group discussion and performed a content analysis to gather all the relevant insights and key themes.
3. Case Studies: Performed a thorough analysis of the case studies data, identifying all the crucial aspects that contributed to the successful implementation of emotional branding.

Reporting Phase:

1. Synthesised findings: Combined the findings obtained through the qualitative questionnaire, the two focus groups, and the two case studies. Analysed and compared the findings from these various data sources.
2. Report creation: Prepared a detailed report with all the findings, including in-depth analyses and recommendations.

Table 1: Key actions and timelines for data collection and analysis

Action	Timelines
Creation of qualitative survey questionnaire and focus group discussion guide.	2 weeks
Contacted potential participants for the qualitative survey and focus group.	1 week
Provided to participants all information required, arranged logistics for the focus groups and ensured getting their consent to participate to the study.	<1 week
Distributed the online questionnaire. Monitored the number of completed questionnaires obtained and send reminders.	3 weeks
Planned and run a focus group meeting.	2 weeks
Identified the appropriate case studies and thoroughly analysed them.	3 weeks
Combined and compared the findings obtained through the qualitative questionnaire, focus group, and case studies.	2 weeks
Prepared a report with all the findings, including analyses and recommendations.	2 weeks

3.12 Fieldwork

Qualitative Survey

Participant Recruitment: The researcher recruited participants for the qualitative survey by identifying and contacting individuals through professional networks and industry contacts. Provided all the necessary information regarding the study, including its objectives and what is expected from the participants. Obtained consent form from participants, guaranteeing that they were aware of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. **Questionnaire Distribution:** The online qualitative questionnaire was distributed to the selected participants by email. It was ensured that the survey would be easy to complete, including also instructions for its completion.

Response Monitoring: Regularly checked number of completed questionnaires to track the completion rate. Sent reminders to participants to encourage on time completion of the survey and increase response rates. Data Collection: Collected completed survey responses and securely stored for further analysis.

Focus Groups

Participant recruitment involved selecting participants for the focus groups from a pool of survey respondents or other identified professionals, based on the inclusion criteria defined for this research. Briefed participants on the objective and structure of the focus groups. Obtained consent form, ensuring that participants were well aware of the confidentiality protocols. A session working around participants availability was scheduled for the focus groups. Organised a virtual format in a way that could promote open and fruitful discussions. Conducted two focus group meetings, consisting of four participants each, utilising a predefined discussion guide. Facilitated and encouraged the active engagement of all participants, ensuring that everyone had the chance to equally contribute to the discussion. Recorded the session (with the prior consent of the participants) in order to ensure an accurate transcription and analysis. Data Collection: Transcribed the focus group discussions in order to accurately capture the precise comments, arguments and responses. Ensured the transcription was securely stored and available for subsequent analysis.

Case Studies

Case Studies Selection: Two case studies have been identified, presenting real-life examples of successful implementations of emotional branding in prescribed medicines. The researcher collected all the relevant data for each case study using multiple sources, such as company reports, marketing materials, and available information on the web. Documented the significant tactics, outcomes, and lessons learnt from each case study in

a comprehensive way. Conducted data analysis to identify common themes, effective strategies, challenges faced in the implementation of emotional branding and solutions undertaken to overcome these challenges.

Fieldwork Challenges

Qualitative Survey Participant Recruitment: The first significant challenge encountered was to recruit an adequate number of participants due to their busy schedules, overwhelmed of many surveys each one receives at almost daily basis and likely a reluctance to share insights related to their professional experiences. The solution applied was to reach out to personal and professional networks to directly contact potential participants, emphasising the importance of the study and assuring them of the confidentiality of their responses to overcome possible objections and concerns and ultimately establish confidence and confirm their willingness to participate.

Survey Completion: The challenge of low response rates was a significant barrier. The researcher sent reminders and personal messages to motivate participants to complete the questionnaire.

Scheduling Conflicts for the focus groups: It was not an easy task to coordinate and identify appropriate times for the participants at the focus groups session due to the presence of different time zones and busy schedules. Virtual focus groups were organised to facilitate participation of professionals from different locations.

Participant Engagement: Fostering the active engagement of all participants and preventing the overpowering influence of one or two individuals during the focus group discussion. The researcher actively encouraged less engaged participants to contribute with their ideas and effectively moderated dominant speakers to ensure inclusivity and equal participation.

Data Access related to the case studies: Finding extensive data for the two case studies proved challenging due to confidentiality issues. Publicly available data were employed.

Consistency and comparability posed another challenge in maintaining consistency and the ability to make meaningful comparisons among the data gathered from the two case studies. Therefore, a standardised methodology was used for collecting the data. This framework included different themes and metrics to facilitate comparisons.

Bias and Subjectivity: The researcher acknowledges the risk of bias and subjectivity when evaluating the qualitative data from the case studies and therefore, triangulation by integrating several data sources and insights was used to validate the outcomes. Moreover, a reflective journal was maintained to record any potential biases and tried to minimise their influence on the final analysis.

3.13 Measurement and Scaling

The present research aims to utilise different assessment scales to capture the various opinions of the participants. The selection of scales is determined by the need to collect thorough qualitative insights while providing a framework for the responses for a subsequent effective analysis.

Open-Ended Questions: The qualitative survey and focus groups discussion guide use open-ended questions to allow participants to elaborate more on their experiences, opinions, and suggestions, without being limited by predefined responses and that way provide more insights that can be useful to the purposes of this research.

Format: Participants provided responses through the questionnaire or in a discussion during the focus groups, enabling the collection of extensive and detailed qualitative data. This approach has also the advantage of allowing the researcher to get

insights in complex topics, such as the emotional elements in marketing and brand differentiation techniques in the pharmaceutical industry.

Categorical scales have been used to collect demographic data and professional background information from the participants, including their current role in the pharmaceutical industry at the time of the study, years of experience, and possible areas of expertise. Participants chose the most suitable category from a predefined list. This helped in categorising the data for more detailed analysis.

As already mentioned, open-ended questions were used in both the qualitative survey and the focus groups discussions to gather information or opinions without limiting the respondent's answer to a specific set of options. The reason for using open-ended questions is to get more insights on the reasoning and contextual information. Open-ended questions are essential for the research of such complicated topics that cannot be sufficiently covered with predefined answers (Connor Desai and Reimers, 2019). The nature of these open questions allowed participants to provide more elaborated insights essential for understanding the factors that influence emotional branding and ethical marketing practices in the pharmaceutical market.

3.14 Data Triangulation

Through this research the researcher aspires to get a deep and detailed understanding of the emotional aspects in pharmaceutical marketing using different data sources and methodologies which are described below:

Qualitative Survey: The main data source consists of a qualitative survey that was distributed to 90 highly experienced marketing executives in the pharmaceutical industry. The questionnaire was aiming to collect a broad range of opinions and perspectives from participants with significant experience in the industry.

Two focus groups took place, consisting of 4 marketing executives each, with significant expertise and from different geographical locations. A discussion guide was used to facilitate in-depth conversations and active engagement among the participants and ensure the collection of the insights necessary for the development of the research.

Two case studies have been examined, looking at real life cases where emotional branding has been successfully implemented in the pharmaceutical industry. The method of case study analysis involved an extensive examination of the tactics used, outcomes, challenges faced, solutions created and contextual elements linked to each case. This approach allowed us to acquire valuable practical observations and knowledge that was used in building a framework of how to effectively incorporate emotional elements into pharmaceutical marketing for prescribed medicine brands.

The use of multiple data sources and methodologies serves various important goals of this research: Validation of the outcomes by triangulating the data obtained from the qualitative survey, focus groups, and case studies. This reinforces the credibility and validity of the study results. Thorough Understanding: Every data source and methodology offers distinct insights. The questionnaire provided extensive, measurable information, while the focus groups facilitated deep conversations and opinions exchange, and case studies provided comprehensive, contextual analysis. Combined, these three methods offered a broad perspective on the research problem.

Mitigation of Bias: By combining multiple perspectives and opinions, the research identified and mitigated biases, providing more balanced and objective conclusions.

Below there is a short description of the approach followed to integrate data derived from the three different research methods, ensuring an extensive and uniform investigation of the research questions.

Integration of qualitative survey data: The qualitative survey data were analysed at first to identify the recurring themes and patterns that appear during the survey, using thematic analysis. Cross-referencing was done to compare the themes and trends identified from the survey with the findings from the focus group and case studies. This helped in verifying the survey findings and offer additional context to the quantitative data. Focus Group Data Integration: the focus group discussions were transcribed and analysed thematically to identify key themes, insights, and quotes. The objective was to compare these themes with those obtained from the qualitative survey in order to identify similarities and differences. Contextual Enrichment: The interactive nature of focus group reinforced the survey results by providing additional context into the rationale behind participants' opinions. Case Studies Data Integration: Two case studies have been analysed in detail to showcase how pharmaceutical companies have managed to successfully implement emotional branding, the challenges faced, how they overcome these and finally the results obtained. The common themes identified in the case studies were compared to those found in the survey and focus groups in order to highlight practical examples and create a thorough understanding of successful emotional branding strategies. This synthesis facilitated the formulation of practical recommendations and implications for pharmaceutical companies.

To ensure a seamless integration of data from the different sources, the following framework was used:

Common Theme Identification: Themes were identified from each data source and subsequently compared to look for similarities and differences. This stage guaranteed thorough examination of all relevant aspects of the research questions. Data Triangulation Matrix: A matrix was developed to analyse and compare the results obtained from the surveys, focus groups, and case studies. This matrix helped to evaluate the connections

between various data sources and highlight points of consensus and difference. A narrative synthesis allowed the researcher to combine all the qualitative data collected into one cohesive narrative. An approach which required integrating the key themes, quotes, and examples obtained from the different data sources into a single story that addresses the research questions.

3.15 Participant Recruitment

Our primary focus during the recruitment process was on identifying professionals with extensive experience and strong knowledge in pharmaceutical marketing matters. The tactics used were the following:

Professional networks: Tried to leverage professional networks which has been proved to be the most important among the different methods used. The researcher leveraged personal connections and relationships within the industry to contact with professionals who were qualified to participate at the study. This method was proved to be extremely effective, facilitating the communication with senior experts who were familiar with the researcher, increasing the probability of their participation.

The researcher made extensive use of professional networking platforms, such as LinkedIn, to identify industry experts worldwide that could potentially participate at the research. LinkedIn's features were used to screen participants based on their job titles, industries, and years of professional experience. Individual communications were sent to these professionals, explaining the goals of the study and extending an invitation for their participation in it.

To ensure that the individuals recruited had the required knowledge and expertise, specific eligibility criteria have been defined: The qualitative questionnaire was distributed to participants who had a minimum of 5 years of expertise in the

pharmaceutical industry and who were now or formerly engaged with a globally operating pharmaceutical company. Focus Group: Participants had to have actively working in the pharmaceutical industry and have at least 8 years of experience in pharmaceutical marketing. Another selection criterion was to have expertise in leading teams and brands with international responsibility. Case Studies: The examples chosen for case studies have shown successful implementation of emotional branding techniques in prescription medicines.

An organised process for reaching out and communicating with potential participants has been implemented: An initial email was sent to potential participants providing information regarding study's goals, the importance of their participation, and what was asked from them. Follow-Up emails have been sent out to remind participants to fill in the questionnaire within the specific timelines and when needed to address any questions or concerns related to both the qualitative survey as well as the focus groups meeting. Informed Consent: Prior to the kick off of the focus groups, participants were given informed consent forms that explained the study's goals, methodologies, and the rights they had as participants to guarantee transparency and align with ethical standards in the recruitment process. Recruiting participants presented several challenges, which were successfully addressed taking some proactive measures: Limited availability: Schedules are tight for everyone. To overcome this flexible scheduling and multiple reminders were used to accommodate the availability of the participants. Geographical Diversity: To ensure all regions are represented in the research, participants with extensive experiences from different regions were selected, and virtual communication tools were used to facilitate their participation. Ensuring Diversity: Actions were taken to extend participation from various sectors within the pharmaceutical industry in order to cover a broad spectrum of perspectives.

3.16 Data Coding and Categorization

The coding process is an essential step in qualitative data analysis, when raw data is converted into categories that can be examined in detail for patterns and themes. The procedure followed includes the following stages:

Data Familiarisation: Transcription: The focus group discussion was transcribed. This ensured accuracy and a comprehensive analysis of the data. The transcription was carefully reviewed multiple times to get a thorough understanding of the content. Notes were also taken regarding initial impressions and possible patterns. **Initial coding:** Open coding: In this stage, the data were divided into several different components, and specific sections of text that were considered important to the research topics were assigned labels (codes). This was done manually in order to maintain proximity to the data. **In Vivo Coding:** Whenever possible, codes were directly derived from the participants' own words (in vivo codes), accurately reflecting the meaning of their opinions.

Developing a coding scheme: this step involved the creation of a codebook for keeping track of all the codes and their definitions. This ensured consistency in coding across the various data sources .

Iterative Refinement: The initial codes were reviewed and refined in an iterative way. Codes with similar characteristics or duplicate have been merged, while any unnecessary codes have been deleted. **Use of Codes:** Systematic Encoding: The complete dataset was coded carefully. Each segment of text was allocated one or more codes, based on its relevance to various elements of the study. After the data had been encoded, the next step was identifying and categorising themes that would offer a more thorough understanding of the research questions.

The process of categorisation consisted of: Categorisation: Code grouping where codes were grouped into broader categories based on their similarities. Each category corresponded to an important aspect of the data related to the research questions. Theme development: Patterns and connections were identified within each category. These patterns facilitated the creation of overarching themes that reflected the core meaning of the data. Thematic maps have been created to visually represent the connections and relationships among various categories and themes in a way that can facilitate the understanding of the interconnections between different elements of the data. Reviewing and Refining Themes: The themes were reviewed to make sure they appropriately reflect the data. This required reviewing the transcripts several times to confirm that the themes were objectively based on the participants' answers. The refinement process included merging overlapping themes, separating general themes into more specific ones, and removing those that lacked sufficient evidence from the data. Defining and Naming Themes: Each theme was provided a detailed definition, explaining what it means and the aspects of the data it contained. The themes were also assigned names to make it easier to communicate the findings of the research.

CHAPTER IV:

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher consolidated all the information and the insights obtained from the following three primary components of this research: the online survey, two focus groups discussions, and the analysis of two case studies. These sources provide an extensive overview of the existing practices, challenges, and opportunities associated with the integration of emotional branding in the pharmaceutical marketing, as well as suggestions of how pharma companies can successfully incorporate emotional elements into their marketing strategies.

First, an overview of the online survey findings is provided, presenting insights and different perspectives from a broad group of marketing experts. The part that follows presents the outcomes of two focus group discussions with senior marketing executives, offering a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and enablers of emotional branding in pharma. Last, the two case studies of Viagra and Cialis illustrate the real-world application of emotional branding techniques and their impact on consumer engagement and prescriber behaviour. These findings collectively will guide us and help us to establish a practical framework for incorporating emotional branding into pharmaceutical marketing, consistent with the research's aim of bridging the gap between rational and emotional resonance.

4.2 Qualitative Questionnaire Results Analysis

The qualitative questionnaire included responses from 35 marketing professionals from across the globe, with significant expertise in the pharmaceutical industry and marketing roles. The mean years of experience in the industry was 16.1 years, with a

median of 17.5 years. More specifically, the mean years of experience in marketing roles, was 10.5 years, with a median of 7.5 years. 88% of the responders had >10 years of experience in the industry and 44% had >10 years of experience in pharmaceutical marketing. The respondents combine a wide range of experience obtained from diverse regions, including Asia, Europe, the US, and Africa/Middle East. 60% of the responders who confirmed their participation, are currently or have covered in the past global/regional roles, giving them a broad range of learnings in experiences across different markets of the globe, combined with the deep knowledge of the nuances of local markets provided by 40% of the confirmed responders. The qualitative nature of the survey with a series of open-ended questions allowed us to collect a significant number of inputs with a total of 118 comments from the 34 responders.

In the following section an analysis of the responses obtained is presented, which sought to understand the role of emotional branding in pharmaceutical marketing. The analysis considers the different constraints that may impact the integration of emotional elements in pharmaceutical branding strategies. The findings are grouped to key themes and discussed in relation to the research objectives and questions.

Key Theme 1: Current Trends in Pharmaceutical Marketing

This theme is aligned with the objective of exploring the changing attitudes towards emotional branding in pharmaceutical marketing. There is an observable shift towards a more patient-focused and emotionally resonant marketing. This trend towards a more patient-centered marketing, instead of product-centric, reflects an emerging need to connect with HCPs on a more personal and emotional level, acknowledging that even in professional decision-making, emotional factors play a key role. However, most responses indicate that scientific and rational messaging still remains dominant, suggesting a mixed approach to emotional marketing. Overall, this theme highlights the

tension between traditional communication based on scientific data and product attributes, and emerging emotionally resonant approaches, which can inform the framework on how to balance these perspectives effectively.

More specifically, these are the outcomes, categorized in sub-themes, emerging from the online survey regarding the current trends in pharmaceutical marketing.

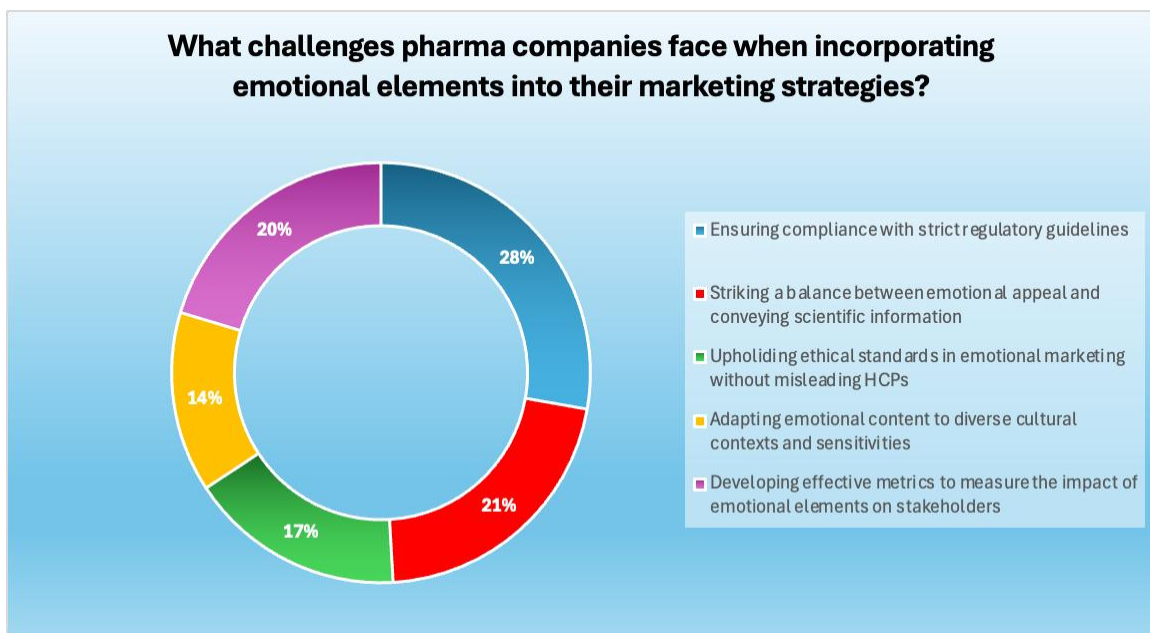
- **Patient-Centric Approaches:** There is a noticeable shift towards patient-focused marketing, emphasizing the importance of tailoring communication strategies to meet patient needs and preferences. A significant number of respondents (13/34, 38%) highlighted the need to accelerate the transition to a more emotional branding in the industry.
- Concerns were raised about how and whether this can be done effectively, since the emotional aspects of branding are still limited by regulations and the indirect relationship of the industry with patients, as doctors act as intermediaries.
- **Empathetic Communication:** Pharmaceutical companies are slowly but increasingly demonstrating their commitment to patient care beyond medication. They also try to integrate emotional branding with traditional methods to create a more holistic and trustworthy marketing strategy.

Key Theme 2: Challenges in Incorporating Emotional Elements

30% of responders indicated that the integration of emotional elements in pharmaceutical marketing is significantly restricted by regulatory requirements, a comment consistent from colleagues across the globe. Several participants at the qualitative questionnaire observed that regulations limit significantly the use of emotional appeals and impose a strict focus on scientific evidence, resulting in a more data-driven, "rational" marketing approach. Regulatory settings impose significant challenges to pharmaceutical companies trying to implement emotional branding strategies,

highlighting the tension between traditional data-driven marketing and emerging emotionally resonant approaches. Addressing such constraints aligns with the main objective of this research of creating a practical framework that can help pharmaceutical companies to integrate emotional components while adhering to regulatory limitations.

Table 2. Qualitative Questionnaire Findings

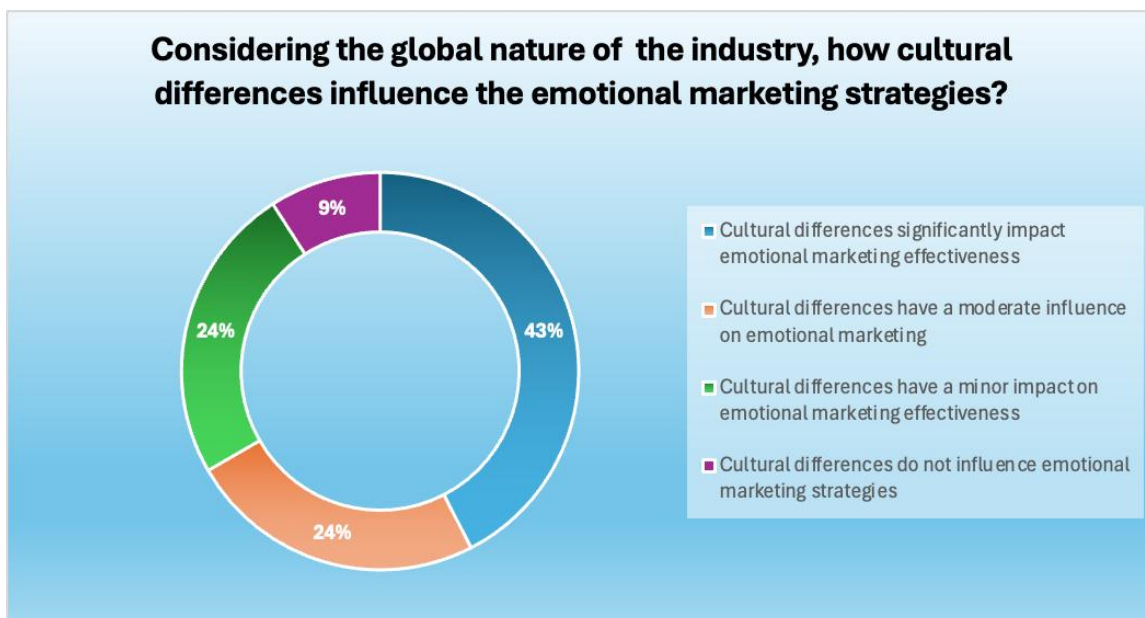


Although there is an observable trend towards patient-centered marketing which reflects an emerging need to connect with HCPs on a more emotional level, acknowledging that even in professional decision-making, emotional factors play a role, among pharmaceutical marketers, some responses indicate that scientific and rational messaging remains dominant, suggesting a mixed approach to emotional marketing.

Key points emerged from the qualitative questionnaire, regarding the challenges faced in incorporating emotional elements in pharmaceutical marketing:

- **Regulatory Compliance:** Strict guidelines and regulations on what and how can be externally communicated from the pharmaceutical companies pose significant challenges in incorporating emotional elements into pharmaceutical marketing. Companies must navigate through this complex regulatory environment while ensuring their marketing efforts remain compliant and effective at the same time.
- **Balancing Emotional and Scientific Content:** It is a difficult task to craft marketing messages that possess emotional resonance while adhering to the regulatory requirements regarding scientific precision. High-quality scientific information must be concise and compelling to resonate with HCPs.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Adapting marketing tactics and messages to different cultural contexts is essential for the success of emotional marketing methods. This requires an in depth understanding of cultural nuances and preferences.

Table 3. Qualitative Questionnaire Findings

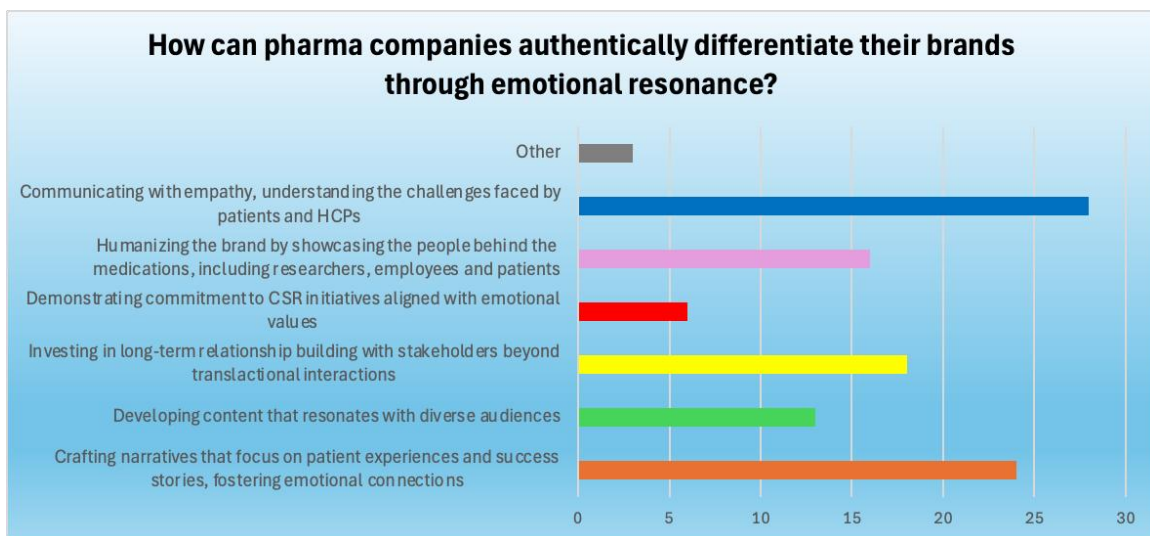


Key Theme 3: Successful Emotional Campaigns

Participants in several cases referred to the integration of digital solutions as an essential element of modern pharmaceutical marketing. Statements such as "*highlighting the integration of digital innovations and patient-centric approaches*" and "*emphasis on digital transformation*" indicate that digital tools are increasingly leveraged to deliver both scientific and emotional messaging. Below there are the key points that emerged, triggered by elements of successfully implemented emotional campaigns.

- **Patient Stories:** Highlighting real patient experiences has proven to be an effective strategy in creating emotional connections. Campaigns that focus on real-life patient journeys resonate deeply with different types of stakeholders.
- **Brand Humanization:** Showcasing the people behind the medications, including researchers, employees, patients and their caregivers helps humanize the brand.
- **Creative Visuals:** Using creative visuals and storytelling techniques can enhance the emotional appeal of marketing campaigns.

Table 4. Qualitative Questionnaire Findings



Key Theme 4: Differentiation through Emotional Resonance

Several responses highlighted the growing significance that emotional aspects have in pharmaceutical marketing and an increasing effort to incorporate these into the marketing strategies, especially in competitive therapeutic areas where product differentiation might be low. Statements such as "*emotion will be key in deciding treatments when products are similar*" and "*the relevance of emotive branding for Gen-Z HCPs*" suggest that emotional branding can be a powerful source of differentiation, particularly since new generations of healthcare professionals may be more receptive to these approaches. The increasing importance of emotional branding in successfully differentiating brands aligns with the objective of this research to develop a practical framework that could help pharmaceutical companies to leverage emotional components for competitive advantage, especially in very competitive therapeutic areas and markets with limited product differentiation.

The sub-themes associated with the differentiation through emotional resonance are as follows.

- **Establishing Long-Term Relationships:** To foster emotional resonance it is crucial to engage with stakeholders beyond just transactional interactions and to invest in lasting relationships. This, among other things as well, requires showing a commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and aligning with emotional values.
- **Narrative Crafting:** Developing narratives focused on patient experiences and success stories helps differentiate pharmaceutical brands and create strong emotional connections with HCPs and patients.

Key Theme 5: Emotional Triggers that Resonate with HCPs

This theme is in line with the objective of this research to develop emotional strategies that will resonate with physicians as well as their patients, by emphasizing patient outcomes.

Some responses mentioned the importance of Quality of Life (QoL) messaging in conjunction with emotional branding. "*Highlighting the importance of QoL in marketing*" and the "*importance of market shaping and emotionalizing brand impact*" might suggest that QoL benefits resonate emotionally with both patients and their HCPs and are integral to the perceived value of pharmaceutical brands.

- Trust: One of the most critical emotional triggers identified by the responders is the trust established between a brand, HCPs and their patients. Transparent and honest communication promotes credibility and reliability.
- Empathy and Hope: Expressing empathy and hope is another important factor that can positively affect HCPs' perceptions of pharmaceutical brands. This involves understanding the challenges faced by patients and the HCPs and addressing their concerns.
- Patient Concerns: Addressing patients' concerns, fears and anxieties can have a significant emotional impact and enhance brand loyalty.

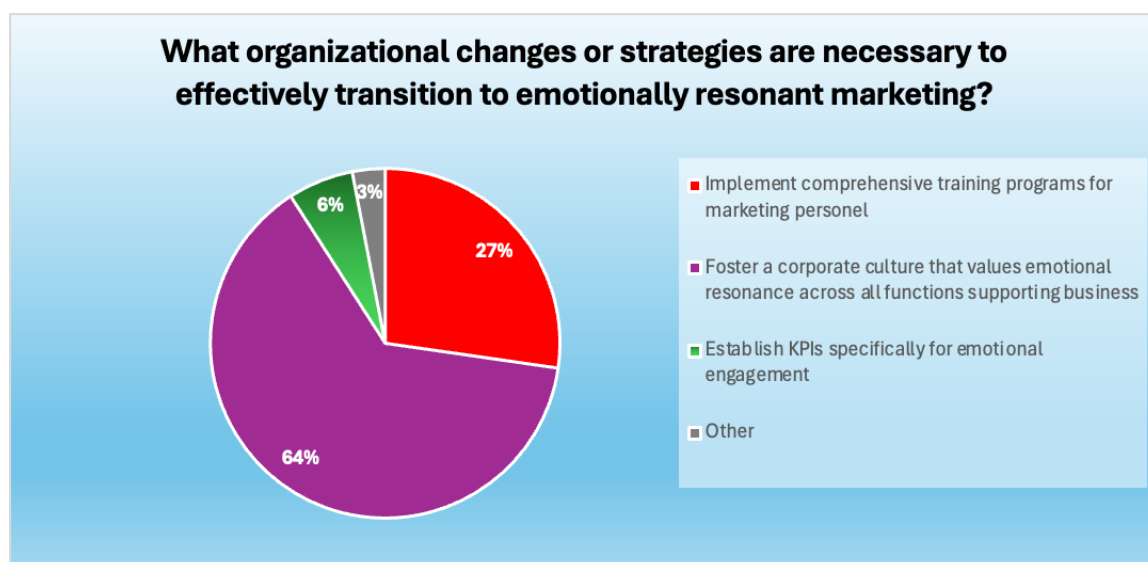
Key Theme 6: Organizational Strategies for Emotional Strategies

This theme aligns with the need to implement significant organizational strategies which will aim to support the effective implementation of emotional strategies from marketing and all business related functions.

- Corporate Culture: Fostering a corporate culture that values emotional resonance across all functions supporting the business has been highlighted as a critical element of success of emotional branding.

- **Training Programs:** Implementing comprehensive training programs for marketing professionals to develop skills in emotional branding and empathetic communication.
- **Creative Thinking:** Create an environment that will encourage creative approaches that integrate emotional elements with scientific content.

Table 5. Qualitative Questionnaire Findings



Key Theme 7: Measuring the Impact of Emotional Branding

Last of the themes, still though of extreme importance is the need to evaluate the impact of emotional branding. The following sub-themes emerged from the responses collected.

- **Engagement Rates:** Measuring stakeholder engagement with the brand's content, including likes, shares, comments, and time spent on digital platforms.
- **Brand Sentiment Analysis:** Analyzing how customer feel about the brand using data from social media and various other digital platforms.

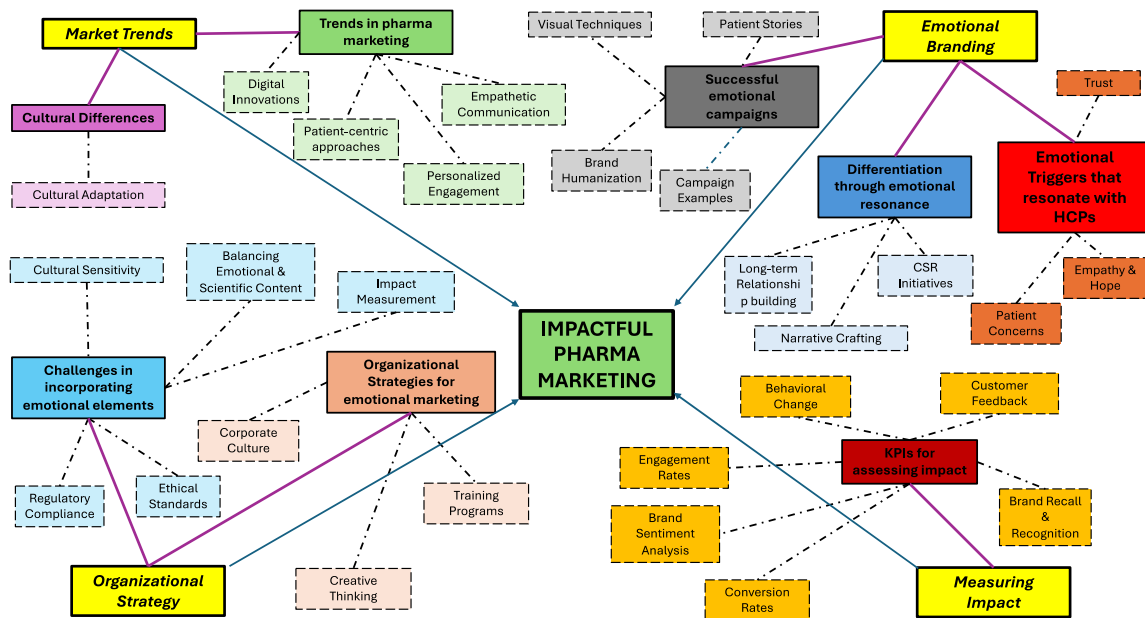
- **Brand Recall and Recognition:** Evaluating stakeholders' ability to remember and recognise the brand over time.
- **Conversion Rates:** Analysing the impact of emotional branding in shaping decision-making and facilitating treatment adoption.
- **Customer Feedback:** Employing customer satisfaction metrics and brand impression surveys to obtain insights directly from customers on the emotional impact of marketing initiatives.
- **Behavioral Change:** Tracking changes in HCPs' behaviours and decision-making as a result of emotional branding efforts.

Conclusion: The qualitative questionnaire results highlight the increasing importance of emotional branding for marketing professionals in the pharmaceutical industry. Despite significant challenges, especially regarding regulatory compliance, the big majority of the survey participants came up with several examples of successful campaigns with emotional aspects, that emphasize patient stories, brand humanization, and creative visuals, which have demonstrated the potential for emotional resonance. Pharmaceutical companies can differentiate their brands and forge meaningful relationships with HCPs and patients by focusing on long-term relationship building, storytelling techniques, and empathetic communication. Measuring the impact of these initiatives using engagement metrics, brand sentiment analysis, and customers' feedback will be critical in determining the success of emotional branding strategies.

The thematic map below offers a detailed visual overview of the key themes identified in the research, the links between them and the overall contribution they have to successful pharmaceutical marketing. This thematic map is divided into four principal categories: Market Trends, Organizational Strategy, Emotional Branding, and Measuring Impact. Each category is broken down into sub-themes, like patient-centric

approaches, digital innovations, and trust, highlighting the complex nature of impactful marketing techniques in the pharmaceutical market.

Figure 1. Thematic Map



A mindset shift towards a more patient-centric approach and the use of digital technologies offer new opportunities for integrating emotional components into marketing strategies. These findings, along with those obtained from the focus groups and the analysis of the two case studies, will guide us in the creation of a practical framework to help pharmaceutical companies in effectively integrating emotional branding while adhering to regulatory compliance and cultural norms.

4.3 Focus Groups Discussions

In this chapter, an analysis of the insights gained from the two focus group discussions is presented. These sessions explored the challenges, opportunities, and organizational transformations required to implement emotional branding effectively. By integrating perspectives from global experts, the analysis identified recurring themes, highlights direct quotes from participants, and provides actionable insights that align with the objectives of this research.

The two focus groups consisted of four marketing professionals each with extensive, globally diversified experience in the pharmaceutical industry. Each participant had previously worked in a local affiliate in regions including Europe, the United States, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East. Seven out of the eight participants also held positions with international or regional responsibilities during their careers, offering a broader understanding of the industry's dynamics across different markets. The participants' experience levels varied: one participant had over 25 years in the industry and more than 15 years in marketing; three participants had over 15 years of industry experience with more than 10 years in marketing roles; and the remaining four had over 10 years of experience in the industry, with at least 8 years focused on marketing. This varied and extensive expertise adds depth to the perspectives shared in the focus groups.

Resistance to Change and Organizational Mindset: A prominent theme that emerged from the discussions was the conservative mindset prevalent in pharmaceutical marketing. Despite the huge progress made in other industries since many years ago, emotional branding in pharma is still poorly implemented. All participants noted the industry's strong reliance on scientific data and the limited incorporation of emotional factors into marketing strategies. One participant expressed this resistance, through the

following statement: "*Pharma companies focus not only on efficacy/safety but also QoL with specific evidence. Emotional branding would accelerate the pharma business, but, additional scientific evidence should be needed.*" This quote illustrates the underlying reluctance to adopt emotional branding, stemming from the perceived need to back up campaigns with scientific data only.

Challenges Identified:

- Unwillingness in moving away from traditional, evidence-based marketing approach.
- Lack of skills, expertise and most importantly insufficient training among marketing teams on how to create engaging emotional storytelling.
- Organisational silos impeding collaboration across marketing, medical, regulatory, compliance and other teams on how to create compelling emotional campaigns in a compliant way.

Proposed Solutions:

- Introduce training programs for marketers to improve storytelling and emotional engagement skills.
- Piloting small-scale emotional branding initiatives to demonstrate effectiveness and foster internal advocacy.
- Encouraging cross-functional collaboration to ensure cohesive and impactful campaigns.

Balancing Emotional Content and Scientific Data: Participants highlighted how challenging is to incorporate emotional elements linked to functional characteristics, to maintain scientific accuracy, an essential component of pharmaceutical marketing.

Emotional branding can be particularly effective only when it aligns with patient journeys and narratives that resonate with HCPs. One participant remarked, "*Clinical facts do not*

make a shift in decision-making of prescribers. So emotional aspects must be integrated into key messages." This statement puts a particular emphasis and importance on the need of balancing emotional triggers with clinical data to drive HCP engagement and emotional resonance.

Challenges Identified:

- Emotional narratives that overpromise (create expectations that the product can't deliver) and therefore could undermine trust with HCPs.
- Navigating complex regulatory frameworks that limit emotional appeals.

Proposed Solutions:

- Developing patient-centric campaigns that combine scientific accuracy with empathetic storytelling.
- Using data-driven storytelling to create messages that resonate emotionally while upholding scientific accuracy.
- Utilising visual techniques and patient stories to connect emotional and scientific elements.

Cultural and Regional Considerations: Cultural differences can have a significant impact on the reception of emotional branding strategies. Participants noted that while emotional branding has gained traction globally, some regions, such as Japan, remain more reserved in their acceptance of such approaches due to regulatory constraints and cultural norms.

Challenges Identified:

- Limited receptiveness to emotional branding especially in culturally "conservative" regions.
- Regulatory frameworks that limit emotionally appealing messaging and marketing tactics.

Proposed Solutions:

- Tailoring campaigns to reflect regional cultural differences while preserving a consistent global message.
- Partnering with local stakeholders, such as patient advocacy groups, to ensure campaigns are consistent with local needs and values.
- Leveraging universal themes, such as trust and empathy, to create suitable communications.

Organizational Changes Required for Emotional Branding: All participants and without any exception agreed that the implementation of emotional branding requires first significant organisational change. One participant commented, *"To truly evolve emotional branding, you need to change your inner communication first, i.e., moving away from non-emotional KPIs towards more qualitative/emotional KPIs."*

Key Changes Proposed:

- Breaking down silos to enhance cross-functional collaboration.
- Getting leadership endorsement using data-driven presentations that demonstrate the return on investment (ROI) of emotional branding.
- Allocating resources for training, technology, and campaign development to support the creation of emotional branding campaigns and marketing tactics.

Measurement of Impact: Measuring the success of emotional branding campaigns emerged as a significant challenge. As one participant succinctly put it, *"Behavior change—an HCP that previously would not use your product in a particular patient now seeing the product as an option—is the best measure of emotional impact."*

Solutions to Overcome Challenges

- Employing A/B testing to refine emotional elements in campaigns.

- Leveraging digital tools such as AI-driven sentiment analysis to evaluate emotional impact.
- Executing longitudinal studies to evaluate the long-term impact of emotional branding on HCP decision-making.

Suggested Metrics:

- Tracking changes in prescription behaviors.
- Gathering qualitative feedback from HCPs on campaign resonance.
- Monitoring engagement rates for emotionally driven content.

Conclusion: The focus groups showed an increasing acknowledgement of the transforming potential that emotional branding can have in pharmaceutical marketing. Nevertheless, significant challenges ranging from regulatory restrictions to organisational resistance must be addressed to fully realise and take advantage of its benefits. By integrating emotional storytelling with scientific proof and enhancing organisational agility, pharmaceutical companies can develop impactful campaigns that will resonate with HCPs, drive behavioural change, and ultimately improve patient outcomes.

4.4 Case Studies

Two well known brands, Viagra and Cialis, have created and led the competitive market known as the erectile dysfunction (ED) (FDA.gov, 1998) (FDA.gov, 2018). To differentiate themselves and build strong connections with their target audiences, both companies, Pfizer for Viagra and Eli Lilly for Cialis, embraced in different periods, unique emotional branding and marketing strategies. The analysis of their branding strategies offers insightful information on how pharmaceutical companies can successfully leverage emotional connections in shaping consumer behaviour and prescriber decisions. The case studies of these two successful competitor products within

the same therapeutic area will investigate the branding strategies, emotional connections, marketing techniques, and challenges that Viagra and Cialis faced in their efforts to dominate the ED market.

Viagra is the first oral drug for erectile dysfunction (ED) approved in the United States FDA in 1998 (FDA.gov, 1998). Very soon became a huge commercial success. Peak annual Viagra sales by 2012 reached \$2.051 billion confirming its leadership in the treatment of ED (GlobalData Healthcare, 2020).

Viagra: Emotional Branding and Market Pioneering

Viagra's initial branding approach in highlighting its efficacy, very soon turned to target the psychological and emotional aspects of ED. Shifting the wording from "impotence" to "erectile dysfunction," Pfizer tried to humanise the condition and make it less stigmatising for men. Emphasising the loss of self-confidence and emotional well-being that come along with ED, Viagra's emotional branding strategy focused on the identity crisis many men feel with ED. Viagra's marketing emphasised not only the physical implications of ED but also the emotional effect it has on men's relationships and overall mental health. Using Senator Bob Dole as a spokesperson, a distinguished and very well respected figure, helped Viagra build credibility, but most importantly made ED a more approachable condition and less embarrassing for many men seeking treatment (Caplan, 2023). Viagra, offered to the men experiencing ED, a unique opportunity to reclaim their feeling of self-worth rather than just a solution for a physical condition. Another important factor defining Viagra's success was its innovative approach of direct-to-consumer (DTC) marketing. Viagra succeeded in breaking social taboos and brought ED into the surface by normalising it through television ads (Lexchin, 2006). Women's engagement in commercials in 2014 (Applequist, 2018) further enhanced the emotional appeal of the brand and expanded it beyond just the men by

highlighting how ED affects relationships and by encouraging partner participation in the choice of treatment.

Cialis: Spontaneity, Intimacy, and Lifestyle Branding

In 2003, and five years after the launch of Viagra in US, Cialis entered the ED market using a different strategy (FDA.gov, 2018). Eli Lilly, Cialis's manufacturer, focused on their drug's lifestyle advantages. Cialis's prolonged half-life up to 36 hours, although initially perceived as a disadvantage compare to Viagra by the physicians, allowed though couples to engage in intimacy spontaneously free from time restrictions' pressure. Couples trying to maintain intimacy free from feeling limited by a time window, as it was the case for Viagra, found appealing this “weekend pill” which promised more flexibility and a natural, worry-free sexual experience (Ncdj.org, 2022). With images reflecting solidarity and emotional connection, Cialis's emotional branding focused on spontaneity and intimacy. The well known his-and-hers bathtubs used in Cialis commercials became a visual symbol of this emotional promise, positioning Cialis as a medicine able to improve the quality of relationships. Cialis differentiated itself from Viagra, more focused on restoring individual performance, by addressing the emotional and relational challenges of ED.

Overcoming doctor concerns regarding Cialis's prolonged half-life became one of its biggest challenges. Originally concerned about prolonged adverse effects, many doctors were initially hesitant to prescribe Cialis. Eli Lilly, however, successfully reframed this possible disadvantage by stressing the advantages of spontaneity along with a strong educational support to the healthcare professionals. As a result of this, Cialis built a reputation as a reliable choice for both prescribers and of course their patients.

Comparative Analysis of Emotional Branding and Marketing Tactics: Both Viagra and Cialis, although following different strategies especially at their launch phase,

managed to build strong connections with their target audience, prescribers and consumers, by leveraging emotional branding. Viagra positioned itself as a solution for men facing emotional crisis due to ED, emphasising restored masculinity and confidence. Strategic direct-to-consumer (DTC) advertising and credible endorsements helped Viagra become more approachable, enabling men to overcome ED stigma and openly seek treatment for it.

Cialis, on the other hand, adopted a more relationship-oriented strategy promoting its long-lasting effects as a way to strengthen couples emotional relationships. Cialis targeted couples that were looking for a natural, less pressed approach to intimacy by stressing spontaneity and presenting itself as a lifestyle enhancer. Cialis built out its niche in the increasingly competitive ED market with an eye towards relationships, intimacy, and mutual satisfaction.

Challenges and How They Were Overcome: The challenges have been significant for both brands in their efforts in implementing emotional branding. Cialis when entered the ED market, dominated by Viagra, had first to overcome the concerns of healthcare professionals about its prolonged half-life. Cialis greatest success was that it managed to turn this potential drawback into a key selling point by emphasising the advantages that spontaneity has for couples and educating prescribers on its safety and efficacy. The brand also faced the challenge of creating an emotional connection not only with the direct consumer, hence the man but with couples as well, through a well chosen message that resonated with both partners. By shifting the narrative around ED and humanising it through strategic endorsements and ethical engagement, Viagra was able to overcome the stigma and shame connected with ED. Pfizer in order to align Viagra's brand with the broader society norms and values, engaged with religious authorities like the Vatican to

present the medication as one that might strengthen marriages and family values (New, 1998).

Lessons Learned and Conclusion: Pfizer's emotional branding approach had a significant impact to both patients' behaviour and prescribers' decision making who managed to overcome the stigma associated with ED. By redefining ED as a legitimate health condition rather than a taboo topic, Pfizer facilitated open discussions between physicians and their patients. This change in terminology, from “impotence” to “erectile dysfunction” ED, allowed physicians to make recommendations for the treatment with greater confidence. The support of public, well known and respected personalities such as Senator Bob Dole, facilitated the “normalisation” of ED talks between patients and their treating physicians, alleviating the discomfort. Viagra's success in leveraging emotional branding included educational initiatives aimed at prescribers. This way Pfizer established trust with healthcare providers by presenting Viagra as a way to restore patients' confidence and masculinity, framing the medicine as part of a treatment plan that improved patient's overall quality of life. Physicians were not providing a treatment just for the medical condition of ED; with Viagra they were primarily enhancing their patients' emotional and psychological well-being, and this was a significant motivator for the prescribers in their decision-making process of what medicine to prescribe.

Cialis, entering the ED market 5 years later dominated by Viagra, adopted a different strategy, by highlighting its lifestyle advantages, especially spontaneity and extended duration of effect with a strong focus and tailored strategies targeting physicians to help them overcome their initial resistance and concerns related to the long half-life time of Cialis. These characteristics emotionally resonated with both patients and prescribers looking for a more natural and flexible alternative. Cialis's marketing presented the medicine as a way to enhance patient relationships and intimacy, so

increasing the likelihood of prescribers recommending it, particularly for patients whose sexual interactions were crucial to their emotional well-being.

Both brands adopted strategies to establish a strong confidence with prescribers. Viagra when first introduced it faced scepticism due to its novelty. However, by educating physicians and even engaging with religious leaders to ensure alignment with ethical and societal values, Pfizer made it easier for physicians to embrace Viagra without fear of social implications.

Cialis, despite concerns over its prolonged half-life, provided prescribers with educational resources that proved its safety and effectiveness. This educational outreach eased prescriber reservations and fostered confidence in recommending the medicine as part of a long-term treatment plan for patients looking for more spontaneous intimacy.

After the launch of Cialis, which positioned itself as a lifestyle enhancer emphasising the importance of spontaneity in people's relationships, Viagra revised its branding strategy to keep a strong competitive advantage against the new entry. Initially, Viagra's marketing focused on restoring men's individual performance and confidence as a result of it. Recognising the emotional resonance of Cialis's focus on couples, Pfizer revised its strategy to highlight the relational advantages of treating ED. By broadening its marketing reach to include women and emphasise how ED treatments can improve relationships, Viagra extended its customer base from individual male patients to couples. This shift reflected the realisation that emotional branding within the pharmaceutical sector must progress, not just to meet individual needs but also to address the relational dynamics that influence the decisions of both patients and prescribers. This allowed Viagra to maintain its market leadership despite the new entrants in the market, by showing its ability to foster emotional connections in intimate relationships, thereby

attracting prescribers who were increasingly prioritising and valuing patients' overall well-being (www.thebrainyinsights.com, 2024).

In summary, Viagra and Cialis established a benchmark for the pharmaceutical industry by demonstrating that when it comes to branding, a prescribed medication shall not be seen as just a solution to a medical condition or problem, but part of a broader emotional narrative including in this specific case intimacy and relationship dynamics. In other words, their success demonstrated that the most influential pharmaceutical brands do not just treat symptoms. Both Viagra and Cialis transformed the way ED is perceived and treated, setting a new standard for how emotional branding can drive consumer engagement, influence prescriber decision making in the pharmaceutical industry and ultimately work in the best interest of the patients.

4.5 Conclusion

The findings from the qualitative questionnaire, focus groups, and case studies indicate multiple recurrent themes that emphasize the potential of emotional branding to influence prescriber decision-making while highlighting the different challenges specific to the pharmaceutical industry.

Trust was identified as a key element across all three research techniques used. Participants regularly noted that maintaining trust with HCPs is crucial for the success of emotional branding. Trust can be cultivated by avoiding overpromising, ensuring a balance between emotional engagement and scientific evidence, as demonstrated through survey responses, focus group discussions, and the analysis of Viagra and Cialis case studies. Emotional branding initiatives that lack authenticity or depend on excessive promises can seriously jeopardise trust and can put in risk patients' safety, further emphasizing the need for ethical alignment and compliance with regulatory requirements.

Another recurring theme emerged throughout the research was the need to incorporate emotional elements into patient-centric narratives. The qualitative questionnaire responses indicated a high recognition of the importance that has incorporating emotional elements of patient journeys into marketing strategies. This was further reinforced in the focus groups, where participants stressed that pharmaceutical campaigns must go beyond product characteristics and scientific data and focus on patient experiences, quality of life improvements, and the tangible effects and benefits that therapies provide in real-world settings. The case studies also confirmed this, illustrating how Viagra "normalised" discussions related to erectile dysfunction by addressing social taboos, while Cialis differentiated itself by focusing on relational dynamics and couples' intimacy.

The importance of organisational change was a consistent topic throughout all the study methodologies used for this research. The focus groups specifically highlighted the reluctance to embrace emotional branding in the typically conservative and data-centric pharmaceutical industry. Participants highlighted also the barriers imposed by organisational silos, insufficient training of business professionals on marketing and more specifically on emotional branding as well as poor leadership support when it comes to new ways of doing marketing and embracing emotional strategies. The participants recommended practical solutions, like for example, encouraging a closer cross-functional collaboration, investing in storytelling training, and introducing metrics that will assess the impact of emotional branding alongside traditional KPIs. These recommendations align with what has been identified also in the case studies, which demonstrated that bold, patient-centric strategies require the ability and a strong willingness to innovate and take calculated risks to achieve significant benefits.

A final topic raised was the need for cultural and contextual understanding in emotional branding. Participants in both the survey and the focus groups agreed that cultural disparities, may affect the reception of emotional campaigns. On top of that, different regulatory and legal frameworks can make these issues even more challenging to resolve. Therefore, it is required that companies adapt their marketing strategies in such a way to align with local norms, rules and values while retaining a consistent, globally aligned narrative. The two case studies provided specific examples of how cultural and social factors impacted the success of Viagra and Cialis, with each campaign carefully navigating the sensitivities of its targeted audiences.

In conclusion, incorporating emotional branding into pharmaceutical marketing requires a solid strategic framework that combines rational and emotional elements. The findings from the qualitative questionnaire, focus groups, and case studies collectively highlighted the importance of having in place a strategy based on stakeholders' trust, patient-centricity, organisational transformation, and cultural sensitivity. By aligning emotional branding with ethical standards and regulatory frameworks, leveraging digital solutions, and fostering authentic connections with HCPs and patients, pharmaceutical companies can develop impactful campaigns that can deeply resonate at an emotional level. The insights obtained through the different research methodologies, provide an excellent platform for developing a structured and practical framework on how to successfully implement emotional branding in pharma, paving the way for sustainable marketing strategies within the pharmaceutical sector that will be presented in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The following chapter provides a detailed overview of the research, its findings analysis in connection with the research questions, the implications of this research, and the wider significance that this might have within the area of pharmaceutical marketing. What was also examined it was whether and in what extent the research questions can be addressed and more specifically the challenges and opportunities associated with incorporating emotional elements into pharmaceutical marketing strategies.

This chapter explores the tangible implications of the research outcomes, highlighting their practical significance for the industry as well as for academic debate. The limitations of the findings are presented, providing transparency on the research's scope and potential constraints. Subsequently, recommendations were made for possible future research to encourage additional research into areas or topics that are still undeveloped or could be considered emerging and interesting for additional investigation.

Chapter V consolidates all the insights obtained, highlighting the study's importance and most importantly providing practical recommendations for the pharmaceutical companies. This systematic approach ensures a comprehensive reflection of the research, providing a framework for its implementation and potential further development.

5.2 Summary of Study and Findings

In an "ideal" situation, treatment decisions would be made based only on a rational process, driven exclusively by clinical evidence and statistical models. Physicians would evaluate each case exclusively on scientific data, without

any emotional effects, cognitive biases, institutional pressures, or external influences. This idealized physician, whom it will refer to as "Dr. Medicus Rationalis", serves as a theoretical benchmark for purely rational medical practice.

"Dr. Medicus Rationalis" represents a hypothetical, completely rational decision-maker, one who prescribes solely based on scientific data, risk-benefit assessments, and evidence-based guidelines. However, as it is discussed in this research, real-world decision-making is significantly more complicated. Healthcare professionals, like all humans, are influenced by emotions, prior experiences, personal biases, and other influences, such as peer pressure, and/or patient expectations.

This study discusses the gap between the expected rationality of physicians' prescribing decisions, related to "Dr. Medicus Rationalis", and the reality of their decision-making, which involves a combination of rational analysis and emotional factors. Understanding this gap is essential for recognising the importance of emotional branding in pharmaceutical marketing and its influence on physician decision-making. Although "Dr. Medicus Rationalis" represents an ideal, emotional influences exist; therefore, effective marketing strategies are those that acknowledge and leverage this dynamic.

Through this research the researcher aspires to explore practical uses of emotional branding in pharmaceutical marketing strategies, and more specifically how emotional resonance can impact physicians' prescribing choices. It was also investigated the incorporation of emotional elements to differentiate pharmaceutical brands while adhering to high ethical and regulatory standards.

The research highlights a shifting trend in pharmaceutical marketing from exclusively data-centric approaches to those that create strong emotional connections with prescribers. Key theoretical frameworks include the Customer-Based Brand Equity

(CBBE) model, which highlights the importance of emotional connections in fostering brand loyalty and differentiation. Extensive research in behavioural economics highlights the influence that emotions and cognitive biases can have in decision-making and consequently in prescriber's behavior as well. Ethical considerations are important, stressing the need of balancing emotional engagement with high ethical standards and regulatory norms.

A mixed-methods approach was used, collecting data from 35 senior pharmaceutical marketing professionals with experience from various countries and regions across the globe. Participants were chosen based on their significant experience in pharmaceutical marketing in multiple countries and regions and also individuals that currently hold senior positions with global responsibility. Data has been collected using different methodologies, such as qualitative questionnaire, focus groups, and case studies, allowing a thorough analysis of the topic in question.

Here you can find a summary of the findings from the research analysis (Chapter IV): Challenges in Integrating Emotional Branding into marketing strategies: Participants identified regulatory constraints and the challenge of balancing scientific accuracy with emotional resonance as significant barriers. Despite these limitations, emotional branding was considered a critical element for differentiating brands especially in markets with clinically comparable products.

Effective Strategies for Generating Emotional Resonance: Strategies suggested from the participants to the research include among many other suggestions and ideas, emotional storytelling, patient testimonials, and the utilisation of “influencers” as successful ways for establishing emotional connections with HCPs. Emotion-driven narratives aligned with scientific evidence, was found to enhance trust, brand loyalty, and advocacy among physicians.

Ethical and Regulatory Considerations: This is a recurring theme presented in the study and more specifically on ways that will ensure maintaining high ethical standards while incorporating emotional elements into pharmaceutical marketing. Participants highlighted the importance of ensuring transparency in the communication, data accuracy, and avoiding the use of strategies that might have risk of leading to manipulation.

Case Study Insights: Two case studies showcased successful emotional branding examples in pharma, offering practical insights into the design, execution, and outcomes of such strategies. These examples demonstrated the potential and the power that emotional branding can have in influencing prescribers' behaviour.

The findings of the research suggest that despite the existing challenges, incorporating emotional elements into pharmaceutical marketing presents considerable opportunities to reinforce brand differentiation and foster strong relationships with healthcare professionals and other relevant stakeholders. The study finally proposes a practical framework that will hopefully be of help and guidance for the pharmaceutical companies in adopting and implementing these strategies as effective as possible and in an ethically sound way.

1. Understanding Patient and Physician Challenges: The Key to Emotionally Resonant Pharma Marketing:

At the heart of every successful pharmaceutical marketing strategy lies a deep, detailed understanding of the challenges faced by both patients and treating physicians. This is a critical component that implies not only identifying clinical unmet needs but also performing a detailed exploration of the emotional, psychological, or logistical challenges faced by patients and physicians. Without this detailed knowledge, the value and benefits associated with a pharmaceutical brand cannot be effectively conveyed,

much less evoke an emotional response from prescribing physicians, patients or any other relevant stakeholder.

Patients with a specific disease face multiple challenges that go beyond just clinical symptoms, including emotional stress, financial burden, social stigma, and all sort of disruptions to normal daily activities. By mapping in detail the entire patient journey, starting with symptoms' start, to diagnosis, therapy, and long-term management, pharmaceutical marketers can identify important pain points and unmet needs. This process has to go beyond superficial analysis, requiring close engagement with patient communities, thorough analysis of real-world data and patient surveys.

Similarly, physicians encounter significant challenges in diagnosing, choosing the "right" treatment, treating, managing adverse effects and overall disease's implications. The physician's journey is a complex process that is not limited only in the treatment selection, but also involves handling diagnostic precision uncertainties, time and other source limitations, and the pressure to balance patient expectations with evidence-based guidelines. These challenges often get bigger by the increasing complexity of treatment options. By understanding these challenges, pharmaceutical marketers can create solutions that genuinely enhance physicians' practice, such as streamlining decision-making via evidence-based tools, offering patient education resources, and shape marketing strategies that highlight how a specific treatment aligns with physicians' goals of improving patient outcomes.

When marketers genuinely understand the challenges faced by patients and physicians, they can develop strategies and messages that directly speak to these pain points, fostering that way a strong emotional resonance. Marketing campaigns that show empathy for a physician's struggle to diagnose a disease or choose a treatment that balances well the efficacy outcomes with the potential toxicities, while presenting a

solution that could potentially facilitate and streamline this process, is far more compelling than one that emphasises only product characteristics and trial outcomes. This method aligns with Keller's (2001) emphasis on brand resonance, where emotional connections strengthen loyalty among stakeholders. A lack of this understanding leads to generic, product feature-focused marketing strategies that fail to create any emotional connection with physicians. Industry case studies show that brands overlooking the emotional and contextual aspects of patient and physician challenges often struggle to gain traction especially in competitive markets where product differentiation is not strong enough. In contrast, campaigns based on a deep, solid understanding of these challenges can effectively demonstrate how a pharmaceutical product mitigates suffering, simplifies decision-making, or enables physicians to deliver better medical care and improve patients outcomes.

Understanding patients' and physicians' journeys is not just foundational; it is transformative and a critical element for crafting emotionally resonant marketing strategies. It enables pharmaceutical marketers to move beyond exclusively data-focused approaches toward strategies that resonate on an emotional level. These insights ultimately can help marketers to effectively link clinical data with real-world benefits and guide them in shaping campaigns that are emotionally resonant. By addressing the specific needs and challenges of patients and treating physicians, pharma companies can build meaningful connections, establish trust, and strongly differentiate their brands in a very competitive and highly regulated marketplace.

2. Tailored Communication as a Catalyst for Brand Resonance in Pharmaceutical Marketing

While understanding the challenges faced by patients and treating physicians is fundamental to design effective pharmaceutical marketing strategies, the next critical step

is tailoring communication according to their unique needs and preferences. Despite its importance, tailoring communication is one of the most underexploited or superficially addressed aspects of pharmaceutical marketing today. Numerous campaigns depend on generalised product characteristics or excessively broad messages that fail to resonate with the targeted audiences. This is especially true in highly competitive therapeutic areas, where differentiation is essential yet poorly implemented due to limited understanding of stakeholders needs and preferences. Physicians are often bombarded with promotional content that provides no new insights or, most importantly, fails to address their challenges.

Tailored communication strategies recognise that patients and physicians are not identical groups; their needs, motivations, and decision-making thinking processes are highly distinctive. For patients, factors such as age, social, economic and cultural background, and emotional state significantly influence their understanding, perception and response to health information. For physicians, tailoring communication involves understanding their medical specialty, their key priorities in treating patients and the challenges they face, their motivations, and their preferred ways of receiving information. Generic approaches disregard these differences, resulting in disengagement in the conveyed message.

Tailored communication is essential for establishing emotional resonance. Patients are more likely to trust a brand when they feel heard and understood. Similarly physicians who are engaged in a way that values their time and at the same time satisfies their needs are more likely to view a brand favourably. Personalising communication transforms the pharmaceutical marketing strategy from transactional to relational, fostering lasting connections and loyalty.

Tailoring communication strategies to align with the needs and preferences of patients and physicians is essential for an effective pharmaceutical marketing, as opposed to an unnecessary luxury. Ignoring or barely addressing this significant element, results in lost potential for engagement and brand differentiation. As we will see below, by leveraging data, insights and new technologies, companies can develop communication strategies that will be able to genuinely engage their audiences, fostering both emotional connections and meaningful outcomes for patients and prescribers.

3. Leveraging Digital Tools

One of the most powerful ways to create emotional resonance in pharmaceutical marketing is through the use of digital tools to simulate the patient experience. Research in experiential learning and neuroscience have consistently demonstrated that simulation is an effective way of eliciting emotions (Gallese, 2005). Simulations enable participants to actively connect with and experience a scenario, resulting in a more strong, emotional impact compare to traditional, static communication methods. Experiencing the perspective of a patient, via digital tools, fosters a deep understanding of the patient's challenges and help building empathy and an intense connection to the emotional burdens of the disease and patients' real needs. By immersing healthcare professionals (HCPs) in a realistic representation of a patient's journey, pharmaceutical companies can evoke empathy and emotional connection far more effectively than traditional methods such as written materials or presentations. This approach not only enhances HCP education but also strengthens the emotional bond between the prescribing physician and the brand.

There are many examples of digital tools and interactive digital platforms, like virtual reality (VR) or augmented reality (AR) simulations, that as an example, could enable physicians to experience the disorientation and frustration of a patient with advanced Parkinson's disease, or the uncertainty of a cancer patient awaiting test results.

These experiences highlight not only the clinical challenges but also the emotional and psychological struggles that patients face, resulting in building a more compelling case for the therapeutic value that a medicinal brand can offer. Digital tools like those mentioned above, can blend clinical data with personal stories, to recreate patient narratives and that way to provide a holistic view of the patient journey. Another example is a digital simulation that could walk HCPs through a day in the life of a patient, showcasing moments of pain, fear, and relief when an effective treatment is administered. This approach ensures that the brand is not just presenting efficacy data but is also demonstrating how it can alleviate real-life suffering, which is a key driver of emotional resonance. Traditional HCP education methods that are still predominant in the pharmaceutical marketing, such as PowerPoint presentations, printed or digital brochures and static emails, often fail to engage physicians emotionally. These methods rely heavily, if not exclusively, on logical and factual communication, which, while important, does not fully capture the complexity of the patient experience. In contrast, digital simulations provide a dynamic and interactive way to convey the same, if not more, information while engaging HCPs on an emotional level. This dual engagement, intellectual and emotional, creates a more impactful and persuasive educational experience. When HCPs emotionally connect with a patient's experience, they are more likely to appreciate the value that a specific medicinal brand brings. This emotional connection increases the likelihood of brand preference, as it aligns the brand with the physician's intrinsic motivation to improve patient outcomes.

The use of digital technologies can significantly increase physicians' engagement in an emotionally resonant way, foster empathy, facilitate education, and build a stronger connection between the brand and the prescriber.

4. How Patient Advocates Shape Emotionally Resonant Pharma Campaigns

Another way to build a strong brand emotional resonance is by integrating patient advocates into pharmaceutical marketing. Patient advocates, by sharing their personal experiences, provide a human element to discussions that in other cases, when presented by clinicians, can appear clinical and detached. Patient advocates serve as authentic voices, revealing the challenges encountered by patients and their families during the disease journey. The emotional impact of a diagnosis, the complexities of navigating healthcare systems, or the side effects of treatments make these personal stories appealing. Their stories can help remove potential taboos associated with specific conditions, encouraging other patients to share their challenges, raise awareness on the struggles they face and get necessary medical support.

For physicians, having the chance to hear these things directly from patient advocates provides a fresh perspective on the realities of their patients, which helps them to better understand the impact of a disease and how a treatment can alleviate this. This approach humanizes the brand and positions it as genuinely empathetic and patient-centered. This emotional connection is in line with physician's desire to help patients.

By leveraging patient voices, pharmaceutical companies can cultivate a sense of community and trust among patients, HCPs, and other relevant stakeholders. These narratives generate a ripple effect; patients feel heard, physicians gain important insights, and the broader community develops awareness and empathy for the challenges faced by patients. This approach not only overcomes the stigma associated some times with specific diseases but also promotes authentic engagement, positioning a brand as a partner in improving lives rather than simply a provider of medications.

5. Integrating Empathy and Scientific Accuracy

Patient-centric marketing that integrates scientific accuracy with empathetic storytelling are essential for creating emotional resonance with prescribers and positively

influencing their treatment decisions. While strict rules regarding the promotion of pharmaceutical products frequently lead to campaigns that prioritise data over emotional engagement, this approach falls short of addressing the human side of a medicinal treatment. Physicians are not just scientists; they are caregivers deeply committed in improving their patients' lives. Campaigns that emphasise the human impact of a treatment, while in line and based on solid scientific facts, strike the balance required to resonate on both rational and emotional levels.

Empathetic storytelling brings data to life by placing it in the context of real patient experiences. For example, rather than simply presenting clinical efficacy rates, a campaign might introduce a patient's journey, illustrating how those outcomes translate into tangible improvements in daily life. By framing the data within these narratives, the campaign engages prescribers emotionally while maintaining scientific credibility. This dual approach ensures that prescribers see the treatment as a tool for transforming lives.

By combining empathy and scientific accuracy, pharmaceutical companies can overcome the perception that strict regulations preclude creative or emotionally engaging promotional campaigns. A well-executed campaign acknowledges the prescriber's role as a partner in the patient's journey, while adheres to the rules. Patient-centric campaigns foster trust and a deeper connection to the brand, positioning it as both scientifically sound and genuinely invested in improving patient outcomes.

6. Emphasizing Societal Impact to Drive Brand Resonance

Another important element that needs to be consider, aiming to strengthen pharmaceutical campaigns' emotional resonance, is emphasizing the broader societal benefits that a treatment can have. By improving clinical outcomes, effective therapies can enable patients to actively contribute to their families, workplaces, and societies in general. Effectively managing a chronic condition might allow a parent to spend quality

time with their children or helps a professional return to their career with renewed energy and confidence. These narratives highlight the ripple effect of improved health outcomes, demonstrating that a treatment's benefits extend far beyond the individual patient. By framing the brand as a catalyst for individual as well as societal well-being, companies can foster a deeper emotional connection with prescribers.

7. Strengthening Emotional Connections Through Patient Testimonials

Incorporating patient testimonials into marketing strategies is another way to effectively humanise a specific treatment's benefits to strengthen the emotional connection between prescribers and the brand. In contrast to narratives that are created around a generic patient, testimonials offer an authentic, personal perspective on the transformative effects that a specific treatment can have. These real-life stories can add credibility to marketing campaigns by linking scientific data to human experiences. For prescribers, hearing these stories directly from patients fosters empathy and a deeper understanding of the emotional and functional improvements that a treatment delivers. Patient testimonials can bridge the clinical outcomes to the real desires, hopes and challenges of patients, ultimately making the treatment's value more tangible and memorable.

Building on the impact of patient testimonials, campaigns should also enable HCPs to visualize and discuss real patients rather than abstract, generic profiles. Presenting for example, specific patient scenarios, such as a young professional managing a chronic condition or a caregiver balancing their own health with family responsibilities, helps prescribers connect emotionally and contextualize the treatment's impact. By shifting the focus from generalized data to individual experiences, these campaigns evoke empathy, making the benefits of the therapy more tangible and

memorable. This approach complements patient testimonials by deepening the prescriber's ability to relate to the challenges and triumphs of real-life patients.

8. Building Trust and Emotional Connections Through Personalized Marketing

In pharmaceutical marketing, it is critical to move beyond treating prescribers as generic consumers who act in predictable, stereotype-driven ways. Physicians behaviors are influenced by a complex interplay of emotions, values, and biases and therefore, pharmaceutical companies must adopt strategies that recognize and address this individuality. Abandoning a one-size-fits-all approach is a good start in this direction, and start designing personalized engagement strategies that align with the human side of prescribers.

Just as it is crucial to understand the patient journey in-depth, the same applies to HCPs, and more specifically prescribers. Pharmaceutical companies often make the mistake of treating physicians as an homogeneous customers group, relying heavily on behavioral segmentation alone and assuming that all are driven by the same needs, concerns, and motivations having in mind a profile which is pretty close to that of the “Dr. Medicus Rationalis”. With this generic approach, pharmaceutical brands struggle to establish any emotional resonance. Physicians have different priorities, motivations, therapeutic approaches and emotional triggers that affect their prescribing decisions. Identifying and addressing this individuality is essential for developing personalized marketing strategies that resonate with physicians and more specifically prescribers.

Mapping and understanding the entire HCP journey, from diagnosis to treatment selection, patient follow-up, and beyond, allows pharmaceutical marketers to identify critical touchpoints where value can be provided, beyond the medicine alone. For instance, an oncologist might be motivated by the desire to simplify complex treatment regimens, while a general practitioner may value tools that help navigate patient

conversations. By tailoring engagement to these specific pain points and motivations, brands can build trust and foster emotional connections that go beyond product features. This approach shifts the narrative from “What can our brand offer?” to “How can we help you achieve your goals for your patients?”

Physicians' psychological drivers further demonstrate the importance of understanding their individuality. For example, a physician might prioritise reducing or avoiding the potential toxicities of a drug to preserve a patient's quality of life and ensure long-term adherence to the therapy, while another physician and for the same patient, may prioritise eradicating the disease at all costs, regardless of the potential elevated toxicities associated with the specific treatment. These different approaches reflect well entrenched motivations, concerns and needs that significantly impact prescribing decisions. Neglecting these differences in marketing minimises the chances of creating a meaningful emotional connection with prescribers.

By leveraging new technologies and modern marketing techniques to map out patients' and HCPs journeys, pharmaceutical companies can uncover the touchpoints where their brands can provide value in a personalised and emotionally resonant way. This approach not only aligns with HCPs' clinical and emotional needs but also positions the brand as a true partner in improving patient outcomes. Ultimately, recognising and treating HCPs as unique individuals and not as generic customers, is the key for establishing lasting relationships and driving brand resonance.

9. Applying Behavioral Economics to Customize Pharma Marketing

One practical application of behavioral economics is leveraging framing to customize messaging for different types of prescribers. For example, during product detailing or campaign design, marketing teams can develop multiple versions of core messages tailoring the wording, the tone of voice and highlighting specific aspects of a

treatment that might be more important than other to specific physician personas. By training sales representatives and other relevant customer facing roles, and adapting digital platforms to deploy the appropriate framing based on prescriber behavioral and psychological profiles, companies can make their messages more personally relevant and emotionally resonant.

The endowment effect highlights the emotional attachment individuals form with what they perceive as their own. Pharmaceuticals companies can design campaigns that position treatments as an extension of the physician's unique approach to patient care. For instance, tools like interactive case studies or customizable treatment guides can be used to show how the brand fits seamlessly into the prescriber's clinical philosophy and aligns with their values. Encouraging physicians to envision how the treatment integrates into their personal practice builds emotional ownership, enhancing loyalty and advocacy.

By implementing these tailored, psychologically informed strategies, companies can elevate their marketing efforts creating stronger connections with prescribers that ultimately drive brand preference and advocacy.

10. Using Ultrapersonalized Communication to Deepen Prescriber Engagement

Ultrapersonalization takes tailored communication a step further by creating materials that directly address individual physicians. An example that is already largely implemented is personalized video from sales representatives to specific customers/prescribers delivering key messages relevant to its customer while fostering a sense of personal connection. This approach acknowledges the physician's unique role, preferences, and challenges, reinforcing the idea that the brand values them as individuals rather than treating them as part of a broad audience. Such ultrapersonalized efforts can strengthen trust, engagement, and emotional resonance, further differentiating the brand in a crowded marketplace.

11. Global Strategy, Local Relevance

For global pharmaceutical brands, a deep understanding of societal, religious, and cultural nuances and preferences is essential for adapting marketing tactics and messages to different contexts, while maintaining brand integrity. For instance, certain visuals, language, or messaging that works in one region might be inappropriate or ineffective in another due to differing values or sensitivities. By tailoring campaigns to reflect these nuances, companies not only enhance emotional resonance but also protect their reputation and credibility in diverse markets.

Pharmaceutical brands with global presence must engage in early collaborations with local stakeholders, such as patient advocacy groups, to ensure that campaigns resonate with local audiences and stakeholders. These partnerships can provide valuable insights into the specific local values, and cultural nuances, facilitating the localisation of global campaigns. By involving these groups early in the planning phase of a launch, companies can develop tactics and messaging that are both culturally suitable with the local patients and communities.

Global campaigns should move away from a one-size-fits-all approach that we still see very often, and instead provide a high-level guidance and direction in line with brand values, strategy, and messaging. While these campaigns create a single vision, regional and local markets must have the flexibility to customise tactics and messages to better align with their unique cultural, sociological, and market conditions. Numerous global campaigns and not only in the pharma industry, designed having in mind a limited number of markets, fail to gain traction in other regions, resulting in wasting valuable resources and reduced impact of the campaign (Tihana, 2023).

Adapting campaigns to regional differences must preserve consistency with the overarching global strategy and messaging. Localised initiatives must align with regional

audiences while retaining the principles and the narrative of the global brand. This balance ensures that the brand preserves its identity and credibility globally, preventing fragmented perceptions while effectively addressing local nuances and deliver campaigns that are both impactful and authentic across multiple markets.

12. Embedding Branding Across All Business Functions

Building emotional resonance with prescribers should not be seen as a responsibility only of the marketing department. In order to be successful in its implementation, it must be embedded into the corporate culture, across all functions supporting the business. Branding is a collective effort, and the failure to foster a shared understanding and appreciation of emotional resonance renders even the most well-conceived marketing strategies ineffective. For emotional resonance to truly differentiate a pharmaceutical brand, every function, from medical affairs to market access, regulatory affairs and legal must internalize its importance and contribute meaningfully to its development. A unified, company-wide commitment to emotional resonance strengthens brand consistency, credibility, and ultimately the impact that this has in the market.

Non-commercial functions play an equally critical role in building a brand that resonates emotionally with its stakeholders. For instance, medical affairs teams often serve as the bridge between clinical data and real-world applications. Their ability to communicate complex scientific concepts in an empathetic and relatable way is critical in supporting prescribers' understanding and trust in the brand. Similarly, regulatory teams can ensure that emotionally engaging campaigns remain compliant with industry regulations, balancing innovation with integrity. Market access teams can work to align pricing and reimbursement strategies with the needs of both patients and healthcare systems, ensuring that the brand's value is understood and fully appreciated by a broader range of stakeholders. Even human resources and training teams have a role in

embedding the principles of emotional resonance into internal communication and staff development, ensuring that employees at all levels understand how their roles contribute to the broader branding strategy.

When emotional resonance becomes a shared value across all business functions, it creates a fertile ground for collaboration and innovation. Functions that deeply understand and value emotional resonance can collectively build innovative strategies that differentiate the brand without overpromising or misleading prescribers, patients or any other stakeholders. By working together, these teams can communicate the brand's value in a way that is clear, credible, and impactful. This not only strengthens prescriber confidence and maximizes market penetration but also ensures that the treatment reaches and benefits as many patients as possible. Ultimately, fostering a corporate culture that values emotional resonance is the foundation upon which all other elements' success of this framework depend, and the key to truly differentiating a brand in a highly competitive market.

13. The Role of Senior Leadership in Driving Brand Resonance

The endorsement and support of senior leadership are critical for embedding emotional resonance into a company's strategy and culture. Senior leaders must understand the value that emotional resonance brings to brand differentiation and patient impact, championing its integration across functions. Their alignment and endorsement, ensures resources, guidance, and support where needed while preventing potential hurdles that could arise from misalignment. When senior leaders actively endorse and advocate for emotional resonance, they set the tone for the entire organization, fostering collaboration and driving impactful, cohesive strategies.

Internal alignment on emotional resonance should start at the grassroots levels before seeking endorsement from upper management. A bottom-up approach guarantees

that the teams tasked with developing and executing emotional tactics are aligned, and they show full commitment to the concept. This alignment promotes collaboration and creativity while strengthening the case for senior leadership support. When executives see determination and alignment at “lower” levels, they are more inclined to value emotional resonance and support future efforts. On the other hand, if operational alignment is missing, top executives may be reluctant to invest in or prioritise emotional strategies, leading to fragmented efforts and reduced impact.

14. Piloting Emotional Branding to Drive Organizational Buy-In

Piloting emotional branding initiatives by launching small-scale projects and initiatives, can be an effective way to demonstrate the impact that emotional resonance can have, cultivate strong internal advocacy and overcome the initial concerns that might exist. This is particularly crucial especially for organizations where emotional resonance is a new, untested concept. Pilots allow organisations to test strategies, build expertise, and demonstrate measurable outcomes, thus building confidence in the approach. By starting with small, pilot programs and demonstrating success, organizations can create internal advocates who champion emotional strategies, facilitating wider and seamless adoption throughout the organisation.

15. Fostering Creativity While Preserving Scientific Accuracy

Establishing an internal environment that fosters creativity is crucial for incorporating emotional branding into marketing strategies while preserving scientific accuracy. Emotional resonance and scientific accuracy should not be seen as conflicting concepts; with the right culture in place, they can and they actually should coexist. Encouraging teams to explore new approaches while maintaining their commitment to accuracy ensures that campaigns can be reliable as well as impactful. Maintaining this

balance will help build trust with prescribers while strongly differentiating the brand in an emotionally resonant way, without compromising its scientific integrity.

16. Fully Leveraging Data to Inform Emotionally Resonant Marketing

While understanding customer needs, motivations, interests, concerns and all the factors that are shaping behaviours is essential, the pharmaceutical industry often fails to fully leverage the data available to it. Despite possessing a significant amount of data, companies often limit themselves to superficial analysis, missing the chance to fully understand the reasons behind customers behaviours. By fully leveraging the data in their possess, pharmaceutical marketers can identify patterns, and triggers that can influence prescribers decision-making that will consequently allow them to develop more accurate and meaningful strategies, ensuring that emotional resonance is informed by actionable insights rather than speculations and hypotheses.

Large datasets, such as real-world evidence (RWE), patient-reported outcomes, customer insights, and clinical trial results, offer huge potential for developing targeted marketing strategies. Leveraging these rich sources enables marketers to identify specific opportunities to provide value to their customers, through identifying uncovered unmet medical needs, addressing gaps in patient care, understanding prescriber preferences, or highlighting unique treatment benefits to specific types of patients and creating marketing strategies aligned with the needs of both patients and physicians.

Pharmaceutical sales representatives constitute an invaluable yet underutilised source of customer data, providing firsthand insights on physician preferences, concerns, and behaviours. Advancements in technology enable companies to collect and organise these data in a more structured way compare to the past and in a compliant manner. By incorporating these insights into broader data analysis efforts, organisations can gain a

better understanding of their customers, enabling the creation of more personalised and impactful marketing strategies.

17. Redefining Pharma Marketing: Building the Skills and Mindset

Marketing professionals role in the pharmaceutical industry must evolve and adapt to the rapidly changing environment, marked by increased competition, the shift from product-centric to customer experience-oriented strategies, and the rapid digital transformation. Historically, pharmaceutical marketers have focused primarily on communicating clinical data and product attributes, an approach that no longer meets the expectations of a market that increasingly prioritises emotional resonance and personalised engagement as a source of strong brand differentiation. To succeed in this environment, marketing professionals need to embrace a broader and significantly different set of skills and capabilities that go beyond the traditional campaign management. They must act first as catalysts of cross-functional collaboration, capable of crafting and executing strategies that focus on customer needs and experiences rather than functional characteristics. This transformation requires a significant upgrade in both skills and mindset. Marketers must develop expertise in new for them areas such as behavioral economics, digital marketing, data analytics, artificial intelligence applications, emotional branding and other, along with a strong knowledge of rules and regulations regarding medicines promotion, enabling them to create marketing strategies that can resonate deeply with prescribers while maintaining scientific integrity and are ethically sound. Equally important is the ability to lead cross-functional teams, bridging potential silos between departments. This collaborative approach ensures alignment and maximizes the effectiveness of strategies aimed at delivering value throughout the customer journey. Beyond technical skills, most importantly the mindset of marketers must shift toward a more customer-centric approach, focusing on how the brand, not just

the product, can address unmet needs, solve real-world challenges, and enhance the overall experience of both patients and prescribers. By redefining the role in this way, marketing professionals will become the driving force behind emotionally resonant and innovative strategies that truly differentiate their brands in an increasingly competitive market.

Redefining the marketer's role in pharma requires extensive training programs to equip professionals with the skills and capabilities required to revolutionise marketing methods. Training should concentrate on emotional branding, customer experience design, data analytics, cross-functional collaboration, and regulatory frameworks for medicines promotion. Moreover, storytelling should be recognised as a powerful tool for emotional branding, allowing marketers as well as in-field representatives to deliver narratives that deeply resonate with their customers. Without such type of training, the transformation required in marketing to meet modern standards cannot be fully accomplished, limiting the potential impact of emotional resonance on brand differentiation.

18. From Data to Insight: Unlocking the Power of Analytics

Using the data in the appropriate way to generate actionable insights is a critical skill that must be developed alongside data generation and analysis capabilities. The true value of data lies not just in collecting them, but most importantly in the ability to analyze these, interpret, and extract meaningful insights that inform decision-making and strategy. This distinction, if not fully understood, can lead to missed opportunities to use the power of data to connect with customers on a more personalized level. By equipping teams with the skills needed to translate data into actionable insights, companies can enhance their understanding of customer behaviors, motivations, and needs, ultimately driving more targeted and effective emotional branding strategies.

19. Data-Driven Storytelling

Data-driven storytelling is a powerful way to develop and deliver messages that can evoke emotional responses while maintaining scientific accuracy. Pharmaceutical companies can develop compelling narratives by utilising data like for example, patient-reported outcomes, treatment success stories, and data showcasing the unmet need and its implications in patients lives in a specific therapeutic area. These real-life narratives can show how a treatment prolonged or improved a patient's life or alleviated a specific disease symptoms, evoke empathy and trust while maintaining its scientific accuracy. This approach ensures that storytelling is not simply anecdotal but strongly grounded in evidence, allowing marketers to balance emotional engagement with the rigorous standards of promotion required in the pharmaceutical market.

20. Translating Product Data into Meaningful Benefits

Further building on the concept of data-driven storytelling and in order to move beyond a communication limited only on data, it is essential to translate functional characteristics of a medicine into clear, meaningful benefits for prescribers, patients, and other stakeholders. Presenting raw data, numbers or product features without linking them to tangible outcomes and benefits is the perfect recipe to fail for emotional resonance. By focusing on how these characteristics improve patient outcomes, ease prescribers' workflows, or address specific stakeholder concerns, companies can make their messaging more relatable and impactful. Furthermore, tailoring these benefits to the priorities of individual customers adds a level of personalization that deepens emotional engagement, creating a stronger connection between the brand and its audience.

21. Evolving Sales Techniques for the Era of Emotional Branding

Sales techniques must also adapt alongside with marketing strategies to transition from traditional product-centric approaches to strategies that prioritise understanding

customers emotions, needs, and motivations and align with the principles of emotional branding. By adopting strategies that prioritise empathy, storytelling, and value-based engagement, sales professionals can reinforce the emotional connections created through marketing initiatives, ensuring a consistent and impactful customer experience.

22. What Pharma can learn from other industries

The pharmaceutical industry has much to benefit from benchmarking against other industries like FMCG and technology, which have historically excelled in emotional branding. These sectors in the last several decades, have excelled in engaging their audiences on a deeper level through storytelling, experiential marketing, and customer-centric innovation to build loyalty and trust. By analysing their best practices and adapting their strategies to the particular context of pharmaceuticals, companies can move beyond traditional approaches and adopt more innovative, emotionally resonant tactics. Emotional branding is mostly about understanding and resonating with the core motivations and emotions of customers, something that pharma can and must do better.

A very common argument in the pharmaceutical industry is that regulatory and compliance constraints restrict or don't allow any adoption of similar approaches or methods implemented in other industries. Although the pharmaceutical industry operates under a strict regulatory framework, this is neither exceptional nor unmanageable. The main challenge is to overcome the pharma industry's typically conservative and insular mindset. By embracing a more open to learn and try things from others mindset, the pharmaceutical companies can innovate, developing marketing and customer interaction techniques that meet regulatory requirements and emotional branding objectives. The ability to adapt and evolve, as influenced by the successes of other industries, will be essential for effectively differentiating brands and fostering stronger connections with both patients and prescribers.

23. Using Technology to Build Personalized, Emotionally Resonant Experiences

Technological advancements have revolutionised how pharmaceutical companies engage and interact with customers in the last few years, putting in place omnichannel strategies that provide personalised and seamless experiences across different channels. Although in-person communication remains the most effective channel in the industry, it is no longer sufficient on its own. Customers today expect the ability to engage with the industry at the time is more convenient for them and by selecting through multiple channels, such as emails, webinars, virtual meetings, mobile applications, social media, the most preferred one. By leveraging digital tools, companies can develop customer journeys that are personalised, ensuring that prescribers, patients, or any other stakeholder can get the information they need, when and how they prefer.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is already here and will play an increasingly significant role in enabling this change. Advanced algorithms can help us accurately analyse customer data to predict preferences, behaviours, identify engagement patterns, and based on these insights provide the most relevant content for each customer. AI-powered platforms can provide prescribers with content tailored to their speciality, prescribing habits, and preferred methods of communication. Likewise, chatbots and virtual assistants provide real-time support, whereas predictive analytics can help refine strategies to maximize impact. Integrating AI into omnichannel strategies enables pharmaceutical companies to provide truly personalised experiences, fostering stronger emotional connections with their customers and reinforcing the effectiveness of their engagement efforts.

Developing digital fluency is a critical element towards the creation of personalised experiences for physicians and patients across digital platforms such as social media, telemedicine, web portals, and online communities. To do so and to equip

teams with the necessary skills and competencies to successfully navigate and deploy digital tools, companies must allocate the appropriate resources for training to develop this expertise, enabling marketers and not only to provide personalised, valuable experiences that build trust and connections.

24. Using Visual Storytelling to Strengthen Emotional Connections

Visual storytelling capturing patient stories by using videos and images, is a powerful tool for fostering strong emotional resonance with customers. Visuals evoke empathy and connection in ways that text alone usually cannot, allowing prescribers to see and feel the tangible effects of a treatment. A video showing a patient's journey starting with the diagnosis till the completion of a treatment and beyond, can provide a human perspective to the clinical evidence and make the brand's value tangible. Pharmaceutical companies can leverage the emotional impact that visuals can have to tailor message communication and build deeper engagement and stronger connections with their audience.

25. Humanizing Pharma Through Stories of Researchers, Teams, and Patients

Humanizing pharmaceutical brands by showcasing the people behind the medicines, such as researchers, commercial teams, employees, patients, and their relatives, can create a powerful emotional connection with customers. For example, researchers who discover treatments, as well as commercial teams play an equally vital role in ensuring that medicines reach patients who need them. For instance, a sales representative traveling long distances to engage with physicians in remote areas or market access professionals negotiating tirelessly to make treatments affordable and accessible are simple examples of the dedication behind the scenes. Highlighting these efforts, along with the stories of patients and their families who contribute through

clinical trials or advocacy, demonstrates the collective passion and commitment behind a brand and strengthens emotional connections with prescribers.

26. Micro-Influencers and Patient Advocates for Emotional Brand Advocacy

Brand advocacy in the today's healthcare landscape goes beyond just the traditional Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) to include “micro-influencers”, physicians with smaller yet highly engaged networks and patient advocates. While top academic experts have significant influence, the so called “micro-influencers”, frequently establish closer, more personal connections with their peers or communities, enabling them to build trust and address concerns in a more empathetic way. Patient advocates also can bring unique perspectives that can emotionally resonate with broader audiences beyond just patients. Leveraging these different perspectives is essential for building advocacy, mitigating potential doubts, and ultimately building strong emotional resonance and loyalty to a brand. By embracing a more inclusive view of influence, pharmaceutical companies can strengthen their messaging, engage new audiences, and build stronger connections.

27. Leveraging Diverse Voices to Strengthen Brand Resonance

Pharmaceutical companies must recognize and engage all stakeholders who can influence a prescriber’s treatment decisions, even if they do not directly have the authority to prescribe. While physicians are the ultimate decision-makers, real-world examples, such as Cialis, demonstrate that other stakeholders like partners, relatives, pharmacists, and nurses can strongly shape these decisions. Relatives may advocate for improved quality of life in chronic diseases, pharmacists may provide advice on cost, formulation or availability, and nurses often guide patients through treatment options.

Caregivers such as family members, friends, nurses, dieticians, physical therapists, psychologists, and others can potentially play a critical role in treatment decision-making, often serving as the bridge between patients and healthcare providers.

Caregivers might be more involved in managing the patient's day-to-day care, offering valuable insights into their needs, challenges, and preferences. Their perspectives can significantly influence prescribers' decisions, particularly in chronic or complex conditions where long-term management is key. Pharmaceutical companies must consider caregivers as an essential stakeholder group, tailoring messaging and engagement strategies to address their unique concerns and highlight how treatments can ease their caregiving responsibilities. By acknowledging and supporting caregivers, brands can foster trust and deepen emotional resonance across the entire care ecosystem.

Involving well recognised and respectable public people can be a powerful way to normalise stigmatised conditions and foster trust with larger audiences. Respected community leaders, celebrities, and influential activists for example, can leverage their platforms to, enhance awareness, and promote open discussions about conditions frequently shrouded in stigma. Their involvement adds authenticity and cultivates emotional connections, facilitating engagement among patients, caregivers, payors and of course prescribers while reinforcing trust in the brand's commitment to addressing societal challenges.

28. Leveraging Corporate Social Responsibility

To establish long-term relationships and foster emotional resonance, pharmaceutical companies must also demonstrate their commitment to societal well-being through impactful Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. These initiatives, which may not directly relate to a specific brand, market, or therapeutic area, showcase the company's broader contributions to society, such as supporting healthcare access in underserved regions, funding disease awareness campaigns, or investing in sustainability. By aligning CSR efforts with emotional values that resonate with customers, such as compassion, equity, and care, companies can build trust and

strengthen their overall reputation, so important as already mentioned, for an industry with a relatively low reputation. This commitment creates a positive emotional association that extends across all brands within the portfolio, enhancing the company's credibility and connection with stakeholders and the prescribers in specific.

29. Defining KPIs for Emotional Resonance in Pharma Marketing

To evaluate the effectiveness of emotional branding strategies, pharmaceutical companies must establish a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) specifically defined to measure emotional resonance. Traditional metrics typically focus on financial results or prescription volume, emotional engagement KPIs though are the most appropriate KPIs to assess both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of a brand's resonance with its target audience. These KPIs offer important insights related to customer perceptions, satisfaction, and loyalty, allowing companies to refine their strategy and continuously strengthen their brands' emotional impact.

The following is the categorization proposed for the KPIs for emotional resonance (Table 6). The first category, Engagement and Experience Metrics, includes metrics such as advocacy, engagement rates, HCPs satisfaction with promotional activities, and Net Promoter Score (NPS), which measure customer interaction and satisfaction across several touchpoints. The second category, Perception and Trust, includes brand perception, sentiment, trust, and reputation, reflecting the emotional connections and credibility established between the brand and its audience. Behaviour and Impact Metrics, including awareness, message recall, behaviour change, and conversion rates, assess the influence that marketing strategies have on customer actions and decision-making. Last, Brand Equity Metrics, such as brand adoption ladders, loyalty, and overall brand equity, evaluate the long-term value of the brand in fostering emotional resonance.

Table 6. KPIs for Measuring Emotional Engagement and Impact

Category	KPIs	Description
Engagement and Experience Metrics	- Level of Advocacy	Measures how actively customers interact with the brand and their satisfaction with engagement.
	- HCP Satisfaction	
	- Net Promoter Score	
	- Engagement Rates	
Perception and Trust Metrics	- Brand Perception	Tracks how customers view and feel about the brand.
	- Brand Sentiment	
	- Trust & Reputation	
	- Brand Resonance	
Behavior and Impact Metrics	- Awareness	Evaluates how marketing efforts influence customer behaviors and decision-making, such as switching to or adopting the brand.
	- Message Recall	
	- Behavior Change	
	- Conversion Rates	
	- A/B Testing Outcomes	
Brand Equity Metrics	- Brand Equity	Focuses on the overall value of the brand in the market and customer loyalty progression, reflecting the strength of emotional and functional engagement.
	- Brand Adoption Ladder	
	- Brand Loyalty	
	- Share of Voice	

30. Ethical Marketing as a Catalyst for Credibility and Emotional Connection

In pharmaceutical marketing, the need for ethical practices goes beyond compliance with regulations, it stems from the profound responsibility of dealing with patients' health and lives. Upholding ethical standards ensures that all marketing efforts prioritize transparency, accuracy, and patient welfare, reinforcing trust among prescribers, patients, and other stakeholders. Only by fully understanding the rules and the regulations related to the promotional tactics of medicines, cross-functional teams can craft innovative and impactful strategies that respect these principles. Ethical marketing

not only safeguards the company's reputation but also highlights its genuine commitment to improving lives, fostering credibility and emotional resonance across all audiences.

5.3 Discussion of Research Question One

How can emotional branding be effectively integrated into pharmaceutical marketing strategies?

The findings of this research show that incorporating emotional branding into pharmaceutical marketing strategies requires a systematic and structured approach. Emotional resonance requires an in-depth understanding of the needs, motivations, interests and challenges faced by both patients and HCPs. Marketing strategies in pharma must finally move beyond an exclusively product-centric approach to emphasise benefits through storytelling and emotional narratives that highlight patient experiences, and brand values.

Digital tools, new technologies and advanced data analytics are critical in enabling this. By leveraging omnichannel engagement and AI-driven personalisation, companies can create customised experiences that are both emotionally resonant and scientifically accurate. Moreover, cultivating a corporate culture that prioritises emotional resonance across all functions ensures that emotional branding efforts are collaborative and in line with overarching business objectives. This study emphasises the importance of ethical and regulatory compliance, suggesting that emotional branding in the pharmaceutical industry requires transparency and trust to be effective and impactful.

5.4 Discussion of Research Question Two

What are the key factors influencing the success of emotional branding in pharmaceutical marketing?

There are several critical elements that determine the effectiveness of emotional branding in pharmaceutical marketing. Initially, internal alignment and cross-functional collaboration are essential. The research indicates that emotional branding cannot be left only with the marketing team; it requires the active participation and collaboration of all business functions and partners, including medical affairs, regulatory, sales, etc. Training programs aiming to develop skills in storytelling, data insight generation, and digital fluency are crucial for preparing cross-functional teams and a strong prerequisite to successfully implement emotionally resonant strategies.

Another important element that this research highlights is the importance of engaging not only with prescribers but other stakeholders as well, such as caregivers, patient advocates, and "micro-influencers", to build a strong brand advocacy. These different stakeholders very often can have a significant influence on prescribers' treatment decisions and can amplify the emotional resonance of branding efforts. Finally, putting in place KPIs to measure emotional engagement and impact is vital for tracking progress and where needed refining strategies.

5.5 Discussion of Research Question Three

What is the role of emotional branding in influencing prescriber decision-making and patient outcomes?

The research shows that emotional branding significantly influences prescriber decision-making by cultivating trust, empathy, and stronger emotional connections with a brand. By recognising the human side of prescribers, acknowledging their challenges, motivations, concerns, fears and emotional triggers, pharmaceutical brands can position themselves as authentic partners in improving patient care. Narratives and visual storytelling, offer a great opportunity of humanizing the impact of a treatment, help

prescribers in understanding the actual benefits of a medicine, making the decision-making process more emotionally resonant.

Emotional branding can improve patient outcomes by increasing awareness, adherence, and trust in a specific treatment. Brand campaigns that highlight the transformative impact of medicines can deeply engage with patients and caregivers. Furthermore, initiatives that highlight societal contributions and corporate social responsibility efforts improve the brand's overall perception, increasing the likelihood that prescribers will feel confident in their decision.

5.6 Implications of the Research

This research provides a practical framework for pharmaceutical companies to use in integrating emotional resonance into their marketing strategies with the ultimate goal to foster more impactful connections with prescribers and physicians in general, while creating a strong brand differentiation. Below are presented the key implications of this research.

1. **Revamping Pharmaceutical Marketing Strategies:** The study highlights the need of moving away from the existing traditional product-centric marketing approach towards strategies that incorporate emotional resonance. By understanding the emotional and psychological factors influencing prescriber decision-making, companies will be in place to more effectively tailor messaging and engagement with their customers. This involves developing communications that go beyond clinical data, and emphasise patient and healthcare professional experiences and the overall benefits that their brands can provide to them.
2. **Enhancing Customer-Centricity Across Stakeholders:** This research highlights the importance of engaging a broader range of stakeholders, such as caregivers,

patient advocates, micro-influencers, and public figures, in building emotional connections with a brand. Pharmaceutical companies have to acknowledge and capitalise on the impact that other, non-traditional, stakeholders might have when it comes to treatment decision-making, rather than concentrating exclusively on prescribers.

3. Leverage Digital Tools and Data Analytics to implement Emotional Branding:

The unprecedented technological advancements that took place in the last years, more specifically in digital tools and advanced data analytics offer significant possibilities for a successful implementation of emotional branding. This research stresses the importance of leveraging digital technologies to move towards a truly omnichannel engagement with customers, and personalised content creation. For example, personalising communications based on real-time engagement data or simulating patient experiences through virtual technologies can strengthen emotional connections with a brand.

4. Ethical and Regulatory Alignment: Maintaining trust is critical in the highly regulated pharmaceutical industry. This study reinforces the necessity of aligning emotional branding efforts with high ethical and regulatory standards to ensure credibility and reinforce companies' reputation.

5. Measuring Impact: The research provides a framework for measuring the impact of emotional branding efforts using a specific set of KPIs. These include engagement metrics (Net Promoter Score NPS, satisfaction with promotional activities, etc.), perception metrics (trust levels, brand equity, etc.), and behavioral metrics (e.g., conversion rates, advocacy levels). Adopting these indicators will allow companies to effectively measure success and refine their strategies.

6. **Organizational Change and Cross-Functional Collaboration:** The implications of this research extend to organizational culture. For emotional branding to succeed, all business functions, beyond just marketing, must understand, value and contribute to building emotional resonance. In that sense, it is essential to put training programs in place to build skills in storytelling, data analytics, and cross-functional collaboration. The role of senior leadership is critical to champion emotional resonance initiatives and ensure company-wide alignment.
7. **Overcoming Industry Established Mindsets:** Finally, the study challenges the often conservative approach of the pharmaceutical industry, urging companies to benchmark against other sectors such as FMCG or technology, for innovative branding practices. By adopting a more open mindset and leveraging insights from other industries, pharmaceutical companies can become more creative without compromising ethical or regulatory compliance.

This framework offers actionable strategies that companies can implement to bridge the gap between rational and emotional elements in marketing, positioning them to thrive in an increasingly competitive market.

5.7 Recommendations for Future Research

Building on the findings of this research and the practical framework presented, the following recommendations are suggested for future studies.

1. **Exploring Emotional Branding in Different Therapeutic Areas:** Future research should investigate whether and how emotional branding strategies might differ across different therapeutic areas and markets. Conditions with significant emotional impact, such as cancer or rare diseases, might require different approaches compared to other non life-threatening conditions with less

- psychological burden. Understanding these nuances can reinforce emotional branding strategies tailored to specific therapeutic settings.
2. **Investigating Cultural Variations in Emotional Branding:** This research among other things, highlights also the importance of cultural adaptation to successfully implement emotional strategies in pharma. An area that future research could potentially investigate more in detail is the impact of cultural differences on emotional resonance applied by pharmaceutical companies. Comparative studies across regions or countries could provide important and detailed insights into the need of localising emotional branding approaches and how to engage diverse audiences while maintaining consistency and alignment with a global strategy.
 3. **Measuring Long-Term Impact of Emotional Resonance:** Further research is needed to evaluate the long-term impact of emotional resonance. Researchers may examine the impact that this has on prescribing practices, patient behaviours and outcomes, and brand equity over extended periods, providing evidence for more investment and focus on emotional branding strategies.
 4. **The Role of Emerging Technologies in Emotional Branding:** Given the rapid advancement of technology that is actually taking place in the last few years, future studies could investigate how technologies like AI, machine learning, and virtual or augmented reality further enhance emotional resonance. For example, research could explore how these technologies personalize customer engagement and create immersive experiences that strengthen emotional connections.
 5. **Emotional Branding Beyond HCPs:** While this research focuses on prescribers, future studies could explore emotional branding's impact on other key stakeholders whose role has been reinforced in the recent years, such as payers, regulators, pharmacists or hospital administrators, just to mention a few.

Understanding how emotional strategies resonate with these groups could provide a broader application of the framework.

6. **Ethical Considerations of Emotional Branding:** Further research should explore the ethical boundaries of emotional branding, especially within a highly regulated market such as pharmaceuticals. This additional research could explore ways to achieve the right balance between emotional engagement and transparency, ensuring that marketing neither mislead nor overpromise but also doesn't undervalue a brand, while still deeply resonating with customers.
7. **Cross-Industry Learning Opportunities:** Future research could explore examples of successful emotional branding in other industries such as FMCG, technology or finance, examining how these strategies can be adapted to the specific context of the pharmaceutical industry.
8. **Emotional Branding Metrics Validation:** Finally, an additional suggestion would be regarding additional research to validate the effectiveness of the recommended KPIs for measuring the impact of emotional resonance. Research could concentrate on developing standardised methodologies for tracking these metrics and linking them to business outcomes, ensuring their practical validity in real-world.

5.8 Limitations of the Research

There are certain limitations that must be acknowledged, which may limit the generalisability and scope of the findings of this research.

1. **Industry-Specific Context:** This research concentrates primarily on the pharmaceutical market, which operates within a particular regulatory framework. The proposed approach in this study is specific to this environment, and the

conclusions may not be applicable to other industries with different operational dynamics.

2. **Dependence on Qualitative Data:** This study's findings are mostly based on qualitative data, collected through a survey, two focus groups and two case studies, which involve subjective interpretations. This methodology offers comprehensive contextual insights but lacks the statistical rigour of quantitative methods, thereby constraining the generalisability of findings.
3. **Focus on Prescribers:** While the study focuses specifically on prescribers, it does not fully address all possible stakeholders in the pharmaceutical ecosystem that can shape and influence a treatment decision-making, such as payors, regulators, or hospital administrators. These groups are getting increasingly more decision making power in the last years, and including them in the research could have provided a more holistic view of emotional branding's impact.
4. **Need to elaborate more on the Emerging Technologies:** Although the study highlights the importance of digital tools and AI in emotional branding, the rapidly evolving nature of the latter may render some findings or recommendations less relevant in the near future or might not cover the full potential of artificial intelligence. Future studies may be needed to assess the implications of new technological advancements and AI more in detail.
5. **Ethical and Regulatory Boundaries:** The research advocates for emotional resonance and although highlights the importance of ensuring that this is done following highly ethical standards, it does not explore in detail the challenges of navigating ethical and compliance concerns. While these issues were addressed conceptually, practical limitations in execution due to strict regulatory frameworks could pose additional challenges not fully covered in this study.

6. **Measurement Challenges:** The proposed set of KPIs for evaluating emotional engagement are insightful but may face challenges in real-world implementation, particularly in accurately quantifying intangible aspects like emotional resonance and trust. Further validation of these metrics is required to ensure their reliability and practical utility.
7. **Focus on Current Trends:** This research focuses on trends currently observed in the pharmaceutical industry and how this drives emotional marketing strategies. However, and considering how fast the industry is evolving, the long-term applicability of these findings may be influenced by future changes in market dynamics, customer preferences, or global healthcare developments.

5.9 Conclusion

With this research the researcher tried to highlight the need to transform pharmaceutical marketing and present a practical way for the companies to make their engagement with customers, and prescribers specifically, more customised and emotionally resonant. The concept of “Dr. Medicus Rationalis”, the idealized physician who makes purely logical, data-driven decisions, remains a myth. By incorporating emotional resonance into customer engagement initiatives, companies can move beyond the transactional focus of traditional marketing and create meaningful, lasting connections with healthcare professionals, patients, and other stakeholders. The present research introduces a practical framework stressing the significance of truly understanding customer needs, using advanced digital technologies, fostering cross-functional collaboration, while maintaining high ethical standards to build trust and credibility.

Despite the unique limitations and challenges of emotional branding in the pharmaceutical industry, it is both possible and crucial to adopt innovative strategies from other industries while adapting to the specific requirements of healthcare. Pharmaceuticals companies willing to embrace this transformation, can strongly differentiate their brands, improve patient outcomes, and ultimately shape the future of healthcare itself.

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APPENDIX A
SURVEY COVER LETTER

Online Survey Consent Form

Research project title: NAVIGATING HEALTHCARE DECISION DYNAMICS
AMONG PHYSICIANS: SHIFTING PHARMA MARKETING STRATEGIES FROM
RATIONALITY TO RESONANCE.

Research investigator: Alexandros Athanasiou

The online qualitative survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes. We don't anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop at any time.

The aim of this project is to explore the emotional factors influencing pharmaceutical marketing strategies, specifically how these emotional elements impact prescribers' treatment decisions. This research seeks to fill a gap in understanding how emotional branding can be effectively used to differentiate pharmaceutical products, especially in fields like oncology where clinical differentiation may be limited. By identifying effective emotional branding strategies, the project may contribute to improved marketing practices, fostering stronger connections between healthcare professionals and pharmaceutical companies, ultimately benefiting patient care. While some research on pharmaceutical branding exists, little is known about the role of emotional factors in decision-making, making this study significant. This research is being conducted as part of a Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) degree, and it is not funded or sponsored by any external organization.

Thank you for agreeing to take part at the above research project. This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement

and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Would you therefore sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

- All the information you provide will be anonymized to protect your confidentiality and privacy.
- There will be no financial compensation or reimbursement for your participation in this study. Participation is voluntary, and there are no costs to you for being involved
- The responses of the survey will be analysed by Alexandros Athanasiou as research investigator
- Access to the survey responses will be limited to Alexandros Athanasiou and academic colleagues and researchers with whom he might collaborate as part of the research process
- Direct quotations from the survey, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets will be anonymized so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed
- Any variation of the conditions above will only occur with your further explicit approval

By accepting this form I agree that;

- I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the survey at any time;
- I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment for my participation;
- I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT

Research project title: NAVIGATING HEALTHCARE DECISION DYNAMICS
AMONG PHYSICIANS: SHIFTING PHARMA MARKETING STRATEGIES FROM
RATIONALITY TO RESONANCE.

Research investigator: Alexandros Athanasiou

Research Participants name: xxx

The focus group discussion will take 90 minutes. We don't anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop or withdraw from the research at any time.

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above research project. Ethical procedures for academic research require that interviewees explicitly agree to being interviewed and how the information contained in their interview will be used. This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Would you therefore read the accompanying information sheet and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

- the interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced
- the transcript of the interview will be analysed by Alexandros Athanasiou as research investigator
- access to the interview transcript will be limited to Alexandros Athanasiou and academic colleagues and researchers with whom he might collaborate as part of the research process
- any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets will be

anonymized so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed

- the actual recording will be (destroyed upon completion of the research)
- any variation of the conditions above will only occur with your further explicit approval

By signing this form I agree that:

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time;
2. The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described above;
3. I have read the Information sheet;
4. I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment for my participation;
5. I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future. }

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome and Introduction:

- Welcome participants and express gratitude for their participation. (2')
- Briefly introduce the purpose of the focus group: to gather insights on emotional marketing strategies in the pharmaceutical industry. (1')

Participant Introductions:

- Ask each participant to introduce themselves, mentioning their role and years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry. (1')

UNDERSTANDING CURRENT TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Current Trends in Pharmaceutical Marketing:

- In the context of emotional branding and resonance, what, in your opinion, are the current trends in pharmaceutical marketing? (12')

Challenges Faced:

- Incorporating emotional elements into marketing can be challenging. What challenges have you or your organization faced in this regard? (10')

STRATEGIES FOR EMOTIONAL RESONANT MARKETING

Successful Emotional Campaigns:

- How have you observed emotional elements being integrated into marketing strategies and if yes, can you share examples of pharmaceutical marketing campaigns that successfully integrated emotional elements? (15')
- What made these campaigns effective? (5')

Navigating Cultural Differences:

- Considering the global nature of the industry, how do cultural differences influence the effectiveness of emotional marketing strategies? (6') (*Optional and only if time is enough*)

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES & STRATEGIES

Transition to Emotionally Resonant Marketing:

- In your opinion, what are some key strategies or approaches that pharmaceutical companies can adopt to authentically differentiate their brands through emotional resonance? (20')
- How do you think pharmaceutical companies can effectively measure the impact of emotional branding on prescribers? (10')

ETHICAL & LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical Concerns:

- Can you provide examples of ethical & legal concerns that may arise when incorporating emotional elements into pharmaceutical marketing, and how these concerns can be addressed? (10')

CLOSING REMARKS

Final Thoughts:

- Any additional thoughts or insights you'd like to share on emotional marketing in the pharmaceutical industry? (2')

Next Steps:

- Briefly outline the next steps in the research process and express appreciation for their time. (2')

Focus Groups

PROJECT SPECS											
Research Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore Current Trends: Understand participants' observations on current trends in pharmaceutical marketing, particularly focusing on the integration of emotional elements. • Identify Challenges: Investigate the challenges faced by pharmaceutical companies, as perceived by industry professionals, in incorporating emotional elements into their marketing strategies, with a specific emphasis on regulatory and compliance aspects. • Examine Successful Campaigns: Examine examples of successful pharmaceutical marketing campaigns that have effectively integrated emotional elements, seeking to understand the factors contributing to their success. • Generate Actionable Strategies: Engage participants in discussions aimed at developing actionable strategies for pharmaceutical companies to seamlessly integrate emotional elements into their marketing practices. • Consider Compliance and Ethics: Explore industry professionals' viewpoints on the regulatory and ethical considerations associated with emotional branding. 										
Target/ Sample	<table> <tr> <th>Sample</th><th>Group 1</th><th>Group 2</th><th>Total</th></tr> <tr> <td>Professionals</td><td>Group of 4</td><td>Group of 4</td><td>8</td></tr> </table>			Sample	Group 1	Group 2	Total	Professionals	Group of 4	Group of 4	8
Sample	Group 1	Group 2	Total								
Professionals	Group of 4	Group of 4	8								
Methodology	<p>60 to 90-minute virtual guided deliberations with Senior Pharmaceutical Industry Professionals</p>										

APPENDIX D:
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: Key actions and timelines for data collection and analysis (page 51)

Action	Timelines
Creation of qualitative survey questionnaire and focus group discussion guide.	2 weeks
Contacted potential participants for the qualitative survey and focus group.	1 week
Provided to participants all information required, arranged logistics for the focus groups and ensured getting their consent to participate to the study.	<1 week
Distributed the online questionnaire. Monitored the number of completed questionnaires obtained and send reminders.	3 weeks
Planned and run a focus group meeting.	2 weeks
Identified the appropriate case studies and thoroughly analysed them.	3 weeks
Combined and compared the findings obtained through the qualitative questionnaire, focus group, and case studies.	2 weeks
Prepared a report with all the findings, including analyses and recommendations.	2 weeks

Table 2. Qualitative Questionnaire Findings (page 66)

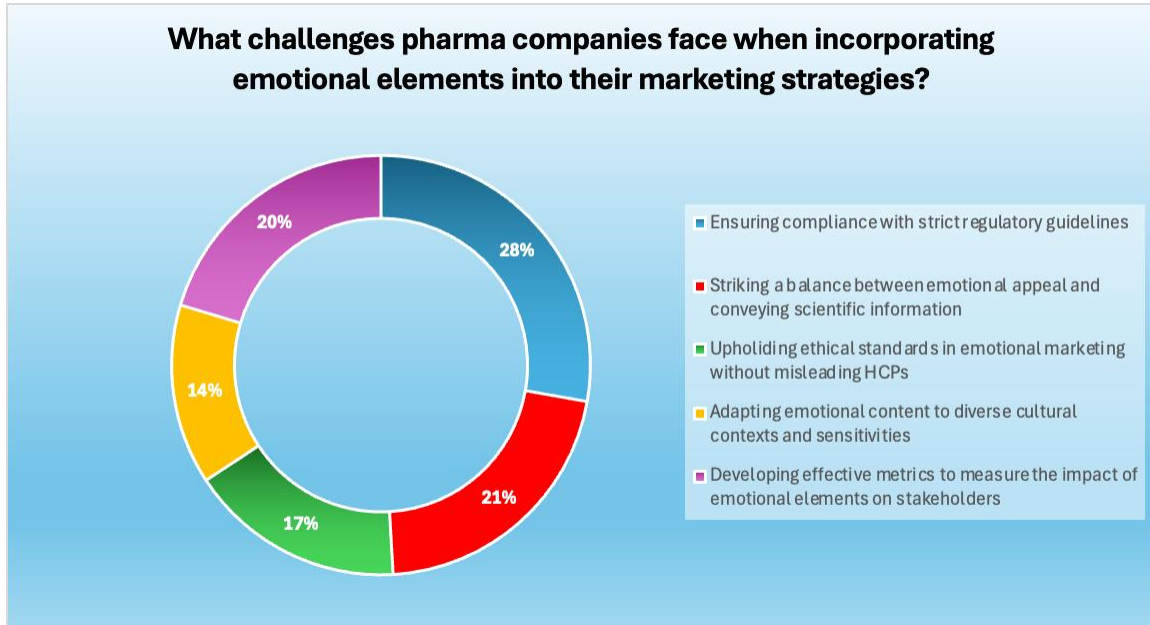


Table 3. Qualitative Questionnaire Findings (page 68)

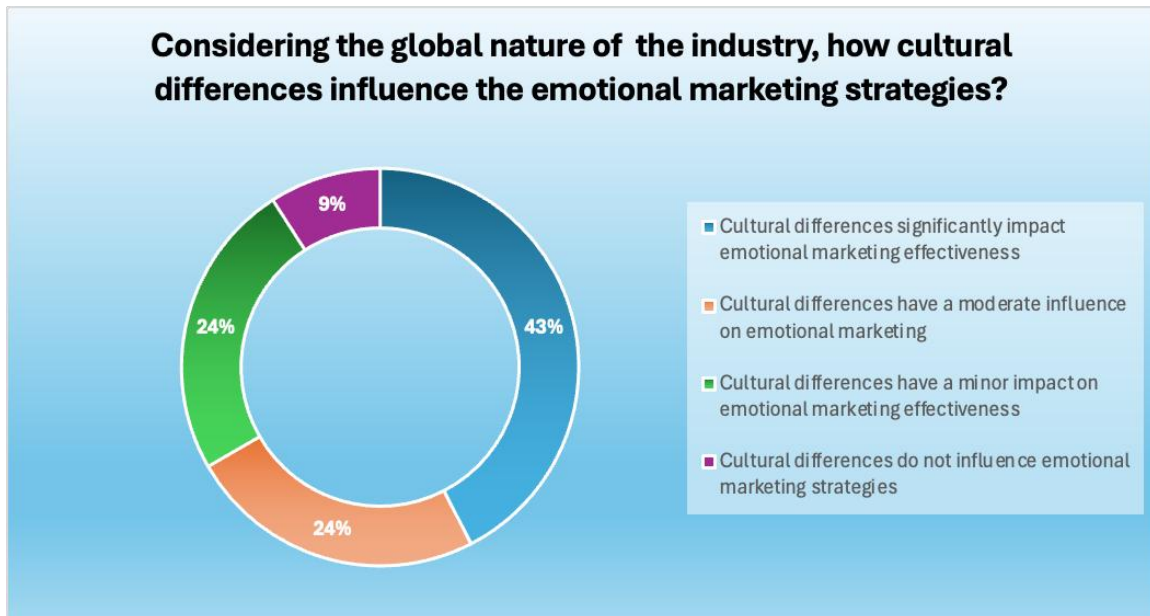


Table 4. Qualitative Questionnaire Findings (page 69)

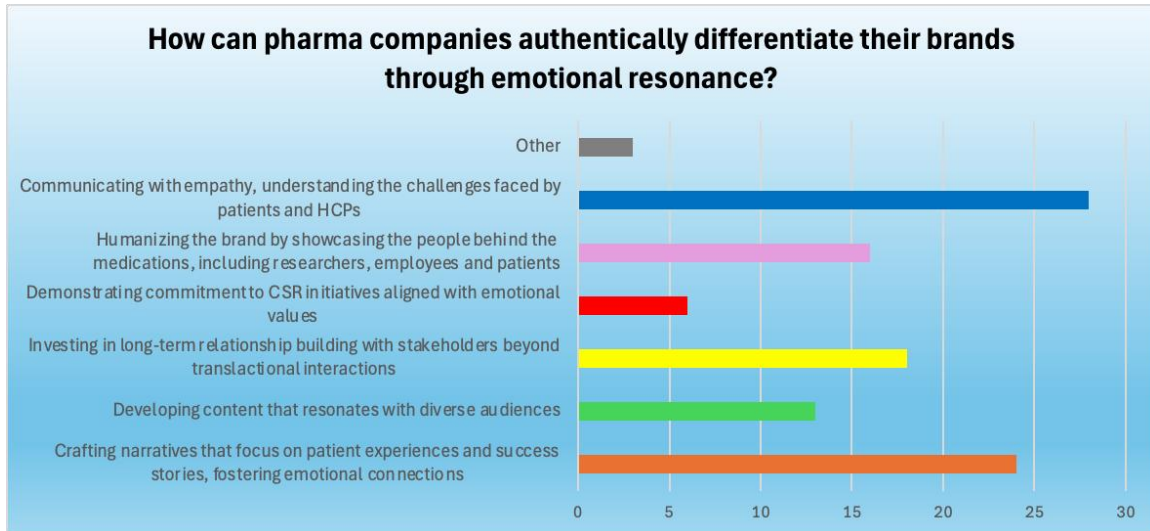


Table 5. Qualitative Questionnaire Findings (page 72)

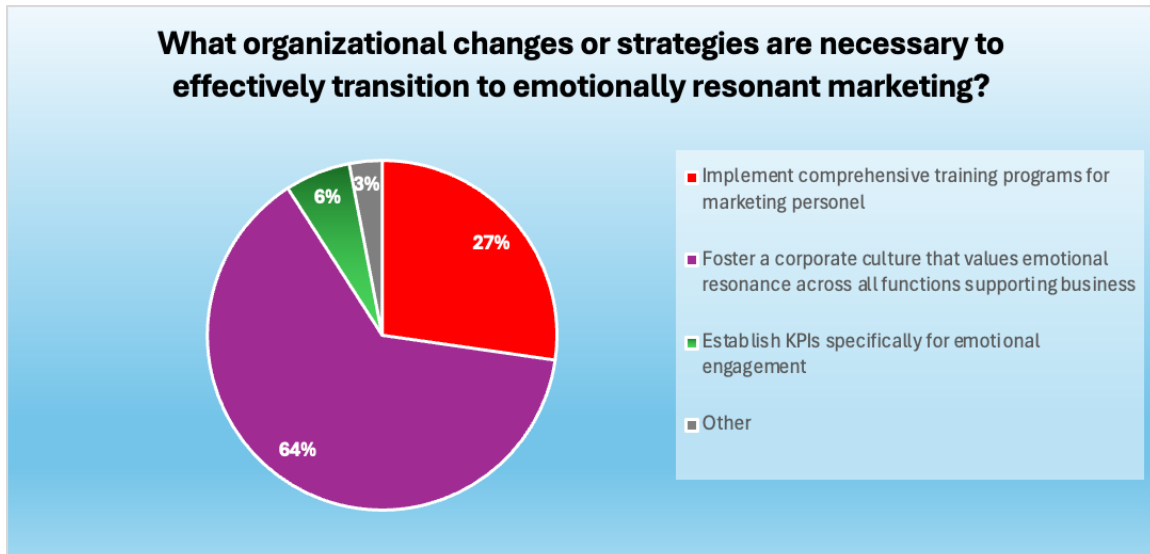


Table 6. KPIs for Measuring Emotional Engagement and Impact (page 116)

Category	KPIs	Description
Engagement and Experience Metrics	- Level of Advocacy	Measures how actively customers interact with the brand and their satisfaction with engagement.
	- HCP Satisfaction	
	- Net Promoter Score	
	- Engagement Rates	
Perception and Trust Metrics	- Brand Perception	Tracks how customers view and feel about the brand.
	- Brand Sentiment	
	- Trust & Reputation	
	- Brand Resonance	
Behavior and Impact Metrics	- Awareness	Evaluates how marketing efforts influence customer behaviors and decision-making, such as switching to or adopting the brand.
	- Message Recall	
	- Behavior Change	
	- Conversion Rates	
	- A/B Testing Outcomes	
Brand Equity Metrics	- Brand Equity	Focuses on the overall value of the brand in the market and customer loyalty progression, reflecting the strength of emotional and functional engagement.
	- Brand Adoption Ladder	
	- Brand Loyalty	
	- Share of Voice	

Figure 1. Thematic Map (page 74)

