

# Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice about Self Medication among Rural Areas in Erode District

Sivasakthi K\*, Koshila KS, Sajeer Mohammed K, Viswa S

Department of Pharmacy Practice, JKKMMRF's Annai JKK Sampoorani Ammal College of Pharmacy, Komarapalayam, Tamil Nadu, INDIA.

## ABSTRACT

**Background:** In India, it is very common to observe self-medication practice, which is emerging as a challenge to health care providers. Few studies were conducted at community level in rural India to assess the magnitude of self-medication practices. **Aim:** This study aims to assess the awareness of self-medication practices and attitude among rural areas in Erode district. **Materials and Methods:** A Cross sectional study was conducted with a self-directed survey based questionnaire among 150 people who held permanent residence in rural areas in Erode district with different socio-economic backgrounds from the age group of 20 to 50 yrs. **Results:** Among the 150 samples, the maximum study sample lies in the age category between 20-30 years, 53.33% were men and 46.67% were women, 28.67% of people were graduate. The most common reason for self-medication was doctor's clinic far from home (22.39%) and doctor's fee (22.34%). The most common symptoms used for head ache (22.01%) and fever (16.77%). 87% of people take self-medication under the source of pharmacy shop. Over 90% of people saw the information at the time of taking self-medication but only 40% of people should understand the information partially. Commonly used medicines were analgesics (44%) and antibiotics (42%). **Conclusion:** Self-medication is a global phenomenon. Study reveals that with increasing the literacy, the demand of self-medication also increasing day by day. So that pharmacists and other healthcare professionals should make the awareness to the public about self-medication.

**Key words:** Self-medication, Literacy, Pharmacist, Awareness, Appropriate use.

## INTRODUCTION

Self-medication is a human trait in which an individual (or a member of the individual's family) selects and uses medicines or any other substances for the treatment of self-recognized or self-diagnosed physical or psychological ailments.<sup>1</sup> Conventionally, it has been described as intake of drugs, herbs or other home remedies on an individual's own persuasion or taking the advice of another person without consulting the physician.<sup>2,3</sup> Thus it forms an integral part of patient's self-care which in fact is the first choice and is one of the most curious tools when an individual encounters common health problems that do not require a doctor's visit.<sup>4,5</sup> Due to insufficient medical facilities, the free accessibility of over-the-counter (OTC) drugs in the local market and

the impoverished national drug regulatory policy, it is now becoming a very common occurrence in numerous countries of the world. Other reasons for self-medication are the shortage of time to visit a physician, inability to get a quick appointment, mild illness, long distance of hospitals and clinics from home and finally unaffordable doctor's fees.<sup>6</sup>

According to WHO, Self-medication is the selection and use of medicines by persons to treat self-recognized illness or symptoms. This broadly includes old prescription, referring prescription, consulting friends and acquiring medication without prescription, consulting relatives and neighbor's social group sharing medicines.<sup>7-9</sup> Nowadays, most

DOI: 10.5530/ijopp.13.3.37

Address for correspondence:  
Dr. Sivasakthi K Pharm D (PB)

Assistant professor, Department of Pharmacy Practice, JKKMMRF's Annai JKK Sampoorani Ammal College of Pharmacy, Komarapalayam-638183, Tamil Nadu, INDIA.

Phone no: +91 9952692134

Email Id: sakthi.siva1292@gmail.com



www.ijopp.org

of the people prefer the self-medication because people are most conscious about health and patients want immediate relief. There is an increased trend of self-medication particularly among the educated people.<sup>10-12</sup> This study aims to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice towards self-medication among rural population.

The Pharmacists plays a valuable role in identifying, solving and preventing drug related problems for the purpose of achieving optimal patient outcomes and quality of life. Appropriate use of OTC products are very effective and saves money while improving outcomes.<sup>13</sup>

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A population based cross sectional study was carried out with people who held permanent residence in rural areas of erode district with different socio-economical backgrounds from the age group of 20 to 50 years.

During this study, 150 people were interviewed and those fulfilling the inclusion criteria of investigation were enrolled into the study. Inclusion criteria considered for the study included people who are easily available for data collection and interested to provide information willingly. Exclusion criteria considered for this study included people who are not comfortable to give information and those people who are less than 20 years in age.

A Self-directed survey based questionnaire was used to assess the knowledge, practices from students, working women and housewife's living in rural areas. The questionnaire which includes socio-economical data and questions assessed to provide knowledge and general awareness about self-medication. The questionnaire was distributed to the people among rural areas. We collected the information from the people to assess the knowledge in attitude, practice and awareness about self-medication.

The data was analyzed by using standard statistical tools. Based on the data, thereby creating awareness to the people who didn't have the proper knowledge about self-medication practices. It was done by providing leaflets to the people thereby creating awareness.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Among the 150 samples, the age category were ranged from 20-50 years and the maximum study sample lies between the age of 20-30 years (51.33%); 53.33% were men and 46.67% were women, majority of 53.33% of people were married, majority of 58.67% of people were employee, majority of 91.33% of people were Hindu. The greater number of 28.67% of people were graduate which correlates with Serdar Oztora *et al.* (Table 1).<sup>14</sup>

Most of the people prefer self-medication because of the reason of doctor clinic far from home (22.39%), doctor fee (23.34%), medicines in their home (15.77%), having old prescription (7.89%) and saving their time (16.40%) (Table 2). The greater number of people take self-medication for minor ailments like head ache (22.01%), running nose(14.68%), cough(15.09%), fever(16.77%), dental problems(10.48%), acidity (4.19%), joint pain(7.34%), constipation(4.19%), menstrual problems (2.09%) and hair fall (3.14%)(Table 3). These data's correlated with Deborah tolulopeesan *et al.*<sup>15</sup>

A greater number of the people obtain the drugs under the source of pharmacy shop(86.67%), friends(3.33%), online shop(3.33%), medical representatives (4.67%) and others(2%)which correlates with Mohammed BIsset ayalew *et al.* (Figure 1).<sup>16</sup> Only 89.33% of people read the given information, out of these 33.58% of people fully understand the information of drugs, 40.30% of people understand the information partially, 26.12% of people not understand the information while using self-medication, 88.67% of people without experiencing any ADR and 11.33% of people experiencing ADR which in correlation with Lee CH *et al.*<sup>17</sup>

In chronic diseases, only 3.33% of people are using self-

**Table 1: Distributions of responders according to the qualification.**

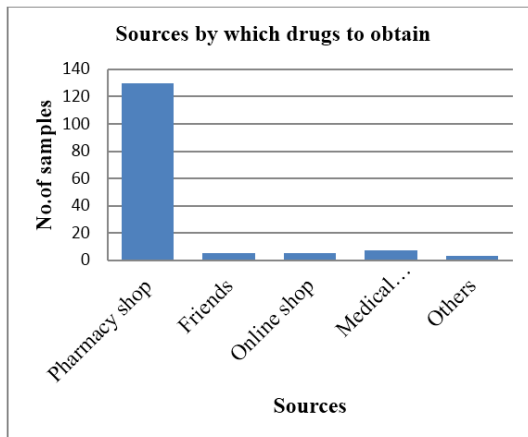
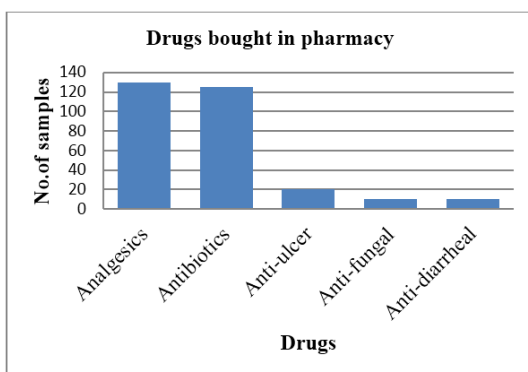
Qualification	Number(N=150)	Percentage (%)
Illiterate	1	0.67
PrimarySchool	14	9.33
SecondarySchool	40	26.67
College	40	26.67
Diploma	11	7.33
Graduate	43	28.67
PhD	1	0.67

**Table 2: Distributions of Responders According to the Reasons.**

Reasons of self-medication	Number of responses (N=317)	Percentage (%)
Doctor clinic far from home	71	22.39
Doctor's fee	74	23.34
Saves time	52	16.40
I have old prescription	25	7.89
I have medicines in my home	50	15.77
Pharmacist	20	6.31
Advice no trust in doctor	15	4.73
Other's explain	10	3.15

**Table 3: Distributions of Responders According to the Self Medication Taken for Diseases.**

Diseases	Self-medication taken (N=477)	Percentage (%)
Head ache	105	22.01
Running nose	70	14.68
Cough	72	15.09
Dental problems	50	10.48
Acidity	20	4.19
Fever	80	16.77
Pain in joints	35	7.34
Constipation	20	4.19
Menstrual problems	10	2.09
Hair fall	15	3.14

**Figure 1: Distributions of Responders According to the Sources.****Figure 2: Distributions of Responders According to the Drugs.**

medication for chronic diseases and rest of the 96.67% of people are not using self-medication for chronic diseases. People brought medicines under the source of pharmacy include analgesics (44.07%), antibiotics (42.37), anti-ulcer (6.78%), anti-fungal (3.39%) and anti-diarrheal (3.39%) which correlates with Renuchauhan. *et al.* (Figure 2).<sup>18</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Several research papers show that self-medication is a global phenomenon. This study focused on the self-medication of the OTC drugs, their use and reason for using it. Study reveals that with increasing the literacy, the demand of self-medication also increasing day by day. The ratio of literate people who are using the self-medication is high as compared to that of illiterate people. Common reasons for using self-medication are doctor's clinic far from home and then save time. Most of the responder using self-medication for headache and fever. So that the pharmacists and other healthcare professionals should make the awareness to the public about self-medication and prevent the supply of self-medications.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are grateful to our principal, Vice-principal and HOD, Department of Pharmacy Practice, JKKMMRF's Annai JKK Sampoorani Ammal College of Pharmacy for their valuable contribution and consistent encouragement.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## ABBREVIATIONS

**WHO:** World Health Organization; **OTC:** Over the counter; **POM:** Prescription Only Medicines; **ADR:** Adverse Drug Reactions.

## SUMMARY

Self-medication forms an integral part of patient's self-care which in fact is the first choice and is one of the most curious tools when an individual encounters common health problems that do not require a doctor's visit. The ratio of literate people who are using the self-medication is high as compared to that of illiterate people. Common reasons for using self-medication are doctor's clinic far from home and then save time. Most of the responders using self-medication for headache and fever. So that the pharmacists and other health care professionals should make awareness to the public about self-medication and prevent the supply of self-medications.

## REFERENCES

1. World Health Organization: The role of the pharmacist in self-care and self-medication. Report of the 4<sup>th</sup> World Health Organization.
2. Consultative Group on the role of the pharmacist in health care system. 1998.
3. Kamat VR, Nichter M. Pharmacies, Self-medication and pharmaceutical marketing in Bombay India. *Social Science and Medicine*. 1998;47(6):779-94.
4. Hussain A, Khanum A. Self-medication among university students of Islamabad, Pakistan: A preliminary study. *Southern Med Review*. 2008;1(1):14-6.

5. World Health Organization. Guidelines for the regulatory assessment of medicinal products for use in self-medication WHO/EDM/QSM/001. 2000. Available: <http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/en/d/Js2218e/>.
6. Zafar SN, Syeed R, Waqar S, *et al.* Self-medication amongst university students of Karachi: Prevalence, knowledge and attitudes. *The Journal of the Pakistan Medical Association*. 2008;58(4):214-7.
7. Vargese S, Durgawale PM, Mathew P. Prevalence of Self-medication in an Urban Slum Area in Maharashtra. *Journal of Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences University*. 2013;2(2):108-10.
8. Kalaiselvi S, Ganesh KS, Archana R. Prevalence of self-medication practices and its associated factors in Urban Puducherry, India. *Perspectives in Clinical Research*. 2014;5(1):32-6.
9. Afridi M, Rasool G, Rabia T, *et al.* Prevalence and pattern of self-medication in Karachi: A community survey. *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences*. 2015;31(5):1241-5.
10. Yasmin M, Ashraf JSM, Tahira M, Shahla Z, Sara A. Self Medication among University Students of Karachi. *Journal of Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences*. 2011;10(3):102-5.
11. Gupta P, Bobhate PS, Shrivastava SR. Determinants of self-medication practices in an urban slum community. *Asian Journal of Pharmaceutical and Clinical Research*. 2011;4(3):54-7.
12. Mehta RK, Sharma S. Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of self-medication among medical students. *IOSR Journal of Nursing and Health Science*. 2015;4(1):89-96.
13. World Health Organization. The role of the pharmacist in self-care and self-medication. Geneva: World Health Organization. 1998. [cited 2016 Dec 13]. Available from: <http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/pdf/whozip32e/whozip32e.pdf>.
14. Serdar O, Gulnar N, Ayse C, Hamdi ND. The practice of self-medication in an urban population. *Biomedical Research*. 2017;28(14):6160-4.
15. Deborah T, *et al.* Assessment of Self-Medication Practices and Its Associated factors among Undergraduates of a Private University in Nigeria. *Journal of Environmental and Public Health*. 2018;5439079:1-7.
16. Mohammed BA. Self-medication practice in Ethiopia: A systematic review. *Patient Preference and Adherence*. 2017;11:401-13.
17. Lee CH, Chang FC, Hsu SD, Chi HY, *et al.* Inappropriate self-medication among adolescents and its association with lower medication literacy and substance use. *Plos One*. 2017;12(12):e0189199.
18. Renuchauhan C. A study of the Prevalence, Pattern and Perception of Self Medication among Medical Students in North India. *IJCMR*. 2017;4(9):1970-3.