



A Survey on Self Medication among the General Population in Pondicherry

S. Rajini^{1*} and Tamil Selvi¹

¹*Department of Community Medicine, Sri Lakshmi Narayana Institute of Medical Sciences, puducherry, India.*

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Article Information

DOI: 10.9734/JPRI/2021/v33i45A32752

Editor(s):

(1) Syed A. A. Rizvi, Nova Southeastern University, USA.

Reviewers:

(1) Nabila Boujaber, Chouaib Doukkali University, Morocco.

(2) Valdemir José Alegre Salles, University of Taubaté, Brazil.

Complete Peer review History: <https://www.sdiarticle4.com/review-history/73610>

Original Research Article

Received 25 July 2021
Accepted 01 October 2021
Published 01 October 2021

ABSTRACT

Although pharmaceuticals have made a main influence to health, a large proportion of the world's population today are facing problems when consuming and accessing medicines. Healthcare professionals are usually sharing their health decisions with their patients in terms of the availability of medicines and its accessibility. Accordingly, patients are being more involved in taking actions either with or without direct healthcare professional guidance, seeking for other facilities to obtain medicines or tend to self-care. Self medication is becoming common in our routine life. This is actually an unhealthy and risky practices. Present study was done to determine the survey on self medication among the general population. A cross sectional study was conducted among the general population of pondicherry. 111 persons took part in this cross sectional study. Data is analysed using suitable statistical methods. Among 111 persons participated in the study the most common reason to take self medication is in case of minor illness and the sources of information about the drug is from the previous prescription and the drugs they get from medical shop. Only 28.4 % visits the qualified medical practioner in case of illness and mostly they have taken medicines for cough, cold, sore throat and followed by that they have taken medications for headache. Out of 111 persons most of them have taken is analgesics followed by allergy medications. The general population has taken the self medication which is a wrong practice.

Keywords: Self-medication; general population; practice; availability; accessibility; analgesics.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to William Osler, a great feature which differentiates man from animals is the wish to take medicine. Self-medication includes the use of medicinal crops by the individuals to treat self-recognized disorders or symptoms, or the alternating or nonstop use of a medication agreed by a physician for chronic or recurring diseases or symptoms [1,2]. Self-medication includes obtaining medicines without a medicine, resubmitting old preparations to purchase medicines, sharing medicines with relatives or members of one's social circle or using leftover medicines stored at home [3]. Self-medication practices cannot be considered as entirely harmful. Drugs classified as "over the counter" can be purchased without prescription and many a times might [4,5].

Self-medication performs were quite high in this study, and these practices were also predominant among the educated people. The physicians and health professionals have to spend some extra time in educating patients regarding the same. Improved knowledge and understanding about self-medication may result in rationale use and thus limit emerging microbial antibiotic resistance issues.

The present studies were conducted at community level in India to measure the greatness of self-medication practices. Studies of such nature will provide useful insight on the reasons for which patients resort to this practice and might help the policy makers and regulatory authorities to streamline the process of drug regulations, updating the list of essential medicines, and safety issues of over the counter drugs [6,7]. With this background, the present study was done to estimate the prevalence of self-medication for allopathic drugs and also to look for association between self-medication and socio demographic characteristics in an urban Puducherry. This study also focused the attitude of people, who follow the practice of self-medication.

2. METHODOLOGY

A cross sectional study on usage of self medication among the general population. Consent was obtained before providing the form. Basic Performa containing name, age, gender, educational qualifications were asked. The

survey consists of 7 questions related to intake of self medications. Microsoft Word and excel were used for calculating data. A pre designed semi structured questionnaire was used to collect the relevant information pertaining to the study variables. The questionnaires were assessed for their completeness and only the completed questionnaires were considered for the final analysis. The collected data was analysed using SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social Sciences) version 11.5. The results obtained were expressed in proportion

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Among 111 persons participated in the study the most common reason to take self medication is in case of minor illness and the source of information about the drug is from the previous prescription and the drugs they get from medical shop. Only 28.4 % visits the qualified medical practioner in case of illness and mostly they have taken medicines for cough, cold, sore throat and followed by that they have taken medications for headache. Out of 111 persons most of them have taken is analgesics followed by allergy medications.

In our study, we found that female students were more interested in taking Self-medication as compared to male students; this may be due to the fact that the female students are more hesitant to go to the hospital or outpatient department for minor illness. Similar findings were there in the study done by Thadani et al. [8].

Out of 111 persons 80.3% have taken self-medication which is supported by the studies done elsewhere reported 76% in Karachi [3]. 94.1% in Slovenia, [9] 76.9% in Bahrain [10]. In our study, most of the persons who took self medication gave the reason that they no need to visit the doctor for minor illness 52.1% easy and convincing (19.7%) confidence on their knowledge about taking medications (17.1%) Similar findings were there in the study done by James et al. [10].

In our study, we found that source of information was previous prescription (44.4%) this may be due to the fact that they had visited the doctor for the same illness previously and do not found it necessary to again visit the doctor for the similar complaints.

Age

115 responses

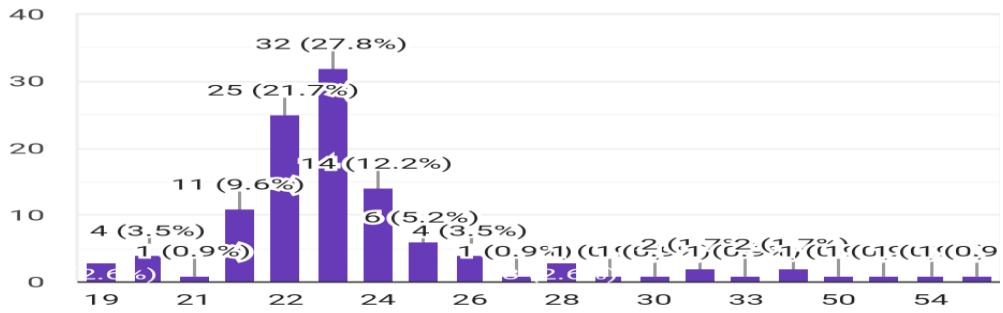


Fig. 1. Distribution of age frequency

Sex

116 responses

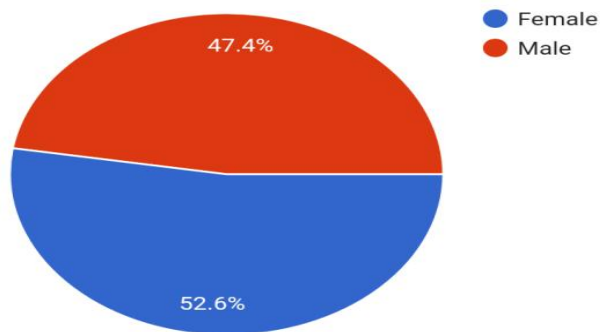


Fig. 2. Distribution based on Sex

Education

116 responses

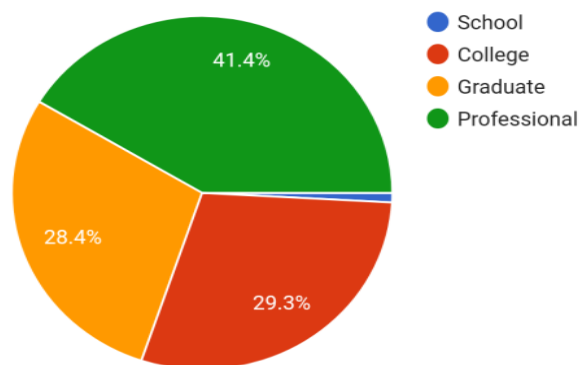


Fig. 3. Distribution based on education

Whether taken self medication or not

116 responses

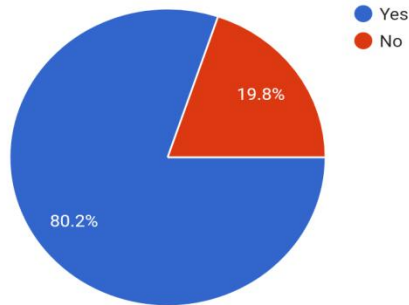


Fig. 4. Distribution based on Self medication

According to you which of the following was the... self medication

116 responses

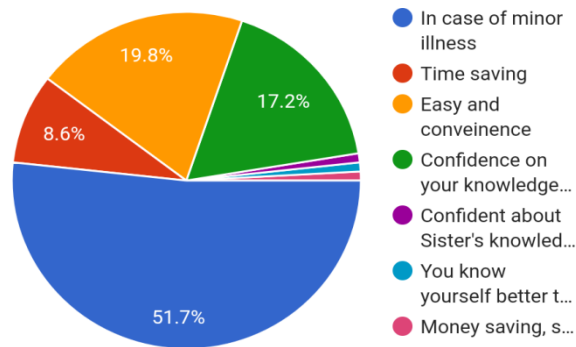


Fig. 4(a). Pie chart of self medication

If yes then what was the source of drugs used for self medication

116 responses

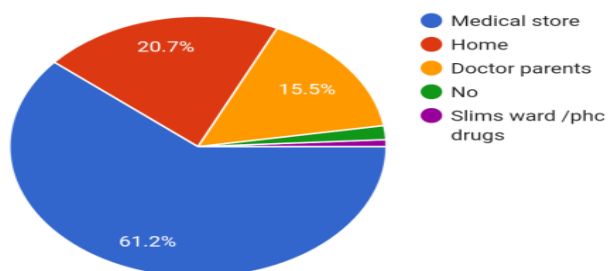


Fig. 4(b) Source of collecting the drug for self medication

According to you what were the indication for self medication

116 responses

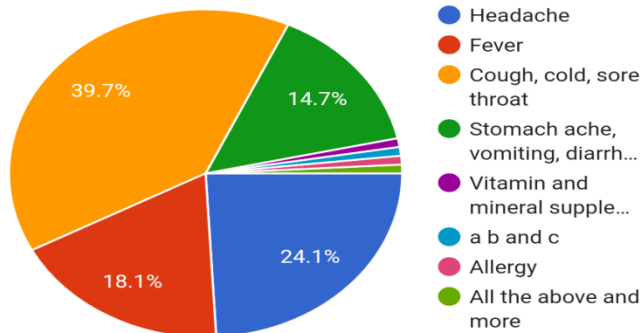


Fig. 5. Showing the indication of self medication

Whether visited a qualified medical practitioner or not

116 responses

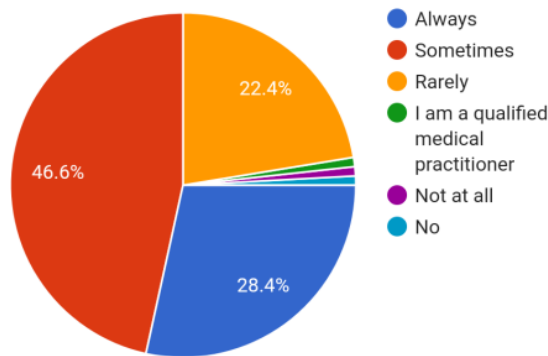


Fig. 6. Pie chart showing survey result for medical practitioner visit

Which of the drugs were used for self medication

90 responses

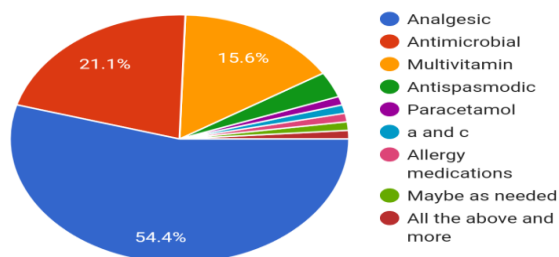


Fig. 7. Variety of drug for self medication

Which of the following was the source of informa...elf medication?

116 responses

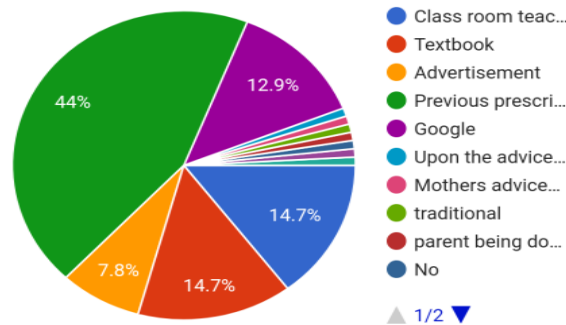


Fig. 8. Source of information about self medication

We also found that major source of the drugs used for Self-medication was medical store; this may be due to ease and convenience, similar results were found in the study done by Klemenc et al. [9]. We found that most of the students took Self-medication was for cold cough and sore throat that may be due to easy spread of infection in the community and the analgesics were the most important drug that has been taken up (53.8) administered. Similar findings were there in study done by Zafar et al. [3] and James et al. [10].

Analgesics were the most common group of drugs used for Self-medication in our study; similar findings were there in the study done by James et al. [10] and Thadani et al. [8].

4. CONCLUSION

The healthcare professionals and others healthcare authorities should work together to increase the awareness of the public about the negative effects of self-medication if used inappropriately and help them to make the right decision related to health problems. In addition, educational intervention programs are needed to educate people on the proper use of non-prescription medicines that are usually taken for treating their minor illnesses. The self medication is mainly due to lack of awareness and knowledge and hence proper knowledge and advice must be made to the public about the disadvantage of taking drugs without a qualified medical practitioner.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

ETHICAL APPROVAL

As per international standard or university standard ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the authors.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES

1. Porteous T, Bond C, Hannaford P, Sinclair H. How and why are non-prescription analgesics used in Scotland? *FamPract* 2005;22(1):78-85.
2. Montgomery AJ, Bradley C, Rochfort A, Panagopoulou E. A review of self-medication in physicians and medical students. *Occup (Lond)*. 2011;61(7):490-7.
3. Zafar SN, Syed R, Waqar S, Zubairi AJ, Waqar T, Shaikh M, et al. Self-medication amongst University Students of Karachi: Prevalence, Knowledge and Attitudes. *J Pak Med Assoc*. 2008;58(4):214.
4. Sontakke SD, Bajait CS, Pimpalkhute SA, Jaiswal KM, Jaiswal SR. Comparative study of evaluation of self-medication practices in

- first and third year medical students. *Int J Biol Med Res.* 2011;2(2):561–4.
5. Abay SM, Amelo W. Assessment of self-medication practices among medical, pharmacy, and health science students in Gondhar University, Ethiopia. *J Young Pharm.* 2010;2(3):306-10.
 6. Vizhi SK, Senapathi R. Evaluation of the perception, attitude and practice of self-medication among business students in 3 select Cities, South India. *International Journal of Enterprise and Innovation Management Studies (IJEIMS).* 2010;1(3):40–4
 7. The Dangers of Self-Medicating [Internet]. Alternatives in Treatment - Drug Treatment Center Located in Boca Raton, Florida; 2015. [Cited 2017 Aug 4]. Available:<http://www.alternativesintreatment.com/combiningdrugs/dangers-self-prescribing-self-medicationprescription-otc-drugs-2>
 8. Thadani S, Salman MT, Ahmad A. Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Self-medication Among Second Year Undergraduate Medical Students. *J Rational Pharmacother Res.* 2013;1(3):131-4.
 9. Klemenc-Ketis Z, Hladnik Z, Kersnik J. Self-medication among healthcare and non-healthcare students at University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. *Med PrincPract.* 2010;19(5):395-401.
 10. Kaushal J, Gupta MC, Jindal P, Verma S. Self-medication patterns and drug use behavior in housewives belonging to the middle income group in a city in northern India. *Indian journal of community medicine: official publication of Indian association of preventive & social medicine.* 2012;37(1):16.

© 2021 Rajini and Selvi; This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Peer-review history:
The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
<https://www.sdiarticle4.com/review-history/73610>