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Identifying risk factors for incautious use of non-prescription drugs among university students in emirates

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Background & Aim: Use of Non Prescription Drugs (NPD) among university students is a serious public health issue. Previous study has reported that generally, a sizeable proportion of consumers do not read the Drug Information Leaflet (DIL) before using NPD. However, few studies have identified the risk associated with not reading drug information leaflet before using NPD. There are no extensive studies, which measured the prevalence and identified the risk associated with not reading DIL among university students. Therefore, we attempted to fill the gap in the literature.

Methodology: A cross-sectional survey-based study was conducted from January to April 2014, among 2875 students in three randomly selected UAE universities. A structured and validated questionnaire was used to collect the responses of the students. SPSS version 20 was used to analyze the data.

Results: More than half (1348; 57%) of participants reported using of Oral NPD. Of 1348 participants reported using Oral NPD, one quarter (1348; 22.2%) of Oral NPD was classified as incautious Oral NPD usage as they did not read the DIL while using the medication for the first time. This study has identified 10 risk factors for incautious Oral NPD use. Participants with age group of 21 years and older (OR=0.554, 95% CI: 0.373-0.823) ($p<0.001$), female (OR=0.339, 95% CI: 0.236-0.486) ($p<0.001$) and students from medical schools (OR=0.619, 95% CI: 0.435-0.882, p value=0.008) had lower odds of being incautious users compared to lower age group, males and students from non-medical schools. Furthermore, participants with a polypharmacy behavior had higher odds of being incautious Oral NPD user than monoparmacy users (OR 1.400, 95% CI: 1.030-1.02) ($p<0.001$).

Conclusion: There is few incautious Oral NPD use among university students, but it is a serious issue when it comes to medical student. There is a need for raising awareness among all medical students to motivate them to be cautious users because they are going to be the future healthcare providers. Further studies are required to explore other risk factors

Biography

Khalid Awad Al-Kubaisi is currently pursuing his PhD in Public Health from Gloucestershire University, UK. He was awarded his Master's degree in Public Health (MPH) from Hamadan bin Mohamed Smart University in 2012. He has received his Bachelor's degree in Science of Pharmacy from University of Baghdad in 1996. He spent 10 years working as a Pharmacist in UAE. His research interest is in self-medication practice and in the use of non-prescription drugs by university students. Recently, he has developed and evaluated an educational intervention designed for modifying university students' practice, knowledge, awareness and attitude in favor of responsible self-medication.

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