

A STUDY OF CUSTOMER AWARENESS ABOUT GENERIC MEDICINES IN JALGAON DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

India is one of the countries that produce generic medicines on a large scale. In COVID 19, people faced a lot of financial burdens due to medical bills. Though generic medicines are available, affordable, and of good quality, the perception of people towards them is unfavorable, and some people are not even aware of the use of generic medicines. So the present study focuses on the level of customer awareness about generic medicines in Jalgaon district and how the people who are engaged in the activity of healthcare services can promote generic medicines as the best option to reduce the medical expenses of common people.

The paper also focuses on how ignorance about generic medicines has an impact on the financial condition of consumers.

Keywords: *Generic Medicines, Awareness, use of medicines, customers, Financial burden, bills of medicines, Non generic medicines.*

INTRODUCTION

"Prevention is better than cure," the motto, is most suitable for the medical treatment of an individual. There are numerous molecules available on the pharmaceutical market. Each pharmaceutical company wants to launch a new product on the market. The increasing number of educated people, the availability of finance, the level of better communication between people and medical practitioners, etc. is the major factors that represent the level of customer awareness among people with respect to medicines. There are numerous studies that have been conducted by various individuals on customer preference, knowledge, and use of generic medicines.

To protect the interests of an individual from the heavy burden of medical bills. The government of India launched the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jansamrudhi Yojana to make medicines of good quality, affordable, and available for everyone in the country. The testing process for generic medicines is similar to that for non-generic medicines. But just because of some differences, people started to judge the effect of the use of generic medicines. Though there is an increase in knowledge, financial assistance, and better communication, there is still a lack of awareness of generic medicines. It is neglected or overlooked because of price differences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- 1) Mohamed A. A. Hassali, Asrul A. Shafie, Shazia Jamshed, Mohamed I. M. Ibrahim, and Ahmed Awaisu (2010) analyze the literature of the past three decades and observe the decision-making process of customers with respect to generic medicines, communication between doctor and patient with respect to similarities between generic and non-generic medicines, and the efforts of awareness made by all communities in health care services for a particular group of illiterate people. may help increase the use of generic medicines.
- 2) Manasa C. R., Kalpana L., and Veena R. M. (2020) conducted a survey of 80 intern MBBS students. They observed that because of their unawareness and lack of information about the Jan Aushadhi Sugam app, the people are unable to find stores of generic medicines, and this is the main cause of suboptimal or less use of generic medicines by the people.
- 3) ZaheerUDin Babar, Piyush Grover, Joanna Stewart, Michele Hogg, Leanne Short, HeeGyung Seo, and Anne Rew (2011) conducted a cross-sectional survey using a postal questionnaire and found that the

pharmacists gave more preference to supporting non-generic medicines and tried to give multiple choices for customer selection. The community pharmacist claimed that the brand alternatives reduced the profitability ratio of their pharmacies. The consumer's desire and the availability of the stock are the two important factors driving the generic displacement.

- 4) Raynu Thomas and Agnes Vitry conducted a survey of 137 consumers about their awareness of generic medicines and willingness to use them. They found in the study that Malaysian consumers are unaware of the need for a generic pharmaceutical strategy and that consumer education on generics must be developed.
- 5) Alian A. Alrasheedy, Mohamed Azmi Hassali Kay, Stewart David CM Kong, Hisham Aljadhey, and Mohamed Izham Mohamed Ibrahim and Saleh Karamah Al-Tamimi (2023) conducted a review of the literature. They found that patients and healthcare communities give prior preference to non-generic medicines as compared to generic medicines. Because of a lack of knowledge and information about generic medicines. So it is required to organize educational programs or educational activities for patients with respect to awareness of generic medicines. And healthcare communities can play a very important role in the promotion of generic drugs

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research is based on primary data, and in the research, a quantitative approach has been used. Data is collected through a structured questionnaire, for which the sample size is 150 people (respondents) in Jalgaon city. Secondary data is collected from websites, articles, research papers published in journals, periodicals, etc. A simple random sampling method is used for the study. For data analysis, percentage analysis and tabulation tools are used to understand customer awareness about generic medicines in Jalgaon, Maharashtra.

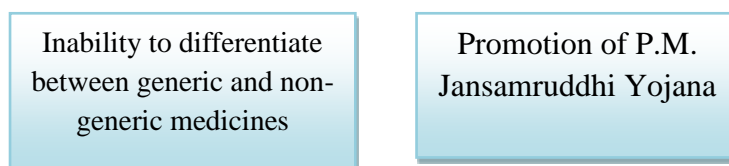
The objective of the study:

As COVID-19 affected the entire world, so many people made their pockets empty to survive their dear and near ones. Medicines play a very important role in our lives to protect us from several diseases through treatments, but when these treatments put heavy financial pressure on the pockets of common people, they search for suitable substitutes to reduce the financial burden of medicine bills. Some people spend a lot of money on medicines due to a lack of awareness about the use of generic medicines, where some people go for generic medicine and save their money.

In view of this, the major objective of the study is to understand the level of awareness among the people of Jalgaon district about generic medicines, which can be listed into attainable objectives as follows:

1. To study customer awareness about generic medicines.
2. To compare the review of the use of non-generic medicines and generic medicines.
3. To study the impact of consumer Unawareness about generic medicines on their pockets.
4. To study the view of healthcare communities on the promotion of generic medicines.

Conceptual Frame work:



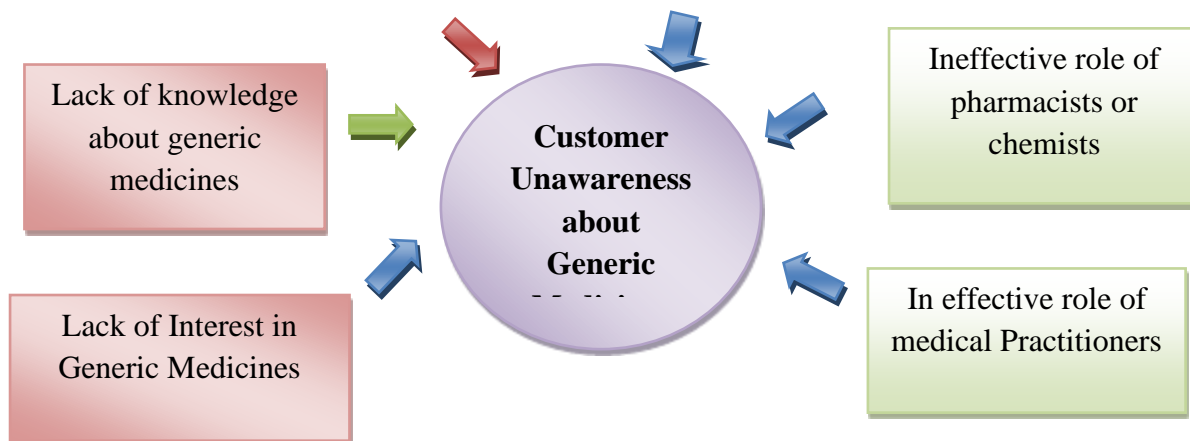


Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework.

Data Collection Method

For the purpose of this study, structured questionnaires are used, and secondary data is collected through news articles, published research reports, websites, the internet, etc. The study mainly depends on primary data.

Data analysis & Interpretation (Findings)

1) Gender

Sr. No.	Gender	No of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Male	96	64%
2	Female	54	36%
Total		150	100%

Interpretation:
The table shows that out of total respondents, 64% are male and 36% are women.

2) Age

Sr. No.	Age	No of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Up to 25	28	18.6
2	26-35	34	22.7
3	36-45	43	28.7
4	Above 45	45	30

Interpretation:
The table shows that out of total respondents, 30% are in the age group of above 45, where 28.7 respondents belong to the 36–45 age group, 22.7% belong to the 26–35 age group, and 18.6% belong to the age group up to 25.

Total	150	100%
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3) Education

Sr. No.	Education	No of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Up to S.S.C	42	28
2	Under Graduate	30	20
3	Post Graduate	47	33.4
4	Diploma or Others	31	20.6
Total		150	100%

Interpretation:

The table shows that out of total respondents, 33.4% are postgraduate, 28% are educated up to S.S.C., and 20.6% are qualified diploma or other course

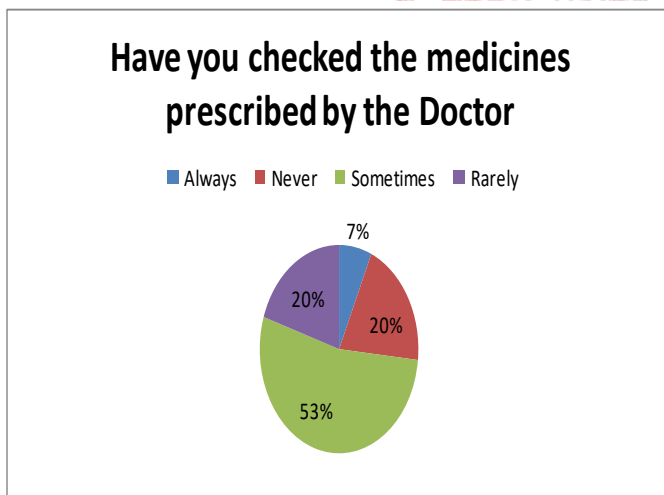
4. Are you familiar with the term generic medicines?

Sr. No.	Generic medicine awareness	No of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Yes	80	53.4
2	No	70	46.6
Total		150	100%

Interpretation:

The table shows that out of the total respondents, 53.4% are familiar with the term generic medicines, whereas 46.6% are not aware of the term generic medicines.

5. Have you checked the medicines prescribed by the Doctor?



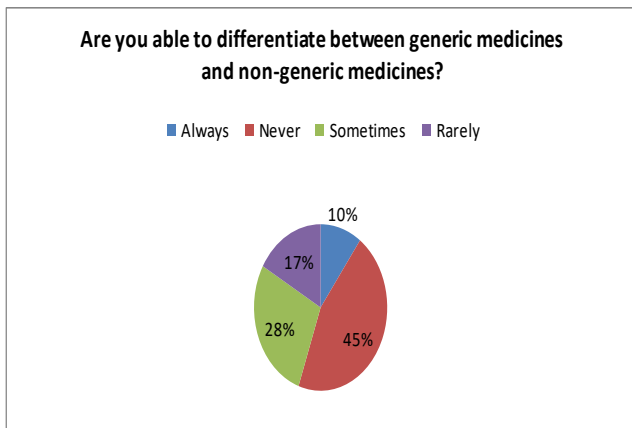
Interpretation:

The table shows that out of the total respondents, 53.4% checked the medicines prescribed by the doctors, and 20% checked Rarely, 20% never checked. 6.6% of respondents always check the medicines prescribed by the doctors.

6. Are you able to differentiate between generic medicines and non-generic medicines?

Interpretation:

The table shows that out of total respondents, 45.4% never differentiate between generic medicines and non-generic medicines; 48% can differentiate sometimes; 16.6% are rarely differentiated; and 10% are able to differentiate always.



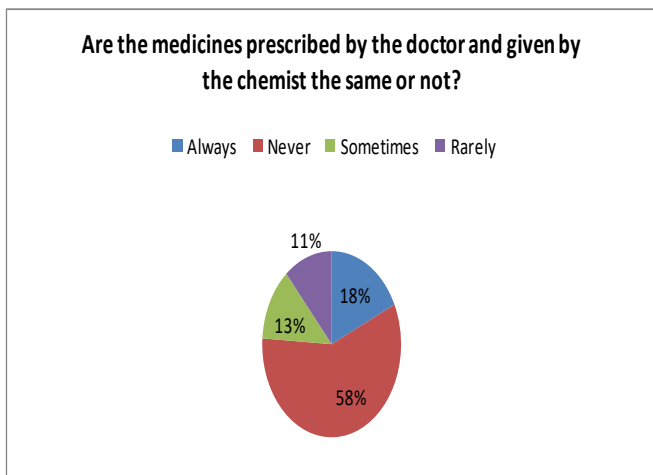
7. What is the monthly use frequency of medicines in your family?

Sr. No.	Monthly Frequency of Medicines	No of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Always	64	42.6
2	Never	5	3.4
3	Sometimes	70	46.6
4	Rarely	11	7.4
Total		150	100%

Interpretation:

The table shows that out of total respondents, 46.6% use medicines in their family, 42.6% use medicines always in their family, 7.4% are rarely used, and only 3.4% are never used medicines in their family.

8. Are the medicines prescribed by the doctor and given by the chemist the same or not?



Interpretation:

The table shows that out of total respondents, 58% never found similarities in the medicines prescribed by doctors and given by pharmacists; 18% found similarities always; 12.6% found similarities sometimes; and 11.4% found similarities rarely.

9. Do you observe a difference after using Generic medicines and non-generic medicines?

Sr. No	Observation about use of generic medicines	No of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Yes	60	40
2	No	90	60
Total		150	100%

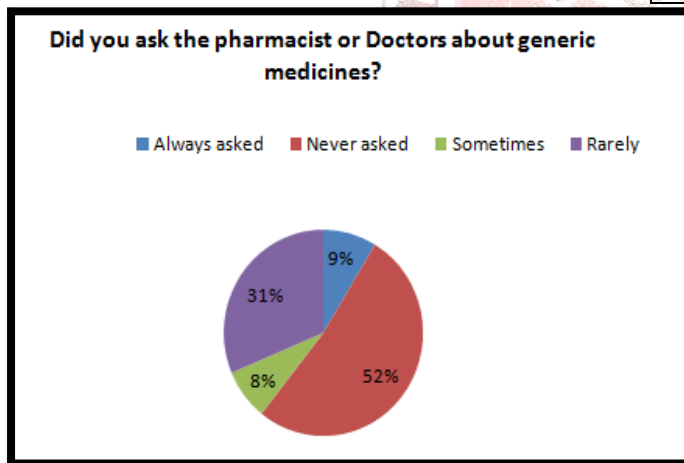
Interpretation:

The table shows that out of the total respondents, 60% did not observe any differences in the use of generic and non-generic medicines, and 40% observed differences in the use of generic and non-generic medicines.

10. Did you ask the pharmacist or Doctors about generic medicines?

Interpretation:

The table shows that out of the total respondents, 52% never asked pharmacists or doctors about generic medicines. 31.4% of respondents rarely ask, 8.6% always ask, and 8% occasionally ask pharmacists or doctors about generic medications.



11. Do you think that pharmacies charge the same price for generic and non-generic medicines?

Sr. No.	Price Differences	No of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Yes	91	60.6
2	No	59	39.4
Total		150	100%

Interpretation:

The table shows that out of total respondents, 60.6% think that pharmacists charge the same price for generic and non-generic medicines, while 39.4% think that pharmacists charge different prices for generic and non-generic medicines.

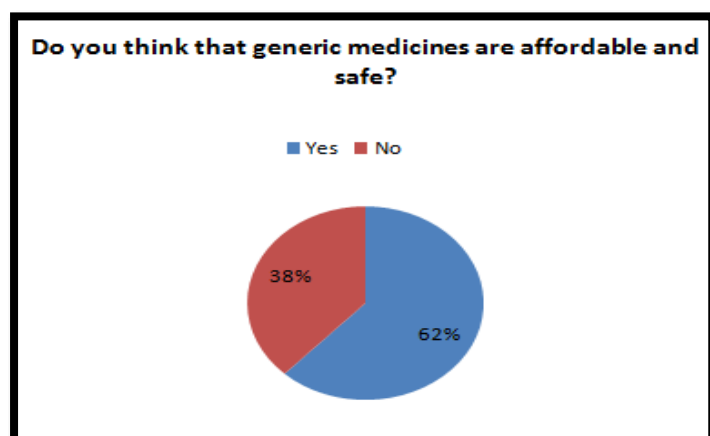
12. Do you think that the effectiveness of generic medicines is lower than that of non-generic medicines?

Sr. No.	Effectiveness	No of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Yes	87	58
2	No	63	42
Total		150	100%

Interpretation:

The table shows that out of the total respondents, 58% think that the effectiveness of generic medicines is lower than that of non-generic medicines, and 42% think that the effectiveness of generic medicines is equal to that of non-generic medicines.

13. Do you think that generic medicines are affordable and safe?



Interpretation:

The table shows that out of the total respondents, 62% think that generic medicines are affordable and safe, and 38% think that generic medicines are not safe and affordable

Conclusion:

From the findings and interpretation, the results clearly show that the majority of the respondents are male, though the majority of respondents are postgraduates. Still, respondents are not even aware of the term generic medicines. The majority of the respondents checked the medicines only some times that are given by the doctors to see if they are generic medicines or non-generic medicines because the majority of the respondents are unable to differentiate between generic medicines and non-generic medicines. The majority of the respondents said that the medicines given by the pharmacist are not similar to the prescribed medicines. And the chemist charges the same price for the generic medicines and non-generic medicines, though the generic medicines have a lower price rate, and due to unawareness about the prices, it hurts the pockets of customers. Here, the role of the chemist is also important to make the customer aware of generic medicines, but they don't do it for their profit margins, and doctors don't do it Due to a lack of certainty about the results of medicines and a lack of awareness, the customer also did not ask the chemist and doctors The majority of the respondents said that the effectiveness of generic medicines is not that great compared to non-generic medicines. The respondents also agree that they did not observe any difference after using the generic and non-generic medicines. They only found that the generic medicines gave slower results compared to the non-generic medicines, but they were affordable and safe.

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