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SELF CARE AND SELF-MEDICATION IN KHAMMAM DISTRICT, TELANGANA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study was aimed at assessing the magnitude and factors of self-medication among various regions in Khammam district. A cross sectional study with 6 month illness recall was conducted. Most commonly used drugs like paracetamol (92.26%), saridon (95.82%), nimusulide (50%), citrizen (92.26%) were obtained from the pharmacy. common reported illness werefever and head-ache followed by cough and common cold. Prior experience and the non-seriousness of the illness were top reported factors for self-medication. Reading materials were the top reported source of information. In conclusion, self-medication was practiced with a range of drugs from the conventional anti pains to antibiotics though the practice of self-medication is inevitable, drug authorities and health professionals need to educate students about the pros and cons of self-medication.

KEYWORDS: Self-Medication, Illness, Health Professionals.

INTRODUCTION

Self-medication is the treatment of common health problems with medicines especially designed and labelled for use without medical supervision and approved as safe and effective for such use. Medicines for self-medication are often called “non-prescription” or “over the counter” drugs. Around the globe, the number of people opting for self-medication is increasing day by day. Responsible self-medication can do a world of good to many people’s lives. It can.

- Help to prevent and treat symptoms and ailments that do not necessarily call for a doctor such as common cold, fever.
- Reduce the pressure on medical services where health care personnel are insufficient.
- Most importantly it can increase the availability of health care to populations living in rural or remote areas.

The basic formative step in formulating a drug policy that involves responsible usage of self-medication by the general public is to show a clear delineation between OTC and prescription products. This also encourages conscientious use of medicines in general, by even the illiterate masses. All of the information required to permit safe and effective use must come from the labelling material, patient information texts, the individual's previous personal experience, and various sources of information in the media, advertising and advice given by health care professionals.It should be emphasized that there are marked differences in opportunities to obtain access to this information between people with different socioeconomic and educational backgrounds and in different countries. Well-tested labelling designed for a particular cultural milieu can help to reduce these differences. However, it should not be used in a way that would limit the availability of the OTC product.

Good self-medication should offer the individual consumer: efficacy, reliability, safety. At the community level, good self-medication can also provide benefits such as saving scarce medical resources from being wasted on minor conditions, lowering the costs of community funded health care programmes and reducing absenteeism from work due to minor symptoms. Improper self-medication could result in an increase in drug-induced disease and in wasteful public expenditure. It is important to realize that many of the risks are not unique to self-medication, they can also occur in the prescription situation.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The present study aimed at finding below given objectives

- What is the frequency of self-medication?
- To find for which ailments people taking OTC
- Which drugs are frequently used?
- Is there any relation between educated and uneducated in taking the drugs?
- To find adverse events due to this self-medication

RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

Study site: study was carried in various parts of Khammam district, kothagudem, Paloncha, Manuguru, Yellandu, Thadikelapudi and Rudrampur.

Study population: the cross-sectional study was conducted on 1480 people including educated and uneducated, ladies and gents.

Data collection and analysis**:** The pre-tested, semi-structured questionnaire was prepared. Data was collected from different age groups, gender, and socio-economic status. The study subjects were informed that the information collected would be anonymous and participation would be totally voluntary. The age, sex and year of study were noted. The information regarding the type of medication, illness for which the medication was used and the reason for not consulting a doctor was collected. The pattern of drug use over a two-month period preceding the study was noted. Their attitude toward self-medication and source of information for those who practiced self-medication were also recorded. Data were analysed using SAS version 9.1 and Microsoft excel and the results were presented using absolute figures and percentages. Analysis was done by using chi-square test of significance, to identify the associations among variables.

Questionnaire

- Questioned about health related problems.
- The name of the drugs they frequently use.
- Whether they self-medicate or not.
- What are the adverse events they observed.
- What is their age and economic status?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

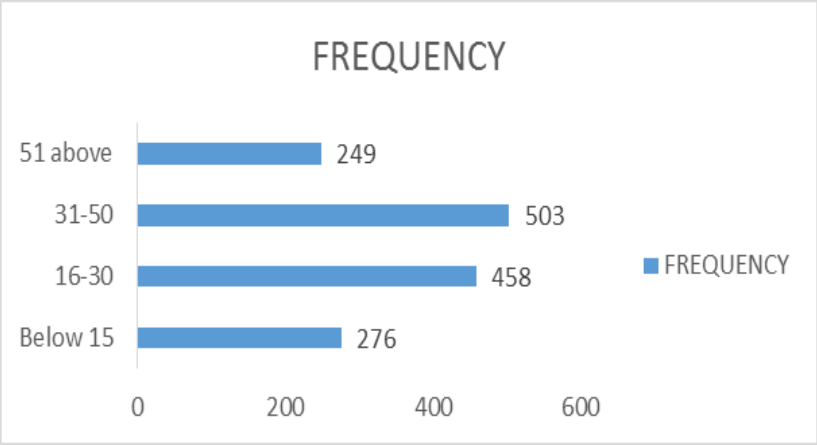
Details of the Participants in the Study

Distribution of participants depending on the age

There are 1486 participants in this study. There are different age groups distributed in this study. 33% of the participants are between 31-50 years and 30% of them are between 16-30.

Table. 1.

AGE				
Age	**Frequency**	**%**	**Cumulative frequency**	**Cumulative percent**
Below 15	276	18.57	276	18.57
16-30	458	30.82	734	49.39
31-50	503	33.85	1237	83.24
51 above	249	16.76	1486	100

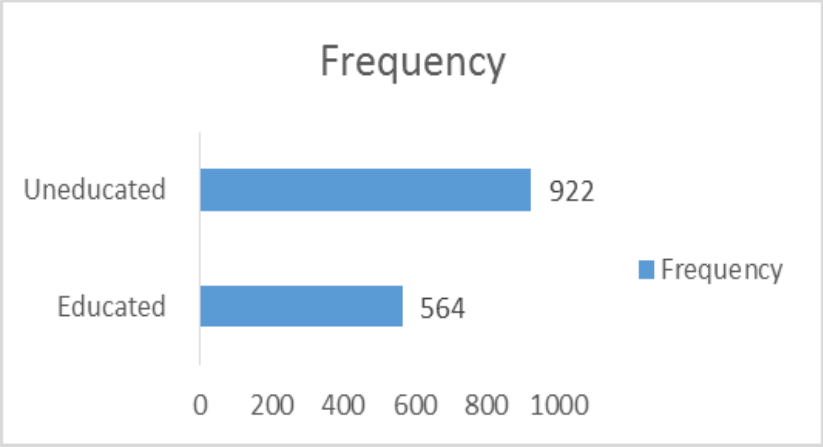


Graph. 1: Distribution of the participants depending on the education.

Most of the participants are uneducated. The percentage of uneducated is 62.05% and educated is 37.95%.

Table. 2.

EDUCATION				
Education	**Frequency**	**%**	**Cumulative frequency**	**Cumulative percent**
Educated	564	37.95	564	37.95
Uneducated	922	62.05	1486	100



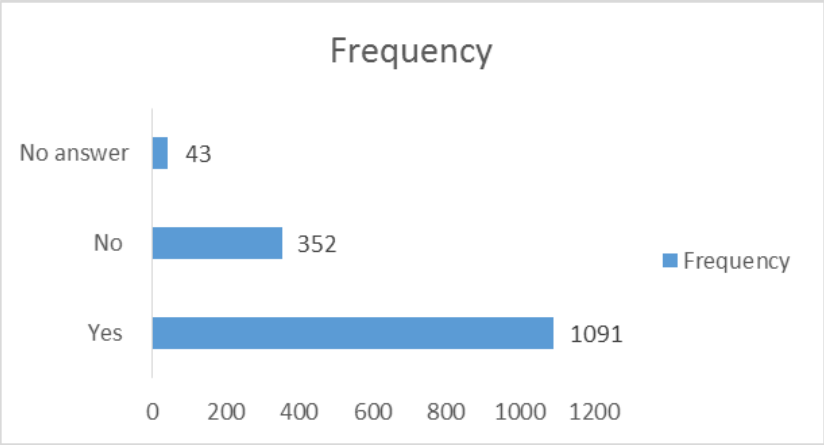
Graph. 2.

Frequency of participants taking self-medication

Among 1486 participants 1091 are taking their medicines without consultation of doctors. Among the participants 1091 said "yes" to the question whether they are taking the medicines, 352 members said "no" and there is no answer from 43 members.

Table. 3.

Self-Medication				
Self-medication	**Frequency**	**%**	**Cumulative frequency**	**Cumulative percent**
Yes	1091	73.42	1486	100
No	352	23.69	352	23.69
No answer	43	2.89	395	26.58



Graph. 3.

Frequency of self-medication by problem

Questionnaire also conducted to know for which problems participants taking medicines frequently. Fever and headache are two ailments for which participants taking self-medication frequently.

Table. 4.

Problem By Self-Medication				
Problem	**Self-medication**			**Total**
	no	**No answer**	**Yes**	
Headache , body pains	0	0	1	1
Allergy	0	0	1	1
Anxiety	0	0	1	1
Asthma	0	0	2	2
Asthma & fever	0	0	2	2
Back pain	3	0	3	6
Back pain & bone problems	0	0	1	1
Back pain & fever	0	0	1	1
Blurred vision	1	0	0	1
Body pains	1	0	19	20
Body pains and fever	0	0	1	1
Body pains headache fever	0	0	1	1
Body pains & cold	0	0	1	1
Body pains & fever	0	0	4	4
Body pains head ache cold	0	0	1	1
B.P	1	1	9	11
BP & fever	0	0	1	1
BP & diabetic	0	0	1	1
Cardiac pain	1	0	0	1
Cavities	0	0	1	1
Cerebellum strain	1	0	0	1
Chest pain	2	0	1	3
Chicken pox	1	0	0	1
Cold	16	0	72	88
Cold & fever	0	0	1	1
Cold & gastric problem	0	0	1	1
Cold & body pains	0	0	1	1
Cold & cough	1	0	4	5
Cold & cough	0	0	10	10
Cold fever cough	0	0	2	2
Cold cough headache	0	0	1	1
Cold cough stomach ache	0	0	2	2
Cold fever	4	0	14	18
Cold fever allergy	0	0	1	1
Cold fever stomach ache	0	0	1	1
Cold fever diarrhoea	0	0	1	1
Cold headache	0	0	16	16
Cold, headache, body pains	0	0	1	1
Cold, stomach pain	0	0	5	5
Cold & throat pain	0	0	1	1
Cold, head ache	0	0	1	1
Cough	2	0	5	7
Cough & cold	1	0	0	1
Cough cold fever	0	0	1	1

Dental problem	1	0	0	1
Dental problem	0	0	1	1
Dermatitis	0	0	1	1
Diabetes	0	0	1	1
Diabetes& B.P	0	0	1	1
Diarrhoea	0	0	2	2
Eye pain	0	0	1	1
Fever	42	0	268	310
Fever & cold	0	0	45	45
Fever cold body pains	0	0	2	2
Fever cold and cough	0	0	2	2
Fever cold and head ache	0	0	1	1
Fever and nasal problem	0	0	1	1
Fever, stomach ache	0	0	1	1
Fever back pain	1	0	0	1
Fever body pains	0	0	2	2
Fever body pains cold	1	0	0	1
Fever B.P	0	0	1	1
Fever, head ache	1	0	7	8
Fever, pain	0	0	2	2
Fever, B.P	0	0	1	1
Fever, stomach pain	0	0	5	5
Fever, vomitings	0	0	1	1
Fever, body pains	0	0	5	5
Fever, B.P, head ache	0	0	1	1
Fever & cold	1	0	13	14
Fever and cough	0	0	4	4
Fever and head ache	0	0	2	2
Fever and head ache	1	0	12	13
Fever & stomach ache	0	0	4	4
Fever, cold	1	0	1	2
Fever , head ache	3	0	1	4
Fever , stomach ache	0	0	1	1
Fever & cold	0	0	1	1
Gastric problem & fever	0	0	1	1
Gastric pain	0	0	12	12
Gastric pain	0	0	1	1
Gastric problem	0	0	6	6
Gastric trouble & body pains	0	0	1	1
Head ache, cold	0	0	1	1
Goitre	0	0	1	1
Head ache	0	0	2	2
Head ache	22	1	218	241
Head ache, cold	0	0	7	7
Head ache, fever	0	0	4	4
Head ache, joint pains	0	0	1	1
Head ache, diarrhoea	0	0	1	1
Head ache, stomach ache	0	0	1	1

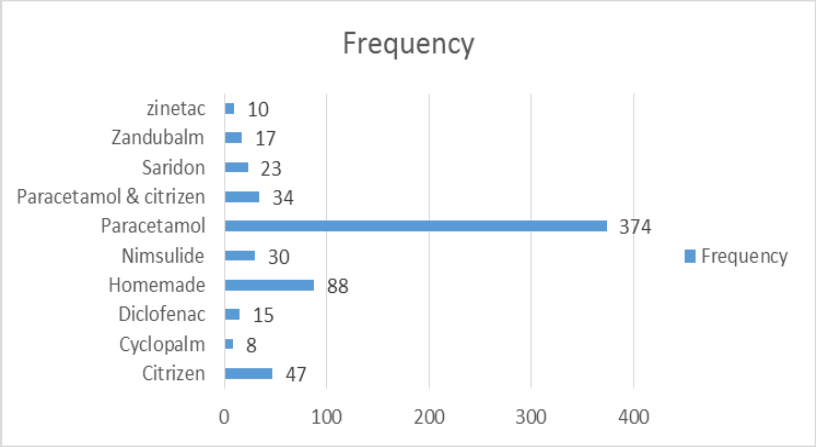
Head ache, stomach ache, cold	0	0	1	1
Head ache, vomiting	0	0	1	1
Head ache, acidity, cold	0	0	1	1
Head ache & body pains	0	0	1	1
Head ache and cold	0	0	5	5
Head ache and fever	1	0	5	6
Head ache & diarrhoea	0	0	1	1
Head ache, fever	0	0	6	6
Head ache	0	0	1	1
Hypotension	1	0	6	7
Immunity deficiency	0	0	1	1
Infection	0	0	1	1
Injury	0	0	1	1
Joint pains & legs pain	0	0	1	1
Leg pain	0	0	1	1
Leg pains	0	0	3	3
Leg pain	0	0	1	1
Legs pain, fever, B.P	1	0	0	1
Malaria	0	0	1	1
Migraine	0	0	1	1
Diarrhoea, stomach ache, fever	1	0	0	1
Diarrhoea	0	0	6	6
Diarrhoea, fever	0	0	1	1
Diarrhoea, head ache	0	0	1	1
Diarrhoea, vomitings	0	0	1	1
Diarrhoea , fever	0	0	1	1
Muscle pain	3	0	4	7
No answer	192	41	11	244
Pains	1	0	22	23
Gastric pains, pains	0	0	1	1
Paralysis	1	0	1	2
Menses problem	1	0	0	1
Fits	0	0	1	1
Psychosis	1	0	0	1
Rashes	1	0	1	2
Rashes	0	0	2	2
Rheumatoid	3	0	4	7
Shivering	0	0	1	1
Skin rashes	0	0	1	1
Skin rashes	0	0	1	1
Sore throat	0	0	1	1
Stomach pain	21	0	109	130
Stomach pain, cold	0	0	2	2
Stomach pain, fever	0	0	1	1
Stomach pain, head ache	0	0	2	2
Stomach pain and cold	1	0	6	7
Stomach pain and fever	0	0	3	3
Stomach pain and head ache	0	0	3	3

Stomach pain and throat pain	0	0	1	1
Diabetes	4	0	4	8
Diabetes & B.P	1	0	1	2
Swelling	0	0	2	2
Throat infection	0	0	2	2
Throat pain	0	0	1	1
Thyroid	0	0	1	1
Tumour	1	0	0	1
Urine infection	1	0	0	1
Vomiting & head ache	0	0	1	1
Vomitings	5	0	3	8
Weakness	1	0	3	4
Weakness and cold	0	0	1	1
Wounds	1	0	3	4
diarrhoea	0	0	1	1
Total	352	43	1091	1486

Frequency of self-medication by frequently used drugs

Table 5

Drug	Frequency	%	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative percent
Citrizen	47	7.28	47	7.28
Cyclopalm	8	1.24	55	8.51
Diclofenac	15	2.32	70	10.84
Homemade	88	13.62	158	24.46
Nimsulide	30	4.64	188	29.1
Paracetamol	374	57.89	562	87
Paracetamol & citrizen	34	5.26	596	92.26
Saridon	23	3.56	619	95.82
Zandubalm	17	2.63	636	98.45
zinetac	10	1.55	646	100



Graph. 4.

The participants taking different drugs, among them paracetamol is the first drug of their choice and next being citrizen.

Chi-square test for analysis of association between education and self-medication

Table. 6.

Analysis of Association Between Education & Self-Medication				
Education	**Self-medication**			**Total**
	No	**No answer**	**Yes**	
Educated	89 5.99 15.78 25.28	26 1.75 4.61 60.47	449 30.22 79.61 41.15	564 37.95
Uneducated	263 17.7 28.52 74.72	17 1.14 1.84 39.53	642 43.2 69.63 58.85	922 62.05
Total	352 23.69	43 2.89	1091 73.42	1486 100

Table. 7.

DF	Value	Prob
2	37.99	< .0001
2	39.03	< .0001
1	24.95	< .0001
	0.16	
	0.158	
	0.16	

Testing of association using chi-square test between gender and self-medication

Analysis of Association Between Gender & Self-Medication				
Sex	**Self-medication**			**Total**
	No	**No answer**	**Yes**	
Female	194 13.06 24.9 55.11	16 1.08 2.05 37.21	569 38.29 73.04 52.15	779 52.42
Male	158 10.63 22.35 44.89	27 1.82 3.82 62.79	522 35.13 73.83 47.85	707 47.58
Total	352 23.69	43 2.89	1091 73.42	1486 100

DF	Value	Prob
2	5.044	0.08
2	5.069	0.079
1	0.573	0.449
	0.058	
	0.058	
	0.058	

The Sas System

The frequency procedure

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-square	2	37.9947	< .0001
Likelihood ratio chi-square	2	39.0278	< .0001
Mantel-haenszel chi-square	1	24.9495	< .0001
Phi coefficient		0.1599	
Contingency coefficient		0.1579	
Cramer's V		0.1599	

Sample size = 1486.

CONCLUSION

Paracetamol and NSAID's were the drugs most commonly used. Prescription drugs such as antibiotics were involved in self-medication practice. Prior experience and non-seriousness of the illness were the most common reasons for self-medication. Although the self-medication practice is inevitable, drug authorities and health professionals need to educate people about the pros and cons of self-medication.

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