

To Evaluate The Knowledge, Attitude And Perception Regarding Generic Medicines And The Factors Influencing It Amongst Consumers In Sangli City.

Dr.Ravindra U Kanthe

(Assistant Professor)

DKTE'S Textile and Engineering (an autonomous) Institute, Ichalkaranji.

Abstract:

Background:

In today's dynamic and changing environment it has been a great challenge to government as well as consumers of branded medicines as the cost of medication is increasing. The generic drugs were launched which would make good healthcare services cheaper and affordable for government and individuals. Government would then be able to provide healthcare services with its limited budget to a larger population of the society who were previously disadvantaged and neglected during the apartheid regime. However these assumptions had never been substantiated with any research work or data.

The researcher will focus on study of the knowledge, attitude and perception regarding generic drugs and the factors influencing consumption of generic medicines over branded medicines by testing how several variables such as level of education, income bracket, and availability of medical insurance, cost of medicines, age and gender, will serve as reference points for the study.

Objective: To evaluate the knowledge, attitude and perception regarding generic medicines and the factors influencing it amongst consumers in Sangli city.

Methods: Five large pharmacies in Sangli city were selected as sample. Customers who visited these pharmacies for purchase of medicines were selected and data was collected with the help of a self-administered, pre-validated and semi-structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed to describe all variables and test any significant difference.

Results:

The study included 100 customers who visited the selected pharmacies for purchase of medicines. Our survey showed that most of the customers (64.16%) were in favor of generic drugs substitution owing to their knowledge about generics. Majority of the customers (69.10%) were aware that both the brand and generic medicines are bioequivalent and that there exists significant price difference between them. Practitioners did not report a significant pressure from patients to prescribe either brand or generic drugs (45.1%). Majority of the customers were of the belief that the cheaper Generic Medicines are of lower quality (64.2%). Majority of the customers were of the belief that there is difference in side effects between Generic medicine and branded medicines (33%)

Conclusions:

Although most of the customers were strongly in favor of generic substitution, concern regarding their quality standards is discouraging them from doing the same. The government can play a major role by improving the standard operating procedures for manufacturing the generic drugs thereby assuring the practitioners about their quality

Keywords: Generic drugs, Generic substitution, Generic medicines

Introduction:

Generic medicines are those medicines which are identical or bioequivalent to an innovator or product brand name drug in dosage, form, safety, strength, route of administration, quality, performance, characteristics and intended use. On expiration of product's patent term, other manufacturing companies market the generic versions of the innovative drugs. Currently, almost all medicines in India are sold under a brand or trade name and medicines are called as branded medicines or branded generic. Our country has become

competent enough to produce quality branded and generic medicines. Pharmaceutical industry becomes a giant compared to any other industry.

In order to bring down the healthcare budget of every citizen of India through providing quality generic medicine at affordable prices the government of India has launched "Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)". The Scheme is being implemented through a registered society namely Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI) which is working under the administrative control of Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, Government of India. The

Product Basket of the scheme now covers more than 800 medicines and 154 surgical's& consumables in all major therapeutic categories such as Anti-infectives, Anti-allergics, Anti-diabetics, Cardiovasculars, Anti-cancers, Gastro-intestinal medicines, etc. Under PMBJP, the target of opening of 3,000 PMBJP Kendras across the country was achieved on 08.12.2017 and as on 15.11.2018, 4,410 PMBJP Kendras are functional in 35 States/Union Territories of the country.

In the light of the above scenario the healthcare providers like doctors and pharmacists, companies providing medical aid and the general population can now have access to less expensive medicine of equal quality and safety standards as the branded medicines provided that these generics should be able to satisfy the same needs as the branded medicines.

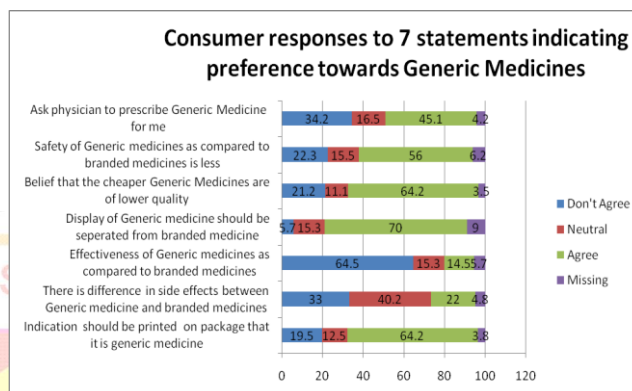
Worldwide, few studies have evaluated the knowledge, attitude and perceptions of practitioners regarding the prescriptions of generic drugs. As there is paucity of such data in our country, the present study was conducted in order to evaluate the level of awareness in the form of knowledge, attitude and practices regarding the generic medicines amongst the practitioners in a rural setup.

Methods

This was a knowledge attitude perception (KAP) questionnaire based survey, conducted among the customers who frequently or regularly visited the selected pharmacies in Sangli City for the purchase of medicines.

For the purpose of the study, a structured KAP based questionnaire was used. The initial draft questionnaire was prepared and pilot study was performed. Modifications were carried out as per the suggestions. Upon receiving the responses from the respondents, its reliability was tested by using the Cronbach alpha value. Each respondent was given ample time to fill the questionnaire. Any clarification or explanation needed in understanding the questionnaire was provided. In order to preclude any potential bias the identity of the respondent was kept confidential. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. It comprised of 25 questions: 10 assessing the knowledge and 10 assessing the attitude and 5 assessing the perception. The KAP survey questionnaire was analyzed question wise and their

percentage value was calculated. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and appropriate statistical tests. In case of unanswered questions, the participant was excluded from the study.



Conclusion:

As per our literature review, our research focused on consumer confidence and knowledge about generic medicines and their use. Mass education efforts, financial incentives and greater communication between patients and health care professionals were seen as major influences on the uptake of generics among consumers. Safety and efficacy issues were viewed as major barriers to the acceptance of generic drug substitutions.

The following conclusions and recommendations are provided on the basis of our analyses of the literature published over the past three decades related to consumers' views of generic drugs.

- An extensive research about consumers' views on generic medicines should be carried out in developing countries like India, where cost savings are needed more than in developed countries.
- Consumers' decision-making processes regarding generic medications should be considered by the researchers for further study
- There should be better communication between different healthcare professionals like doctors, paramedical staff, nurses and patients regarding generic medicines. This will help to make patients more aware about generic medicines
- Mass educational efforts should be undertaken by government to educate patients regarding the use of generic medicines

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