



## Consumer satisfaction with community pharmacies in Warri, Nigeria

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### Abstract

*Background:* Consumer satisfaction is likely to affect the image of the pharmacist and pharmacy profession. Efforts should not only be made to track consumer satisfaction with pharmacy services but also to improve it where needed.

*Objective:* To investigate consumer satisfaction with community pharmacies in a Nigerian city.

*Methods:* A cross-sectional survey of a consecutive sample of 700 pharmacy consumers at 35 randomly selected community pharmacies was conducted. Data were gathered on consumer demographics and their satisfaction with the community pharmacies using a 32-item rated instrument that combined pharmaceutical care and traditional pharmacy items. Descriptive statistics was computed on sample characteristics and the questionnaire items. Inferential statistics used Student's *t* test and one-way ANOVA.

*Results:* The response rate for the survey was 71.9% (503/700). Cronbach's alpha test of reliability was computed to be 0.980. Of the respondents, 298 (59.2%), 284 (56.5%), and 101 (20.1%) rated their satisfaction as excellent regarding availability of genuine drugs, the pharmacist, and household consumer goods, respectively. The mean total score for pharmaceutical care items was found to be  $3.50 \pm 1.32$ , while the

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mean total score for traditional pharmacy items was computed to be  $3.56 \pm 1.34$  (midpoint = 3, range = 1 to 5). Consumers' income status was associated with their satisfaction, with the lower income earners experiencing higher satisfaction ( $F = 2.668, P = .050$ ).

*Conclusion:* Consumers in this survey experienced moderate service satisfaction with their community pharmacy encounters. The consumers were most satisfied with the pharmacists' professional attitude but dissatisfied with the provision of nondrug services in the community pharmacy. These services are mainly health promotion activities that are advocated under pharmaceutical care philosophy. There is an opportunity for the community pharmacies to introduce new services and enhance their consumer loyalty.

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## 1. Introduction

Many industries such as the hospitality sector spend millions of dollars trying to assess consumer satisfaction with their services. Similarly, the retail sector also spends millions of dollars trying to develop products and marketing tools that will elicit satisfaction in the consumers.<sup>1</sup> For pharmacists, measuring patient (or consumer) satisfaction is a relatively new activity, although one could argue that since the origins of pharmacy profession, pharmacists have strived to satisfy their patients and, indeed, their businesses have depended on it.<sup>1</sup>

A review of the existing literature indicates a wide variance in the definitions of satisfaction. However, all the definitions share some common elements and when examined as a whole, 3 general components can be identified: (1) consumer satisfaction is an emotional or cognitive response; (2) the response pertains to a particular focus such as expectations, product, and consumption experience; and (3) the response occurs at a particular time (after consumption, after choice, based on consumption experience, etc).<sup>2</sup>

Consumer satisfaction has been typically conceptualized as either an emotional or a cognitive response. More recent satisfaction definitions concede an emotional response. The emotional satisfaction is confirmed by the consumer responses. Of the respondents, 77.3% of group interview responses specifically used affective responses to describe satisfaction, and 64% of the personal interviewees actually changed the question term "satisfaction" to more affective terms.<sup>2</sup>

Consumer or patient satisfaction is one important indicator of the quality of care because it reflects whether or not a given service is meeting consumers' expectations and is consistent with their values.<sup>3</sup> Managed care organizations in the United States also include patient satisfaction as an indicator of service quality.<sup>4</sup> From the individual's viewpoint, there is evidence

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