

VIII - SELF -MEDICATION PRACTICES

CHAPTER VIII

SELF MEDICATION PRACTICES

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Kosa has analyzed Freidson, Mechanic and Coe who state that Self-medication is practised before the seeking of formal medical care particularly by the poor people. These people are known to resort to self-medication because of lack of proper knowledge about medicine, increasing costs and the part played by traditional sub-culture of the poor people. They were influenced by mass media and advertisements. According to him the poor think of the body as a constant plumbing system to be flushed out or cleaned, Hence they use laxatives, liver and kidney tablets. In general they resort to self-medication and seek formal consultation only in the ease of persistent disease conditions. These are two contrasting views on the subject of self-medication. One is based on the fact that those indulging in self-medication put off their visits to the doctor. In this way they may harm themselves. This may have an adverse effect on those practicing self medication, another opinion put forth is that some medicines must be made available to the public in order to lighten the burden of the general practitioners. It has been stated that one of the reasons for self-medication is also the pattern of organization of medical services. It has also been stated that in the society everywhere medical care is public sector self-medication has decreased. In Great Britain, for example, self-medication is not used as an alternative to consulting a physician. On the other hand it has also been observed that in societies where the people have knowledge of the medicinal system, there is a chance of self-medication

It has been stated that earlier studies show self-medication to be mostly practiced among the poorer notions of society. It has been seen that owing to economic implications, self-medication was practiced among the lower lower economic groups. Self-medication may later result in consultation of a doctor.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to study the practice of self-medication in general. In order to study the researcher examine conditions under which self-medication is resorted. The researcher tries to understand the factors of influences on this practice.

Regarding the objectives of this present study was to collect data on the practice of self-medication and the stage at which people approach the formal medical care agency. For this purpose the researcher have asked the respondents as to what medicines from different medicinal system they keep at home for purpose of self-medication. They researcher has to signify the stage at which they seek the assistance of the formal medical system.

TABLE- 8.1

Type of Medicines kept at home for self-medication

| Sl.No. | Type of Medicine | No.of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Common allopathic drugs for aches and pains | 71 | 23 |
| 2 | Homeopathy drugs | 42 | 14 |
| 3 | Left over drugs | 29 | 10 |
| 4 | No drugs kept as such fore self-medication | 158 | 53 |
| Total | | 300 | 100 |

The above table reveals that 53 percentage of the respondents were do not maintain any drugs for self-medication, 23 percentage of the respondents were keep common allopathic drugs for aches, pains and fevers to use in case of necessitate, 10 percentage of the respondents were says that they use leftover drugs for self-medication,

14 percentage of the respondents were use homeopathy medicine initially in case of self-medication. It is seen that 53 percentage of the respondents were do not maintain any medicines at hand for self-medication, but 47 percentage of the respondents were option to self-medication.

TABLE- 8.2

Medicines kept at home for self-medication

| Sl.No. | Self-Medicine | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Self-medication Practiced | 148 | 49 |
| 2 | Self-medication not practiced | 152 | 51 |
| Total | | 300 | 100 |

The responses of the respondents about the medicines kept at home for self-medication majority of the 51 percentage state that they do not take medicines without professional advice; whereas 49 percentage state that they practice self-medication. They take medicines without professional advice, that is on their own. It was intended to see the treatment usually followed by respondents for certain ailments with view together when self-medication is usually practiced.

The present study examine that the treatment of some ailments with the aim of knowing the extent of self-medication. Hence the source was collected on the basis of self medication.

TABLE- 8.3**Treatment of Chicken Pox Measles**

| Sl.No. | Treatment | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Traditional treatment or application of Neem leaves diet control | 141 | 47 |
| 2 | Traditional as well as doctor's advice sought | 36 | 12 |
| 3 | Doctor's Treatment only | 123 | 41 |
| Total | | 300 | 100 |

With regard to the treatment of chicken pox and measles it was seen that 47percentage of them confine themselves to traditional treatment. By traditional treatment it as seen that they meant the application of neem leaves paste to the body after the smash subsided. They also emphasized isolation and liquid diet intake as a part of traditional treatment. Only 12 percentage, stated that they followed doctor's treatment in addition to following the traditional treatment. 41 percentage of the respondents stated that they followed doctor's treatment only and did not resort to any other customary practice. It is clear that with regard to the treatment of chicken pox and measles, the traditional form of treatment seems to be predominating.

Subsequently the study explain the treatment that the respondents take for cold, fever and headache.

Table-8.4

Treatment for Cold, Fever and Headache

| Sl.No. | Type of Treatment | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Common allopathy drugs | 112 | 37 |
| 2 | Homeopathy on their own | 46 | 15 |
| 3 | Consultation of doctor but no medication at home | 142 | 48 |
| Total | | 300 | 100 |

The above table shows that 48 percentage of the respondents of the respondents use no medication at home but consult a doctor in case fever, cold or aches occur, 15 percentage of the respondents have started that they use homeopathy in the treatment of cold, fever and headaches on their own. It may be said that 37 percentage of the respondents use common allopathic drugs on their own in the treatment of cold, fever and aches. Therefore it may be said that 52 percent of the respondents resort to self-medication in case of fever, cold or aches and only 48 percentage of the respondents consult a doctor.

An attempt has been made to analyze the referral system through which the practice of self-medication comes into operation.

Table -8.5

Friends' idea in use in self-medication

| Sl.No. | Friends idea taken in self-medication | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Friends idea in use in self-medication | 22 | 15 |
| 2 | Friends idea not in use in self-medication. | 120 | 85 |
| Total | | 142 | 100 |

The present study clear that 85 percentage of the respondents do not take their friends suggestion in the practice of self-medication. Only 15 percentage take the advice and suggestions of their friends in the practice of self-medication. Therefore it is clearly stated that majority do not take their friends suggestion in self-medication and a minority take their friends suggestion in self-medication. An attempt has been made to observe the influence of media on the respondents as far as self-medication was concerned.

Table — 8.6

Influence of Self-medication practices

| Sl.No. | Influence of self medication | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Influence of Media Self-medication is present | 45 | 32 |
| 2 | Influence of Media on Self-medication is not present | 97 | 68 |
| Total | | 142 | 100 |

The above table shows that majority that is 68 percentage of the respondents state that mass media does not influence the practice of self-medication. 32 percentage state that there is influence of media on self-medication. It may be stated that majority are not influenced by media in the practice of self-medication and a minority are influenced by media in the practice of self-medication. In the practice of self-medication, the researcher concentrated to know the system of medicine and the respondents utilized regularly.

Table -8.7

Self-medication and Medicine System

| Sl.No. | Self-medication and Medicine System | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Allopathic used mostly in self-medication | 100 | 70 |
| 2 | Homeopathy used mostly in self-medication | 42 | 30 |
| Total | | 142 | 100 |

The present study observes that 70 percentage of the respondents use the Allopathic system of medicine in self-medication whereas 30 percentage of the respondents of the respondents use homeopathy in the practice of self-medication. It may be said that Allopathic is the most widely used system in the practice of self-medication. An attempt has been made to look into the causes of self-medication.

T a b l e – 8.8

Reasons for Self-Medication

| Sl.No. | Reasons for Self-Medication | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Helps in giving relief | 67 | 47 |
| 2 | It helps and has been seen not to be harmful | 23 | 16 |
| 3 | Saves money and time for small ailments | 52 | 37 |
| Total | | 142 | 100 |

The above table clear that the majority of the respondents practicing self-medication it is seen that 47 percentage of the respondents are take to self-medication because it helps in giving relief. Only 16 percentage of the respondents state that they take to self-medication because it helps them and it is not harmful to them. 37 percentage of the respondents of the respondents state that self-medication save money as well as time and is resorted to in small ailments. It is therefore the study explain that a majority resort to self-medication as it is helpful in giving relief and a minority because they feel it provides them relief as well as it is not harmful. The sources were also collected on the practice self-medication in general.

T a b l e – 8.9

Opinion about Self-Medication

| Sl.No. | Reasons for Self-Medication | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Good as it helps in giving relief | 61 | 20 |
| 2 | Harmful as half knowledge is dangerous | 152 | 51 |
| 3 | Saves money and time | 21 | 7 |
| 4 | Doctors give the same medicines so we use them | 66 | 22 |
| Total | | 142 | 100 |

The responses of the respondents about the opinion about self-medication,

the majority that is 51 percentage of the respondents state that self-medication is harmful as half knowledge is dangerous. They have said that half knowledge of medicine is dangerous as they may have side effects. Only 7 percentage of the respondents stated that self-medication saves time and money. Therefore, they said it is practiced. 22 percentage of the respondents stated that by consultation of the doctor they have become familiar to the drugs, hence they start using them on their own. 20 percentage state that medicine helps in giving relief. They state that they require relief from distressing symptoms. They cannot want to go to the doctor, hence the practice of self-medication arises. It is explain that 51 percentage of the respondents state self-medication to be dangerous whereas 50 percentage state it to be used, owing to certain reasons discussed. It was desired to observe the stage in which the doctor was consulted.

Table – 8.10

Stage for consultation of Doctor

| Sl.No. | Stage for consultation of Doctor | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | When self—medication does not work doctor should be consulted | 142 | 47 |
| 2 | Immediate consultation of doctor | 108 | 36 |
| 3 | If symptoms persist after one or two days of rest and leaving to | 50 | 17 |
| Total | | 300 | 100 |

The responses of the respondents about the Stage for consultation of Doctor 47 percentage of the respondents stated that a doctor should be consulted when self-medication does not mark only 17 percentage of the respondents stated that a doctor should he consulted after one or two days of the ailment. They stated that they leave this to nature and then consult a doctor if necessary. 36 percentage of the respondents state that a doctor should be consulted immediately in case of illness.

It is seen that the majority consult a doctor in case self-medication does not work and a minority consult a doctor after one or two days of illness of symptoms persist.

From the above analysis on self-medication certain inferences may be drawn. It may be concluded that more than 50 percentage of the respondents of the respondents do not keep medicines at home. A considerable percent of them that is more than 40 percentage of the respondents of them keep drugs at home and resort to self-medication whenever they think it necessary. It has been seen that of the respondents do not practice self-medication. It is important to note that 49 percentage of the respondents of the respondents practice self-medication.

With regard to the treatment of some ailments the researchers note that in the case of chicken pox, a majority of the respondents followed traditional treatment and a minority followed professional as well as traditional treatment. In the case of cold, fever and headaches we may note that a majority of the respondents did not practice self-medication for such ailments but consulted the doctor only. A minority of the respondents use homeopathy drugs on their own for headache, cold and fever. It may be noted that self-medication varies according to the ailment for instance in the case of chicken pox and measles the predominant treatment taken is traditional treatment. A minority of them use traditional as well as doctors treatment. As far as the influences on self-medication are concerned, the researcher may state majority of the respondents do not come under the influence of friends. Only a minority of them take the suggestion of their friends. It is also noted that a majority of the respondents do not come under the influence of mass media. Only a minority of them state that they are influenced by media in their practice of self-medication.

In their practice of self-medication the respondents regularly used the system of allopathic followed by a alternatively using homeopathy. The causes for the practice of self-medication are mostly that it relief pain directly. A little percent of the respondents state that self-medication is practiced since it helps in reduce pain and it is not harmful as well.

Regarding the opinion of the respondents about self-medication the study analyses status that 50 percentage of the respondents were of the opinion that self-medication is harmful they stated half-knowledge of medicine is dangerous. A very small percentage of them stated that self-medication saves money and time.

The present study observed that it is clear that the inferred a majority of the respondents sate that a general practitioner when self-medication does not work. It is revealed that a small percentage of the respondents meet a doctor if symptoms persist after one or two days of rest and leaving to nature. It may be inferred that self-medication is practiced by nearly 40 percentage of the respondents.

Reference

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