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“A Comparative Study To Assess The Attitude And Self-Reported Practices Of Self- Medication Among The Healthcare And Non-Healthcare Undergraduate Students Of Selected Institutions Of A University In Udupi District, Karnataka”

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"ABSTRACT

"A comparative study to assess the attitude and self-reported practices of self-medication among the healthcare and non-healthcare undergraduate students of selected Institutions of a University in Udupi District, Karnataka" was carried out by Ms. Ilakkiya P in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science in Nursing at Manipal College of Nursing, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal, Karnataka.

The objective of the study was to compare the attitude and self-reported practices of self-medication among the undergraduate students of healthcare and non-healthcare. The study aimed at assessing the attitude on self-medication in terms of favoring or not favoring the use of self-medication. Also, the study focused at comparing the self-reported practices between the healthcare and the non-healthcare students in terms of percentage of self-medicating, types of drugs used, indications, the reasons for self-medicating, and sources of information regarding the drugs.

The conceptual framework for the study was developed based on Irvin Rosenstock's Health Belief model. The study was conducted among 650 students selected from the constituent institutions of Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal. The study adopted a quantitative approach with a comparative cross-sectional survey design. Among the nine institutions, three healthcare and four non-healthcare institutions were selected by simple random sampling, using a chit method. All the final year students of the selected institutions were included for the study.

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The tools used for data collection were a socio-demographic proforma, a structured questionnaire on the attitude of the undergraduate students on self-medication, and a structured questionnaire on self-reported practices of the undergraduate students on self-medication. The content validity of the tool was established and modifications made based on the suggestions by the seven experts. All the tools were pretested and the reliability was established. The reliability of the structured questionnaires on the attitude on self-medication and the self-reported practice was established using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.711$) and the test-retest method ($r = 0.76$), respectively. The pilot study was conducted among 20 healthcare and 20 non-healthcare undergraduate students and the study was found to be feasible.

Administrative permission was obtained from the Dean, MCON, Manipal, Institutional Research Committee, MCON, Manipal, Institutional Ethics Committee, KH, Manipal (916/2019) and the heads of the selected institutions and registered the study under CTRI (CTRI/2020/02/023276). For the data collection, approached the students in their respective institutions. The students who met the eligibility criteria were informed about the study with the participant information sheet and the informed consent was obtained. The questionnaires were administered to the students. Online survey was adopted for the technical students to collect the data.

The data were analyzed using the SPSS version 16 and statistically analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The study results revealed that the mean ages of the healthcare and the non-healthcare students were 21.01 years and 20.23 years, respectively. The majority of the healthcare students were female (74.9%), whereas in the non-healthcare they were almost equal (male, 46.7% and female, 53.3%). The majority of the parents in both the healthcare and the non-

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healthcare groups had graduation and above qualifications. The majority of the healthcare students (78%) and the non-healthcare students (66%) had awareness on over-the-counter medicine.

The findings on the attitude towards self-medication revealed that 70.6% of healthcare and 88% non-healthcare students favored the self-medication. The study infers that both the healthcare and the non-healthcare students preferred to take self- medications.

The attitude scores on self-medication of the non-healthcare students (median =36) were significantly higher than the healthcare students (median =33) $U=34513$, $p=0.001$. The study inferred that non-healthcare students preferred self- medication compared to healthcare students.

The findings on the practice of self-medication found that 603 (92.77 %) students both from the healthcare and the non-healthcare had practiced self- medication some or the other time. Among them, 321 (91.7%) were healthcare and 282 (94%) non-healthcare students. The most indications for which the healthcare and the non-healthcare students had taken the self-medication on their own were headache (78.5%, 79.4%), fever (91.9%, 89.4%), cold (84.4%, 91.8%), and cough (83.5%, 84%).

The reasons quoted by the healthcare and the non-healthcare students for self- medication: thinking that they had a minor illness (88.5%, 89.4%), they had sufficient knowledge about the medicine (60.7%, 69.1%), for quick relief of the symptoms (82.9%, 77.7%), used similar medicines in the past (74.8%, 79.1%), the

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physician would prescribe the same medicine (61.1%, 59.2%), easy availability of the medicine (63.2%, 59.2%).

The sources of information for self-medication for the healthcare and the non- healthcare students were academic knowledge (71%, 53.5%), a previous prescription for the same illness (64.5%, 80.1%), healthcare professionals from the family (70.4%, 78.4%), own experience (70.7%, 78.4%). The study also found that 54.5% of the healthcare and 48.2% of the non-healthcare students practiced checking the expiry date on the medicine every time whenever they attempted self-medication, whereas 6.9% of the healthcare and 9.2% of the non-healthcare students did not check. Both the healthcare and the non-healthcare students preferred Ayurveda and Allopathic systems of medicine (56.4%, 55%).

Thus, the study concluded that both the healthcare and the non-healthcare students preferred taking self-medication and the practices of self-medication were common in both"