

CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF DEMONSTRATION PHARMACIES IN THAILAND

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The objectives of the study were to determine consumers' perceptions of general pharmacy patronage and pharmacist consultation service activities offered by Thai demonstration pharmacies. Also, to evaluate what factors are related to general pharmacy patronage and pharmacist consultation service activities. A convenience sample of 1,000 customers using seven demonstration pharmacies was selected. For an in-store survey, subjects were asked how important were 13 general pharmacy patronage dimensions and six pharmacist consultation service activities using a unipolar importance scale. They also were asked questions about drug purchases and demographic information. The mean importance scores of all the 13 general pharmacy patronage dimensions were rated above three (of moderate importance) and all mean importance scores of the six pharmacist consultation service activities were rated above four (of considerable importance). The results from multiple regression found that "Consult", "Age", and "Gender" were significantly related to most of the thirteen general pharmacy patronage dimensions, while "Education" was significantly related to pharmacist consultation service dimension. Based on this convenience sample through demonstration pharmacies, the analysis showed that on average the general pharmacy patronage dimensions were considered important and seem to support the concept that these services need to be provided as a basic step to build pharmacy traffic and maintain customers. However fulfillment of the general pharmacy patronage components may not be enough to assure the success of the demonstration pharmacies. In order to maintain customers' loyalty, the service aspects should not be ignored. We feel that this data supports pharmacist consultation service activities as a crucial part of the success of pharmacy business and can help to make the demonstration pharmacies more of an ideal setting that customers desire.

Keywords: *Pharmacy patronage, Pharmacist consultation service, Thai demonstration pharmacy, Consumers' perceptions*