

Review: The Future of Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medications

R. Ganesh*

Abstract

According to medicine, India's over-the-counter drug market is growing. The country's economy is expanding. The Indian pharmaceutical industry has experienced rapid growth in the last decade and significant changes in the quality of business. The company actively promotes its products in the market; North Americans focus on finding cures for minor ailments compared to Europeans who rely on village pharmacists to treat minor ailments. Only the promotion and dissemination of public education on health and wellness can create awareness about the effective use of medicine. Compared to other products, OTC drugs have significant products. However, looking to the future, it is expected that merchants with good sales skills will be able to increase the sales of their own products. The government and many pharmaceutical companies have done a lot of work to create awareness about different drugs and to turn prescription drugs into over-the-counter options.

Keywords: Self-medication, Drug Consultative Committee of India (DCC), Central Drug Standard Organization (CDSCO), Food Drug and Cosmetic Act (FD&C), fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG)

INTRODUCTION

From regular stores without a doctor's prescription, Consumers can purchase the product. Most over-the-counter drugs are approved by regulatory agencies and contain safe and effective ingredients when used without a doctor's prescription [1–2]. Daily illnesses, such as headaches, allergies, colds, constipation, backaches, hyperacidity, and chronic fatigue can be treated without consulting a doctor. In 1860, home preparation was replaced by purchasing medicines. Public demand for and use of medical drugs has decreased. The FDA allows for some regulation but does not specify which drugs are OTC and which are not covered by the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of 1938 (FD&C). Differences between prescription drugs and addressing drug safety concerns [3]. The Pharmaceutical Advisory Council of India (PAC) announced in November 2016 that it was developing a definition of over-the-counter drugs. Before that, it was generally accepted that any drug that was not subject to a prescription could be obtained without a prescription. However, as of early 2018, the key points have not yet been agreed upon. Since there is no legal definition of over-the-counter drugs, this \$4 billion industry is unregulated. The local pharmacist gives the best advice one can rely on him. In countries where health and economic growth are improving, there are opportunities to help governments reduce healthcare spending while also easing pressure on doctors [4].

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India as OTC Drug Market Size 2022–2027. The OTC drug market in India was valued at \$7.62 billion in 2022 and is expected to reach \$18.49 billion by 2027 [5]. The COVID-19 pipeline has had a significant impact on the business. For example, Indian manufacturers import active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) from China. The lockdown has slowed down the

availability of APIs, reduced product availability, and increased product costs. Given the huge demand for essential medicines, the government has banned the export of some essential medicines. Other banned drugs include over-the-counter antipyretic paracetamol, metronidazole, which contains vitamins B1 and B12, and antibiotics to treat infections and other ailments. Meanwhile, online purchases of over-the-counter medicines are on the rise. For example, in April 2020, the Andhra Pradesh Health Department launched Covid Pharma, a mobile device that tracks people's consumption of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines. According to the 2022 MDPI report, the self-medication rate in India is estimated at 44.9%. Self-medication is more common in middle-and low-income households, with a prevalence of 26.31% [6]. Hamda Lab released 12 OTC games anti-virus products in January 2021. Antacids, cough and cold medicines, laxatives, Analgesics, vitamins, and anti-allergic products are mainly used as a product in India. Menstrual cramps and musculoskeletal injuries, Over-the-counter antibiotics are mostly used for treatment and control purposes. Interventional Pain and Spine Center (IPSC) 19% of the elderly population in India suffers from the following diseases: Increase by 25%. The most commonly used over-the-counter are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and acetaminophen, aspirin, naproxen, and ibuprofen [analgesics group] in India [7].

Market Dynamics

According to a 2019 NCBI article titled Prevalence and Patterns of Drug Self-Use among Urban Indians: A Cross-Sectional Study, 3.8% of graduates and 8.5% of professionals. Workers self-medicated with antibiotics. "Prevalence of Medical Self-Medication Use in India: Analysis and Meta-Analysis", published in August 2020 in the open-access journal [6–7]. India OTC Research Business - Business Report - Trends, Size, and share are shown in Figure 1.

Lack of Specific Regulations for OTC Drugs

There is currently no good regulatory control in the industry, resulting in many drugs in the market being recalled in many markets. As per Indian law, over-the-counter drugs are not covered by the D&C Act, of 1940. Antifungals, cough syrups, and decongestants are sold without preservatives, or chemicals [8–11].

OTC Market Recent Trends in India

The most popular OTC products in India are Dabur Honitus Lozenges, Cough Syrups, Vicks VapoRub, Zandu Balm, Iodex, Moov, Cough Drops, and Lozenges. One of India's most important industries is the pharmaceutical industry, which exports goods worth \$15 billion annually and has some of the world's top manufacturing companies. Retail and pharmaceutical products are India's second largest export to the US [4]. Access to the Indian market one of the biggest challenges faced by pharmacies is their inability to reach remote parts of the country. The Indian pharmaceutical industry accounts for approximately 2.5% of the global pharmaceutical industry and 10% of its total volume. GSK launched a new nasal decongestant portfolio called Otrivin in the Indian consumer healthcare market in December 2020. Otrivin Breathe Clean Daily Nasal Wash was also launched in the market (Figure 1 and Table 1) [3].

OTC Drug Market in India-Growth Drivers

Self-treatment of minor illnesses is more popular. The product is sold in pharmacies and supermarkets. Indian cities are starting to showcase the concept of over-the-counter medicines due to the advancement of technology and media, high workplace stress, and clean health awareness. Companies are working hard to improve their understanding of various drugs and convert prescription drugs into over-the-counter options [12–18]. The opportunities and problems presented by OTC drugs are listed in Table 2.

India Over-the-Counter Drugs (OTC) Market: Competitive Landscape

Dominant players and market nature: The Indian over-the-counter (OTC) market is characterized by many international and domestic players, creating a highly competitive environment. Large international companies, such as Procter & Gamble Co., Abbott Laboratories, GlaxoSmithKline PLC, and Johnson & Johnson, as well as strong players, such as Emami Limited, Dabur India Limited, Sun Pharmaceuticals Limited, and Cipla Inc. presence contributes to the business which are included in the Market. The business model is fragmented, with no single entity having a significant business presence. This division reflects the competitive environment where many companies have a large influence and offer different products to cater to different customers (Figures 2–6).

Major Players and Their Characteristics

Indian OTC players demonstrate unique strengths and strategic approaches. Procter & Gamble and GlaxoSmithKline PLC are leveraging their global presence and brand building to control market dominance. Meanwhile, Emami Limited and Dabur India Limited are leveraging their deep understanding of consumer preferences and herbal products to drive demand for medicinal and ayurvedic products in India. Abbott Laboratories and Johnson & Johnson are focusing on a broad product portfolio that includes both OTC and prescription drugs to meet a wide range of consumer needs.

Market Trends and Future Success Strategies

Key trends in the Indian pharmacy market include a shift towards self-medication and a growing preference for preventive medicine products. Digital marketing and e-commerce have become important distribution channels, especially in cities. To succeed in a competitive market, companies need to focus on expanding their product range to meet changing customer needs, investing in digital transformation, and improving delivery capacity to reach untapped rural markets. Also, collaboration and partnership with local vendors and pharmacies can play a significant role in increasing market reach and product awareness.

India Over-the-counter Drugs (OTC) Market Size (2024–2029)

India's over-the-counter (OTC) market size is expected to grow significantly during the forecast period due to the increasing number of self-medication users. This change has made it increasingly easy to use over-the-counter products without a doctor's prescription, which are the first choice for treating health issues. Additional demographic factors, such as higher rates of self-medication among educated and urban populations, are supporting the expansion of the economy. Despite challenges, such as price cuts, advertising restrictions, and regulatory issues, the Indian OTC market is expected to grow rapidly, fueling consumer demand for healthcare solutions (Tables 3 and 4).

RESULTS

Key Highlights

Bayer's CCR, digestive, and eye drops sales. Supply problems in the region are also affected. RB's top product Ibuprofen growth data in single digits the main reason for the weak performance of the joint venture is GlaxoSmithKline's lagging behind the market large [14].

Lifecycle Highlights

Rx-to-OTC players are key players investing in R&D to reinforce the growth in competition and market fragmentation. Allergies and respiratory diseases will increase in the next decade. The regulatory lifecycle begins with the manufacturer submitting an NDA application. The time has come, and drug manufacturers use a number of methods to extend the patent protection of a product, including providing new delivery systems, changing product strengths, and adding new brands. Consumers are so patient that many executives in the pharmaceutical industry are afraid of their loyal customers. Consumers are willing to pay a little more for popular brands and remain loyal to competitors [13].

Challenges

Building in-house OTC expertise is more successful than licensing products to a utilitya€• companies (e.g., Merck as the purchase of Schering-Plough and its distribution equipment or Abbott as the purchase of Ross as Product Division). Discussions can influence sales interactions with providers [19].

Advantages

Over-the-counter drugs are generally not eligible for reimbursement programs. Pharmaceutical companies often offer OTC products at lower prices than prescription drugs to increase sales. Consumers benefit from lower costs for substitute products. Profits will not be reduced due to lower prices [20–22].

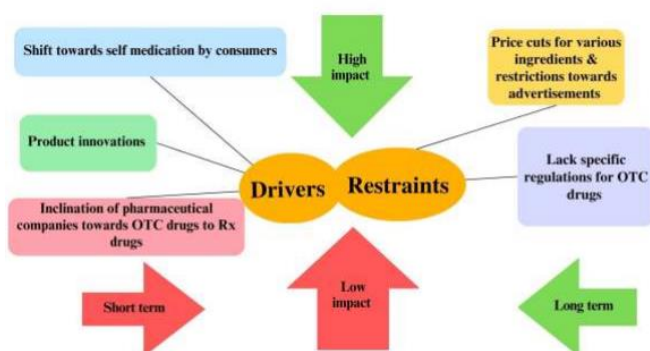


Figure 1. India OTC market analysis-industry report- trend, size and share (Source: mordorintelligence.com).

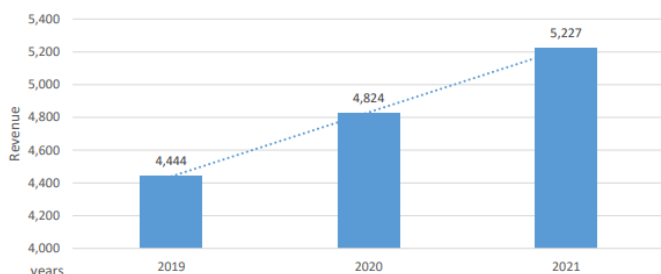


Figure 2. India, revenue in USD million, 2019–2021

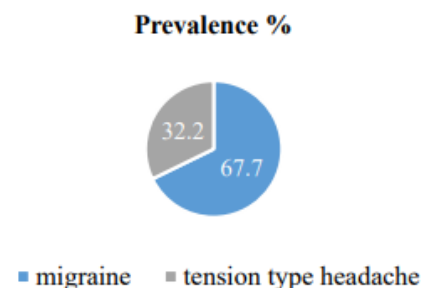


Figure 3. Prevalence of headache in India.

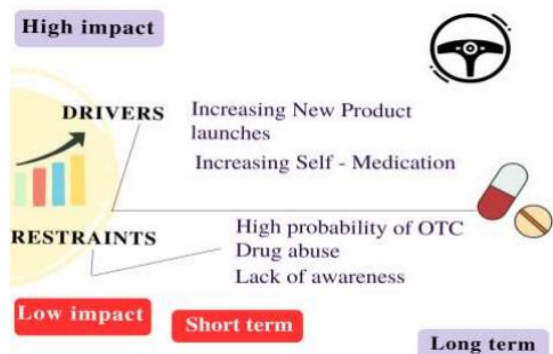


Figure 4. Drivers and restraintse EU.

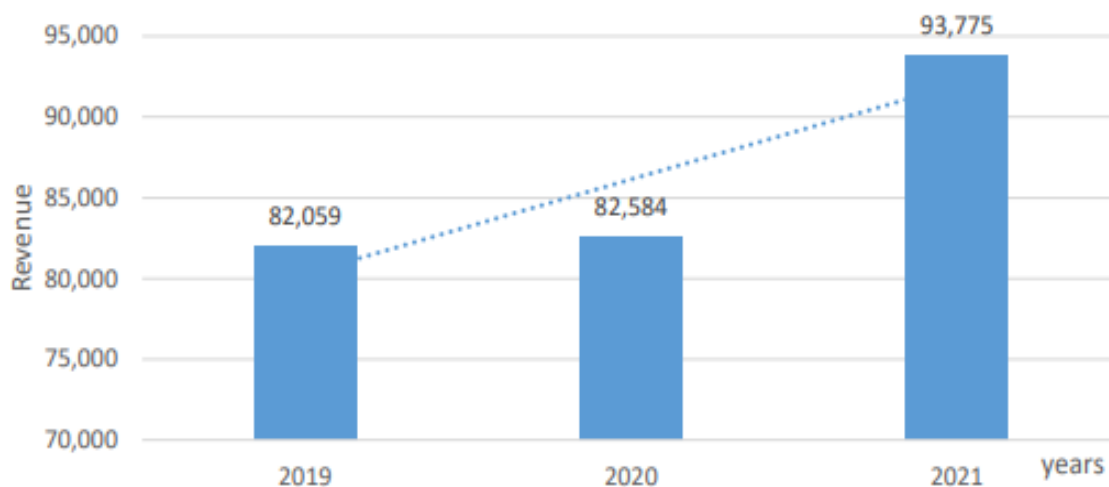


Figure 5. Revenue USD million, 2019–2021, EU.

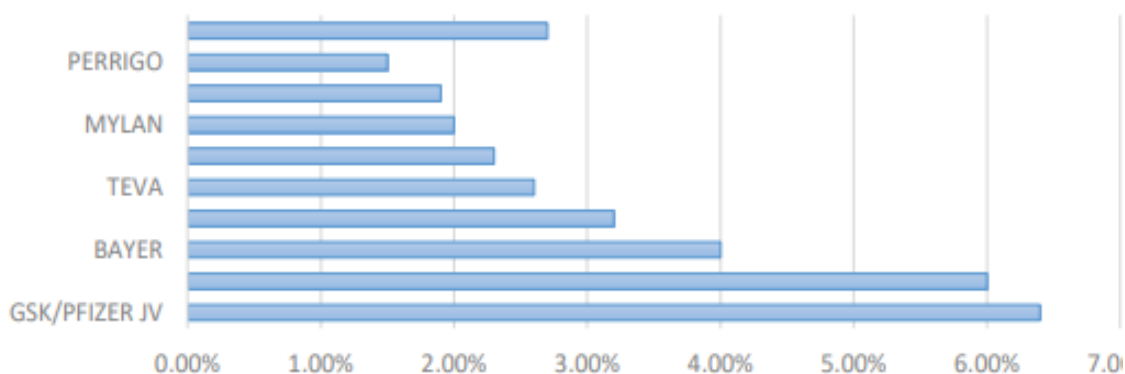


Figure 6. Top10 corporations Europe value share and latest year growth (%).

Table1. India OTC market top players.

India OTC Market Top Players
Emani Limited
Dabur India Limited
Procter & Gamble
Abbott Laboratories
Glaxo SmithKline
Cipla
Sun Pharmaceuticals Limited
Johnson & Johnson

Source: <https://business.mapsofindia.com/fmcg/over-the-counter.html>

Table 2. Opportunities and challenges of OTC medications.

Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumers have more flexibility with less restrictive price controls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefit-based product differentiation must become ingrained in customers' minds.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OTC items are becoming more widely perceived as FMCG goods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make their product line more accessible to the public, OTC merchants in India need to review their pricing strategies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An excellent option for successfully promoting OTC brands in fragmented media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An excessive number of firms are entering the market, with fierce rivalry.

Source: OPPI 46th Annual report.

Table 3. Top supplier of over-the-counter medications – J&J.

Drug Name	Drug Class	Therapeutic Uses
Tylenol	Analgesics	pain reliever, fever reducer, arthritis
Sudafed	Upper respiratory	signals in the brain that trigger cough reflex
Zyrtec	Antihistamines	itching and swelling caused by chronic urticaria (hives)
Motrin IB	NSAIDS	inflammation caused by many conditions, such as toothache, arthritis, menstrual cramps, or Minor injury

Source: <https://www.drugs.com/mtm/pepcid-complete.html>

Table 4. Europe OTC drugs market top players.

Europe OTC Drugs Market Top Players
Astra Zeneca
GlaxoSmithKline
Bayer
Cardinal Health
Johnson and Johnson
Novartis

Source: [https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20220930005390/en/Europe-Over the-counter-OTC-Drugs-Market-Report-2022-Increasing-Self-medication-Practices-Driving-S.4--Annual-Growth-ResearchAndMarkets.com](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20220930005390/en/Europe-Over-the-counter-OTC-Drugs-Market-Report-2022-Increasing-Self-medication-Practices-Driving-S.4--Annual-Growth-ResearchAndMarkets.com).

CONCLUSION

Therefore, over-the-counter medicines play an important role in daily life. Cough and cold medicines account for half of the global market according to the recent report. Due to the Covid-19 period, most people are turning to self-medication instead of going to hospitals and pharmacies. The demand for e-commerce sites is increasing compared to offline channels. Analgesics are the most commonly used medicines by the elderly and the elderly. The expansion rate is higher in the United States, followed by Europe and India. India is in the development stage due to the lack of proper OTC regulation. The company focuses on value proposition, target audience, safety, and operational guidelines. Whether consumer or consumer from the OTC pharmaceutical sector. The market demand for medicines is stable and has the characteristics of daily pharmaceutical products. In addition, although OTC drugs have a high market share compared to other consumers, suppliers have a good sales history and are expected to increase their ownership of the products in the future. Labels in stores should be clear, understandable, and easily understood by untrained individuals. The cost-effectiveness of over-the-counter and self-administered drugs is another important factor driving market expansion. 50 percent of doctors believe that over-the-counter drugs should be covered by health insurance and insurance. For example, using an antacid (Maalox) instead of pantoprazole to treat severe stomach pain can improve health. Technology is the best way to encourage drug

dissemination in the market. The shift from prescription to pharmacy can be both financially and health-wise. Policymakers rely on economic models to estimate the cost reductions associated with transferring drugs to pharmacies. The pharmaceutical market in India is expected to reach USD 6.73 billion by 2024, growing at a CAGR of 5.39% to reach USD 8.76 billion by 2029.

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