

Pharmaceutical Care Provider with Health Educator's Role in Self-Medication and Self Care: An Urgent Demanding Role!

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Abstract: In the views of global acceptance of the new role of pharmaceutical care providers with health educators in providing the level of awareness for self medication and self care health issues amongst college student as well as others in general, it is actually the need of the hour to take up this role. The study was aimed to assess the existing level of knowledge of self medication awareness among college students. The awareness, knowledge and practice were assessed in the study with the help of a designed "Questionnaire" for age group of 17-28 years which consisted of college students. *Questionnaire* consisted of different questions related to self medication and self care like, major sources of drug for self medication, reasons for prominent diseases and seriousness for self medication. Responses were analysed based on feedback obtained from *questionnaire*. 53.96% students found drugs from medical/pharmacy store in self medication and 7.93% used left over drug/medicine from previous prescription. About 95.22% felt self medication would not cause serious event, high level of ignorance's are prevalent among population. Most of the students were not aware about the self medication and those who were aware, not serious for self medication. A high level of ignorance, wrong knowledge and lack of awareness was observed among the students. Thus inclusion of health education and counselling in their syllabi is advocated. It emphasizes their responsibility and underlined to provide informed and objective advice on medicines and their use, to promote the concept of pharmaceutical care and to actively participate in illness prevention and health promotion. In view of the findings of the survey, the emerging responsibility of pharmaceutical care providers and health care educators, role as "care giver, decision maker, communicator manager, lifelong learner, teacher, leader and researcher" should be urgently implemented.

Key words: Self Medication • Self Care • Health Educators

INTRODUCTION

The patterns of medication use are an important health indicator [1]. The misuse of non-prescription drugs amongst student's population has become a serious problem. The youth is especially exposed to the media and the increased advertising of pharmaceuticals poses a larger threat to the young population. This raises concerns of incorrect self-diagnosis, drug interaction and use other than for the original indication.

Self-medication is defined as obtaining and consuming drugs without the advice of a physician either for diagnosis, prescription or surveillance of treatment [2]. This includes acquiring medicines without a prescription, resubmitting old prescriptions to purchase medicines, sharing medicines with relatives or members of one's social circle or using leftover medicines stored at home [3]. The misuse of non-prescription drugs amongst students has become a serious problem, which would lead to promote wrong practices among societies. In the view of global acceptance of the new role of pharmacist as a

pharmaceutical care provider and health educator and the level of awareness regarding health issues amongst college student as well as others in general, it is actually the need of the hour to take up this role.

Self-Care: Self-care is what people do for themselves to establish and maintain health, prevent and deals with illness [4].

It is a broad concept encompassing:

- hygiene (general and personal);
- nutrition (type and quality of food eaten);
- lifestyle (sporting activities, leisure etc.);
- environmental factors (living conditions, social habits, etc.);
- socioeconomic factors (income level, cultural beliefs, etc.);
- self-medication.

Self-Medication: The World Health Organisation defines self-medication as “the use of medicinal products by the consumer to treat self-recognised disorders or symptoms, or the intermittent or continued use of a medication prescribed by a physician for chronic or recurring diseases or symptoms” [5]. Self-medication is the selection and use of medicines [6, 7] by individuals to treat self recognised illnesses or symptoms [8]. “Self-medication is one element of self-care”.

Medicines for self-medication are often called ‘non-prescription’ or ‘over the counter’ (OTC) and are available without a doctor’s prescription through pharmacies. In some countries OTC products are also available in supermarkets and other outlets. Medicines that require a doctor’s prescription are called prescription products (Rx products).

Self-medication with OTC medicines is sometimes referred to as ‘responsible’ self-medication to distinguish this from the practice of purchasing and using a prescription medicine without a doctors’ prescription. This is irresponsible (and potentially even dangerous) ‘self-prescription’ and has no place in self-care or (responsible) self-medication.

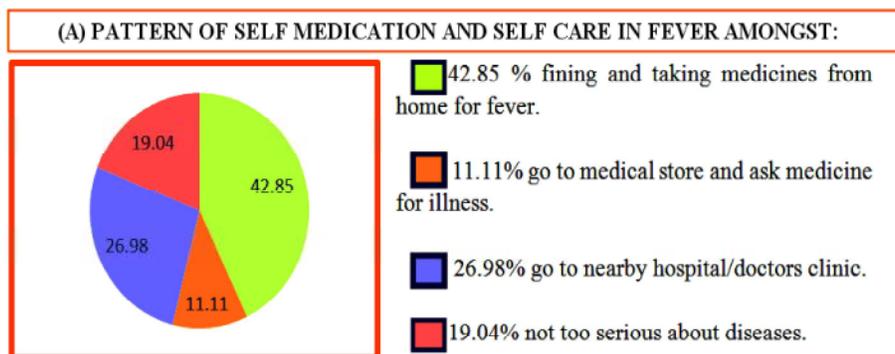
MATERIALS AND METHODS

The objective of the study was to assess students of age group ≥ 17 years for their knowledge and practices on self medication and self care management on various health issues. The *Cross sectional study* was conducted by participation and simple random selecting 1008 college students from different streams from the age group of ≥ 17 years at Raipur (Chhattisgarh, India) during Oct 2013-Jan 2014. The study population consisted of about both male and female students. We developed an “*English Questionnaire*” specifically for this survey, translated it into national languages and back translated in local/regional languages it to ensure consistency [9]. The nature and purpose of study was described briefly and designed questionnaire was then given to assess their knowledge awareness on self medication and self care.

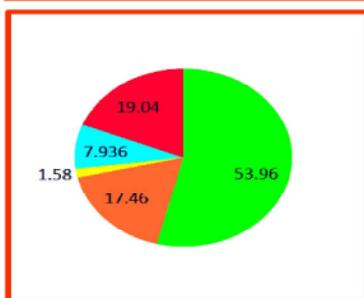
Respondents were classified as self-medicating if they reported that they had taken any drugs in the previous 12 months without a prescription from a physician, dentist, or nurse and vice versa. Data were analysed and represented graphically.

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS

Responses were analysed represented based on correct replies from designed questionnaire.

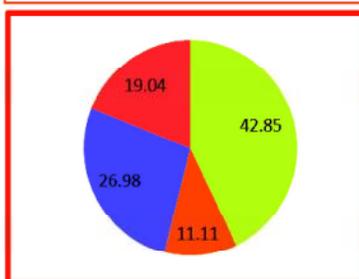


(B) MAJOR SOURCES OF MEDICINES FOR SELF-MEDICATION, MAINLY STUDENT FOUND FROM:



- 53.96% found medicine from medical/pharmacy store.
- 17.46% waiting for progression of disease, to became serious
- 1.58% found medicines from friends and neighbour.
- 7.936% used left over drug/medicine from previous prescription
- 19.04% getting medicines from family members itself.

(A) PATTERN OF SELF MEDICATION AND SELF CARE IN FEVER AMONGST:



- 42.85 % finding and taking medicines from home for fever.
- 11.11% go to medical store and ask medicine for illness.
- 26.98% go to nearby hospital/doctors clinic.
- 19.04% not too serious about diseases.

Brief Questionnaire

Name:.....year.....Sex.....
 Institute Name / Address

QUESTIONNAIRE USED FOR ASSESSING PATTERN OF SELF-MEDICATION AND SELF CARE

Q1: If you have fever you would like to do first:

- a. Finding and taking medicine from home.
- b. Go to medical store and ask medicine for illness.
- c. Go to nearby hospital/ doctor clinic.
- d. Not to serious about disease.

Q2: Major sources for medicine for self-medication main you find:

- e. Medical/Pharmacy store.
- a. Wait for some hour/time.
- b. Friends and neighbour.
- c. Left over drug/medicine from previous prescription.
- d. Getting from family member itself.

Q3: Prominent disease condition that predisposed respondent for self medication:

- a. Cough cold and fever.
- b. Body ache/pain/headache.
- c. Diarrheal/dysentery.
- d. Gastric disorder and acidity.

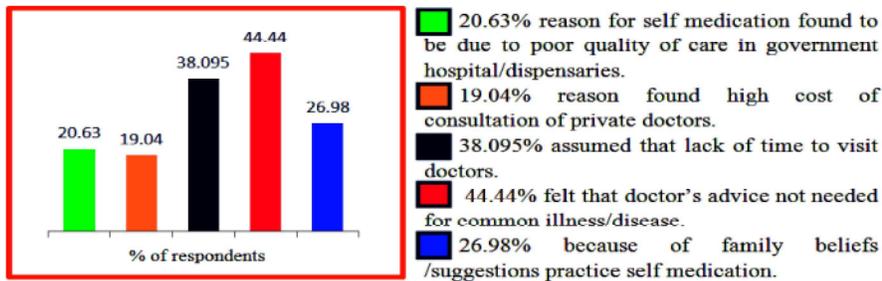
Q4: Your reasons for self-medication: (You can choose multiple ticks)

- a. Poor quality of care in government hospital/dispensaries.
- b. High cost of consultation of private doctors.
- c. Lack of time to visit doctors.
- d. Doctor advice not need for common illness/disease.
- e. Because family beliefs/suggestion for self medication.

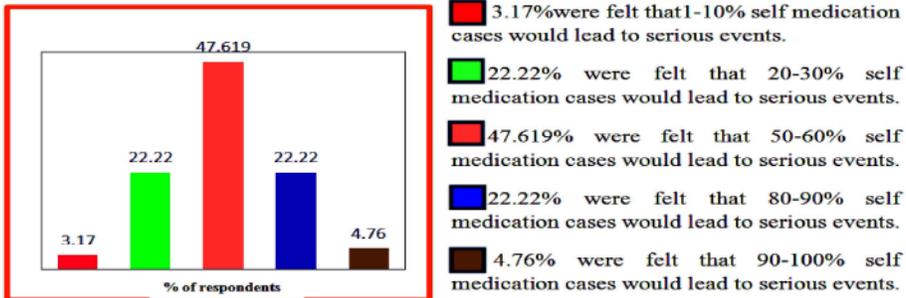
Q5: How much you feel serious about self medication would causes serious event:

- a. 1-10%
- b. 20-30%
- c. 50-60%
- d. 80-90%
- e. 90-100%

(D) REASONS BEHIND FOR PRACTICING SELF MEDICATION FOUND TO BE:



(E) LEVEL OF SERIOUSNESS ABOUT SELF MEDICATION WOULD CAUSES SERIOUS EVENTS:



DISCUSSION

Based on respondents completed the questionnaires. The responses were calculated and shown the prevalence rates of major sources of drug/medicine for self medication would be from nearby medical/pharmacy store [10]. 19.04% population getting medicines from family members itself for their illness and disease with 7.936% used left over medicine from previous prescription from there medicine cabinets and boxes at home itself [11].

A high degree of ignorance's saw about 42.85% finding, that they were taking medicines from home itself for fever condition. Cough, cold and fever are prominent condition [12] that predisposed respondent 52.38% start self medication followed by 30.15% for body ache/pain/headache [12] problem. 4.76% only felt serious about self medication would lead to serious events, a high degree of absences of alertness seen on self medication [13].

These observations are similar to those reported by the WHO that self-medication provides a cheaper and convenient alternative for treating common minor illnesses [14] and which would lead to burden on health sector and economy.

These data gave message us, that encourage the population for healthy habits and rooting out the habit of self medication among them. Mode of media advertisement, TV/News would also be very helpful in rooting out the problems. Our findings contribute to the growing evidence that urgently need of inclusion of self medication knowledge at their syllabus.

Report generated from our study advocate the demanding role of pharmaceutical care provider that is to say pharmacist [15] would play a lead role along with other health care educators to uproot the wrong practices among public. The preliminary reports generated from our study are in flow and indicative [16] which demand great attention to promote betterment of public health.

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