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The impact of demographic characteristics on vulnerability of consumers to counterfeit drugs in a developing country

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Abstract

Counterfeiting of medicines in developing countries has been reported as a distressing issue. Moreover, although desperate need and drug counterfeiting are linked, no much study has been carried out to cover this area. Therefore, this study was conducted to assess the impact of demographic variables, including age, annual income, working status, education, and gender with respect to increasing or decreasing vulnerability of consumers to counterfeit drugs. It reports on two studies conducted in two Sudanese states, namely Khartoum and Gadaref. In study 1 in-depth qualitative interviews with a purposive sample of knowledgeable policy-makers and community pharmacists were undertaken. Study 2 employed a face-to-face structured interview survey methodology to collect data from 1003 subjects. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques (ANOVA) were used to evaluate the data. While study 1 identified that economic status is the only demographic charactor play a role in increasing or decreasing vulnerability of consumers to counterfeit drugs, study 2 showed that a significant difference in purchase intention of counterfeit drugs was supported for all demographic groups with exception of age groups. Overall, findings throughout study 1 and study 2 were inconsistent, but however, though inconsistent it may be informative as it may demonstrate, rather than inconsistency, that the views of policy makers and practitioners are different from those of consumers. This could have negative implications reflected in that interventions developed by those policy makers and practitioners will consider only their views about the problem and is unlikely to address the real problem.

Biography

Abubakr A. Alfadl has completed his M.Sc. from Strathclyde University and Ph.D. studies from Universiti Sains Malaysia. He is Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice, College of Pharmacy, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia. He has published three papers in reputed journals and serving as an editorial board member of Sudanese Journal of Public Health.

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