

COMMUNITY PHARMACIST ATTIRE AND ITS IMPACT ON PATIENT PREFERENCE IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Different attires may bring different perceptions, level of trust, status and transmits social signals towards pharmacist in a community pharmacy setting. The objectives of the study were to explore the public perception of community pharmacist attire and the association of respondents' sociodemographics with their preferences for community pharmacist attire. This was a cross-sectional, convenience sampling study among 200 general public adults (> 18 years old) in community pharmacies setting in Malaysia. A face validated Likert-type questionnaire was administered to assess the public perceptions and their preferences on community pharmacist attire. Four sets of model photographs with variation in gender, ethnicity and attire formality (i.e., formal wear with lab coat to casual attire) were used to assess respondents' preferences. The most preferred attire of pharmacists was formal wear with a lab coat compared to other styles of attire (74% versus 36%). The older the respondents were, the more likely they prefer pharmacists in the formal wear with lab coat attire compared to formal (OR: 0.943; 95% CI: 0.899, 0.989; $p < 0.05$) and semi-formal wear (OR: 0.912; 95% CI: 0.840, 0.989; $p < 0.05$). Male respondents prefer pharmacists in formal wear without the lab coat (OR: 3.893; 95% CI: 1.449, 10.491; $p < 0.01$) compared to female. A neat and proper attired pharmacist will gain a positive impression from patients. Respondents favour pharmacists in formal attire with a lab coat. Pharmacists in formal wear with a lab coat able to display professionalism and instil feelings of trust, confidence and comfort among the public in a community pharmacy setting.

Keywords: Pharmacist, Attire, Perception, Lab coat, Formal wear, Public preference

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