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**THE INFLUENCE OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL MERCHANDISING ON
CONSUMER BEHAVIOR (ON MATERIALS OF PHARMACY RETAIL
NETWORK)**

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In the article it is told about the problem of effectiveness of the pharmacy merchandising in the drug store. Results of qualitative marketing research are showed. Investigation took place in the drug store with closed trade form. Customers of this drug store took part in the investigation. By results of this market research segmentation of consumers was carried out and the target audience is allocated. In the process of monitoring has been allocated percentage of customers who have made a purchase through the influence of merchandising facilities. The trade zone as object of a merchandising in a studied drugstore is in detail considered. In it the sectors attracting the greatest number of buyers were allocated. Also the most effective object of a merchandising in a drugstore was defined. According to the research it is made a conclusion about effectiveness of pharmacy merchandising in this chemist's shop.

Keywords: Merchandising; drugstore; structure of consumers; trading area; effectiveness.

**ВЛИЯНИЕ ФАРМАЦЕВТИЧЕСКОГО МЕРЧАНДАЙЗИНГА
НА ПОВЕДЕНИЕ ПОТРЕБИТЕЛЕЙ
(НА МАТЕРИАЛАХ АПТЕЧНОЙ РОЗНИЧНОЙ СЕТИ)**

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В статье рассматривается проблема эффективности мерчандайзинга в аптечном учреждении. Приведены выводы, полученные в результате проведенного качественного маркетингового исследования с использованием метода наблюдения. Исследование проводилось в аптечном учреждении с закрытой формой торговли. В наблюдении приняли участие покупатели рассматриваемой аптеки. По результатам данного маркетингового исследования было проведено сегментирование потребителей и выделена целевая аудитория. В процессе наблюдения был выделен процент покупателей, совершивших покупку благодаря воздействию объектов мерчандайзинга. Торговая зона как объект мерчандайзинга в исследуемой аптеке подробно рассмотрена. В ней были выделены сектора, привлекающие наибольшее число покупателей. Также был определен наиболее эффективный объект мерчандайзинга в аптеке. На основе проведенного исследования сделаны выводы об эффективности фармацевтического мерчандайзинга в данном аптечном учреждении.

Ключевые слова: мерчандайзинг; аптечное учреждение; структура потребителей; торговая зона; эффективность.

Merchandising represents some type of art, which provides effective customer's acquaintance with the product. The modern market becomes more wide, severe, and competitive, so for producers and sellers merchandizing is an effective means of ensuring the competitiveness of their goods. Thus, merchandising is required in all spheres of modern market and pharmacy is no exception.

Merchandising in the pharmaceutical institution has a number of facilities through which its functions are provided. Objects of pharmacy merchandising include following:

1. Trading hall. Includes planning the location of the shop windows and format of the drug store (open or closed form of trade).

2. Laying out. It depends on the goals of the chemist's shop. It may be organization of medicines on the basis of action of drug, its brand name and more.

3. Advertising. It is the one of the most important and various aspects of merchandising in the pharmacy. Pharmacy advertising includes the following:

- Posters, attracting the attention of the consumer.
- Booklets. Carry information about the benefits of a particular medicinal product.
- Shelf talkers (Shelftalkereng.). are promotional materials (cardboard or plastic), placed on a shelf to draw attention to a particular drug.

4. Assortment of show-cases. Represents the goods, which are conditionally subdivided into 3 groups - A, B and C.

- The A group includes medicines that make up 10% of the assortment and provide 80% of turnover.
- Group: 15% of assortment and 15% of turnover.
- Group: 75% of assortment and 5% of turnover.

Pharmacy merchandising has a number of features, which provides its effectiveness. Such features are conditioned by the particular behavior of the consumer in a pharmacy that is differ from its behavior in other commercial establishments. Features of consumer behavior in a drugstore include the following:

1. Susceptibility to external influences. External influence is understood as an information, which consumer receives from the specialist about the quality and necessity of using of the particular drug. Expert advice is quite often has a strong influence on consumer preferences.

2. The trust. This point is an integral part of the model of consumer behavior in the pharmacy. Most people, coming to the pharmacy, very often tell pharmacist about their problems and hope to get help. For the most consumers pharmacy is a place associated with security, guaranteed quality of products, high qualified personnel and effectiveness of drugs.

3. Get positive emotions. People coming to the pharmacy, as a rule, hope to overcome their disease. Such positive mood of the consumer is provided by atmosphere of the drugstore.

4. The independence of decision making. This item of the model of consumer behavior at first sight is contrary to the first two. But the main feature of such independence is imaginary. Art of sale of the goods is to have a greater impact on consumer choice, creating impression that the buyer has made right choice himself, without help of the pharmacist or other external influences. [1, p. 85 - 86].

Thus, if you know the peculiarities of consumer behavior in the drug store, you could create different conditions, which allow increase quantity of the purchased goods and the amount of purchases in general, i.e. motivate the buyer.

To confirm this hypothesis qualitative marketing research **of the method of observation** was conducted. Observation was carried out by means of the organized and purposeful perception with further fixation of the received data. The objective of the monitoring was to collect the following data:

- the turnover of pharmacies per 8 hour shift
- the amount of purchase
- % of purchases from the total number, which were made under the influence on the buyer of merchandising and value of this purchases

Monitoring was carried out by the pharmacist during 8 - hour shift.

The research was conducted in the pharmacy institution with a closed form of trade. The closed form of trade implies a closed windows and receipt of goods from the hands of the seller. Thus, all the following examples and data are obtained from observations in a pharmacy of such type.

As part of the indicators may vary depending on the season (for example, turnover), then it is important to note that indicators, represented in this work reflect the state at the beginning of May of the current year.

The observation was attended by 280 people (the average number of customers per 8 hour shift). During the investigation consumer audience was divided by two

criteria - the gender and age, recorded the number and value of purchases made by the particular consumer segment

Often, different kinds of pharmacy marketing tricks are targeted at the particular group of consumers, therefore, to analyze the effectiveness of the pharmaceutical merchandising, it is necessary to study the structure of the consumer flow. Consideration of the structure of consumers allowed to make a portrait of the consumer (regular customer). So, a large number of buyers are women aged over 40 years (Fig. 1; Fig. 2).

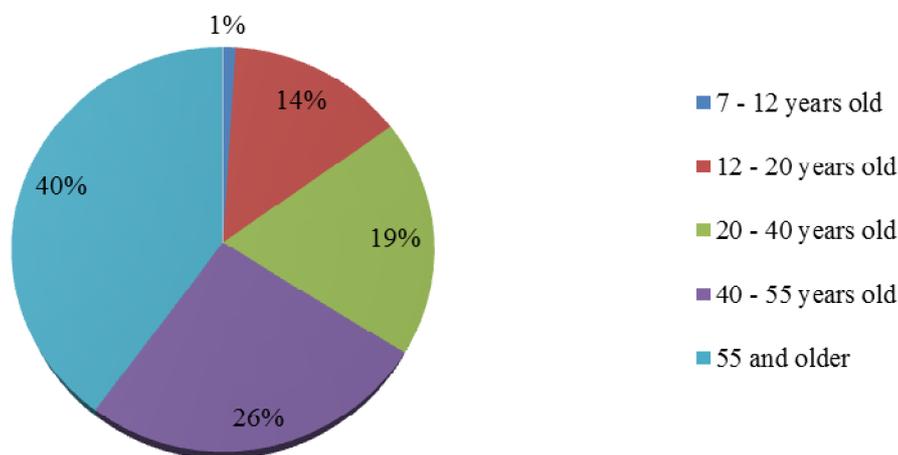


Figure 1. The age structure of consumers

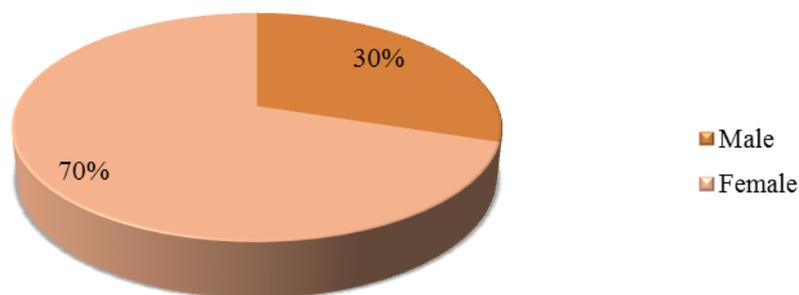
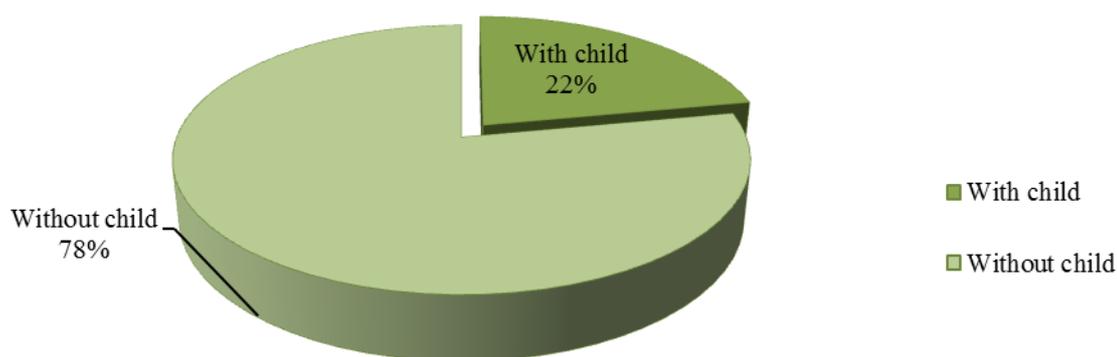


Figure 2. Gender structure of consumers.

Women over the age of 40 years is not only the most part of the number of consumers, but also make purchases, the amount of which forms a significant part of

turnover. For example, shift turnover of one pharmacist is about 36 thousand rubles, where 17 thousand are purchases, made by women aged 40 and older, which forms more than 47% of turnover.

In the course of the research it was found that part of the purchases is made at the request of children. Therefore, it was proposed to add another criterion to segmentation - having a child of three years and older (the age at which child is able to formulate a request to purchase something). Division of costumers by the presence of a child was very important, because often the marketing gimmicks, located in the pharmacy are aimed at children. Very often children are pushing the customers to make unplanned purchases. Almost 1/4 of the total number of consumers is buyers with children (Fig. 3).



**Figure 3. Structure of consumers.
Criterion: having a child.**

As for the value of purchases of parents with children, its amount is approximately 900 rubles per shift pharmacist that is 2.5% of per-month turnover. This figure may vary depending on the season.

Proceeding from the analysis of consumer flow in the drugstore, we can conclude that the merchandising in a pharmacy should be aimed at attraction of customers, which are 40 years and older, predominantly women, moreover, it is also necessary to attract children's attention, as almost a quarter of buyers bring their children to the pharmacy.

For the analysis of efficiency of pharmaceutical merchandizing, it should be determined, what percentage of the consumer makes a purchase under the influence

of the objects of merchandising. During the research it was found that the main object of merchandizing in the pharmacy is the trading area. For the analysis of the effectiveness of this object it is necessary to consider it in detail. Trade area is the location of windows and division of space into zones. Plan of investigated drugstore has the following form:

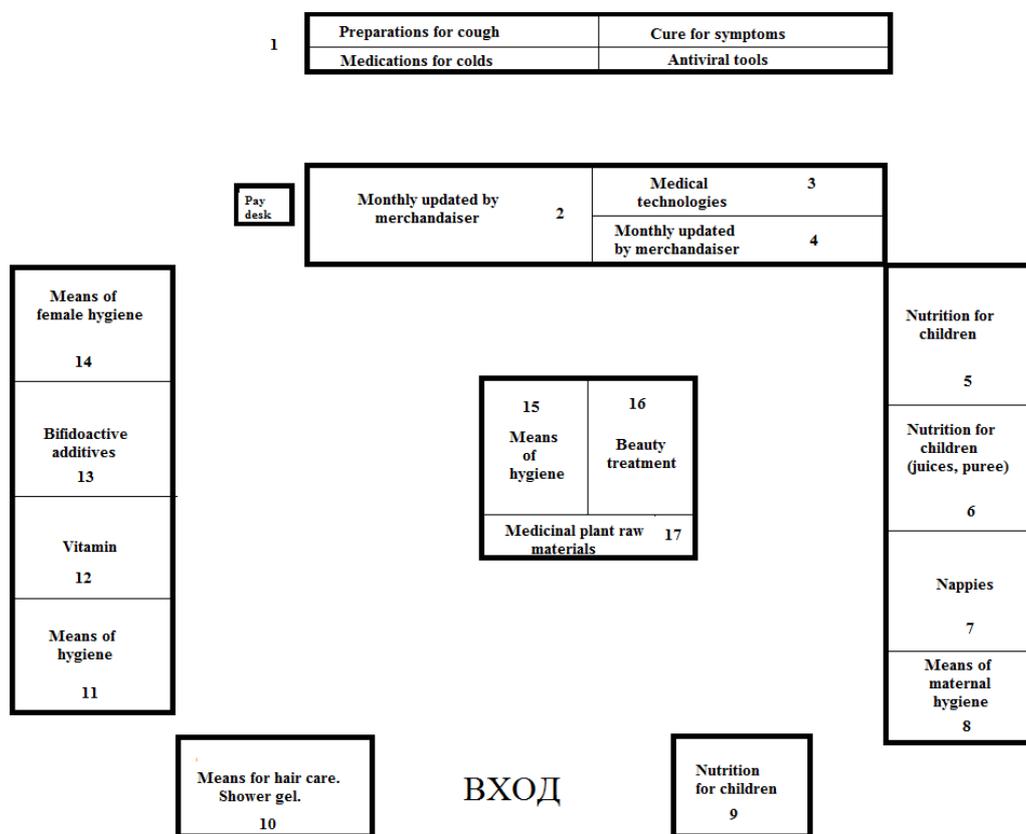


Figure 4. Plan of the trade hall.

Trading zone is divided into 17 sectors identified in figure numbers. According to the plan it was found out, that laying out in the pharmacy is based on the principle of prescription of the product. Showcases №2 and №4 are exceptions, this stands are monthly updated by the merchandisers (assortment of this showcases may vary).

According to the research the most attractive areas for the consumer's attention are sectors №2, №4, №5 and №6.

Sector №2 is a showcase located directly beside the cash register. The buyer pays attention to products, which are placed on this stand while he or she making the purchase in 38 out of 100 cases. Sometimes this showcase is the cause of the unplanned purchases (Fig. 5). The production situated on the shop window is an object of attraction of both adult and children's attention. This is, for example, hard candy, chewing gum, hematogen etc.

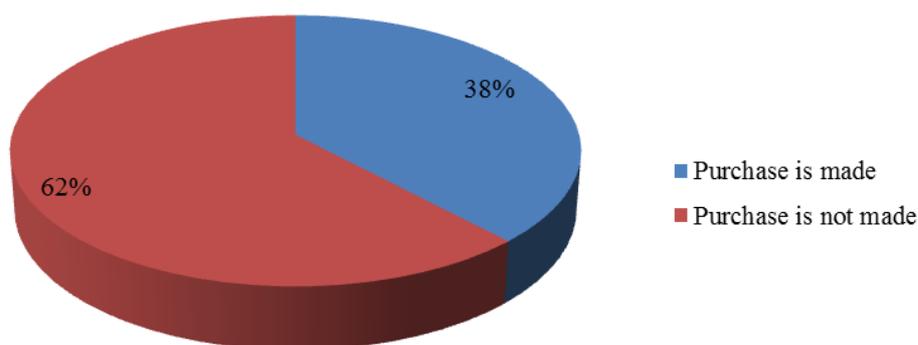


Figure 5. Part of the consumers, which made unplanned purchase, from the number of paid attention to showcase №2.

Feature of this showcase is that all products, located on it, is at eye level of 6 - year-old child, so unplanned purchase is often made at the request of the child.

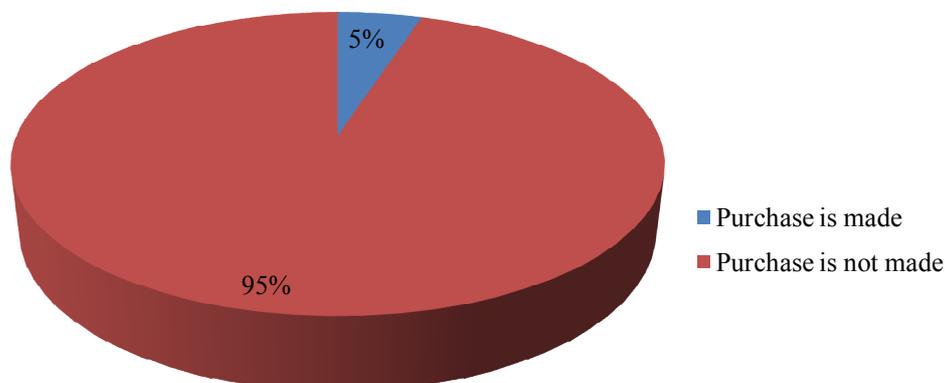


Figure 6. The number of consumers, which made unolanned purchase from the number of came with children (showcase №2)

Sector №5 and №6 are glass cases containing products designed for child nutrition and large assortment of juice so this showcases are subjects of child's attention, which also leads the consumer to make unplanned purchases.

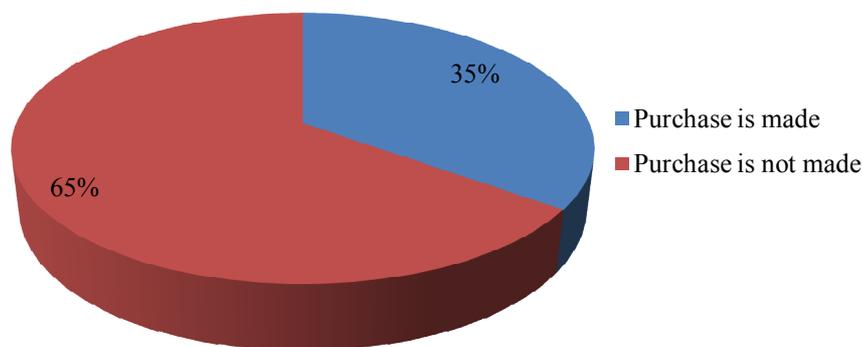


Figure 7. The number of consumers, which made unplanned purchase from the number of came with children (showcase №5 и №6)

It is important to note that the number of purchases carried out because of the stores №5 and №6 depends on the season. For example, in spring and summer the number of visitors with children increases and, as a result, the number of purchases increases too.

According to the obtained data, because of presence of windows №2, №4, №5 and №6, it is made 20% of purchases for the sum of 1200 rubles during the 8 – hour shift of the pharmacist. Therefore, we can speak about the efficiency of the trading hall in concerned drugstore.

On the basis of the conducted research and data analysis, we can make a conclusion about functions of the pharmaceutical merchandising and its object's efficiency.

During the research it was found that the target audience of pharmaceutical merchandising is women between 40 years old, bringing most of the turnover of pharmaceutical institutions. Also an important consumer category is buyers with children, because in most cases made unplanned purchases are made at the request of the child.

According to the investigation, the most effective merchandising object in the pharmacy is a shopping area. Therefore, the more attention is paid to planning the shop hall, the greater is number of purchases will be made by the buyers.

Thus, merchandising in pharmacies is effective in motivating consumers to make a purchase, accessible source of information about medicinal products, and irreplaceable means of creating an atmosphere of pharmaceutical institution.

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