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Research Article

**SELF-MEDICATION AMONG MEDICAL AND DENTAL  
STUDENTS**<sup>1</sup>Anum Jabbar, <sup>2</sup>Sara Arshad, <sup>3</sup>Ghulam Dastageer<sup>1</sup>Capital Hospital Islamabad, <sup>2</sup>Rawalpindi Medical University, <sup>3</sup>Bolan Medical College Quetta**Article Received:** November 2019    **Accepted:** December 2019    **Published:** January 2020**Abstract:**

*Self-medication is a common practice worldwide. Self-medication practices are presumed to be common, given its regulatory climate in this regard. A total of 180 medical and dental students from different colleges, living in hostels and day scholars were included in this study. A predefined questionnaire was presented. The mean age of the students was  $22.56 \pm 2.45$  years, mean age of male students was  $23.45 \pm 1.56$  years and of female students  $21.34 \pm 2.54$  years. There were 90 [50%] male and 90 [50%] female students. Self-medication is highly prevalent in medical students in Pakistan.*

**Keywords:** *Self-medication, Medical students.***Corresponding author:****Anum Jabbar,**  
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**INTRODUCTION:**

Self-medication is a human behavior in which an individual uses a substance or any exogenous influence to self-administer treatment for physical or psychological ailments. The most widely self-medicated substances are over-the-counter drugs used to treat common health issues at home, as well as dietary supplements. These do not require a doctor's prescription to obtain and, in some countries, are available in supermarkets and convenience stores [1, 2].

The field of psychology surrounding the use psychoactive drugs is often specifically in relation to the use of recreational drugs, alcohol, comfort food, and other forms of behavior to alleviate symptoms of mental distress, stress and anxiety, including mental illnesses and/or psychological trauma, is particularly unique and can serve as a serious detriment to physical and mental health if motivated by addictive mechanisms [3, 4].

In several studies it has been found that inappropriate self-medication results in wastage of resources, increases resistance of pathogens and generally entails serious health hazards such as adverse drug reactions, prolonged suffering and drug dependence. On the other hand, if done appropriately, self-medication can readily relieve acute medical problems, can save the

time spent in waiting to see a doctor, may be economical and can even save lives in acute conditions [5, 6].

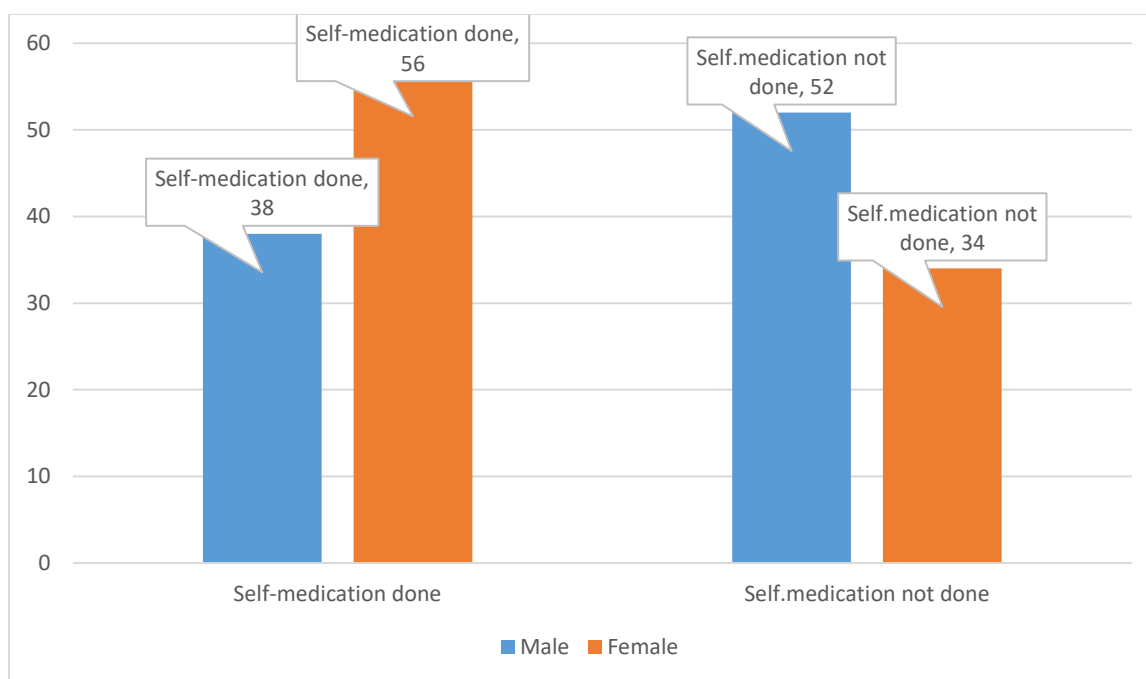
It is now accepted that self-care in the form of responsible self-medication can be beneficial for patients, healthcare providers, the pharmaceutical industry and governments [7]. The purpose of this study is to see the prevalence of self-medication among medical students

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:**

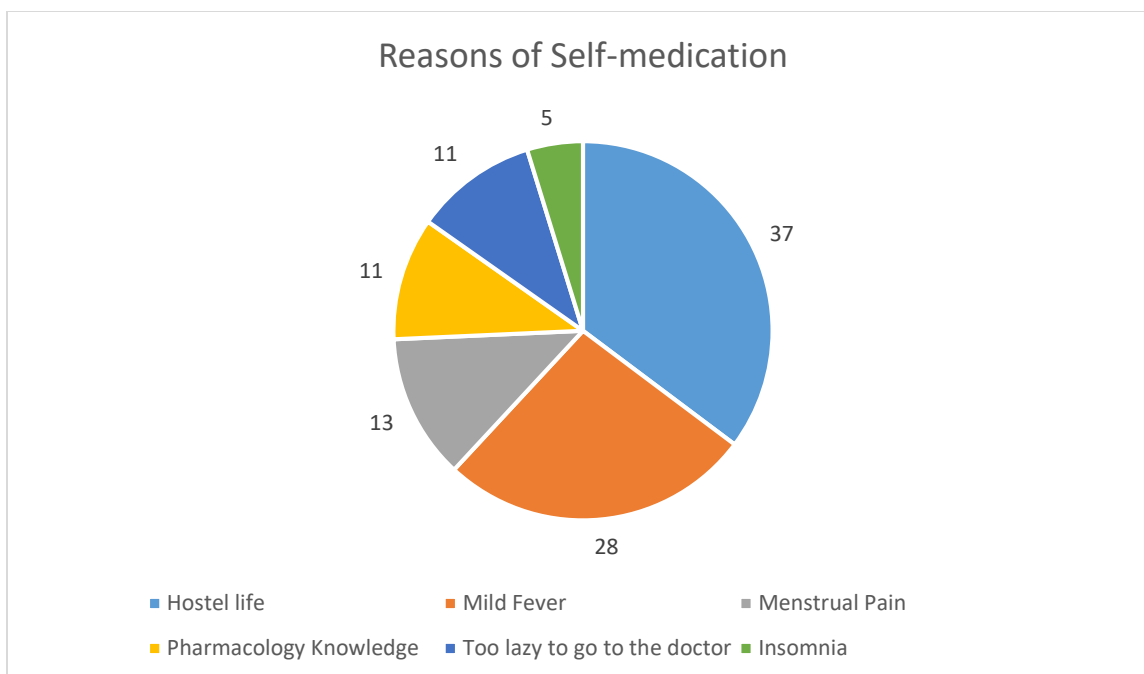
A total of 180 medical and dental students from different colleges, living in hostels and day scholars were included in this study. A predefined questionnaire was presented. Data was entered and analyzed in SPSS Ver. 25.0. The qualitative variables were presented as frequency and percentages, quantitative were presented as mean and standard deviation.

**RESULTS:**

The mean age of the students was  $22.56 \pm 2.45$  years, mean age of male students was  $23.45 \pm 1.56$  years and of female students  $21.34 \pm 2.54$  years. There were 90 [50%] male and 90 [50%] female students. One hundred and fifty [83.33%] students were living in the hostels. Distribution of male and female students according to self-medication is presented in graph:



Different reasons of self-medication were hostel life, mild fever, insomnia, menstrual pain, too lazy to go to the doctor, pharmacology knowledge etc.



### DISCUSSION:

The World Health Organization [WHO] has also pointed out that responsible self-medication can help prevent and treat ailments that do not require medical consultation and provides a cheaper alternative for treating common illnesses. However, it is also recognized that self-medication must be accompanied by appropriate health information. Studies on self-medication show that it is influenced by many factors, such as education, family, society, law, availability of drugs and exposure to advertisements. A high level of education and professional status have been mentioned as predictive factors for self-medication. The reasons for self-medication mentioned in the literature are mild illness, previous experience of treating similar illness, economic considerations and a lack of availability of healthcare personnel. The most common medications used for self-medication are analgesics and antimicrobials [4, 8, 9].

Self-medication is a common practice worldwide. Self-medication practices are presumed to be common, given its regulatory climate in this regard. For example, people in Pakistan can obtain medications such as antibiotics or sedatives without a prescription. Based on this, practices such as the utilization of prescription and/or nonprescription medication without prior medical consultation is considered a part of self-medication's operational definition. Several personal factors could influence self-medication practices, including sex, income, selfcare orientation, and medication knowledge. Self-

care-oriented people are those who undertake activities without professional assistance to promote their own health. Both self-care orientation and medication knowledge are important factors in determining the attitudes toward and the consumption of medications [1, 3, 6, 8].

### CONCLUSION:

Self-medication is highly prevalent in medical students in Pakistan.

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