

Investigating the Relationship between Service Quality and Amount of Violations in Community Pharmacies with Their Type of Ownership

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Abstract : Introduction: Community pharmacies have been always played an important role in public health. Therefore, having a decent service provided by these pharmacies is of paramount importance for the healthcare system. The issue of pharmacy ownership and its possible impact on the quality of services and amount of violations has been argued for many years, and there are different opinions around this debate. Since, so far, no scientific research has been performed to investigate this issue in Iran, this study aimed to examine the differences between these two types of pharmacies ownership in terms of violations and service quality. Method: This study investigates the impact of two different kinds of pharmacy ownership (pharmacists and non-pharmacist's ownership) on the pharmacies' amount of violations and services quality. Pharmacies' amount of violations was examined using "pharmacy inspection reports" between September 2018 and September 2019, in their distinguishable categories: minor, major and critical violations. Then, service quality was examined using a questionnaire from the perspective of pharmacy customers. Results: Considering violations, there was no evidence to prove a significant relationship between critical violations and major violations with the type of pharmacy ownership. However, in minor violations, the average of violations was higher in pharmacies owned by pharmacists in comparison to their non-pharmacist owned counterparts. Regarding service quality, the results showed that there is no significant relationship between the quality of service and the type of pharmacy ownership. Discussion and Conclusion: In this study, no significant relationship was found between the amount of violations and the type of pharmacy ownership. This could indicate that the pharmacy ownership would not influence the rate of violations. Considering that more inspections have been carried out in non-pharmacist owned pharmacies, it can be concluded that these pharmacies are more under control, and in fact, this monitoring has reduced violations in these pharmacies. The quality of services in the two types of pharmacies were not significantly different from each other, and this shows that non-pharmacist-owned pharmacies also try to maintain the desired level of service in competition with their competitors.

Keywords : pharmacy ownership, quality of service, violation, community pharmacy

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