ABSTRACT
The practice of pharmacy in the country has undergone rapid changes. Change is inevitable, and it is essential to change with the times. Merely “selling” medicines across the counter would be a thing of the past, as shifts would take place, in view of the opening up of the economies, evident entry of foreign players in retail pharmacy market, and changing health care needs of our clients. The recent amendment to the Indian Patent Act would throw up newer challenges. Sudden attention to high pricing of generics, pricing regulations, all have begun to affect the smaller players in the pharmaceutical industry, and this would lead to closures, mergers and acquisitions. The time has come to change. The mission of pharmacy practice is to provide medications, other health care products, relevant information, and professional services and to help people and society to make the best use of them. Every activity in the pharmacy (from procurement, storage, to handling & filling of prescriptions, to providing patient information and rational use of medicines) needs to be done with certain systems and confidence, in order to give the right touch of professionalism and care.

Keywords: Retail pharmacy market, Health care, Indian Patent Act, Professional services

INTRODUCTION
Health is a word very familiar to us but it also carries a lot of complications and problems. According to the World Health Organization health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely absence of any illness. To make the above definition of health practical we have to depend upon a "health care team". A health care team is the group of people who share a common health goal and common objectives determined by community needs. India with the greatest cultural diversity, health though an important issue is being neglected due to many hindrances. The condition is further worsened due to insignificant drug use problems. On the spurge of many spurious, duplicate and adulterated drugs, it is in the hands of the pharmacist particularly the community pharmacist, to take up the challenge for providing better health care and better outcomes economically.

To change the status of Indian pharmacists from drug trader’s dispensers to health care providers, pharmacists should start interacting with the physician and the patient. In the near future, the pharmacist would be considered and recognized as the leader of medical treatment too. Pharmaceutical organizations in India have taken note of this change and they are stressing the functioning of pharmacists as health care provider. According to the changed scenario, the expanded functions of dispensing pharmacists as health care provider are Family Pharmacist, Dispensing of medication, Patient counselling, Treating common ailments, Avail clinical services, Health screening services, Home care services, Professional relationship, Drug information services, Continuing training programs, Participation in social work and in national health programmes.
PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

In India, the practice of community pharmacy in its true professional sense is still in its infancy. However, emergence of large pool of pharmacists does have a major role as professional and health care service providers in the society with other health professionals. If their full potential is realized, like in other developed countries, they can be experts in medicine management and can be part of national health and pharmaceutical policies.

PROBLEMS RELATED TO RETAIL PHARMACIST

1. Non-recognition of the role of Pharmacist: Patient, other health care providers and the government have not recognised the role of the pharmacist. They are not aware of what services the pharmacist might or should provide beyond trading of medicines. In hospitals also, persons other than pharmacists look after the purchase and inventory of drugs under the supervision of the medical officer.

2. Isolation of Pharmacist: At the doorstep of the government and in the public, the pharmacy profession is isolated. Though the pharmacist is in direct contact with the patient, the patient and physicians are not aware of the role of the Pharmacist in health care. As part of the curriculum, the degree pharmacists mostly take industrial training and diploma pharmacists take training in private, medical shops or hospital pharmacies. Therefore, the component of pharmacy practice should be increased at B.Pharma level also.

3. Insufficient continuing education and training: The poor recognition of the role of the pharmacist in health care has been linked with the insufficient education and lack of professional functioning of the pharmacist. A pharmacist who has diploma education runs almost all retail pharmacies in India. Whether the pharmacist is a diploma holder or degree holder there was no compulsion for continuous professional development for the practicing pharmacists. The standard of education and or curricula must be upgraded for each level of training to ensure consistency and appropriateness.

In most countries, basic qualification to practice pharmacy is six years D.Pharm degree and up to two year internship before registration. Periodically, they have to undergo refresher courses to upgrade knowledge.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A problem well defined is the problem half solved. The research process begins with the problem discovery and identifying the problem which is the first step towards its solution. The formulation of the problem is often more essential than its solution. The problem of the study contains the hidden need for the research project.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. To study the Good Pharmacy Practices to be followed by community pharmacists.

2. To know ways to continuously implement the change in the Management of Retail Medical Stores.

HYPOTHESIS

H₀: Good Pharmacy Practices does not play an important role in Retail Medical Stores Management.

H₁: Good Pharmacy Practices plays an important role in Retail Medical Stores Management.

CONCLUSION

1. The practice of pharmacy in India is governed by many laws. It is important to adhere to these laws, and to perform all pharmaceutical activities within the purview of these laws.

2. A prescription is an important, legal document and its legality and authenticity needs to be ascertained at all stages of dispensing.
3. Medicines are classified into different schedules or categories. Medicines should be sold only after taking into consideration the legal requirements for their sale.

4. The sale of medicines should only be undertaken under the personal supervision of a Registered Pharmacist.

5. An improvement in refrigeration technology has provided frost-free refrigerators. Pharmacists should prefer such frost-free refrigerators as they are easy to maintain and protect printed packaging materials. Refrigerators also provide separate and large compartments for the freezer portion and the main storage area with separate doors so that opening one of the doors does not disturb the storage temperature in the other compartment. Pharmacists also need to plan for adequate number of such units to store the entire stocks requiring such refrigerated storage.

6. A systematic system needs to be in place to review selection of medicines to be procured, and to quantify the requirements of medicines, which forms the basis of a good procurement process.

To conclude, the role of community pharmacist is indispensable in providing better health care. Steps should be taken by the government and the pharmacist himself to make his recognition in the community as a better health care provider. The main driving force will have to come from pharmacists themselves. They are best able to decide what can be achieved and within what time scale.

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