

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the research was to determine the rural consumers' perceptions of the corporate image of pharmaceutical companies in the greater Bushbuckridge area and to present guidelines to align organisational behavior closer to the rural consumers' corporate image.

From the results presented and discussed in chapter 6, conclusions are made in this chapter on the consumers' perceptions of the corporate image of pharmaceutical companies in the greater Bushbuckridge area. Guidelines will also be provided to align the organisational behavior closer to the consumers' corporate image.

7.2 THE RURAL CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CORPORATE IMAGE, AND GUIDELINES TO ALIGN THE ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOR CLOSER TO THIS IMAGE

7.2.1 Perceptions and guidelines regarding corporate social responsibility

7.2.1.1 Conclusions

It is concluded that HIV/AIDS prevention, HIV/AIDS treatment and support for pensioners are considered by the consumers to be the most important intervention areas of corporate social responsibility.

7.2.1.2 Guidelines

As discussed in chapter 2, corporate social responsibility should ensure to contribute to the raising standards of living and quality of life for all employees and all inhabitants from the local community to the wider society and even the country as a whole (Selfe, 2002) The following guidelines regarding HIV prevention, treatment and support for pensioners should be followed by pharmaceutical companies to improve the HIV related plight of the consumers in the rural areas.

(i) HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment

According to Pearson, (2005:77), the high endemic HIV/AIDS disease levels are 'directly correlated high poverty in Africa. An estimated 10% of the adult population of the continent are infected with HIV and almost 30 million people live with the disease. According to Lee Jong, the World Health Organisation's director, in Pearson, at least 100 000 health workers are needed to distribute anti retroviral. It is difficult to manage the problems of such magnitude. The 8 000 people dying daily from AIDS is equivalent to 30 jumbo jets crashing every day (!). Africa is facing three main challenges in this regard:

- naturally high endemic disease levels;
- net loss of health professionals and
- government's reluctance to delegate management.

Even those governments with the best intentions cannot provide enough grant money to keep the hospitals running optimally, and no one obviously wants to manage the unmanageable (Pearson, 2005:77).

It is recommended that pharmaceutical companies should be involved in the following initiatives to improve the HIV-related situation in the rural areas:

- **HIV prevention**

Harrison, CEO of South Africa' *Love Life* campaign, in Prior (2005: 24-35) emphasises that the AIDS epidemic is mainly driven by the sexual behaviour of young people. Early sexual debut, a high number of partners and erratic condom use are the principal problems, with those at the peak of new infections in South Africa being 15-20 years old girls. By the time they are just over 16.5 years of age 50% of South Africans have had sexual experience, 50% of those sexually active have had more than one partner in the previous year; 60% used a condom in their last sexual encounter, and one third say they never use a condom.

As discussed in chapter 4, many parents do not have time to teach their children things as basic hygiene (Kuzwayo, 2000). It is therefore important for pharmaceutical companies to educate young people, the entire communities and their own employees on how HIV/AIDS is contracted. Possible examples of the appropriate internal and external educational programmes are listed below:

- **External educational programmes**
 - health workers conduct information sessions at schools;
 - health workers conduct information sessions with employees and the wider community;
 - pharmaceutical companies distribute health-related brochures at schools, highly frequented shops and social venues;
 - quality condoms are freely and widely distributed; and
 - HIV/AIDS prevention-related information is provided on popular radio stations, and television channels, as well as via newspapers and magazines.

There are still people in Bushbuckridge, though not many, who believe in polygamy. These should be specifically targeted by the pharmaceutical companies regarding the risks associated with HIV/AIDS and encouraged to turn monogamous.

- **Internal educational programmes**

- As discussed in chapter 5, employee wellness interventions such as employee assistance programmes recognise the important link between employees' health and organisations' productivity (Cummings and Worley, 2001). It is therefore recommended that pharmaceutical companies implement an employee wellness policy with specific focus on HIV/AIDS.
- Companies should have a proactive corporate healthcare strategy that manages this risk.
- Healthcare knowledge and support: a healthy company requires mastery in preventing impaired performance from employees and requires its managers to address specific health risks facing the company; health support services ought to be integrated into the company's business plan, Human Resources strategies and on-site healthcare resources. Health care knowledge and support may include the following:
 - Voluntary HIV testing available to employees;
 - Workshops on how to prevent and live with HIV/AIDS;
 - Free distribution of condoms;
 - Fully equipped first aid kits available on the premises.
 - On site counselling services to assist employees

- **HIV/AIDS Treatment**

The pharmaceutical sector should implement programmes to assist with HIV/AIDS treatment.

(a) Training of professionals in the pharmaceutical sector

The pharmaceutical sector should ensure consultancy support and training assistance in order to help the country's training programmes in providing enough health workers to treat HIV/AIDS. Involvement in training can comprise of external and internal interventions.

- **External interventions:**

- Development of a new formula for funding universities where funding would be linked to the percentage of students from disadvantaged communities. Pharmaceutical companies should assist in the funding of bridging programmes to overcome this shortage.
- Initiating a recruitment programme which would also assist high school students with choosing the required subjects and acquiring relevant work experience.
- Setting up locally based scholarships schemes with local selection committees and distributing bursaries to meet the needs, ensure involvement and identify role models within the community.
- Instilling into the education and training curriculum the sense of ethics and accountability to the community by exposing students to rural settings and community-based education.
- Building relationships with local schools and promoting careers in health science courses with emphasis on identifying students with potential to succeed at university.
- Providing additional support for disadvantaged students by means of mentoring.

- **Internal interventions**

Due to the shortage of skills among health workers in Bushbuckridge, it is recommended to focus on development activities so as to ensure a readiness pool and retention of health workers in the area. The following main development activities are recommended:

- Mentoring and coaching programmes: these should focus on graduates entering the workplace.

- Learnerships, internships and skills programmes: companies should invest in these as part of their social responsibility endeavours. The main focus should be on mathematics, sciences and economics where there is inadequate representation of Africans.
- As discussed in chapter 5, one of the most important competencies an individual can contribute is the ability to learn and a managers long term success depends on the ability to teach that person the mastery of a specific skills (Hunsaker & Cook, 2001). Pharmaceutical companies should therefore roll out training and development programmes for health workers with specific focus on the latest knowledge and skills in HIV treatment

(b) Improve living conditions

Pharmaceutical companies should assist with integrated food and nutrition programmes.

(c) Reduce prices of HIV/AIDS medicine

Significant price reductions of HIV/AIDS medicine have been effected by Government over the years, and in some instances it is free at public hospitals and clinics. It is recommended that pharmaceutical companies launch similar initiatives.

(ii) Support for pensioners

As discussed in chapter 3, the family is an important feature of African communalism. The elders occupy a very important status and are regarded as the paragons of wisdom. The African culture shows profound and divine respect for elderly as these individuals play key religious, social, political, ceremonial and intellectual roles (Mbigi, 2005)

It is therefore crucial that the pensioners are shown the same respect and have focused social initiatives targeted at them.

Internally companies should have fixed structures in remuneration packages for allocation to retirement, disability and death cover and funeral benefits, including the benefits for the extended family.

As discussed in chapter 2, it is important to integrate these programmes into the business and to include both centrally and locally driven initiatives. It is also important that companies have hands on ongoing involvement in these programmes. Ideally initiatives for social corporate responsibility should be selected in consultation and collaboration with community leaders had managing jointly by employees and the communities (Selfe, 2002)

In summary, the objective of this section was to determine the rural consumers' perceptions of the support consumers require from a pharmaceutical organisation with specific focus on corporate social responsibility programmes and to provide guidelines for aligning organisational behaviour more closely with the rural consumers' corporate social responsibility needs. The research objective has been obtained and answered.

7.2.2 Corporate Business Conduct

7.2.2.1 Conclusions

It is concluded the rural consumers expect leaders to be able to listen; to treat people with respect and to act intelligently.

As discussed, many theories explore the question of what makes a good leader. Chapter 3 discussed the notion that the requirements for successful business leadership are changing. The need for companies to investigate rural markets was discussed in chapter 1. In chapter 3 the new leadership qualities to be successful in the 21st century were identified. The importance of the leadership qualities was discussed with the consumer market in Bushbuckridge during the focus groups deliberations, and a few leadership qualities were added which the participants also regarded as important. It was found and discussed in chapter 6 that all these leadership qualities were important for respondents in the rural markets.

7.2.2.2 Guidelines

As discussed in chapter 2, corporate image leadership is a dialogic process in which organisations and stakeholders communicate with one another to create the image of the organisation. Thus a corporate image represents a collaborative social construct between the organisations' top leadership and multiple actors who comprise the organisational audiences (Massey, 2003)

It is recommended that pharmaceutical companies create a leadership brand that includes the identified leadership qualities. Consumers and employees will then believe in the leadership ability to attain future results in an ethical way and ensure the organisation has a positive corporate image.

In summary, the objective of this section was to determine the leadership conduct preferred by the rural survivalist consumer group and to provide guidelines for aligning organisational behaviour more closely with the preferred leadership conduct. The research objective has been obtained and answered.

7.2.3 Support when buying medicine

7.2.3.1 Conclusions

It is concluded that the respondents expect that the pharmaceutical companies should provide the following support when buying medicine: trustworthiness, emphasise the importance of confidentiality and be able to analyse and clarify needs.

7.2.3.2 Guidelines

As discussed in Chapter 3, organisations should understand consumer needs in order to be successful in their chosen markets.

It is recommended that the employees in the pharmaceutical sector should have the following basic competency levels (knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and experience) in order to be successful in Bushbuckridge:

- Understanding the challenges that the country is facing and the needs of rural communities in terms of health services,
- Compassion for the community ,
- Understanding the culture of the consumers and their specific health-related needs,
- Ability to gain the trust of the community,
- Good knowledge of the differences between Western and traditional medicine,
- Experience in the health sector in rural areas,
- High social and emotional intelligence,
- Team-orientated in the spirit of *ubuntu*,
- Understanding and believing in the corporate image of the company.

In summary, the objective of this section was to determine the kind of support consumers require from a pharmaceutical organisation with specific focus on education and facilities and to provide guidelines for aligning organisational behaviour more closely with the needed support. The research objective has been obtained and answered.

7.2.4 Distribution channels

7.2.4.1 Conclusions

It is concluded that the respondents prefer to buy their medicine at pharmacies, government hospitals and clinics.

7.2.4.2 Guidelines

As discussed in chapter 3, the manner in which a product is sold or distributed can have a profound impact on the sales success of a brand and thereby help in creating a more positive corporate image.

Although it is believed by authors like Mbigi (2005) and Sobiecki (2003) that non- western healing systems are reviving because they recognise the importance of the emotional and interpersonal aspect of healing, the study found that most consumers in Bushbuckridge buy medicine in pharmacies. This is interesting because the delivery of pharmaceutical services in rural areas places a huge burden on the Department of Health. As many as 97% of all households in rural areas are dependent on the public sector for healthcare delivery. This fact clearly indicates that the availability of pharmaceutical services needs urgent attention. It is there pharmaceutical companies can play an important role in the distribution of medicine and monitoring diseases like tuberculosis and AIDS (www.puk.ac.za).

It is also important to realise that the organisational structure will be affected by the type of health care and products that consumers need. Pharmaceutical companies should have enough branches in rural areas to address the health needs of the consumers. In addition they should not exclude other distribution channels, to reach all consumers of pharmaceutical products. These other distribution channels are as follows:

- Street vendors and spaza shops: limited products should be distributed through these channels due to their lack of knowledge. Only basic medicine like headache tablets and vitamins should be made available.
- Supermarkets: distribute schedule 0 medicine especially where no pharmacy or hospital is close by.
- Private doctors and private hospitals and clinics: all medicine types can be distributed through these channels.

- Traditional healers and faith healers: it is recommended that these healers distribute only natural medicine. The government should also set up a stringent medical body where they all should register to improve the quality of traditional medicine and service.

In summary, the objective of this section was to determine the best distribution channel for pharmaceutical products and to provide guidelines for aligning organisational behaviour more closely with the preferred distribution channels. The research objective has been obtained and answered.

7.2.5 Qualities of the sales force

7.2.5.1 Conclusions

It is concluded that the respondents expect that pharmaceutical companies should emphasis the following services: privacy during consultation, clean environment and training on how to live a healthy life.

7.2.5.2 Guidelines

In chapter 3 it was stressed that one of the challenges in services markets is to fully understand how to satisfy consumer needs

The support and services provided by the pharmaceutical companies should be structured and presented in private. The following specific guidelines should be adhered to:

- Privacy during consultations: pharmacists must provide private consultation rooms on their premises, install a smaller service desk to ensure closer contact with consumers and have a cut off point, such as used in banks, to ensure that the other clients in the pharmacy cannot overhear the discussion with the pharmacist or the health worker.

- Clean environment: pharmaceutical companies should promote a clean environment for patients.
- Training on how to live a healthy life: how to prevent HIV/AIDS was discussed in section 7.2.1
- Pharmaceutical companies should also provide information sessions; distribute pamphlets on other health issues like child care, diabetes, etc to enhance their support for the community.
- Physical consultation by nurse or pharmacist: as discussed previously, pharmacists should provide a consultation room to be able to deliver a quality service in this regard.
- Deliver medicine in rural areas: this need is difficult to meet at present due to the lack of roads and home addresses.

It is important that pharmaceutical companies acknowledge the customers' right to expect a range of choices in the delivery of services. The companies should also involve their customers in the decision making related to new services and products.

In summary, the objective of this section was to determine the consumers' view on the qualities and behaviours that pharmaceutical employees should have and to provide guidelines for aligning organisational behaviour with the preferred qualities and behaviours. The research objective has been obtained and answered.

7.2.6 Price of medicine

7.2.6.1 Conclusions

The best method of payment for medicine was also investigated and, as discussed in chapter 6, it was established that respondents prefer to pay in cash.

7.2.6.2 Guidelines

The Constitutional Court upheld the pricing regulations scheme issued in terms of the Medicine Act but declared the key contested provisions, i.e. those dealing with pharmacists' dispensing fees invalid, and referred it back to the Pricing Committee to be redrafted (www.health-e.org.za). Recommendations on the pricing strategy for medicine can therefore not be made at this stage.

Regarding the preferred payment method when buying medicine, it is recommended that the community should be educated about the different medical aid schemes available and assisted in choosing the affordable ones.

In summary, the objective of this section was to determine the consumers' preferred payment method when buying medicine. The research objective has been obtained and answered.

7.2.7 Communication

7.2.7.1 Conclusions

With regard to communication, the following main conclusions were made:

- Preferences in magazines: Drum, True Love and Living and Loving
- Preferences in televisions stations: TV1, TV2 and TV3
- Preferences in radio stations: Bushbuckridge, Tsonga and Swazi
- Preferences in newspapers: Daily Sun and The Sowetan
- Respondents regarded themselves and their mothers as the main decision makers when buying medicine.
- The results indicate that respondents prefer white, green and red as corporate colours for pharmaceutical companies

7.2.7.2 Guidelines

Based on the obtained results, the following promotional plans are recommended to increase product acceptance, positioning, competitive reaction and creation of an effective corporate image (these media could also be used for education and recruitment purposes):

(i) Advertising mediums

- Magazines: According to Fadiman (2000) in chapter 2, magazines have a higher readership and more repeat reader. This suggests that advertising should be placed in print media that have a high image-to-text ratio. To attract consumers, advertising should depict one-image slogans, which should vary only slightly over time. It is evident that the recommended magazines are focused on Black readers, and it would therefore be ideal to use them to advertise medicine, education and pharmaceutical services. However, other magazines like TV Plus, Men's Health, Computer, People, Car, Move, Kick Off and House and Living were also rated as popular by consumers. Some of these, like TV Plus, Men's Health, Computer and Car focus purely on the European in South Africa readership. There is a need for pharmaceutical companies to structure advertisements in these magazines that will accommodate European and African consumers.

- Radio stations: As discussed in chapter 2, radio is the most effective channel for reaching the African Market (Fadiman, 2000). Pharmaceutical companies should include the recommended radio stations as well in their choice of media.

- Television: Fadiman, 2002 emphasis in chapter 2 that television has the sharpest impact on the audience and therefore a good media to use. As discussed, the main focus is still on SABC. It is recommended that advertisers do not use more sophisticated channels like DSTV and MNET to reach the consumer market in Bushbuckridge.

- Newspapers: Readers indicated that they read the newspapers as shown above on a weekly basis. This is therefore a relatively cost-effective and powerful media resource to communicate aspects of the company's corporate image.

Identifying and attracting suitable health workers depends on the effectiveness of advertising, both in terms of its substance and the extent to which it reaches the target audience. It is recommended that pharmaceutical companies use the above advertising mediums to reach local schools, university students and health workers elsewhere in South Africa.

(ii) Decision makers

As discussed in chapter 2, it is important to establish who the main decision makers are when designing the advertising campaign. Pharmaceutical companies should focus their advertising campaigns on the main decision makers mentioned above.

(iii) Corporate colour:

It is important to use these colours in all internal and external promotions (product labels, corporate uniforms, promotional materials, company logo etc).

In summary, the objective of this section was to determine the best communication methods with specific focus on advertising, main decision makers and preferred corporate colours and to provide guidelines for aligning organisational behaviour with the preferred communication methods. The research objective has been obtained and answered.

7.2.8 Pharmaceutical products

7.2.8.1 Conclusions

- Types of medicine: Western medicine is preferred in Bushbuckridge. However, many respondents also believed in traditional medicine from a pharmacy or hospital.

- Attributes of the product: The study found that consumers perceived the following product attributes as most important when buying medicine: Quality of the product, expiry date, assurance against negative effects and availability of stock.

7.2.8.2 Guidelines

(i) Types of medicine

Pharmaceutical companies should find effective ways to include both Western and quality traditional medicine in their product range.

(ii) Attributes of the product

- Quality of product: it is evident that consumers, despite their low income, still prefer quality medicine instead of a cheaper lower quality product. Pharmaceutical companies should promote the quality of medicine rather than the price as part of their corporate image.
- Expiry date: consumers are very sensitive about the expiry date of medicine and will never use a product that is outdated. It is important that pharmaceutical companies project the image of honest dealers that will not as a matter of principle sell out-of-date medicine.
- Assurance against negative effects: It is important that pharmaceutical companies provide enough information about the likely negative effects of the medicine and how to overcome them.
- Availability of stock: it is important for pharmaceutical companies to investigate which products are preferred in rural areas. They should then ensure that these products are always available to consumers.

Pharmaceutical companies should create the image that they understand their customers' needs by focusing on those product attributes that will make a real difference to customers. This will ensure a loyal customer base that is essential in the creation of an effective corporate image.

In summary, the objective of this section was to determine the consumers' views on the preferred type of medicine and product attributes. The research objective has been obtained and answered.

7.2.9 Employee behavior

The assumption was made in this study that the perceptions of the consumers are representative of the values and customs of the society and the employees who are recruited from the same society. Therefore the values and customs of the society and the employees should be reflected in the organisational behavior of the pharmaceutical companies.

7.2.9.1 Conclusions

(i) Employee values and customs

The following is concluded regarding the values and customs:

- Cultural paradigm: It is evident from the study that the respondents value “ubuntu”
- Time orientation: The respondents believe that “time is money” which is a more urbanised orientation towards time. The study also showed that people value the custom of making an appointment before visiting. Respondents therefore suggest that time is sometimes more important than money.
- Language: It is evident that most of the languages are important and represented in Bushbuckridge.
- Religion: The finding in this study is that the sample is neutral or undecided towards the influence of witchcraft in the workplace (Refer to discussion in chapter 6)

- Education: Education is important. The majority of the Bushbuckridge community attended schools (74%), even though a large part (22%) of the population has no education whatsoever.
- Social system:
 - This study found that some respondents are neutral or undecided towards the value of the extended family. However, others felt that the extended is still contributing to the well being of the community;
 - It is also evident from the study that respondents feel neutral towards the statement that women should have more leadership roles in the society;
 - The sample value eye contact communication because it is respectful to look a superior in the eyes.
 - They are non –committal towards the traditional custom that women should serve men at social functions;
 - The rural Africans in this sample are undecided on the statement “I feel morally obliged to attend the funeral of a person in the community who I scarcely know”

(ii) Employee satisfaction

It is concluded that provision for retirement, training and development opportunities and good management and leadership style are considered by the consumers to be the most important benefits to ensure employee satisfaction.

7.2.9.2 Guidelines

(i) Employee values and customs

As discussed in chapter 3, it is essential that employee behavior is aligned with corporate image. According to Lussier (1999) in chapter 4, personal values have worth for or are important to the individual, and a value system is the set of value standards by which the individual lives. Hunsacker and Cook (2001) stated in chapter 4 that organisational culture consist of values, guiding beliefs, attitudes and ways of thinking that are shared by members of an organisation and are thought to members as the correct way to perceive,

think and feel in relation to these problems. It is therefore important for pharmaceutical companies to align employees' values with their corporate image. The following societal and employee values should be incorporated in the organizational culture of the organisation:

- Cultural paradigm: The organisation should adhere to ubuntu values. As discussed in chapter 3, "ubuntu" is not just about collectivism but also values the principles of inclusion, interdependence and reciprocity. It was also emphasised in Chapter 5 that organisations should adopt a structure that helps it to attain its goals and thereby promotes organisational effectiveness. The recommendation is to have a flatter organisational in the pharmaceutical sector in Busbuckridge so as to enhance corporation, support and teamwork.

In Chapter 4, Cummings and Worley, 2001 emphasised that reward systems are concerned with eliciting and reinforcing desired behaviours and work outcomes. It is therefore recommended that the performance appraisal should also have a component that rewards teamwork.

- Time orientation: As discussed in chapter 4 and 6, it is believed that Africans use a system which might be called "natural time", based on the natural levels of comfort in the body. This system originally relied on seasonal rather than scientific observations. The opposite was found in the study. It is recommended that Pharmaceutical companies should promote the scientific or modern orientation towards time as part of their corporate image.
- Language: All languages should be accommodated. However, specific emphasis should be given to Xitsonga, SiSwazi and Sepedi groups because they are most widely represented.
- Religion: Pharmaceutical companies should acknowledge cultural differences in terms of religions. Specific emphasis on witchcraft is not recommended.

- Education: As discussed in chapter 5, the majority of the Bushbuckridge community attended schools (74%), Even though a large part (22%) of the population has no education whatsoever. Pharmaceutical companies should therefore focus their corporate image on how to accommodate all levels of education in the region.

- Social system: The companies should align their policies with the social systems of the community and employees. The following specific recommendations can be made in terms of the social system in Bushbuckridge:
 - Extended family: Pharmaceutical companies should acknowledge the nature and contribution of the extended family but should not fashion their corporate image around it.
 - Status of women versus men: According to Bowes & Pennington (2004:180), segment most affected by poverty are women. It is for this reason that August has come to be known as the month to celebrate the role of and the contribution by South African women in strengthening South Africa's young democracy. The advancement of women and women's values should be promoted at all levels in the workplace. This should also be part of the company's corporate image. The main obstacles to overcome are the following:
 - Education obstacles: Educational systems can constrain women's initiative as women tend to have limited access to educational opportunities.
 - Oppressive attitudes from men: oppressive attitudes also discourage women from taking risks in business and prevent them from accessing equal procurement opportunities.
 - Management and job-related obstacles
 - Family-related obstacles.

- Lack of separate facilities: Many male-dominated companies do not have separate toilet or shower facilities for women.
- Lack of childcare facilities: While women remain largely responsible for childcare, very few companies have made provision for such facilities, and there is very little real pressure from unions to do so.

- Insensitivity regarding funerals: Pharmaceutical companies should be sensitive towards funeral ceremonies, but policies to provide extra leave days may not be required.

It is suggested that organisations take the actions listed below to create an effective organisational culture aligned with the needs of consumers, employees and other stakeholders in Busbuckridge:

- Step 1: diagnose which facets of the current culture are in line with the corporate image and strategy and which may be inhibiting the strategy;
- Step 2: develop ways to make the needed changes in culture and to recognise how long it will take for the changes, once they are imitative to take hold.
- Step 3: use the available opportunities for making incremental changes that improve alignment of culture and corporate image strategy.
- Step 4: encourage lower-level leaders to take actions on their own to set an example and to do what will further instil values and behavior reinforcing the desired culture
- Step 5: actively build and nurture the emotional commitment that managers and employees have to the strategy in order to produce temperately fit between culture and the overall corporate image (Adapted from CEO Magazine, 2005:72).

(ii) Employee satisfaction

Acknowledge the main employee benefits and ensure that they are incorporated in the people management strategy.

In summary, the objective of this section was to determine consumers' views on what they perceive as good employee behaviour and to provide guidelines for aligning organisational behaviour with the preferred employee behaviors. The research objective has been obtained and answered.

7.3 UTILITY VALUE OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

The literature overview and the resulting empirical survey will assist leaders in the pharmaceutical sector to obtain better understanding of rural consumers' perceptions of corporate image. It will also help leaders to evaluate the role that the internal system element can play in promoting change and strengthening the organisation. It is important to note that the key system variables are interactive; a change in one potentially impacts and changes other variables. More specifically, the study will hopefully aid the leaders in the pharmaceutical sector in the transformation of human resources policies and procedures, technology, organisational design and organisational culture.

The benefits were discussed in detail in chapter 1

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is recommended that the following themes be investigated in further research:

- **Corporate social conduct**

More research should be carried out on why the community in Bushbuckridge does not change their behavior to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Research should also be conducted on how to assist pensioners in the pharmaceutical sector. Specific emphasis should be placed on consumers' perception of old age homes.

- **Price of medicine**

Further studies should be conducted to explore how consumers perceive the new price regulations of medicine. It should also be investigated why consumer prefer to buy medicine at pharmacies if the government hospital offers a cheaper generic brand.

- **Communication**

Research should be executed on how pharmaceutical advertisements should be designed to reach both African and Western markets.

During this research it was observed that the sample struggled to differentiate between primary and secondary colours. It is recommended that research be conducted to establish if this is a common phenomenon.

- **Product**

More research should be done on how to effectively incorporate Western and traditional medicine in pharmacies. It would also be of value to establish why traditional medicine is not preferred in the region.

- **Recruitment**

More research should be done on what makes health workers successful in rural areas. A psychometric test battery and selection procedure should then be developed to assess applicants against the ideal profile.

Research should be conducted on identifying the most popular advertising medium to reach health workers countrywide.

- **Training and development**

More research should be conducted on identifying the best learning methods in rural areas.

- **Organisational structure and work design**

Pharmaceutical companies should do more research to ensure organisational alignment with their specific environment and needs.