



**FACTORS INFLUENCING ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF
COMMUNITY PHARMACIES IN YANGON, MYANMAR**

**MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
(MBA)**

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A Thesis Presented

By

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Submitted to the Swiss School of Business Research

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ABSTRACT

Community pharmacies are essential healthcare access points, particularly in urban areas like Yangon where public healthcare systems face overcrowding and infrastructure limitations. This study investigated customer satisfaction with community pharmacies in Yangon, Myanmar, and analysed key service factors, demographic influences, and areas for service enhancement. A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of pharmacy users, revealing that most respondents were female (65%), of working age (20 to 40 years of age), and primarily middle-income earners. The majority visited pharmacies for general medicine purchases rather than consultations or chronic disease management. The study found that overall customer satisfaction was moderate, with a high likelihood of future use (mean = 3.67), indicating strong customer loyalty despite service gaps. Key drivers of satisfaction included staff attitude, communication, and service quality, while product availability and pricing transparency were not significant predictors. Cleanliness and a welcoming environment positively contributed to satisfaction, whereas delays in service and lack of loyalty programs were noted as major drawbacks. Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.784 to 0.922 confirmed strong internal consistency of the survey instrument. Statistical analysis showed no significant differences in satisfaction based on gender, age, education, or income; however, occupation did influence outcomes, with retired individuals reporting higher satisfaction. These findings suggest that pharmacies can improve customer experience by enhancing pharmacist-patient interaction, promoting consultation services, expanding chronic care offerings, and introducing loyalty and promotional programs. These improvements have the potential to increase trust, medication adherence, and the overall effectiveness of pharmacy services in Myanmar's evolving healthcare landscape.

Key words: *Customer Satisfaction, Community Pharmacy, Service Quality, Healthcare Access, Healthcare in Myanmar*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iii
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
ABBREVIATION.....	vi
CHAPTER I.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION	1
1.2 COMMUNITY PHARMACIES IN MYANMAR	13
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT	14
1.4 OBJECTIVES	17
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	17
1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS.....	17
1.7 ORGANIZATION	19
CHAPTER II.....	20
LITERATURE REVIEW	20
2.1 INTRODUCTION AND IMPORTANCE OF SUBJECT AREA.....	20
2.2 THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES	22
2.3 VARIABLES OF THE STUDY	26
2.3.1 <i>Dependent Variable</i>	26
2.3.2 <i>Independent Variables</i>	27
2.4 REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES	28
2.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY	33
<i>Conceptual model</i>	34
CHAPTER III	35
METHODOLOGY	35
3.1 RESEARCH METHODS	35
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGNS.....	35
3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING	35

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD	37
3.5 DATA ANALYSIS.....	37
3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION	38
CHAPTER IV	39
ANALYSIS AND RESULTS	39
4.1 DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE PARTICIPANTS.....	39
4.2 ASSOCIATION OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR SATISFACTION	40
4.3 SATISFACTION SCORES FOR CURRENT PHARMACY SERVICES	41
4.4 RELIABILITY OF CONSTRUCTS.....	44
4.5 DETERMINATION OF FACTORS INFLUENCING ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF COMMUNITY PHARMACIES IN YANGON	44
CHAPTER V	46
CONCLUSION.....	46
5.1 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS	46
5.2 SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	49
References.....	51

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Top Ten Companies with Their High ACSI Scores In 2024	6
Table 2 Demographics Characteristics of the Participants	39
Table 3 The Association of Demographic Characteristics of Participants and their Satisfaction.....	40
Table 4 Satisfaction Scores for Current Pharmacy Services	41
Table 5 Cronbach's Alpha and Descriptive Statistics.....	44
Table 6 Regression Analysis of Factors Influencing On Customer Satisfaction of Community Pharmacies in Yangon	45

ABBREVIATION

ACSI	American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI)
OTC	Over-The-Counter
CPV	Customer Perceived Value
WHO	World Health Organization
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
EDT	Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

In challenging economic environment, marketing is the key function to face and survive financially (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Other business functions like finance, operations, and accounting will not perform properly without having profit in products and services of the firm (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). The best short definition of marketing is meeting people needs' with profit and it is typically encountering and seeing social needs and wants of people (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Marketing is the action of the firm in buying or selling of products and services (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Marketing is also the process of detecting and meeting needs and wants of people and then designing, giving and exchanging products or services with others (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

Marketer is the people who look for response, answer, purchase, reaction, return, and donation (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Specialists in marketing department usually promote 10 main types: products, facilities, occasions, skills, people, locations, belongings, organizations, information, and ideas (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Most companies market their own physical goods from production such as U.S companies marketed their fresh and frozen foods, electronic devices and other products for livings (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). In Myanmar, the top marketed product categories are food and beverages, electronic devices, clothing and beauty products (Statista, 2024). Facilities like hotels, airlines, rental services, many professional services (bankers, lawyers, doctors, and accountants) are marketed as goods and services mix-marketing ways (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Marketers advertise events, shows and performances such as Olympic and World Cup that are advertised to both companies and their fans (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Marketers also sell experiences and services such as customized experiences in Walt Disney Magic Kingdom and camps for baseball, rock and roll and rock climbing (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Celebrities like David Beckham, Oprah Winfrey and others collaborated with companies and advertised themselves to

become brand endorsers, influencers and spokesperson (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Commercial cities, tourists' attraction places, states, regions and whole nations are marketed for residents, tourists, factories and companies by real estates, advertising agencies, economic specialists and business associations (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Financial property (stocks and bonds) and real property (real estate) are also advertised for their strong existence for ownership and for investment (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Organizations, corporations, universities, and museums use marketing to raise their image and to get audiences and funds (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Companies and organizations also marketed information and idea in their markets through contents, how-to videos, information graphics and informational guides (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012).

In modern world, marketing is more than the process of developing a good product and it involved the pricing of product attractively and accessibly (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Marketing may have influence on every point of customer experience and marketers must be aware of every point of contact with customers in shop layouts, product designs and functions, training of employee, shipping and logistics management (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Moreover, marketing is not only related with the marketing department, and department for product innovation and business development are also important to create a powerful marketing organization (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Marketing communication is the process of the firm to inform, persuade, and remind consumer about the selling products, services and brands directly or indirectly (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Marketing communication can give product information to consumers, and make stronger customer loyalty, relationship and customer equity (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

The important purpose of marketing is to develop intense, long-term relationships with all people and groups that are explicitly and implicitly related to the marketing activities' achievement (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Relationship marketing is building equal enduring relationship with main elements to maintain and success the business (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Four main elements for relationship marketing are customers, staffs, marketing coworkers (suppliers, agencies, channels, distributors, dealers) and financial associates (owner, stockholders, shareholders and analysts) (Kotler &

Kotler, Marketing Management, 2012). Marketers must understand their abilities, resources, purposes, needs and wants to build sound relationship with them (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Marketers make success and wealth in these four elements and settle the return to all key investors (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Key stakeholders like customers, workers, seller, dealer, wholesaler, dealers, and company built synergistic partnership or win-win business by relationship marketing and it is called a marketing network (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Companies also emphasize on individual customers to give different offers, services and messages according to their past activities, demographic data, media and their preferences (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). By this, companies can build strong customer loyalty and then can give high profit to their business (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

Marketing experts said that the heart of every organization and firm is making loyal customers and the values of company and organization depend on the value of customers (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). The business can gradually great with getting, saving and increasing customers which are the ones we have now and the ones we will have in the future (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). By reason of customers, organization and company hire workers, build plants, manufacture and distribute products, make operation and logistics and many business functions (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). In successful marketing organizations, the customers are in the top tiers of the modern customer-oriented organization chart and the second ones are frontline people (person who see, help and service customers) (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). The middle and top management of organization are in the third and the last level of organization chart and they participate in every activities of customers (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

Nowadays, customers are much more intellectual and knowledgeable than before and they have many rules to assess the organizations' services and always look for the superior choices (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Customer perceived value (CPV) is the variation of potential assessment of customer on all the benefits and expenses of an offerings and the perceived alternatives (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). CPV is the difference point between customers' advantages and customers' cost for alternatives and marketers can raise

its value by providing physical, emotional and financial profits with low cost (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Customers may have different levels of loyalty to individual stores, products, types and companies and in the future, customer has the strong bond to buy the desired product and service again under various circumstances is called the loyalty (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). The customers' evaluation of organization or product performance usually has many influences, particularly the kind of loyalty with the product that the customers have (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). They particularly have the more positive opinion about the brand or product that they already have good feeling about them (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012).

Satisfaction is stated that the assessment of the emotional and cognitive reaction to the process, services and structure (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). Satisfaction is also the level of fulfillment of one's needs, wants and desire (OxfordLanguages, n.d.). Customer satisfaction is the attitude and their expectations towards to the process, service and structure that they received (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). Customer satisfaction can reveal the business's type, quality, their services, and their provided activities (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). It can also act as an indicator for good business practice and can show how well they work in the environment (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021).

When the company produce and give lowering price or great services, customer satisfaction can be increased but not profits of the company (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). The critical purpose of customer-centered organization is not only to get high-level of customer satisfaction but also to get higher profit (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Others than satisfaction, the company must be able to get high profits by investing in upgrading their manufacturing process, or by developing their research and development process (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Moreover, the investors and stakeholders of the company must feel lower satisfaction because of their funds flow into customer satisfaction (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). The marketers of the organization must be aware of using their acceptable amount of resources in getting high level of customer satisfaction (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012).

Customers generally get their expectations of product or organization from their past shopping experiences, their friends and family information and sellers'

promises and facts (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). If the sellers give high expectations, the buyers will feel distress and with low expectations, they will not be interested in the brand (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Thus, the sellers need to balance these two things to get high customer satisfaction and high performances (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

Many firms and organizations determine satisfaction by how they behave towards customers, finding what factors influence it, modifying their activities in production and marketing (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Clever business and organizations frequently analyze customer satisfaction as it is the best way to determine customer retention (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Customers usually choose the services with the most benefits and costs to them (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). The customer with great satisfaction typically stays more with the brand or product and has less attention to the competitors with a price non-sensitive manner (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Better customer satisfaction also has a relationship with greater retention, higher lifetime brand or product value and less risk on the stock market (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). If the performance does not meet their expectations, the customers will be disappointed and dissatisfied (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

The relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction are related but not directly proportional (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Experiencing high satisfaction or delight fosters an emotional connection with the brand or company, going beyond mere rational preference (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Regular surveys can directly monitor customer satisfaction and add extra questions to assess repurchase goals and the respondent's probability to mention the brand or product to others (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Organizations or companies must also keep track of their competitors' performance by monitoring their loss rate (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Then, they will keep in touch and find out the reason with people who stopped buying the product and those who have changed to another brand (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

Customer satisfaction serves as both a strategic goal and powerful marketing tool for customer-oriented companies (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). In today's digital age, businesses must pay close attention to their customer

satisfaction levels, as the internet can enable consumer to share their experiences both positive and negative opinions on a global scale (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Some dissatisfied customers express their complaints to public by creating dedicated websites with voice grievances and stimulate protests against major brands in U.S like Home Depot and Mercedes-Benz (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Claes Fornell of the University of Michigan developed the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) to assess customer perceptions of satisfaction across various companies, industries, economic sectors and national economies (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Companies that achieve high customer satisfaction scores, and those with improving their customer satisfaction levels are the ones to keep on eye as there is a direct link between customer satisfaction, corporate profitability and stock performance (Index, n.d.). Top ten companies with high ACSI scores in 2024 are as follow in Table 1 (Index, n.d.):

Table 1 Top Ten Companies with Their High ACSI Scores In 2024

No.	Company	Current Score	Industry
1	Apple	85	Personal Computers
2	Chewy	85	Online Retailers
3	LongHorn Steakhouse (Darden)	85	Full-Service Restaurants
4	Nike	85	Athletic Shoes
5	Sam’s Club (Walmart)	85	General Merchandise Retailers
6	Skechers	85	Athletic Shoes
7	Texas Roadhouse	85	Full-Service Restaurants
8	AB InBev	84	Breweries
9	Coca-Cola	84	Soft Drinks
10	HP	84	Personal Computers

Certain corporate and organization count customer complaints as the another way to get customer satisfaction evaluation but studies found that the customers would complain about the brand or product in 5 percent of the time but actually they

feel 25 percent time in dissatisfaction of product (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Owing not to know whom to complain or not to waste time in complaining process, 95 percent of buyers are not complaining about the product or brand, as opposed to end buying the product (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). 54 percent to 70 percent of the consumers would go back with the organization after resolving their complaints and with the fast response of the organization, about 95 percent will go back to them (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

No matter how well a marketing program is designed and executed, errors are inevitable (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). The most effective approach of company is to provide customers with easy and accessible ways to voice their concerns (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Providing tools such as feedback form, suggestion form, free-phone number or cost-free number, web pages and email address will facilitate prompt and bilateral communication (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Marketers should be aware of handling negative experience of customers as it is vital and many product development concepts originated from the customer complaints in 3M Company (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

Customer satisfaction is closely tied to its product and service quality but we cannot find exact factors which can define the quality of the product (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Different specialists said that quality is the product descriptions with no variation, requirements coherence, and suitable to use (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). According to the American Society for Quality, quality encompasses all the descriptions and characteristics of a product or service that contributed to suit identified customer needs (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). When the sellers' presented product or service is meeting or exceeding customers' hope which is the definition of quality in customer-oriented way (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). The organization that consistently meets the need of most of its customer is regarded as a quality-focused organization but it is important to differentiate conformance quality and performance quality (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Conformance quality ensures that every unit of a product meets its promised standards, regardless of its brand or category (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Performance quality refers to the excellence level of product within its category (Kotler & Keller,

Marketing Management, 2012). For instance, Lexus delivers higher performance quality than Hyundai while both achieve conformance quality as they meet their respective brand standards (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

Product quality, service quality, customer satisfaction, and profitability of company are deeply interconnected (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). High quality leads to great customer satisfaction which often justifies premium pricing and reduces costs in the long run (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Researchers consistently stated that there is a strong link between a company's relative product quality and its profitability (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Some companies produce superior goods in the global market and then various countries recognize them for their outstanding quality practices (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Prestigious awards such as Japan's Deming Prize, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the European Quality Award highlight organizations that set the standard in quality management (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

On the other hand, companies that compromise quality to cut costs often face significant consequences (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). For example, Northwest Airlines eliminated complimentary amenities such as magazines, pillows, movies, and small snack bags on domestic flights while simultaneously raising prices and reducing its flight schedules (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). Then, the airlines ranked last among major U.S carriers in both ACSI and J.D Power customer satisfaction survey (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012). When Home Depot excessively focused on cost-cutting and it negatively impacted the customer experience, and faced similar challenges (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management, 2012).

Pharmacy

Pharmacies are shops for selling pharmaceutical and medical products in both on-site sales and online sales (Statista, 2024). Pharmacy is the combined arrangement of art and science of preparation and standardization of drugs (Krnatz & Hartley, 2025). The activities of pharmacy are various such as the plants cultivation, chemical compounds preparation, medical agents analysis (Krnatz & Hartley, 2025). Many dosage forms: tablets, capsules, and injections are prepared in the pharmacy according to physicians', dentists' and veterinarians' prescriptions and patients' needs.

Along with the fast alteration of healthcare system, the pharmacy had been facing evolution and progression (Pearson, 2007). From ancient time, pharmacies are centers for important health services but others thought that it has many uncertainty and haziness (Pearson, 2007). Traditional pharmacies are the places for combination of health sciences and chemical sciences to guarantee the medication usage (Pearson, 2007). The original purpose of pharmacy was curing human diseases and relieving human suffering while using plants as healing agents (University L. J., 2024). Then they created the first medicines which become to the initial step of pharmacy (University T. T., n.d.). The oldest prescriptions were found in Mesopotamia on a clay tablet at BC 2400 (University T. T., n.d.). In the Sumerian cuneiform, the process of making salves, washes and poultices were shown by using the ingredients such as mustard, fig, myrrh, bat droppings, turtle shell powder, snake skins, beer, milk and wine (University T. T., n.d.). In the book of *Sushruta Samhita*, the compounded medicine was found as an earliest record at the 6th century BC. In western society of pharmacy, the apothecaries performed as essential healthcare providers at the early 17th century (University T. T., n.d.). Pharmacists made compounding and preparation of medicines from the year of early 1900, and manufacturing industries for medicines and large-scale were developed by the 1950s (Pearson, 2007). The role of pharmacists was limited by industries and the legal law for prescribed only status (Pearson, 2007). But, the clinical pharmacy and patients consulting role of pharmacists became more popular by the mid of 1960s (Pearson, 2007).

Over the past forty years, the original focus of pharmacy trend changed to more focus on patient care (WHO, Developing pharmacy practice, A focus on patient care, 2006). People accepted that the pharmacies and the pharmacists are important in achieving patients' outcomes and their quality of life (Pearson, 2007). From regarding as a compounder and medication supplier, pharmacists are considered as information and service providers and patient care providers (WHO, Developing pharmacy practice, A focus on patient care, 2006). They also had the activity of collaboration with other health care professionals and patients to optimize the highest health outcomes (Pearson, 2007). Nowadays, pharmacy is the place for scientifically preparation and dispensing medicines and providing extra clinical activities like vaccinations, health screenings, and giving health advices on public health concerns (University L. J., 2024). People can also get the essential information at pharmacy in

addition to the information provided by their doctors and nurses and plans to prevent medication adverse reactions (University L. J., 2024).

Types of Pharmacy

Pharmacies are found in various places and types of pharmacies are defined according to their location and specialties (Constantine, 2022). These are community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy, clinical pharmacy, industrial pharmacy, compounding pharmacy, consulting pharmacy, ambulatory care pharmacy, regulatory pharmacy, home care pharmacy, managed care pharmacy, research pharmacy and so on (Constantine, 2022).

Community pharmacy

Community pharmacy is also known as retail pharmacy and it is the most popular type of pharmacy (Constantine, 2022). People can find community pharmacists in the pharmacy department of drug, grocery or retail stores and this type of pharmacy is typically called the pharmacist shop or chemist shop (Constantine, 2022). Customers can pick up their prescriptions and can ask and learn about the effects of their medications (Team, 2025). They can also get the advice and instructions about their medications to improve their health (Team, 2025). Customers can know what drugs interact with others or with food or alcohol and they can aware of toxic or dangerous combinations of medication (Constantine, 2022). Many services are provided in this pharmacy such as preparing prescriptions and education customers on taking over-the-counter medications (Team, 2025).

Hospital pharmacy

Hospital pharmacy is the type of pharmacy which people can find at hospital, medical clinic and nursing home (Constantine, 2022). The services of hospital pharmacy includes choosing, preparing, storing, compounding, and dispensing pharmaceutical products for the safe, effective and effective use of them (Gouveia, 2014). It typically deals with outpatient and inpatient pharmaceutical services and manages the prescribed medications for patients for better outcomes (Team, 2025). This pharmacy services include collaboration with other health professionals to optimize pharmacotherapy for each patient (Constantine, 2022).

Clinical pharmacy

Clinical pharmacy includes all the activities and services of pharmacists in hospitals, community pharmacies, nursing homes, home care services, and clinics

(Gouveia, 2014). This pharmacy review patients' medications to ensure their effectiveness and make changes whenever they need (Constantine, 2022). The pharmacy also work with patients at care home and team up with other health professionals to coordinate patients' care (Constantine, 2022). This pharmacy are specialized for the proper use of medications, administering and monitoring the drug safety, preparing medications for personalized medicines or individualized dosing (Constantine, 2022).

Industrial pharmacy

In pharmaceutical industry, pharmacists involve in the research, production, marketing and quality control of medical products (Team, 2025). In pharmaceutical factory, they learn the updated and latest technologies to analyze and research drug compounds, and develop new drugs and medications (Constantine, 2022). In every stage of production, they ensure the quality of products and pack them safely and appropriately (Team, 2025). Then, they stored the products safely and register with the relevant authorities (Team, 2025). The industrial pharmacists act as the representative of pharmaceutical company and giving medication features and their benefits (Constantine, 2022).

Compounding pharmacy

In compounding pharmacies, pharmacists prepare the medicines in new forms and in a small scale in order to patients ingest easily (Constantine, 2022). They usually combine, mix and alter the ingredients to make the customized medication such as reformulating a powder tablet into a solution (Constantine, 2022). For administration of certain patients for their special needs, they prepare compounded medications like antimicrobial or antifungal solutions, ointments, nasal sprays, pain reliefs in the form of solutions, gels, suspensions, ointments (Constantine, 2022).

Consulting pharmacy

The consulting pharmacies emphasize on the theoretical review of medications instead of dispensing medicines (Constantine, 2022). They provide expert advice to patients and healthcare teams on medication uses and their safety in cost-effective views (Team, 2025). The pharmacies review patients' history to monitor the best medication regimens and resolve complaints about medication (Constantine, 2022). People can find consulting pharmacists in variety of settings, like hospitals, nursing homes, and ambulatory surgery centers (Constantine, 2022).

Ambulatory care pharmacy

The ambulatory care pharmacies supply health care to people in rural area especially to the generic populations (Constantine, 2022). They take care of high-risk patients to control their drug related health problems and complications (Constantine, 2022). They also educate people on how to use medical devices such as nebulizers and blood glucose monitors (Team, 2025). They can also act as mobile service center to reduce their hospital visits and help them to learn how to take right medication with right dose (Constantine, 2022).

Regulatory pharmacy

Regulatory pharmacy is also known as the government pharmacy and it is responsible for the practice of ensuring that established guidelines and laws with medication safety (Constantine, 2022). The pharmacies guarantee the safety, efficacy and quality of medications to protect the public and enforce the regulations to drug development, licensing, registration, manufacturing, marketing and labeling (Team, 2025).

Home care pharmacy

Home care pharmacy is one of the pharmacy services that deliver medications to patients at homes (Constantine, 2022). Primary functions of home care pharmacy are preparation and delivery of injection drugs to patients' home like infusions for nutritional support, chemotherapy, oncology and mental illness (Constantine, 2022). This pharmacies help patients to adhere their medication schedules, to manage complex treatment plans, and to improve patients' quality of life (Constantine, 2022).

Managed care pharmacy

Managed care pharmacies plan and manage health care resources in organizations to improve population health outcomes (Constantine, 2022). They usually collaborate with other organizations to offer the most appropriate and effective medications at the best cost-effective way (Team, 2025).

Research pharmacy

Research pharmacy is practice research place dealing with health care research and development of new drugs, investigation of pharmacy services, exploring the impact of medication management, and many researches are performed in it (Constantine, 2022). Researchers use various methods such as surveys, observational studies, randomized controlled trials to get data (Constantine, 2022).

1.2 Community Pharmacies in Myanmar

Myanmar pharmacy market has grown rapidly as the growth of the populations and healthcare demand of people (6wresearch, 2023). It has more competitive market when we compared to other ASEAN countries (Administration, n.d.). Non-communicable diseases including heart diseases, diabetes, stroke and chronic lung diseases are increasing rapidly and vice versa the medication demand for these diseases are also increasing gradually (6wresearch, 2023). Health care service in Myanmar is still developing and community pharmacies play a vital role in health care facilities of rural regions (Statista, 2024). Due to economic growth and greater disposable income, people have more financial means to buy healthcare services (Statista, 2024). There are high urbanization and high population density in major cities, and people are looking for the nearest community pharmacy to their home or work (Statista, 2024). Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines demand is larger as customers are more energetic in self-medication and preventive health care (Statista, 2024). The market development of local pharmacies, drug stores and manufacturing units across the country made competitive environment among market retailers (Statista, 2024). Community pharmacies in Myanmar are now offering wide range of medications, dietary supplements, and medical devices according to global and regional market trends (Statista, 2024).

Local medication supplies are usually produced by the Government owned pharmaceutical factory (Myanmar Pharmaceutical Factory) (Administration, n.d.). About 80% of pharmaceutical products are imported from other countries like India and Bangladesh and over 100 foreign pharmaceutical distributors are currently operating in Myanmar (Administration, n.d.). From the year of 2020 to 2026, the pharmacies and drug store markets in Myanmar will grow 3.2 % at CGAR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) (6wresearch, 2023). The pharmacies market of Myanmar is estimated to reach a revenue of US\$ 897. 56 million in 2025 and it will grow to a market value of US\$ 770 million by the year 2029 (Statista, 2024). According to the Yangon Directory, there are 2566 medicine shops around Yangon (Directory, n.d.). Number of retail pharmacy outlets are around 10,000 which selling both allopathic and traditional medicines in Myanmar (WHO, WHO, 2019). From 2014 to 2025, the number of community pharmacy are increasing gradually around the country and the market is significantly growing by altering customer preferences

and trends, special circumstances in country and many economic factors (Statista, 2024).

Community pharmacies serve as the primary healthcare access point for a large portion of the population in Yangon, Myanmar's largest city (WHO, WHO, 2019). These pharmacies provide essential services, including medication dispensing over-the-counter (OTC) drug sales, and basic health consultations (6wresearch, 2023). As an integral part of the healthcare system, community pharmacies play a critical role in promoting public health, ensuring medication adherence, and offering convenient pharmaceutical services (Al-Arifi, 2012). However despite their importance, customer satisfaction with pharmacy services in Yangon remain a significant concern due to various factors, including service quality, availability of medicines, pricing, accessibility, and trust in pharmacy professionals.

1.3 Problem Statement

Community pharmacies are also the public places for drug administering and providing health care services, for preventing and treating diseases and promoting the people's health in the community (Gül, Helvacıoğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). They also have activities of medicines supply, health advices and health screening, disease management, preventive care and medication therapy management (Al-Arifi, 2012). They also can give numerous help to public health activities and can participate in people's health outcomes (Pharm, alsageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021).

In Myanmar, community pharmacies are often the first point of contact for people seeking healthcare advice and medication (WHO, Developing pharmacy practice, A focus on patient care, 2006). Unlike hospitals and clinics, pharmacies provide immediate access to medications without requiring a doctor's appointment (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). Due to high urban population and demand for accessible healthcare, the role of community pharmacies in Yangon has become more significant (WHO, Developing pharmacy practice, A focus on patient care, 2006). Myanmar pharmacy market developed during and after Covid-19 Pandemic and many pharmacies were opened around the city, Yangon (Statista, 2024). Since 2023, import licenses for medicines were temporarily suspended and people faced medicines shortage and market price rising (Statista, 2024). Some of pharmacy stores cannot stand on this situation and some may remain. Pharmacies in

Yangon operate in a dynamic environment where they must balance regulatory requirements, customer expectations, and competition pressures (WHO, Developing pharmacy practice, A focus on patient care, 2006).

The effectiveness of community pharmacies depends not only on the availability of medication but also on the quality of services provided by pharmacists and pharmacy staff (Gül, Helvacıoğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). Customers expect accurate information about medications, personalized counseling, and a seamless service experience (Al-Arifi, 2012). However, inconsistencies in service delivery, pharmacist training, and medication availability have led to varied level of satisfaction among customers (Al-Arifi, 2012). By reason of the increasing competition and raising customer expectations, it is essential to examine the factors influencing customer satisfaction in Yangon's community pharmacies to improve service quality and ensure better health outcomes (Pharm, alsageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021).

Many factors are involving in this problem and customer satisfaction is one of the factors to continue to overcome this problem. Customer satisfaction can impact sale volume and it can make the pharmacy can stay longer (Kotler & Keller, Marketing Managment, 2012). Despite the vital role of community pharmacies in healthcare delivery, customer satisfaction remains a major concern in Yangon (WHO, WHO, 2019). The main problem is that many pharmacies fail to meet customer expectations due to inconsistent service quality, limited medication availability, high pricing variations, and trust issues (WHO, Developing pharmacy practice, A focus on patient care, 2006). These challenges negatively affect the reputation of pharmacies and reduce customer loyalty (WHO, WHO, 2019).

Inadequate customer service and lack of proper communication by pharmacists and staff are significant factors that negatively impact customer satisfaction in community pharmacies (Al-Arifi, 2012). The expertise and behavior of pharmacists are the key determinants of customer satisfaction (Pharm, alsageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). A well-trained pharmacist who provides clear explanations, answers queries, and recommends suitable medications can greatly enhance the customer experience (Al-Arifi, 2012). Effective communication is essential in pharmacy services, as customer rely on pharmacists to provide clear information regarding their medications, including proper usage, potential side effects, and drug interactions (Al-Arifi, 2012). However, many community pharmacies in Yangon are run by pharmacy assistants or unqualified personnel who may lack the necessary

knowledge to provide personal counseling (WHO, WHO, 2019). Moreover, many pharmacists and staff in community pharmacies fail to engage with customers in a friendly and informative manner, leading to confusion and dissatisfaction (Gül, Helvacıoğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). Additionally, insufficient drug counselling and guidance on medication use further contribute to poor customer experiences (Gül, Helvacıoğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). Customers often leave pharmacies without fully understanding how to take their medications, which can result in improper usage and adverse health outcomes. Limited pharmacist engagement in patient education and health promotion also prevents customers from gaining valuable information about disease prevention, lifestyle changes, and medication adherence (Al-Arifi, 2012). When pharmacists fail to educate patients about their health conditions, customers may feel neglected and view the pharmacy as merely a place to purchase medications rather than a trusted healthcare provider (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021).

The availability of essential medications is another major factor influencing customer satisfaction, as frequent stock shortages of essential medications remain a persistent challenges (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). Customers often visit pharmacies expecting to find necessary medications for chronic conditions, infections, or acute illness and they only turned away due to unavailability (6wresearch, 2023). Customers may visit multiple pharmacies before finding the required drugs, leading to frustration and delays in the treatment and potential health risks (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020).

Additionally, inconsistent pricing across different pharmacies in Yangon further contribute to dissatisfaction, as customers may feel they are being overcharged for medications (Statista, 2024). Many individuals rely on pharmacies for affordable medications, but the same drug may be sold at different rates on various location, pharmacy size or suppliers (6wresearch, 2023). This inconsistency forces customers to compare prices across multiple pharmacies and make inconvenience and financial strain especially for those with chronic conditions and long-term medications (6wresearch, 2023). Without clear price labels or standardized pricing policies diminishes trust in pharmacies, leading to dissatisfaction and a reluctance to return (6wresearch, 2023).

Operation hours, location, and ease of access also play a crucial role in shaping customer satisfaction (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). Many community pharmacies in Yangon operate with limited hours, making it difficult for

working individuals to access their services and those with urgent medical needs (6wresearch, 2023). This lack of accessibility can result in patients skipping doses, delaying treatment, or seeking alternative and sometimes unsafe sources for medication (6wresearch, 2023). Furthermore, the uneven distribution of pharmacies across different townships results in disparities in service availability (Directory, n.d.).

By examining different views of various researchers, the seven factors: the quality and availability of pharmaceutical products, knowledge and professionalism of pharmacy staff or pharmacists, the attitude, service quality and communication of pharmacy staff or pharmacists, pricing and transparency, waiting time and operational efficiency, cleanliness and overall store environment, loyalty programs and promotional offers will be analyzed on customer satisfaction with community pharmacies in this study.

This research proposal can show how much these seven factors will impact on customer satisfaction with community pharmacy in Yangon. This study can help to get customers' feedback and to find new strategies to improve pharmacy practice and customers' loyalty.

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is analyzed on:

- a. To explore the influencing factors on customer satisfaction of community pharmacies in Yangon.
- b. To examine the relationship between influencing factors and customer satisfaction of community pharmacies in Yangon.
- c. To analyze the impact of influencing factors on customer satisfaction of community pharmacies in Yangon.

1.5 Research Questions

- a. What are the influencing factors on customer satisfaction of community pharmacies in Yangon?
- b. What is the relationship between influencing factors and customer satisfaction of community pharmacies in Yangon??
- c. Which influencing factors had impact on customer satisfaction of community pharmacies in Yangon?

1.6 Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on evaluating customer satisfaction of community pharmacies in Yangon, Myanmar. It examines key aspects such as the quality and availability of pharmaceutical products, knowledge and professionalism of pharmacy staff or pharmacists, the attitude, service quality and communication of pharmacy staff or pharmacists, pricing and transparency, waiting time and operational efficiency, cleanliness and overall store environment, loyalty programs and promotional offers. It aims to assess how these factors impact customer experiences and overall trust in pharmacy services. The study aims to capture the diverse customer experiences across different regions of the city. The study will primarily target customers who visited community pharmacies to gain insights to perspectives. The data will be collected from customers who have used services from community pharmacies in Yangon, including individuals from various demographic groups (age, gender, income level, and educational background).

The study is limited to community pharmacies operating within Yangon, Myanmar, covering urban, suburban, and potentially peri-urban areas. And it is geographically limited to community pharmacies in Yangon, meaning that the results may not fully represent customer satisfaction levels in rural or other urban areas of Myanmar where pharmacy services and challenges may differ. Additionally, the study relies on customer feedback which may be subjective and influenced by personal experiences, leading to potential bias in the data. Another limitation is the availability and willingness of participants to provide detailed and accurate information, as some customers may be reluctant to share negative experiences. Furthermore, the study focuses primarily on factors such as service quality, medication availability, pricing and accessibility, but external factors such as government regulations, economic conditions, and healthcare policies are not examined in depth.

The sample size of this study is limited, as the study will target only 323 customers. But, the study excludes hospitals and institutional pharmacies, focusing solely on community pharmacies. Moreover, it does not cover the wholesale or industrial pharmaceutical operations. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into customer satisfaction in community pharmacies in Yangon and can serve as a foundation for future research on improving pharmacy services in Myanmar.

1.7 Organization

This study is organized into five key sections to ensure a clear and systemic exploration of the factors influencing customer satisfaction in community pharmacies in Yangon. The first section, the introduction, provides background information on the role of community pharmacies and outlines the significance of customer satisfaction in the healthcare sector. The problem statement then identifies the key challenges affecting pharmacy services, followed by the objectives and research questions, which guide the study's focus. Scope and limitation of the study shows the boundaries of the research and acknowledges potential constraints that may impact the findings. The literature review presents existing research and theoretical frameworks related to the pharmacy services and customer satisfaction. The methodology section express the research design, data collection methods, and analyze techniques used to gather and interpret findings. The analysis and results section details key findings from surveys and interviews, analyzing them in relation to the study's objectives. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the main findings, highlight the study's contributions, and suggest practical solutions for improving customer satisfaction in community pharmacies.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction and Importance of Subject Area

Community pharmacies play a crucial role in the healthcare system by providing easy access to medications, health advice, and pharmaceutical services (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). In Yangon, where public healthcare facilities are often overwhelmed, community pharmacies serve as a primary point of care for many individuals seeking treatment for common illnesses and chronic conditions (6wresearch, 2023). Given the challenges of accessing public hospitals and clinics due to overcrowding, long waiting times, and limited healthcare infrastructure, community pharmacies provide an essential alternative for immediate and convenient healthcare services (WHO, Developing pharmacy practice, A focus on patient care, 2006). They offer wide range of medications, including prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, and basic health supplies, making them critical for disease management and general health maintenance (6wresearch, 2023). They are now providing various daily essentials, beauty products, traditional medicines, and baby care products (6wresearch, 2023). Additionally, in a country where healthcare awareness is still developing, pharmacists in community pharmacies have the potential to educate customers about medication use, disease prevention, and overall wellness (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021).

Beyond dispensing medicines, community pharmacies in Myanmar contributes to improving public health by offering services such as medication counseling, chronic disease management, and emergency pharmaceutical care (WHO, Developing pharmacy practice, A focus on patient care, 2006). They are especially important in rural and suburban areas, where access to healthcare facilities is even more limited (WHO, WHO, 2019). However, many community pharmacies face challenges such as inconsistent service quality, lack of standardized pricing, and the sale of counterfeit or substandard drugs (WHO, WHO, 2019). Strengthening the role of community pharmacies through better regulations, pharmacist training, and improved customer service can significantly enhance healthcare accessibility and ensure safer and more effective medication use for people (Al-Arifi, 2012).

Customer satisfaction is a vital factor in the success and effectiveness of community pharmacies in Myanmar, as it directly impacts trust, patient adherence to medications, and overall health consequences (6wresearch, 2023). Since community pharmacies serve as the most accessible healthcare providers for many people, ensuring a positive customer experience helps to improve public confidence in pharmacy services (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). Satisfied customers are more likely to return to the same pharmacy, follow medication instructions correctly, and ask professional advice when needed, leading to better health management and diminish risks associated with self-medication or improper drug use (Gül, Helvacıoğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). Furthermore, high levels of customer satisfaction contribute to the reputation and growth of pharmacies to maintain high service standards (Al-Arifi, 2012).

The customer satisfaction with these pharmacies is influenced by many factors, including service quality, pharmacist communication, medication availability, pricing transparency, and accessibility (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). Ensuring positive customer experience in community pharmacies is essential for improving medication adherence, promoting trust in pharmaceutical services, and enhancing overall public health outcomes (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). The importance of studying customer satisfaction in Yangon's community pharmacies lies in its impact on healthcare accessibility and patient well-being. A well-functioning pharmacy system not only ensures the availability of essential medications but also provides proper guidance on their use, reducing the risks of self-medication and medication-related errors. Additionally, understanding the factors affecting customer satisfaction can help pharmacy owners, healthcare policy makers, and regulatory authorities to get improvements in implementation for higher service standards and better patient outcomes. Due to the growing healthcare demands in urban areas like Yangon, addressing these issues is crucial to strengthening the role of community pharmacies as reliable healthcare providers. This study aims to explore these factors in detail, identify key challenges, and provide recommendations to enhance customer satisfaction and overall the effectiveness of pharmacy services. Thus, this study has significant implications form improving pharmacy services, promoting safer medication use, and strengthening the role of community pharmacies in Myanmar's healthcare system.

2.2 Theoretical Concepts and Principles

The study on factors influencing customer satisfaction in community pharmacies in Yangon is grounded in several theoretical concepts and principles from service quality models, consumer satisfaction theories, and healthcare service frameworks. These theories help to explain how various factors: service quality, pharmacist communication, medication availability, pricing transparency, and accessibility, contribute to overall customer satisfaction in pharmacy services.

One of the key theoretical models relevant to this study is the SERVQUAL Model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). This model identifies five dimensions of service quality: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, which are essential in evaluating customer satisfaction in service-oriented industries, including pharmacies (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

Tangibles refer to the physical aspects of the pharmacy environment, including the appearance of the facility, equipment, and even the appearance of personnel (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). A well-maintained and organized pharmacy with clear product displays, modern facilities, and a clean environment create a positive impression on customers, and enhance their trust in the pharmacy services (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Additionally, the professional appearance of pharmacists and staff, including proper uniforms and name tags, can contribute to customer confidence in the competence and credibility of the pharmacy (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). The availability of comfortable waiting areas, easy-to-read signage, and an overall welcoming atmosphere further improves the customer experience (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

Reliability is the ability of pharmacy and its staff to consistently provide accurate, dependable, and timely services (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). In the pharmacy setting, reliability encompasses several aspects, including the accurate dispensing of medications, the consistency of drug availability, adherence to prescription guidelines, and the ability to provide trustworthy health advice (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). A reliable pharmacy ensures that customers receive the correct medications in the prescribed dosage, with clear instructions for use (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). It also maintains a consistent stock of essential medicines, and prevents customers from having to visit multiple pharmacies in search of their prescriptions (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Additionally,

pharmacy staff must be knowledgeable and provide accurate health information, ensuring that customers feel confident in the guidance they receive (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Timeliness is another key element of reliability, as long waiting times, delays in medication restocking, or errors in prescription fulfillment can lead to frustration and dissatisfaction (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). When a pharmacy is perceived as reliable, customers are more likely to develop trust and loyalty, leading to repeated visits, and positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Conversely, frequent medication shortages, dispensing errors, and inconsistent services can damage a pharmacy's reputation and reduce customer confidence (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Proper inventory management, pharmacist training, and effective service delivery, are essential for enhancing customer satisfaction (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

Responsiveness refers to the willingness and ability of pharmacy staff to provide prompt service, assist customers effectively, and address their concerns in a timely manner (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). A highly responsive pharmacy ensures that customer receive quick assistance, whether in answering medication- related queries, processing prescriptions efficiently, and handling customer complaints professionally (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). In the pharmacy setting, responsiveness is demonstrated when pharmacists and staff are available to answer questions about medications, side effects, and proper usage without necessary delays (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Customers expect pharmacy staff to be approachable, courteous, and proactive in offering guidance, when they need urgent medical advice or clarification on prescriptions (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Long waiting times, lack of attention, dismissive behavior from staff can lead to frustration and dissatisfaction, and then customers seek alternative pharmacies (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Moreover, responsiveness also extends to how pharmacies manage customer concerns, like medication availability and service complaints (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Pharmacies that actively listen to customer feedback and make efforts to improve their services can build stronger relationships with their customers (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

The knowledge, professionalism, and courtesy of pharmacy staff, and their ability to inspire trust and confidence among customers are called the assurance

(Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Since the pharmacies are a key source of healthcare advice and medication, customers expect them to be knowledgeable, competent, and able to provide clear, accurate guidance on medication use, potential side effects, and health-related concerns (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Assurance in pharmacy is demonstrated through the expertise of pharmacists, their ability to explain medical information in an understandable way, and their professionalism in handling customer inquiries (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Customers feel more confident in their treatment when they receive reliable and well-informed advice from pharmacists who show empathy and a genuine interest in their well-being (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Additionally, the presence of licensed and well-trained pharmacists contributes to customer trusts, as they are more likely to follow medical recommendations when they believe the information provided is credible and accurate (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). If pharmacies have lack of assurance such as untrained staff, misinformation about medications, and poor communication can lead to customer distrust and dissatisfaction and can result in medication errors, and reluctance to seek professional pharmacy services (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

The ability of pharmacy staff to provide caring individualized attention to customers and make them to feel valued and understood is referred to empathy (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). As the pharmacy is often the first point of contact for individuals for healthcare advice, customers hope for pharmacists to be approachable, compassionate, and attentive to their specific needs (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). In a community pharmacy, empathy is shown with pharmacists' willingness to listen to customer concerns, providing personalized recommendations, and genuine care for their well-being (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Customers appreciate pharmacists who take time to explain medication usage, side effects, and alternative treatment options, for chronic illness or elderly patients with their extra assistance healthcare (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Lack of empathy like rushes service, dismissive attitudes, and failure to acknowledge customer concerns can lead to dissatisfaction and weaken customer loyalty (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). According to this model, a positive perception of these dimensions leads to higher customer satisfaction, while gaps between expected and perceived service result in dissatisfaction (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

The Health Belief Model (HBM) by Rosenstock (1974) provided insights into patient behavior concerning medication adherence and pharmacy visits (Rosenstock, 1974). Rosenstock identified four key components that influence health behavior: perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, perceived benefits, and perceived barriers (Rosenstock, 1974). Perceived susceptibility is an individual belief about the likelihood of experiencing a health issue (Rosenstock, 1974). Perceived severity is the individual's belief about the seriousness of the health condition and its potential consequences (Rosenstock, 1974). Perceived benefit is the belief that a specific preventive action will effectively reduce the risk of illness or improve health outcomes (Rosenstock, 1974). Perceived barriers are the potential obstacles or costs (financial, psychological, or physical) associated with taking preventive action (Rosenstock, 1974). If a person perceives a high risk of developing a disease, they are more likely to take preventive actions (Rosenstock, 1974). According to this model, patients' decision to seek pharmaceutical care are influenced by their perceived susceptibility to illness, perceived benefits of medication adherence, and perceived barriers such as high medication costs or poor pharmacist communication (Rosenstock, 1974).

Another relevant concept is the Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT) proposed by Oliver (1980), which explained how customer satisfaction is determined by the gap between pre-purchase expectations and post-purchase actual experiences (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). This model showed how consumers form satisfaction judgment based on their expectations and experiences with a product or service. The model consists of following key components: expectations, performance perception, disconfirmation, satisfaction judgment, and consequences of satisfaction (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). Customers develop expectations about a product or service before experiencing it and these are based on factors such as marketing, word-of-mouth, and past experiences (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). After using the product or services, consumers evaluate its actual performance is called the performance perception (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). Customers also compare their expectations with the perceived performance (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions,

1980). If the product or service meets or exceeds expectations (positive disconfirmation), satisfaction occurs (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). When it fell short (negative disconfirmation), dissatisfaction can be found (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). Moreover, the level of satisfaction depends on the degree of disconfirmation (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). Higher positive disconfirmation leads to stronger satisfaction, while significant negative disconfirmation results in dissatisfaction (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). Satisfaction influences future behaviors, such as repeat purchases, brand loyalty, and word-of-mouth recommendations (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). On the other hand, dissatisfied customers may switch brands and leave negative reviews (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). The researcher concluded that customer satisfaction is a dynamic and evolving process, influenced by cognitive evaluations of evaluations and performance (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980). His model provided valuable insights for business improvement in customer satisfaction by managing consumer expectations, ensuring consistent product performance and addressing service gaps (Oliver, A cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, 1980).

2.3 Variables of the Study

In this study on factors influencing customer satisfaction of community pharmacies in Yangon, the variables are classified into dependent and independent variables as follows:

2.3.1 Dependent Variable

Dependent variable is the outcomes that the study aims to measure and in this study we will measure customer satisfaction. In the study, customer satisfaction refers to the overall satisfaction of customers with the services provided by community pharmacies. It includes many aspects such as trust in the pharmacy process, willingness to return, and likelihood of recommending the pharmacy to others.

2.3.2 Independent Variables

The independent variables are the factors that influence customer satisfaction. Based on the relevant literatures, the key independent variables in this study include the quality and availability of pharmaceutical products, knowledge and professionalism of pharmacy staff or pharmacists, the attitude, service quality and communication of pharmacy staff or pharmacists, pricing and transparency, waiting time and operational efficiency, cleanliness and overall store environment, loyalty programs and promotional offers.

1. The quality and availability of pharmaceutical product – The availability of essential medicines at all time, quality and effectiveness of the medications provided, the consistency of stock to avoid shortages, availability of multiple brands for the same medication, availability of OTC and prescription medicines.
2. Knowledge and professionalism of pharmacy staff or pharmacists – The pharmacist or staff's expertise, knowledge, professionalism, and courtesy of pharmacy staff, clarity of medication instruction, availability of the pharmacist when needed for consultation.
3. The attitude, service quality and communication of pharmacy staff or pharmacists – The attitude and communication skills of staff, clear communication about medication use, the promptness and willingness of pharmacists and staff.
4. Pricing and transparency – The affordability of medications, transparency in pricing, transparency in additional costs before purchasing, availability of cost-effective alternatives.
5. Waiting time and operational efficiency – Speed of prescription processing, queue management in peak hours, billing and payment efficiency, minimal delays in providing medications.
6. Cleanliness and overall store environment – Hygiene and cleanliness of the pharmacy, store layout and ease of navigation, comfortable waiting area for customers, compliance with health and safety standards.
7. Loyalty programs and promotional offers – The availability of discounts and promotions, effectiveness of loyalty programs, influence of promotions on purchasing behavior, clear communication about available discounts

By analyzing the relationship between these independent variables and customer satisfaction (dependent variable), this study aims to identify key areas for improving pharmacy services and enhancing the overall healthcare experience in Yangon.

2.4 Review of Empirical Studies

In their 1982 study, “an investigation into the determinants of customer satisfaction,” Gilbert and others examined the factors influencing customer satisfaction, focusing on the roles of expectations, perceived performance and disconfirmation (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). For nondurable products, such as everyday consumables, customer satisfaction was influenced by initial expectations, perceived performance, and the disconfirmation experience (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). This aligns with traditional models where satisfaction results from the comparison between expectations and actual performance (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). In contrast, for durable products like appliances or electronics, satisfaction was primarily determined by perceived performance alone (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). Neither initial expectations nor the disconfirmation experience significantly impacted satisfaction levels in this category (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). These findings suggested that the determinants of customer satisfaction can vary on the type of products, and highlighted the importance for marketers to consider product-specific strategies when addressing customer expectations and perceptions (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982).

In 2006, Richard L. Oliver contributed to the understanding of customer satisfaction by emphasizing the expectancy disconfirmation level (Oliver, Customer Satisfaction Research, 2006). This framework posits that customer satisfaction arises from the comparison between initial expectations and actual performance (Oliver, Customer Satisfaction Research, 2006). If a product or service meets or exceeds expectations, satisfaction results; and if it falls short, dissatisfaction occurs (Oliver, Customer Satisfaction Research, 2006). Oliver’s work highlighted the importance of managing customer expectations and delivering consistent performance to achieve satisfaction (Oliver, Customer Satisfaction Research, 2006).

Additionally, research by Burns and Neisner in 2006 explored the role of emotions in customer satisfaction within retail settings (Burns & Neisner, 2006). Their study found that both cognitive evaluations and emotional reactions significantly influence satisfaction levels, with cognitive aspects being more dominant in retail environments (Burns & Neisner, 2006). This suggested that while emotions are important, customers’ rational assessments of their experiences play a crucial role in determining satisfaction in retail contexts (Burns & Neisner, 2006). These insights underscore the multifaceted nature of customer satisfaction, involving both cognitive

judgments and emotional responses (Burns & Neisner, 2006) (Oliver, Customer Satisfaction Research, 2006). For any businesses, understanding and addressing both aspects are essential for fostering positive customer experiences and building loyalty.

Researchers in Vietnam examined the factors that impact on community satisfaction with local pharmacies in Vietnam, with shedding light on how various service dimensions influence public perceptions and loyalty (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). The research employed a structured survey approach to access key service quality aspects including the physical environment, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy as conceptualized in the SERVQUAL model (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). Findings revealed that customers place significant emphasis on reliability and assurance (accurate medication dispensing, professional guidance), and a trustworthy service atmosphere are critical in fostering satisfaction (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). Moreover, medication availability and pricing transparency emerged as essential determinants in this study and frequent stock shortages and inconsistent pricing were shown to undermine trust and overall satisfaction (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). The study concluded that five important factors (staff's communication and attitude, how they consulted on medication and disease, facilities and convenience of the pharmacies, pharmaceutical products availability and variety, pricing of the drug) had a relationship with the customer satisfaction towards the community pharmacies service in Vietnam (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021). Researchers recommended for community pharmacies to invest in staff training, improve inventory management, and adopt more customer-centric practices, and suggested that such enhancements could lead to improve public health outcomes and a more robust healthcare system in Vietnam (Do, Foulon, Thuy, Tien, & Anderson, 2021).

In 2021, a study titled "Consumers' View, Expectation, and Satisfaction with Community Pharmacy Services" was published in the *Mediterranean Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences* (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). This research aimed to assess consumer perspectives and satisfaction levels regarding services provided by private community pharmacies in Libya (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). The study employed a descriptive, cross-sectional survey design, utilizing self-administered questionnaires (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed to adult patients and customers visiting community pharmacies, with 450 completed responses received, yielding a

75% response rate (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). Approximately 75% of participants reported that pharmacy staff interacted politely and 60% felt that their privacy was respected (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). Additionally, 60% agreed that staff listened attentively, and 50% were satisfied with the time spent during encounters (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). About 45% of respondents indicated that staff explained the mechanism of action for new medications (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). However, only 30% reported being asked about experienced side effects and their ability to use prescribed medicines properly (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). Notably, 60% stated that they did not receive information regarding proper medication storage (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). Over half (55%) of respondents perceived that community pharmacy services were more focused on commercial aspects than patient health (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). Similarly, 60% believed that services were more business-oriented than health-focused (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). A significant majority (85%) recognized community pharmacies as indispensable components of the healthcare system (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). Satisfaction with pharmaceutical product availability was reported by 40% of respondents, while only 20% were satisfied with product costs (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). In this study, the polite way of communication of the pharmacy staff, providing sufficient consideration and privacy, listening attentively are important factors when they considered the consumers' view, expectation and satisfaction with community pharmacy services (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). This study highlighted areas of low customer satisfaction concerning community pharmacy services in Libya's southern region (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021). It emphasized the need for pharmacy staff to adhere to ethical practices and codes of conduct to enhance service quality and patient trust (Pharm, alssageer, Hassan, & Rajab, 2021).

Analysis in Batam City of Indonesia, the researcher examined the key factors that drive customer satisfaction and subsequent purchase intention in the pharmacy (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). The study adopted a quantitative approach, using structured questionnaires distributed among pharmacy customers to collect data on various service attributes and customer perceptions (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). This attribute included service quality dimensions such as tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, as well as additional factors like pricing,

product availability, and the overall shopping experience (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). The analysis revealed that customer satisfaction is significantly influenced by the perceived quality of service (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). Factors such as the cleanliness of the pharmacy, the professional and knowledge of the staff, and the speed and accuracy of service delivery played a critical role in shaping customer satisfaction (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). In particular, the study found that customers value prompt and courteous service, which reinforces their trust in the pharmacy and contributes to a positive overall experience (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). Such satisfaction, in turn, has a direct impact on their purchase intention, encouraging repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). Furthermore, the study identified pricing and product availability as essential determinants of customer behavior (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). Competitive pricing and a consistent stock of essential medications and health products not only enhance customer satisfaction but also boost the likelihood of customers making a purchase (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). The findings suggest that when customers perceive that they are receiving fair value for their money and have access to the product they need, they are more inclined to complete transactions and become loyal patrons of the pharmacy (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). This research emphasized on the service quality improvement, effective inventory management, and transparent pricing policies and then, the brand image and price have strong influence on customer satisfaction and purchase intention of customers in the competitive market of Batam City (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020). This study provide valuable insights for pharmacy managers and policy makers by outlining practical measures to refine service delivery, and operational practices, to foster long-term customer loyalty and improve overall business performance in the healthcare retail sector (Kesumahati & Jurnal, 2020).

The research in Saudi Arabia aimed to assess patients' perceptions and satisfaction regarding the role of pharmacists as healthcare providers in community pharmacies within Riyadh (Al-Arifi, 2012). The study conducted from 125 community pharmacies across Riyadh's geographical regions representing approximately 10 to 15% of all community pharmacies in the city (Al-Arifi, 2012). Out of 2,000 patients approached, 1,699 responded, yielding an 85% response rate (Al-Arifi, 2012). The questionnaire comprised eight items focusing on patients' views and satisfaction with pharmacists' role in the current community pharmacy practice

(Al-Arifi, 2012). The majority of respondents are young adults and adults (82.8%) and approximately 71% of them confirmed the availability of pharmacists during working hours (Al-Arifi, 2012). Only 37.3% of respondent perceived pharmacists merely as vendors and 38% received unsolicited counselling from pharmacists (Al-Arifi, 2012). 35% noted pharmacist's active role in ensuring treatment compliance, and 43% recognized pharmacists' involvement in resolving pharmacists' involvement in resolving medication-related issues, and 34% views pharmacists as providers of health awareness (Al-Arifi, 2012). About 44.6% of respondents considered pharmacists to be indispensable and effective members of healthcare system (Al-Arifi, 2012). The study indicated an improvement in the image and professional performance of community pharmacists and patients exhibit better satisfaction, perception, and appreciation of pharmacist's role within the healthcare team (Al-Arifi, 2012). It recommended that pharmacists should proactively engage with patients, assess their concern, and offer prompts solutions to become effective and indispensable healthcare providers (Al-Arifi, 2012).

The cross-sectional study took place in Afyonkarahisar, Turkey and data were gathered using questionnaire that covered demographic details, specific service factors, satisfaction levels, and loyalty indicators (Gül, Helvacioğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). A total of 402 respondents responded, and the average age of participants was 32.02 years; 53.9 % were employed, 54.1% held a bachelor's degree, 11.7% had chronic diseases, and 16.1% were on regular medication (Gül, Helvacioğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). The study found several key service factors that communication and attitude of pharmacy staff had a positive impact on customer satisfaction, highlighting the importance of courteous and professional interactions in building trust with customers (Gül, Helvacioğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). Medicine supply was found to have strongest effect on satisfaction, and indicated that the consistent availability of medicines plays a crucial role in meeting patient needs (Gül, Helvacioğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). Additionally, the pharmacy environment, including cleanliness, organization and overall ambiance, also contributed positively to patient satisfaction (Gül, Helvacioğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). However, service promptness did not show a significant effect on satisfaction and suggested that there was a strong positive relationship between patient satisfaction and loyalty to the pharmacy (Gül, Helvacioğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). This investigation concluded that to enhance patient satisfaction and loyalty, community pharmacies should focus on improving communication, ensuring

consistent medicine availability, and maintaining a welcoming environment (Gül, Helvacıoğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023). Meeting both the medical and social expectations of patient is crucial for fostering satisfaction and loyalty (Gül, Helvacıoğlu, & Saraçlı, 2023).

The research of customer attitude in other business of Norway aimed to access how the three components of attitude: affective (feelings), cognitive (beliefs) and conative (behavioral intentions), influence customer attitudes towards both local and international coffee shop brands (Khanal, 2018). At international coffee shops, all three components significantly predict customer attitudes, with conative (behavioral intention) being the most influential, followed by affective and cognitive (Khanal, 2018). At local coffee shops, affective and conative were significant predictors of customer attitudes, but the cognitive component was not a significant predictor (Khanal, 2018). Overall, Norwegian customers exhibited a slightly more positive attitude toward local coffee shops compared to international ones (Khanal, 2018). This study concluded that affective, cognitive, and conative components are positively correlated with overall customer attitudes towards coffee shops (Khanal, 2018). These insights can aid entrepreneurs and marketers in formulating strategies that align with customer attitudes and preferences in market (Khanal, 2018).

2.5 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Conceptual model



Source: Own Compilation Based on Previous Studies

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methods

The study adopts a quantitative and descriptive research design to analyze the factors affecting customer satisfaction with community pharmacies. The factors were based on the previous research articles and it includes seven factors: product quality and availability of drugs, knowledge and professionalism of pharmacy staff or pharmacist, attitude, service and communication of pharmacy staff or pharmacist, pricing and transparency, waiting time and efficiency, cleanliness and store environment, loyalty program and promotions. Then, this research will determine the relationship between the dependent variables and independent variables analytically.

3.2 Research Designs

Research designs refer to the overall strategy used to integrate the different components of a study in a coherent and logical manner (Creswell, 2014) . The appropriate research design depends on the research objectives, nature of data, and methods of analysis. The research is carried out to analyze the factors impacting on customer satisfaction with community pharmacies in Yangon.

Sampling is the way to select a sufficient number of people from population for generalizing the characteristics of population (Sekaran, 2003). Convenience sampling is the process of gathering information of people from population who has availability to provide conveniently (Sekaran, 2003). Convenience sampling is the one of the best technique to get basic information of people rapidly and proficiently (Sekaran, 2003). The random sampling method will use in this study and participants who had used community pharmacies services will be collected for this study. Total sample population will be 323 participants.

3.3 Population and Sampling

Population refers to the set or group of all the units on which the findings of the research are to be applied. It is a set of all the units which possess variable characteristic under study and for which findings of research can be generalized. A part of population that represents it completely is known as sample. It means the units,

selected from the population as a sample, must represent all kind of characteristics of different types of units of population. Due to various reasons, data are collected from units of sample instead of all units of population in majority of researches and their findings are generalized in the context of entire population. This can be done precisely only if the efforts are made to select the sample by keeping in mind the characteristics of an ideal sample (Sekaran, 2003).

Convenience sampling will be utilized to collect data from customers of community pharmacies in Yangon, Myanmar. The sample size will be collected 323 customers, ensuring a diverse representation of dining experiences. Convenience sampling can be used by researchers to obtain important insights quickly by recognizing its benefits, eliminating any potential downsides, and combining it with other sample techniques. This is especially true in circumstances where other methods may be too expensive or inconvenient (Sekaran, 2003).

A non-probability sampling method was used in many previous studies. Also, to reduce errors and improve data accuracy, the sample size should be large enough. In the case of unknown population size, the following statistically formula was used to calculate the sample size:

$$\text{Sample Size} = \frac{z^2 \times p(1-p)}{d^2}$$

Where;

Z^2 = 95% of confidence level and equals 1.96

P = expected prevalence response which equals 70%

d^2 = is the level of precision or sampling error and equals 5% (0.05)

$$\text{Sample Size} = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.7(1-0.7)}{0.05^2} = 322.69 \approx 323$$

Therefore, the study designed a sample size of more than 323 customers of community pharmacies in Yangon, Myanmar. The questionnaire will be included demographic information and influencing factors on customer satisfaction. An explanatory research design will be used to examine these factors.

3.4 Data Collection Method

The study is collected the data from the primary data source by structured questionnaires. Self-administered questionnaires is designed and developed to measure satisfaction levels and identify key determinants. Each survey form is accompanied by a cover letter with the objectives of this study. In this study, the response of the participants towards each statement will be measured by 5 point Likert scale. The secondary data is based on the report or studies on the pharmacy sector in Yangon and literature on customer satisfaction in pharmacy services.

3.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive research design is used to systematically describe a phenomenon, characteristics, or behaviors of a population without influencing or manipulating any variables (Saunders & Thronhill, 2019). It helps in understanding the level of customer satisfaction in community pharmacies (Saunders & Thronhill, 2019). We used structured questionnaires to gather customer opinions and employed quantitative analysis such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution to summarize data. Mean and standard deviation are used to measure the average satisfaction score and variations, frequency and percentage are used to show the proportion of respondents in different categories.

Exploratory research design is used when little is known about a problem, and the goal is to gain deeper insights or develop a hypothesis for further research (Yin, 2018). It helps to explore new factors affecting customer satisfaction that may not have been previously studied in Myanmar's community pharmacies (Yin, 2018). It can guide the development of a more structured survey of future studies. Explanatory research design (causal research design) aims to establish cause-and-effect relationships between variables, typically using experiments or statistical methods (Bryman & Bell, 2015). It will determine how independent variables directly influence customer satisfaction. We used regression analysis to analyze relationships between factors. Then, we compare satisfaction levels across different demographics to see if variations exist and test hypotheses to confirm whether specific factors significantly influence customer satisfaction. The data collected in this study were analyzed by using SPSS version 23 and Microsoft Excel 2016.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

Conducting research on customer satisfaction requires adherences to ethical principles to protect the rights, privacy and well-being of participants. All participants will be fully informed about the purpose of the study, their role, and their rights to withdraw at any time. Participating in the study will be completely voluntary and no one will be forced or coerced into answering the questionnaire. Participants will have the right to skip any question they do not feel comfortable answering (Bryman & Bell, 2015). No personal identifiers will be collected to ensure anonymity and responses will be coded and stored securely, preventing unauthorized access. The data will be used only for research purposes and will not be shared with third parties. Data will be retained for a limited period and deleted after the study is completed. Before data collection, approval will be sought from an Ethical Review Board (ERB) and the study will follow local and international research ethics guidelines to ensure compliance.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Demographics of the Participants

Of the 350 questionnaires distributed, 323 were returned (92.3%). Participants' demographics are shown in Table 1. Most of the respondents in this study were female (n=210, 65%). The age group of 20 years to 40 years have the highest percentage of participants (n= 178, 55.1%). The second high population of age group is people within their 41 years to 60 years (n=88, 27.2%). Regarding the highest education level, most of them had a bachelor degree level (n=111, 34.4%). The common occupation of this study group is worker (n=186, 57.6%) and their income range is about 1Lakh to 3 Lakh (n=156, 48.3%). Most of the respondents came to visit pharmacies to purchase general medicines (n=226, 70%).

Table 2 Demographics Characteristics of the Participants

Demographics Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	113	35
	Female	210	65
Age	< 20 years	25	7.7
	20 to 40 years	178	55.1
	41 to 60 years	88	27.2
	> 60 years	32	9.9
Education Background	High School	118	36.5
	University	111	34.4
	Post-Graduate	59	18.3
	Others	35	10.8
Occupation	Student	39	12.1
	Worker	186	57.6
	Self-employed	31	9.6
	Retired	27	8.4
	Others	40	12.4
Monthly Income	Under 1 Lakh	32	9.9
	1 Lakh to 3 Lakh	156	48.3
	3 Lakh to 6 Lakh	65	20.1
	Over 6 lakh	70	21.7
Reason to visit pharmacy	Purchase general medicines	226	70
	Get consultation from pharmacist	1	0.3
	Refill medication for chronic treatment	32	9.9
	Others	64	19.8

4.2 Association of Demographic Characteristics of Participants and Their Satisfaction

The relationship of satisfaction score of participants upon their six demographic characteristics are determined by Student t-test ANOVA and only one participants' characteristic is significantly different between in their groups (p value < 0.05). The occupation of participants is significantly associated with the customer satisfaction on community pharmacies.

Table 3 The Association of Demographic Characteristics of Participants and their Satisfaction

Demographics Characteristics		N (%)	Mean $\pm$ SD	<i>P</i> value
Gender	Male	113	3.39 $\pm$ 0.66	0.646
	Female	210	3.38 $\pm$ 0.68	
Age	< 20 years	25	3.41 $\pm$ 0.56	0.244
	20 to 40 years	178	3.35 $\pm$ 0.67	
	41 to 60 years	88	3.37 $\pm$ 0.73	
	> 60 years	32	3.61 $\pm$ 0.56	
Education Background	High School	118	3.39 $\pm$ 0.66	0.609
	University	111	3.32 $\pm$ 0.73	
	Post-Graduate	59	3.42 $\pm$ 0.64	
	Others	35	3.49 $\pm$ 0.55	
Occupation	Student	39	3.18 $\pm$ 0.59	0.003*
	Worker	186	3.34 $\pm$ 0.67	
	Self-employed	31	3.28 $\pm$ 0.76	
	Retired	27	3.64 $\pm$ 0.54	
	Others	40	3.67 $\pm$ 0.67	
Monthly Income	Under 1 Lakh	32	3.34 $\pm$ 0.54	0.437
	1 Lakh to 3 Lakh	156	3.32 $\pm$ 0.69	
	3 Lakh to 6 Lakh	65	3.47 $\pm$ 0.73	
	Over 6 lakh	70	3.41 $\pm$ 0.61	
Reason to visit pharmacy	Purchase general medicines	226	3.37 $\pm$ 0.65	0.891
	Get consultation from pharmacist	1	3.4 $\pm$ 0.00	
	Refill medication for chronic treatment	32	3.35 $\pm$ 0.68	
	Others	64	3.44 $\pm$ 0.74	

*Significant (P value < 0.05) (Student t-test for two mean comparisons, and ANOVA test for more than two mean variables).

4.3 Satisfaction Scores for Current Pharmacy Services

Patient satisfaction scores with items showing pharmacy services in Yangon is presented by using descriptive statistics in Table 2. The item: “*The pharmacy provides alternative options when a specific medication is out of stock.*” had the highest mean (3.71 ± 0.781) and the item: “*The promotions and special offers provided encourage me to return to this pharmacy.*” showed the lowest mean (2.33 ± 0.819) respectively.

Table 4 Satisfaction Scores for Current Pharmacy Services

Items	1 N (%)	2 N (%)	3 N (%)	4 N (%)	5 N (%)	Mean $\pm$ SD
The quality and availability of pharmaceutical products						
The pharmacy provides a wide range of medications to meet my needs.	6 (1.9)	13 (4)	168 (52)	123 (38.1)	13 (4)	3.38 ± 0.715
The quality of medications provided by the pharmacy is reliable.	5 (1.5)	17 (5.3)	99 (30.7)	162 (50.2)	40 (12.4)	3.67 ± 0.819
I rarely experience situations where medications are out of stock and unavailable.	11 (3.4)	69 (21.4)	136 (42.1)	82 (25.4)	25 (7.7)	3.13 ± 0.949
The pharmacy provides alternative options when a specific medication is out of stock.	4 (1.2)	13 (4.0)	95 (29.4)	171 (52.9)	40 (12.4)	3.71 ± 0.781
I am satisfied with the variety of health products available at the pharmacy.	5 (1.5)	10 (3.1)	138 (42.7)	156 (48.3)	14 (4.3)	3.51 ± 0.702
Knowledge and professionalism of pharmacy staff or pharmacists						
The pharmacy staff or pharmacists are knowledgeable and answer my questions thoroughly.	6 (1.9)	38 (11.8)	157 (48.6)	100 (31.0)	22 (6.8)	3.29 ± 0.832
The pharmacy staff or pharmacists provide accurate and helpful medical advice.	6 (1.9)	51 (15.8)	154 (47.7)	90 (27.9)	22 (6.8)	3.22 ± 0.859
I feel confident in their recommendations and advice.	7 (2.2)	26 (8.0)	172 (53.3)	94 (29.1)	24 (7.4)	3.32 ± 0.811
The pharmacy staff or pharmacists treat me with respect and professionalism.	6 (1.9)	12 (3.7)	151 (46.7)	137 (42.4)	17 (5.3)	3.46 ± 0.735
The pharmacy staff or pharmacists are always available and willing to assist with my inquiries	5 (1.5)	62 (19.2)	155 (48.0)	91 (28.2)	10 (3.1)	3.12 ± 0.804

The attitude, service quality and communication of pharmacy staff or pharmacists						
The staff communicates clearly and listens to my concerns.	6 (1.9)	33 (10.2)	172 (53.3)	65 (20.1)	47 (14.6)	3.35 ± 0.915
The pharmacy staff provides clear and understandable explanations about medications.	5 (1.5)	23 (7.1)	180 (55.7)	68 (21.1)	47 (14.6)	3.40 ± 0.877
The staff treats me in a friendly and welcoming manner.	16 (5.0)	36 (11.1)	137 (42.4)	90 (27.9)	44 (13.6)	3.34 ± 1.01
I feel comfortable approaching the staff with my questions.	17 (5.3)	25 (7.7)	167 (51.7)	108 (33.4)	6 (1.9)	3.19 ± 0.814
I feel valued as a customer when visiting the pharmacy.	19 (5.9)	35 (10.8)	184 (57.0)	79 (24.5)	6 (1.9)	3.06 ± 0.813
Pricing and transparency						
The prices of the medications are reasonable and affordable.	12 (3.7)	67 (20.7)	136 (42.1)	91 (28.2)	17 (5.3)	3.11 ± 0.916
The pharmacy provides clear information about the costs of medications and services.	11 (3.4)	51 (15.8)	141 (43.7)	106 (32.8)	14 (4.3)	3.19 ± 0.873
The staffs are aware of any additional charges before making a purchase.	7 (2.2)	18 (5.6)	126 (39.0)	129 (39.9)	43 (13.3)	3.57 ± 0.869
The pharmacy provides discounts or cost-effective alternatives when available.	7 (2.2)	44 (13.6)	128 (39.6)	133 (41.2)	11 (3.4)	3.30 ± 0.826
I feel that the services and medications provided are worth the money I spend.	9 (2.8)	39 (12.1)	167 (51.7)	103 (31.9)	5 (1.5)	3.17 ± 0.765
Waiting time and operational efficiency						
The pharmacy fills my prescription in a timely manner.	11 (3.4)	20 (6.2)	198 (61.3)	85 (26.3)	9 (2.8)	3.19 ± 0.734
The waiting times at the pharmacy are reasonable.	7 (2.2)	24 (7.4)	190 (58.8)	95 (29.4)	7 (2.2)	3.22 ± 0.704
The billing process is quick and efficient.	2 (0.6)	36 (11.1)	175 (54.2)	103 (31.9)	7 (2.2)	3.24 ± 0.687
I rarely experience delays when purchasing medications.	16 (5)	80 (24.8)	144 (44.6)	76 (23.5)	7 (2.2)	2.93 ± 0.875
The pharmacy manages high customer traffic efficiently.	16 (5)	43 (13.3)	178 (55.1)	79 (24.5)	7 (2.2)	3.06 ± 0.813
Cleanliness and overall store environment						
The pharmacy is clean and well-maintained.	6 (1.9)	15 (4.6)	157 (48.6)	130 (40.2)	15 (4.6)	3.41 ± 0.736

The layout of pharmacy makes it easy to find what I needed.	7 (2.2)	19 (5.9)	132 (40.9)	146 (45.2)	19 (5.9)	3.47 ± 0.785
The waiting area is comfortable and well-maintained.	11 (3.4)	74 (22.9)	139 (43.0)	94 (29.1)	5 (1.5)	3.02 ± 0.848
The pharmacy follows proper hygiene and safety protocols.	2 (0.6)	11 (3.4)	210 (65.0)	93 (28.8)	7 (2.2)	3.28 ± 0.594
The overall environment of the pharmacy makes me feel comfortable.	10 (3.1)	25 (7.7)	183 (56.7)	99 (30.7)	6 (1.9)	3.20 ± 0.736
Loyalty programs and promotional offers						
The pharmacy offers regular discounts and promotions on medications.	13 (4.0)	147 (45.5)	104 (32.2)	52 (16.1)	7 (2.2)	2.67 ± 0.870
The pharmacy has a loyalty program that provides benefits for frequent customers.	21 (6.5)	122 (37.8)	107 (33.1)	68 (21.1)	5 (1.5)	2.73 ± 0.918
The promotions and special offers are relevant and useful to me.	23 (7.1)	107 (33.1)	118 (36.5)	73 (22.6)	2 (0.6)	2.76 ± 0.902
Information about promotions and discounts is easy to find.	32 (9.9)	138 (42.7)	114 (35.3)	37 (11.5)	2 (6)	2.50 ± 0.847
The promotions and special offers provided encourage me to return to this pharmacy.	52 (16.1)	129 (39.9)	126 (39.0)	14 (4.3)	2 (0.6)	2.33 ± 0.819
Customer satisfaction						
I am overall satisfied with the services provided by the pharmacy.	5 (1.5)	37 (11.5)	197 (61.0)	80 (24.8)	4 (1.2)	3.13 ± 0.677
I trust the pharmacy as my primary source for medications.	6 (1.9)	15 (4.6)	162 (50.2)	101 (31.3)	39 (12.1)	3.47 ± 0.835
I would recommend to the pharmacy to my family and friends.	5 (1.5)	28 (8.7)	130 (40.2)	119 (36.8)	41 (12.7)	3.50 ± 0.879
I plan to continue using the pharmacy for my future healthcare needs.	6 (1.9)	8 (2.5)	119 (36.8)	144 (44.6)	46 (14.2)	3.67 ± 0.818
The pharmacy meets or exceeds my expectation in terms of service quality.	15 (4.6)	22 (6.8)	196 (60.7)	82 (25.4)	8 (2.5)	3.14 ± 0.767

4.4 Reliability of Constructs

Reliability is the measurement of constructs' internal consistency in the study (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Alpha is the vital concept in the evaluation of questionnaires and a construct is reliable if the Alpha (α) value is greater than 0.70 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Table 3 shows Cronbach's alpha for each dimension of evaluation in customer satisfaction of community pharmacies in Yangon. In this study, Cronbach's alpha of each factor was higher than 0.7 (0.784 to 0.954). The results showed the quality and availability of pharmaceutical products scale with four items ($\alpha = 0.784$), Knowledge and professionalism of pharmacy staff or pharmacists scale with five items ($\alpha = 0.902$), the attitude, service quality and communication of pharmacy staff or pharmacists scale with five items ($\alpha = 0.922$), Pricing and transparency scale with four items ($\alpha = 0.881$), Waiting time and operational efficiency ($\alpha = 0.903$), Cleanliness and overall store environment ($\alpha = 0.851$), and Loyal programs and promotional offers ($\alpha = 0.859$) which are reliable.

Table 5 Cronbach's Alpha and Descriptive Statistics

Evaluation scale	No. of items	Cronbach Alpha
The quality and availability of pharmaceutical products	4	0.784
Knowledge and professionalism of pharmacy staff or pharmacists	5	0.902
The attitude, service quality and communication of pharmacy staff or pharmacists	5	0.922
Pricing and transparency	4	0.881
Waiting time and operational efficiency	5	0.903
Cleanliness and overall store environment	5	0.851
Loyal programs and promotional offers	5	0.859
Total	34	0.954

4.5 Determination of Factors Influencing on Customer Satisfaction of Community Pharmacies in Yangon

The multiple regression was conducted to examine the factors on customer satisfaction of the community pharmacies. The results in Table 5 showed that the linear multiple regression model between factors and customer satisfaction was proper to be used. In all of these factors, four factors had the statistically significant impact on customer satisfaction ($p < 0.001$). The four factors are knowledge and professionalism of pharmacy staff or pharmacists ($B=0.194$, $S.E = 0.050$), the attitude,

service quality and communication of pharmacy staff or pharmacists ($B = 0.359$, $S.E = 0.047$), cleanliness and overall store environment ($B = 0.185$, $S.E = 0.042$) and loyalty programs and promotional offers ($B = 0.179$, $S.E = 0.035$) respectively. The overall regression model was significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the model significantly predicts customer satisfaction. The model explained 71% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.713$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.709$), suggesting a strong fit and 71% of customer satisfaction can be explained by these seven factors.

Table 6 Regression Analysis of Factors Influencing On Customer Satisfaction of Community Pharmacies in Yangon

Items	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	95% CI for B	
	B	S.E	Beta		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Constant	0.106	0.146		0.469	-0.181	0.393
The quality and availability of pharmaceutical products	0.77	0.048	0.066	0.114	-0.018	0.172
Knowledge and professionalism of pharmacy staff or pharmacists	0.194	0.050	0.199	<0.001	0.096	0.293
The attitude, service quality and communication of pharmacy staff or pharmacists,	0.359	0.047	0.416	<0.001	0.267	0.451
Pricing and transparency	0.002	0.033	0.003	0.950	-0.062	0.066
Waiting time and operational efficiency	0.040	0.046	0.039	0.388	-0.051	0.131
Cleanliness and overall store environment	0.185	0.042	0.162	<0.001	0.101	0.268
Loyalty programs and promotional offers	0.179	0.035	0.186	<0.001	0.111	0.247

*R square 0.716, *Adjusted R square 0.709, *p (model Sig) < 0.001

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Findings and Discussions

The demographics of this study found greater health-seeking behavior among women as female participants (65% of all participants) significantly outnumbered than male participants (35%). The majority of the participants (55.1%) are between 20 years to 40 years of age, followed by 41 to 60 years (27.2%). This indicated that most pharmacy users are in their working-age years, possibly managing family healthcare needs as well. Most respondents have a high school (36.5%) or university level (34.4%) education and this implied a moderately educated customer base, possibly comfortable with some level of health information and instructions. The major occupation of the study is worker (57.6%) and this aligned with the age distribution and indicated that pharmacies serve primarily the employed segment. Nearly half (48.3%) earned between 1 Lakh to 3 Lakhs, suggesting a middle-income group dominated the sample. Smaller proportions earned under 1 Lakh (9.9%) or over 6 Lakhs (21.7%). Again, this supported the idea that the pharmacies serve a primarily middle-class clientele. A large majority of participants (70%) visited pharmacies to purchase general medicines. Only a small fraction came for chronic medication refills (9.9%) or for consultation (0.3%), and others (19.8%) may include purchases like personal care, OTC products, or medical supplies. This showed that the primary role of pharmacies was purchasing medicines, with limited use for professional consultation or chronic care support. The study reflected a predominantly female, educated, working-age, middle income population visiting pharmacies mainly for general medicines purchase. There is a limited role of pharmacists in providing consultations, and chronic care support appeared to be a minor driver for visits. From this results, this could highlight potential areas for service expansion at pharmacy for promoting pharmacist consultations, offering chronic disease management programs, and targeting male and elderly populations, who are underrepresented.

The customer satisfaction of both males and females reported similar average scores (3.39 and 3.38) and gender does not significantly influence the outcome of customer satisfaction. Although older adults (> 60 years) have slightly higher average scores, and the difference among age group is not statistically significant. Education level of participants does not significantly affect the mean scores, although post-

graduates and other education levels showed slightly higher means. Respondents' income level showed no significant association with the outcome through there is a slight trend of higher income correlating with higher mean scores of customer satisfaction. The reason for visiting the pharmacy did not significantly affect the measured customer satisfaction but the occupation of participants significantly impacted the participants' customer satisfaction. Retired individuals and others like informal workers and freelancers have higher customer satisfaction scores but students reported lower customer satisfaction scores.

In the quality and availability of pharmaceutical products, respondents are generally satisfied with the availability and reliability of the pharmacy's product offerings. The high score for providing alternatives when stock is unavailable (mean = 3.71) indicated strong stock management and customer support. The lower score for rarely out of stock (mean = 3.13) suggested stock-out issues still exist, though mitigated by alternatives. The pharmacy should maintain good inventory management to prevent stock-outs and continue offering alternatives and expand product lines as customer expectations grow.

Customer satisfaction ratings for knowledge and professionalism of staff or pharmacists are moderate to slightly high, showing a generally positive perception of staff competence and behavior. Their key strength is their respect and professionalism to customers (mean = 3.46) and availability (mean = 3.12) and perception of being valued (mean = 3.06) need improvement. Training staff in pharmacy to consistently communicate clearly, listen actively and be approachable can strengthen trust and perceived value of customers. More proactive engagement like greetings, check-ins and follow-ups could improve customer satisfaction scores.

Customers felt somewhat positive about pricing, but perceptions varied. Clarity and awareness of charges score were well (mean = 3.57), and implied good internal training. The pharmacy should post all prices of medications clearly, and staff could communicate costs proactively. The efficiency of pharmacy in this study was acceptable but not excellent.

The relatively low score of customer satisfaction (mean = 2.93) in rare delays indicated frequent complaints about slow service or peak-hour congestion. The pharmacy should consider workflow to redesign and additional staff during peak hours and introduce digital queue systems and SMS prescription notifications system.

The pharmacy's cleanliness and layout were highly appreciated, which positively affected satisfaction and the satisfaction score of waiting area comfort was neutral, which was hinting at space constraints or lack of amenities in the pharmacy. The pharmacy should improve seating, lighting and air circulation in the waiting area. It should maintain regular cleanliness and highlight hygiene compliance publicly such as posters and digital screens.

Customers perceived few benefits or incentives to remain loyal and this was the weakest area across all service categories of pharmacy. Promotions in pharmacy were not effectively communicated and personalized to customers. The pharmacy should develop a visible loyalty programs such as member card and point systems, and use in-store displays and digital communication to share offers. It should tailor promotions to customer needs based on purchase history.

While general satisfaction to community pharmacies is moderate but trust and loyalty are high as the score of 3.67 for future use is the second highest in overall and indicated strong repeat patronage. Even if the pharmacy services had a few operational gap, the customers are willing to stay and the pharmacy should focus on retention through value-added services and sustained quality.

The reliability of the scale in this study showed the Cronbach's Alpha value from 0.784 to 0.922 for each of the extracted factors and indicated that the items in each factors were internally consistent and well-constructed. Strong internal consistency across all dimensions indicated a high-quality survey instrument and the instrument is very useful to determine customer satisfaction of community pharmacies in Yangon, Myanmar. It strongly supported the validity of using this questionnaire to measure overall customer satisfaction with community pharmacies.

The quality and availability of pharmaceutical products is not strong and significant factor in predicting satisfaction in this model ($p > 0.05$). Knowledge and professionalism of staff or pharmacists is the key driver of customer satisfaction and rank third in importance in accessing customer satisfaction. The attitude, service quality and communication of staff or pharmacist are the top predictor and it is the most influential determinant of customer satisfaction. By improving soft skills and communication, the pharmacy can maximize the customer satisfaction. Pricing, transparency, waiting time and operational efficiency of pharmacy do not influence satisfaction significantly in this model. Clean and welcoming environment of pharmacy play a clear supporting role in satisfaction at pharmacy. Loyalty programs

and promotions programs drive customer retention and satisfaction especially in competitive markets.

5.2 Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on the findings, this study provides a clear roadmap for community pharmacies in Yangon to enhance customer satisfaction and retention. The most influential determinant of satisfaction is the attitude, communication, and professionalism of pharmacists and staff. The pharmacy management should conduct regular workshops on empathy, active listening, problem-solving, and respectful communication. The management should encourage staff to greet customers, check in on their needs, explain medications clearly, and follow up if necessary and should set up anonymous feedback channels so that customers can easily report staff behavior and service experiences, both positive and negative.

Pharmacy environment and physical set up should improve the comfortable waiting area as the neutral satisfaction score in this study suggested a need for better seating, lighting, air circulation, and amenities such as water dispensers and TV digital screens. The pharmacy should reinforce cleanliness through scheduled cleaning routines with hygiene practices and ensure clear signage, organized shelves, and easy-to-navigate aisles to reduce customer frustration and increase shopping convenience.

Even though the pharmacy can provide alternative products, stock out still happened and should introduce inventory alert systems and reorder automation to reduce this issue. The pharmacy should expand product variety according to purchase trends and customer suggestions. When products are unavailable, staff should proactively explain and recommend alternatives with clear dosage and pricing information.

In pharmacy, all medication prices are clearly visible on shelves and digital displays and must provide itemized bills. Digital queue system should introduce with queue tokens and mobile application to reduce congestion during peak hours. During peak periods, staff numbers should be increased to prevent delays.

To reward regular customers with promotions and customer retention programs, the pharmacy should launch member cards, points system and discount tiers and use purchase history to offer tailored promotions. The pharmacy should also improve

promotional communication with eye-catching store displays, banners and digital monitors to make ongoing offers more visible.

Based on this study, very few customers used pharmacists for consultation and it should raise awareness through campaigns like “Ask Your Pharmacist” to encourage interaction. The pharmacy should collaborate with physicians and clinics to offer chronic disease management programs such as hypertension, diabetes and asthma monitoring programs. Moreover, men and elderly individuals are underrepresented in this study and the pharmacy should design health check packages, senior discounts and male-specific health education issues to attract these groups.

To monitor satisfaction trends in pharmacy, the pharmacy should conduct regular customer surveys to evaluate progress and identify emerging gaps in customer service and should analyze customer visit frequency, purchase, and complaints to refine service delivery.

Community pharmacies in Yangon have a solid customer base characterized by working-age, middle-income, educated women. While overall satisfaction is moderate, there are clear opportunities to improve service quality, communication, environment, and loyalty mechanisms. By implementing these evidence-based recommendations, pharmacies can not only boost satisfaction but also achieve sustained customer trust, increased repeat visits, and long-term growth.

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