

Tendency of Self-Medication among Students

Sabbir Hossain

Department of Pharmacy, Jahangirnagar University, Dhaka-1342, Bangladesh

Original Research Article Abstract:

*Corresponding Author:

Sabbir Hossain

Citation:

Sabbir Hossain., (2024)
Tendency of Self-Medication
among Students. *iraetc j. nur.*
health care; 2(1) 14-16.



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Background: Self-medication practice (SMP) is the practice of taking medication without a doctor's prescription. The main issues with self-medication have been drug resistance, adverse drug reactions, resource waste, and major health risks, including fatalities. This study's primary goal was to determine how common self-medication is among Bangladeshi students and what factors are linked to it. **Methods:** A semi-interviewed study was conducted among 67 students in City University, Savar, Bangladesh, from April 20 to May 10, 2023. Purposive sampling was used in conjunction with a questionnaire to conduct this study. **Results:** A greater proportion of students—53, or 79.10 percent—self-medicated than those who chose not to seek therapy for their personal issues. The majority of students—35.82%—use tolfenamic acid as a self-medication for headaches or depression, whereas the smallest percentage—8.95%—use fluoxetine for anxiety and depression. **Conclusion:** Complying with this study, numerous studies also indicated that, most of the students practice self-medication. Increasing community knowledge of drug adverse effects and coordinating efforts across individuals, groups, healthcare facilities, and regulatory agencies are crucial.

Key Words: Knowledge; Healthcare; Self-medication; Depression.

|| © IRAETC Publisher || Publication History - Received: 04.01.2024 || Accepted: 25.01.2024 || Published: 28.01.2024 ||

INTRODUCTION

One aspect of self-care is self-medication practice (SMP), which is the use of medication for self-recognized illnesses without a prescription from a medical professional (e.g., refilling previous prescriptions, giving medication to family members, or using leftover medication) [1]. The incidence of SMP varies widely throughout the world, from 32.5 to 81.5% [2,3]. Self-medication may provide some short-term relief, but in the long run, it will only make someone's issues worse. Using food, cigarettes, illicit drugs, alcohol, or prescription drugs for self-medication on a regular basis can result in addiction, exacerbate mood disorders, and worsen overall health issues.

Buying medications based on previous prescriptions, getting them without a prescription, giving them to friends or family, or using leftover medication are all examples of self-medication [4]. The community's choice of self-medication treatment is influenced by a number of factors. Economic and psychological conditions, treatment experiences, and product advertising [5], education and education history are the common causes [6]. As long as the stress experienced is still within the bounds of individual capacity, stress can also have positive effects, such as fostering self-development and boosting creativity. Students' daily stress is still necessary for their personal growth [7-10]. Students usually take self-medication to relieve mental stress, academic pressure, relationship pressure and sometimes in case of just self-confidence. The purpose of this study was to ascertain how university students handled stress by engaging in self-medication.

METHODOLOGY

A semi-interviewed study was conducted among 67 students in City University, Savar, Bangladesh, from April 20 to May 10, 2023. Purposive sampling was used in conjunction with a questionnaire to conduct this study. Students were selected randomly from almost all departments, and their age was between 21 to 27 years. It was performed by asking questions concerning the symptoms got on and the medications used. Ethical approval was taken from Institutional Review Board, Jahangirnagar University with Ref. No: {JU/ S/ 2024 (5)}. Besides, all participants read, understood and gave full consent at the time of survey data collection.

RESULTS

According to the results of the data collection, 67 questionnaires were finished by respondents. Students between the ages of 21 and 27 were chosen at random from practically every department.

Table 1: Gender & age distribution of respondents

Variable	Variable	Frequency (N=67)	Percentage
Age (years)	21 to 24	39	58.20%
	25 to 27	28	41.80%
Gender	Male	42	62.68%
	Female	25	37.32%

Table 2: Stress related problem among students

Symptoms	Individual number	Percentage
Depression	40	59.70%
Insomnia	18	26.86%
Indigestion	3	4.47%
Headache	6	8.95%

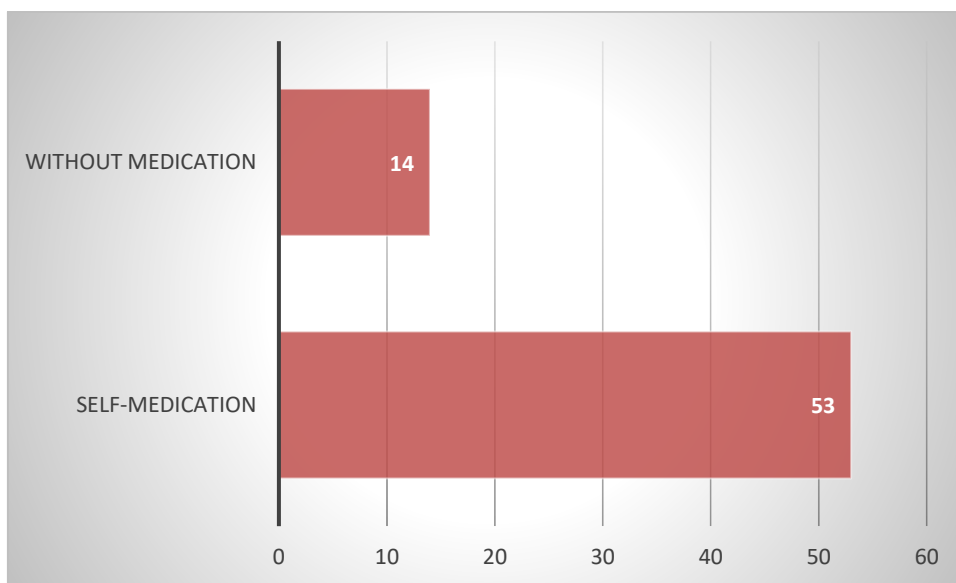


Figure 1: The quantity of students who take their own medications

Table 3: Medicine used by respondents in self-medication

Types of medicine	Individual number	Percentage
Sertraline	22	32.83%
Fluoxetine	6	8.95%
Tolfenamic acid	24	35.82%
Escitalopram	15	22.38%

DISCUSSION

According to (Table 1), 62.68% of respondents reported having had male sex, whereas 37.32% reported having female sex. It is clear from this description that men made up the majority of the study's participants. (Table 2) provides an overview of the number of stress-related symptoms, namely depression 59.70%, insomnia 26.86%, headache 8.95%, and indigestion 4.47%. With the predominance of symptoms of depression, 40 students experienced it. (Figure 1) demonstrates that 53 (79.10%) of students self-medicated, a higher percentage than those who 14 (20.90%) did not seek therapy for their own physical problems. (Table 3) describes that most student 35.82% use tolfenamic acid as their self-therapy to treat headache or depression, while least number of students 8.95% use fluoxetine as to treat depression and anxiety.

If self-medication is done on a regular basis, it can be advantageous. However, not knowing treatment details can cause adverse drug reactions. According to a study, 1.72% of the 9.78% of patients who used self-medication medications needed to be treated in the emergency room [11]. ADRs of 3.9% were observed in 7000 hospitalized patients in Germany, according to another study, as a result of self-medication [12]. Advanced drug delivery system enable to

produce drug with new design and more safety measure today [13]. Studies on the prevalence and related aspects of self-medication in this field are rare, despite the detrimental effects of self-medication and its widespread use.

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