

## **ABSTRACT**

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The role and importance of packaging in consumer communication have been extensively studied and analyzed by numerous researchers. However, despite the comprehensive scope of the topic, there has been limited focus on identifying the specific needs of older adults regarding pharmaceutical products and examining the role that pharmaceutical packaging plays in their purchasing decisions. A review of the existing literature indicates that older adults exhibit unique needs and expectations related to the aging process. The studies analyzed identify various deficiencies in over-the-counter (OTC) medication packaging that directly impact usability challenges for seniors. Despite the recognized deficiencies, there remains a lack of studies that thoroughly and holistically explore the requirements and expectations of older adults concerning the use of OTC medications. This study endeavors to address this gap by providing an in-depth analysis aimed at understanding and responding to these specific needs.

The dissertation is both theoretical and empirical in nature, comprising six chapters, with two dedicated to theoretical analysis and four to empirical research. The theoretical discussion is based on a thorough review of the relevant literature. In the empirical section, original research is presented, confirming the significance of exploring the needs and requirements of older adults with respect to OTC products and their packaging.

The empirical research was conducted in four stages:

1. Assessing older adults knowledge levels concerning OTC products and their packaging.
2. Analyzing the needs and expectations of older adults in relation to OTC medications and packaging.
3. Evaluating selected OTC packaging available on the market using selected quantitative and qualitative methods.
4. Proposing improvements to OTC packaging that address identified needs.

As a result of this empirical research, the primary goal of the study was achieved, to develop guidelines for improving OTC medication packaging that meets the requirements of older adults, along with the specific objectives to:

- analyze older adults knowledge levels concerning the use of OTC medications packaged in diverse materials and designs,

- define the hierarchy of needs and expectations of older adults concerning OTC medications and packaging,
- evaluate the OTC medication packaging available on the market from the perspective of older adults needs and expectations.

Furthermore, the research enabled verification of the study's hypotheses:

H1: Older consumers possess a low level of knowledge about OTC products and their packaging.

H2: OTC medication packaging available on the market inadequately meets the needs and expectations of seniors.

H3: OTC medication packaging varies in terms of informational content and functional usability.

H4: The correlation between older consumers' needs and expectations regarding the informational and functional aspects of OTC packaging influences their purchasing choices.

Hypotheses H1 and H3 were positively verified, while hypotheses H2 and H4 were not conclusively confirmed.