



**PRACTICE OF SELF MEDICATION AMONG ADOLESCENTS: EFFECTIVENESS OF
TEACHING PROGRAMME ON KNOWLEDGE REGARDING ADVERSE EFFECTS OF
SELF-MEDICATION AT MANGALURU**

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Self-medication is a major form of self-care. It involves the use of medicinal products by the consumer to treat self-recognized disorders, symptoms, recurrent diseases, or minor health problems. Many young individuals irrespective of age and sex go for self-medicated drugs without actual knowledge of the adverse effect of the medication. They can cause severe and fatal damage to any organs of the body. In this regard people need to be concertized of the likely adverse effects of these drugs. **Objectives:** To identify the practice of self-medication and to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching programme on adverse effects of self-medication among adolescents in a selected colleges at Mangaluru. **Methods:** A quantitative research approach with pre experimental one group pre test post test design was used for the study. Sixty adolescents were selected by non-probability purposive sampling technique from selected colleges. A structured practice questionnaire to identify the practice of self medication and structured knowledge questionnaire to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching program was used to collect data and the collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. **Results:** The result showed that 50% of adolescents practiced self medication. There was a marked improvement in the knowledge score after the administration of teaching program **Conclusion:** The need for further improvement in knowledge still exists in this area. The researcher emphasizes the role of doctors, health professionals and social workers in promoting the knowledge of adolescents on adverse effects of self medication.

KEYWORDS: Adolescents, Effectiveness, knowledge, self medication.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are the embodiment of our dreams and hopes of the future. More than 22.5 percent of Indian population is in the age group of 10-19 years.^[1] As a human beings we have the fundamental right to have access to health services. While viewing the health-related issues we hardly can be obvious about any medicine or drug.^[1,2] Nowadays around the world people consume medicines with or without prescription of the physicians.^[3] Like adults, adolescents self administer drugs. Different studies have reported that self-medication starts at the onset of adolescence and increases with age.^[4] White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) reported that self-medication problem is also found in children as they do not know what medicine to take and they just by seeing their parents they take random medicines. It may cause serious health problems to them.^[5] It is recommended that self-medication should be discouraged by everyone as it can lead to serious problems.^[5,6,7]

Self-medication can be defined as obtaining and consuming drugs without the advice of physician either for diagnosis, prescription or surveillance of treatment.^[8] The reasons for self medication mentioned in various literatures are mild illness, previous experience of treating similar illness, economic considerations and a lack of availability of healthcare personnel.^[9] In developing countries like India, easy availability of wide range of drugs coupled with inadequate health services result in increased proportions of drugs used as self-medication compared to prescribed drugs.^[10] Over-the-counter medications are widely used and self-medication and self-administration are common events in our society.^[11] The prevalence of self medication practices is alarming in the state.^[12] Unlike other aspects of self care, self medication involves the use of drugs, and drugs have the potential to do good as well as cause harm. Their excessive use can also lead to serious side effects and unfavourable reactions.^[12,13] So, people need to be aware of the health hazards of these drugs.^[14] The World Health Organization has emphasized that self medication must

be correctly taught and controlled. It is a global problem, 47.6% prevalence of self-medication has been reported in 2011 WHO survey.^[15] We recommend that holistic approach should be taken to prevent this problem, which include proper awareness and education regarding the self medication and strictness regarding pharmaceutical advertising.^[16] Hence, the investigator as a researcher felt the need to identify the practice of self medication and to determine the knowledge and to enhance knowledge on hazards of self-medications among adolescents studying in selected colleges through teaching program.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A quantitative research approach with pre experimental one group pre test post test design was used for the study. Sixty adolescents were selected by non-probability purposive sampling technique from selected colleges at Mangaluru. After obtaining ethical clearance, the formal written assent was obtained from adolescents and

informed consent were taken from subjects parent's. A structured practice questionnaire to identify the practice of self medication and structured knowledge questionnaire to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching program was used to collect data and the collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data presented in Table 1 depicts that the 50% of subjects have practiced both self medication and seek medical consultation whereas 28.1% of subjects have practiced self medication alone. The findings are consistent with a similar study on the analysis and quantification of self-medication patterns, 909 customers who requested over-the-counter medication were surveyed in Australia. The study findings revealed that 75% of them self-medicate. Of these, 31% stated that they commonly self-medicate for headache, common cold and pain.

Table 1: Practice of self medication among adolescents n = 60.

Practice	Frequency	Percentage
Self medication/treatment	17	28.1
Medical Consultation	13	21.7
Both	30	50

Table 2: Knowledge scores of adolescents regarding adverse effects of self medication

n = 60

Knowledge score	Grade	Pre test		Post test	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
27 - 34	Excellent	-	-	16	26.7
20 - 26	Good	12	20	34	56.7
13 - 19	Average	43	71.1	10	16.7
1-12	Poor	5	8.3		

Maximum score = 34

The data in table 2 shows that during the pretest, majority 71.1% of the subjects have average knowledge, 20% of them have good knowledge and 8.3% of them have poor knowledge. During the post test, (26.7%) have excellent knowledge 56.7% have good knowledge and one subject (16.7%) have average knowledge. A similar

study conducted on the effectiveness of an awareness programme on the actions and adverse effects of commonly used self medication among the lay people of Manipal revealed that the post-test mean knowledge score 17.4 was apparently higher than the pre-test mean knowledge score 8.3.

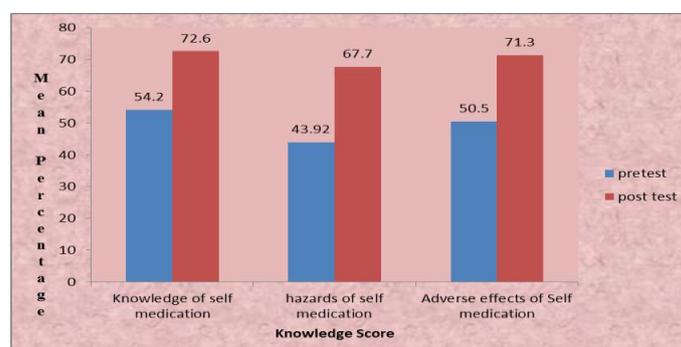


Fig. 1: Domain wise pre-test and post-test knowledge scores.

The data presented in figure 1 shows that mean percentage of pre-test knowledge score 54.2% was higher in the knowledge of self medication than in the areas of hazards of self medication 43.92% and adverse

effects of self medication 50.5% and the mean percentage of post test knowledge score 72.6% is higher in the knowledge of self medication than in the areas of

adverse effects of self medication 71.3% and hazards of self medication 67.7%.

Table 3: Effectiveness of teaching program on knowledge regarding adverse effects of self medication.

n=60					
Knowledge score	Mean	SD	Mean percentage	't' value	P value
Pre-test	17	3.49	50	15.015	0.0001*
Post-test	24	4.08	70.58		

$t(59) = 2.0$ * Significant

Data in the table 3 shows that higher mean knowledge score 24 in the post-test than pre-test knowledge score 17. The computed 't' value showed a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean knowledge ($t_{59} = 15.015$, $p < .05$). A similar study conducted on the effectiveness of an awareness programme on the actions and adverse effects of commonly used self medication among the lay people of Manipal revealed that the post-test mean knowledge score 17.4 was apparently higher than the pre-test mean knowledge score 8.3 and the median post-test score 19 was also higher than median pre-test score 7.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate that teaching program was effective on adverse effects of self medication in improving the knowledge of adolescents. Through genuine attempt of teaching to the adolescents on adverse effects of self medication knowledge can be improved. The need for further improvement in knowledge still exists in this area. The researcher emphasizes the role of doctors, health professionals and social workers in promoting the knowledge of adolescents on adverse effects of self medication.

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