

Report

Main Report
On
Identifying the Barriers
to Injectable Use among
Higher Income Segment

Submitted to:
Social Marketing Company
(SMC)

Submitted by:
Research and Computing
Services (RCS) Private
Limited



Social Marketing Company (SMC)
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33 Banani Commercial Area,
Dhaka-1213

May 2004



VOLUME - I: MAIN REPORT

ON

**IDENTIFYING THE BARRIERS TO
INJECTABLE USE AMONG HIGHER
INCOME SEGMENT**

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MAY 2004

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Date: May 31, 2004

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**SUBMISSION OF REPORT ON 'IDENTIFYING THE BARRIERS TO
INJECTABLE USE AMONG HIGHER INCOME SEGMENT'**

Dear Mr Khan:

We are pleased to submit the report on the study on 'Identifying the Barriers to Injectable Use among Higher Income Segment'.

Please accept our gratitude for entrusting us the job of carrying out such an important study.

Assuring our full cooperation at all times. We hope you will find the report in order.

Sincerely,



Nadia Binte Amin
Managing Director

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PREFACE

SMC undertook a nationwide study on identifying the barriers to the use of the injectable, SOMA-JECT among the higher income groups. The issues the survey intends to look at are:

- Use of family planning methods among the target group and it's advantages and disadvantages;
- Knowledge of injectable methods among the target group;
- Attitude of the target group towards Injectable method;
- Views about SOMA-JECT and Blue Star Providers held by the target group;
- Expectations of SOMA-JECT users;
- The Price the SOMA-JECT users are willing to pay;
- Media habit of the potential users.

In compliance to a solicitation from Social Marketing Company (SMC), Research and Computing Services Private Limited (RCS) carried out a nationwide study on Identifying the Barriers to Injectable Use among Higher Income Segment. The proposed study was conducted by using the techniques of focus group discussion and in-depth sessions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Successful completion of study on "**Identifying the Barriers to Injectable Use among Higher Income Segment**" demonstrates the team spirit and cooperation rendered by all concerned. We would like to convey our deepest gratitude for the generous support and sincere contribution made by all who were involved in the planning, designing and implementation of the survey.

The study was conducted by Research and Computing Services Private Limited (RCS) and was sponsored by Social Marketing Company (SMC). We express our profound gratitude to the people of SMC for their support and technical assistance. Special thanks due to Ms. Perveen Rasheed, Managing Director, Mr. Toslim Uddin Khan, Manager, Market Research, Dr. Hashina Begum, Manager, Clinical Services, and Mr. Md. Billal Hossain, Research and Monitoring Executive of SMC for their cooperation, at every stage of the study, for reviewing the draft data collection tools and suggesting improvements.

We gratefully acknowledge the scholarship and work of the research team and for completing the study in time and producing an excellent report.

We remain ever grateful to respondents who made this report possible through their cooperation and also to the data collection teams for their sincere effort and hard work.

Nadia Binte Amin

Managing Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Social Marketing Company (SMC) / Research and Computing Services Private Limited (RCS) have undertaken a nationwide survey on identifying the barriers to the use of it's over branded injectable SOMA-JECT among the higher income segments. The target population for the survey comprised of those individuals who are working women and mothers having at east one child in urban and semi urban areas.

The objectives of the survey were to gather an in-depth knowledge about the perception of the target audience about SOMA-JECT that will enable SMC to develop it's communication strategy in such a way that helps to reposition SOMA-JECT among this group.

To be more specific, the survey aims to identify the barriers among this group to the use of SOMA-JECT, to gauge their media habit and also their willingness to pay for the injectable. The study also evaluated the opinions of the Blue Star Providers on the above-mentioned issues.

Information gathered from the respondents in the 24 Focus group discussions (with uses and potential users) and the 16 in-depth Interviews (with service providers) conducted shed light on significant areas.¹

1. Use of family planning methods & it's advantages & disadvantages

Almost all the respondents are aware of the available methods like pills, and condoms as well as Coper –T while only half of the respondents who participated in the FGDs mentioned injectable as a means of birth control. The rest half have not heard of injectables as a form of birth control.

Most of the respondents revealed using contraceptives that include pills and condoms while some rely on the method of " safe period". Very few of the respondents, who are aware of injectables, were found to be using injectable as a means of birth control. Those who are not using any form of method justified themselves by the fear of the different side effects like burning sensation, excessive bleeding, headache, that such clinical methods usually cause and thus rely on the method of Safe period.

However, respondents who are users of pills supported its use by saying that they have adjusted to it. Respondents who rely on condoms feel that it helps to prevent sexually transmitted diseases while the very few injectable users feel that they are protected for a longer period of time by using injectables.

¹ *The findings from the FGDs revealed that there were no significant differences in the opinions shed by the participants from the two target groups (Those with a monthly income of Tk 3,000- TK 5,000 & those who earn more than TK 5,000 per month).*

The survey also revealed that few of the respondents dropped using injectables as it gave rise to a number of physical ailments. They mentioned side effects like back pain, headache, burning sensation all over the body, (গা জালা-পোড়া করে), irregular menstruation cycle, a complete stop of menstruation or long lasting menstruation, or excessive bleeding or excess weight gain.

Pill is the most preferred contraceptive by clients as confirmed by both Graduate and Non-Graduate Medical Practitioners. According to Graduate Medical Practitioners condom is the next best method preferred by the higher income group while Non-Graduate Medical Practitioners suggest that injectable is the next preferred method of birth control.

2. Knowledge about Injectable Methods

Only half of the respondents are aware of Injectables as a method of birth control. These respondents are also unaware of the various available brands and place of availability. Most think that it is available in various clinics, hospitals given the fact that it is a clinical product. At the same time, they lack awareness about its prevailing market price and mentioned the cost ranging from 'zero' (free of cost) to Tk.10. Many commented that they do not know regarding the eligibility of couples who can use SOMA-JECT.

However, most of the respondents who are aware of Injectables could correctly mention the duration of use of injectables. Most cited that it needs to be administered after every 3 months.

The only advantages of using injectables from their point of view of those who know about it, are that it involves much less hassle than those that are incurred while taking pills and also it provides protection for a longer period of time. While according to them the disadvantages are the invasion of one's privacy that occurs, as it has to be administered through someone else and the various side effects that it causes as the ones already discussed earlier.

The main barrier to the use of injectables can be attributed to the lack of awareness among the general public, as revealed by the sessions of FGDs and in-depth interviews. The second barrier stands to be the overwhelming fear among the potential users regarding the side effects that the use of injectables give rise to. Other factors that pose as potential barriers are lack of privacy while administering injectables, and discouragement from elder members of the family, as suggested by the providers as well as the working women.

3. Attitude toward Injectable Method

Most, who are aware of injectables, are cautious about its use mainly because of the various side effects it causes. However, they suggested that the providers should introduce other methods of birth control than the existing ones. Awareness about its benefits, availability etc needs to be generated among the mass public.

Also, the method of injectable gives rise to minimal side effects but much awareness about its benefits, availability etc need to be generated among the mass public.

4. Views about SOMA-JECT and Blue Star Providers

Majority lacks the knowledge about Blue Star Providers, or SOMA-JECT. Very few have heard of SOMA-JECT by it's name only, while a very few knows that it is an injectable.

Majority of the respondents admitted not knowing anything about its doses and administration. While respondents, who are familiar with SOMA-JECT, as an injectable is aware of the fact that it needs to be administered after every 3 months.

Apart from the product itself, these people are totally ignorant about the price of SOMA-JECT. However, when the prevailing market price of SOMA-JECT was revealed to them by the moderators, they found it to be quite reasonable. In fact, the price is not seen as a barrier to its use, but rather many are willing to pay upto Tk 35/- to Tk 40/- in the future.

Majorities of the respondents are also unaware of existence of the product and as well as its availability in the Blue Star centers. Surprisingly only 5 respondents out of a total number of 163 actually recognized Blue Star center and SOMA-JECT's availability in such places. In this issue, they said that if SOMA-JECT is only available through Blue Star Centers then it would pose a barrier to its use. They would rather go to a nearby pharmacy to have it administered instead of making an effort to locate a BS Center. They also suggested various hospitals and NGO clinics where it should be made available.

When asked about their comments on the benefits of using SOMA-JECT, some of those who are aware of it as an injectable feel that it is user friendly in the sense that it provides protection for 3 months and eliminates the scope to miss one dose, while many could not share any comments on it's advantages as they are completely unaware of them.

The in-depth interview on the other hand, revealed some Graduate Medical Practitioners confirmed that around 6-10 patients come to them for SOMA-JECT while few Non-Graduate Medical Practitioners said they served more than 30 patients per month with SOMA-JECT. GMP's think that SOMA-JECT is an accepted method of choice by the higher income group while NGMPs feel the same.

5. Expectations of Potential SOMA-JECT Users

SOMA-JECT should give rise to minimal side effects to its use. While, Blue Star should establish an image and brand a service provider like "Sobuj Chatta" (সবুজ ছাতা) or "Surjer Hashi" (সূর্যের হাশি). The respondents also expect it to be more widely available in various pharmacies and clinics rather than only at BS Centers.

