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Phenomenological Study on Self-medication and Medication Practices in An Urban Poor Community: A Basis for Community Development Services

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Abstract

Self-medication has set off an expanding public health consideration due to its extensive practice, often seen as a cutback measure amidst the identified high costs of medicines. However, the rise of medication malpractices has led to important issues and entailed intervention programs. Using a phenomenological research design within a qualitative framework, the study gathered data through focus group discussions. The research aimed to assess participants' lived experiences, perceptions of self-medication, and the factors influencing their decisions to self-medicate. The participants' responses, based on their experiences and observations, revealed how they manage various illnesses within their community. Key themes that emerged from the study include the convenience of self-medication, financial constraints, and misconceptions about conventional medicines and healthcare services. The findings indicate that self-medication is a prevalent practice in Zonta Village, providing residents with a convenient way to manage illnesses at home. However, the study also highlighted that several factors influence the decision to self-medicate, potentially leading to risks for the residents. The study contributes to the development of community health services to address the issues surrounding self-medication, suggesting the need for targeted interventions to promote safer medication practices and improve overall community health. The researchers suggest that local health offices utilize this study to address medication malpractices within communities, emphasizing the need to recognize issues such as antibiotic abuse, unhealthy medication habits, and disease masking. Additionally, they recommend that the Department of Health (DOH) consider this study as a reference when developing programs and policies aimed at combating these issues.