

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter describes the measuring instruments, sample selection, data collection and analysis.

#### **3.1 QUESTIONNAIRE**

Two structured questionnaires were used to gather primary data from a total of 15 retail pharmacies and 150 retail pharmacy customers. The retail pharmacy owners' survey consists of 12 questions on the proportion of customers during certain times and days of the week, age groups of customers, customers purchases in terms of product categories and ethnic group of customers. This survey was conducted by personal interviews of the selected retail pharmacy owners or responsible managers .

The pharmacy customers' questionnaire is based on a five point Likert scale from 1 to 5 ( with 1 for strongly agree to 5 for strongly disagree). It was designed to obtain primary data from retail pharmacy customers includes questions on the various factors influencing customers' patronage of a retail pharmacy such as service, location, prices, environment, product range and advertisements. This structured questionnaire consists

of 26 questions on various determinants of patronage behavior and eight personal data questions. Basically it attempts to measure five patronage factors. The factor of service is measured by using four items: waiting period for service, courtesy of staff, importance of courtesy compared to location or prices, help or advice needed from pharmacist and personal relationship with the pharmacist. The second factor of location is provided by four items: distance of outlet from home, importance of location compared to prices, location of outlet in complexes and the availability of parking spaces. The third factor of prices is studied by such items as prices among pharmacies, importance of price compared to services, availability of special discount and willingness to pay higher prices for higher quality products. The fourth factor on environment is measured by lightings and decor, stock display and tidy selves, neat arrangement of stock and good environment compared to location or prices. The fifth factor refers to advertisement and promotion including advertisement of a sale, selection of products from brochures and recommendation by friends or colleagues. The last factor on product range or variety is indicated by wide variety of a particular product, wide range of products, availability of household goods besides medicines and availability of stock . A copy of each of the two questionnaires is provided in the Appendix.

### **3.2 SAMPLE SELECTION**

This study focuses on retail pharmacies in an urban area, that is, the Klang Valley. Based on convenience sampling, retail pharmacies were selected. The factors affecting the selection of these pharmacies were location and the familiarity of the author with the pharmacy owners or managers. The pharmacy owners or managers' survey was to be completed by the pharmacy owners themselves in the case of sole-proprietor pharmacies or the managers in the case of chain pharmacies.

Each pharmacy was provided with more than ten questionnaires for completion by their customers. A total of 150 questionnaires were targeted at these customers. The staff of the pharmacy were briefed on the details of the questionnaire and the procedure for completing it so that they can provide the necessary briefing to the respondents.

### **3.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

Prior permission was obtained from the retail pharmacy management to interview the staff concerned and also on the distribution of questionnaire to the customers. Of the 15 retail pharmacy selected, only 12 completed

forms were obtained.(Response rate of 75%). Of the 150 sets of questionnaires for the customer survey given out a total of 114 were completed and return for analysis. This represents a response rate of 76%.

The data obtained were analyzed mainly by average values, standard deviations and cross tabulations. Factor analysis was also conducted to examine the interrelationship among the different items and to determine the underlying dimensions or factors.