A STUDY OF PHARMACY CUSTOMERS' PROFILES AND PREFERENCES IN AN URBAN AREA

YOON HIN SIANG
(Bachelor of Pharmacy, Hons.)

FOR RESEARCH REPORT EB699
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE
MASTERS OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEGREE
UNIVERSITI MALAYA,
MARCH 1996
CLOSED STACKS

ABSTRACT

This study deals with both retail pharmacies set-up and pharmacy customers' patronage preferences. A total of twelve retail pharmacies in the Klang Valley area were surveyed and a total of 114 pharmacy customers completed the required questionnaires.

The results from the pharmacy owners or managers' survey indicated that most of their customers are in the age group of between 30 and 49 years old and the most commonly purchased items were prescription medicines. Most of the pharmacies were opened between six and seven days a week and up to ten hours a day.

The results from the pharmacy customers' survey indicated that the most important factors that affect patronage of a pharmacy are service factors such as advice from the pharmacists and staff courtesy. The overall stock display and availability were also given high priority by the customers.
ACknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Puan Lee Kum Chee, for her advice and guidance for this study. I would also like to record my thanks to all the pharmacy owners and managers and customers who have been most generous with their time and effort in participating in the surveys. Last, but not least, I would like to thank my wife, Karen, and my children, Yung Wah and Yung Sim, for their understanding and support during the entire duration of my course.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>iii &amp; iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter One

### Introduction

1.1 The Health Care System In Malaysia ................. 1
1.2 The Pharmaceutical Industry ..................... 3
1.3 History Of Pharmacies In Malaysia ................. 4
1.4 Set-Up Of A Retail Pharmacy ...................... 7
   1.4.1 Sole-Proprietor Pharmacies
   1.4.2 Chain Pharmacies
1.5 Objectives Of This Study ......................... 10

## Chapter Two

### Literature Review

2.1 A Review Of Patronage Factors ..................... 11
2.2 Studies on Patronage Behavior ..................... 16

## Chapter Three

### Research Methodology

3.1 Questionnaire ................................... 22
3.2 Sample Selection .................................. 24
3.3 Data Collection And Analysis ...................... 24
Chapter Four

Research Results

4.1 Results From The Pharmacy Owners Or Manager's Survey .. 26
   4.1.1 Opening Hours
   4.1.2 Opening Days
   4.1.3 Staff Strength
   4.1.4 Proportion Of Customers In A Day
   4.1.5 Age Groups
   4.1.6 Average Purchase
   4.1.7 Product Category Of Purchases
   4.1.8 Proportions Of Customers In A Week

4.2 Results From The Pharmacy Customers Survey ............ 33
   4.2.1 Demographic Profile
   4.2.2 Patronage Factors

Chapter Five

Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Findings ............................................. 48
5.1 Implications Of This Study ...................................... 49
5.2 Recommendations For Future Studies ......................... 51

References ............................................................... 52

Appendix ................................................................. 55
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Percentage Of Customers In A Day .................. 29
Table 2: Product Category Of Purchases .................. 31
Table 3: Proportion Of Customers In A Week ............... 32
Table 4: Demographic Profile Of Pharmacy Customers ....... 34
Table 5: Factor Loading For Patronage .................. 37
Table 6: Ranking Of Factors For Patronage ............... 38
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Main Channels Of Pharmaceutical Distribution In Malaysia