



A Study On Public Awareness Towards Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) With Special Reference To Tirupur District

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ABSTRACT

The Department of Pharmaceuticals initiated the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) initiative to offer excellent medications at reasonable costs to the general public. The purpose of the PMBJP shops is to sell generic medications, which are equally effective and high-quality as branded medications but are offered at lower costs. India is popularly called as the “Pharmacy of the World” since it exports many different medicines to other parts of the world. But it is facing a problem of higher per capita medical expenditure due to expensive branded medicines in the market. Hence, to reduce the medical expenditure of individuals, the government came out with the concept of providing generic medicines, which is similar to the branded medicines, to the general public at a lower price through the Jan Aushadhi Kendra under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) scheme. This paper focused on the significant factors influencing the purchasing of generic medicines from Jan Aushadhi medical stores. It revealed cost and quality, promotional activities, customer awareness, and customer psychology and availability of required medicines in Jan Aushadhi medical stores were the key factors influencing customers buying behavior.

KEYWORDS: PMBJP, Branded Medications, Customer Behavior and Psychology.

INTRODUCTION

A generic drug is a drug that is not branded but is similar to a branded or reference listed drug in terms of dosage, administration and performance. According to guidelines from the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the generic drug must have the same active ingredient as the brand name drug as well as the same dosage, strength, safety, conditions of use and route of administration.

The generic medication is bioequivalent to the branded product, which means that the pace and degree of absorption of the two medications are the same, or if there is a variation, it is either intentional or not medically important. When the patent owner waives their rights or the patent expires, a generic medication may be marketed as long as the FDA requirements are satisfied. Because the pharmaceutical industry is so competitive, once a generic medication is on the market, the price of the medication for both the original brand-name medicine and the generic medication is significantly reduced.

As of 2023, the Indian pharmaceutical industry is the world's 13th largest by value and third largest in the world by volume. The industry produces over 60,000 generic drugs in different 60 therapeutic categories. India's revenue from pharmaceutical exports was \$25.3 billion in the 2022-2023 financial year.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In India, a significant proportion of the population faces challenges in accessing essential medicines due to the high cost of branded pharmaceuticals. The soaring prices of medicines often lead to financial burdens on individuals and families, hindering their ability to afford necessary healthcare. Additionally, the prevalence of counterfeit drugs and substandard medications poses serious threats to public health, exacerbating the existing healthcare challenges. Furthermore, the lack of a robust and widespread distribution system for generic medicines in the country contributes to the limited availability of affordable drugs. This scarcity disproportionately affects marginalized communities, rural areas, and economically disadvantaged individuals, perpetuating health disparities across the nation. The problem is that not everyone is aware of the schemes implemented by the government for the welfare of the people below the poverty line.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the socio-economic and demographic profile of the Respondents.
2. To know about the awareness level towards the Jan Aushadhi Medical Schemes.
3. To study the attitude and willingness of customers towards Jan Aushadhi Generic Drugs.
4. To analyze the problems faced by the customers while purchasing the Generic Medicines in Jan Aushadhi products/stores.
5. To assess the Impact of Trust in Government's Initiatives for Healthcare on Public Participation in Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP).
6. To study the satisfaction level of customers towards quality and affordability of the Generic Medicines.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study targets the degree of knowledge of individuals about Jan Aushadhi Medical Store, the people's awareness of Jan Aushadhi Medical schemes, to understand the willingness of individuals to shop for generic medicines, to review the understanding and people's perception on generic medicines, to study the satisfaction level of consumers towards quality, price, availability, accessibility, acceptability, affordability of those medicines. This study helps to identify the issues and problems faced by people and also helps to decide and to give a proper solution regarding the problem. The purpose of this study is to make the public and as well as the research for this topic is done in very limited numbers. This makes me to select this particular topic out of various schemes which was initiated by the Central Government.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a blueprint of a scientific study. It includes research methodologies, tools, and techniques to conduct the research. It helps to identify and address the problem that may arise during the process of research and analysis.

SAMPLE SIZE

The size of the sample is limited to 280 respondents. Out of 280 respondents, I have taken only 269 respondents because of remaining 11 respondents are not responded to the questions.

SAMPLE TECHNIQUES

The sampling method adopted for this study is convenient sampling method.

AREA OF THE STUDY

The area covered under this research is Tirupur district.

SOURCE OF DATA

The study includes both primary and secondary data was collected for this study.

PRIMARY DATA

Primary Data refers to data that is collected firsthand by a researcher or a team of researchers for a specific research project or purpose. It is original information that has not been previously published or analyzed, and it is gathered directly from the source or through the use of data collection methods such as surveys, interviews, observations, and experiments. The questionnaire comprises of close ended. Primary data was obtained from personal interview of respondents with the help of widely used and well-known method of survey through a well-structured questionnaire.

SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data were already collected by and readily from other sources. In this project, the data that have been collected from the following sources like journal, articles, websites and books etc.

TOOLS USED FOR THE STUDY

1. SIMPLE PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS
2. CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS
3. ANOVA ANALYSIS (ONE-WAY ANOVA)
4. RANKING ANALYSIS

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. This study is done only in Tirupur district, which may not be a true representation of all other cities in India.
2. The study was conducted under the assumption that the information given by the respondents on authentic.
3. The research may face difficulties or restrictions in obtaining relevant information from some peoples.
4. The study is depending the present condition and hence the result may not applicable in other period of time.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Manjula Bai, H. (2021)¹ conducted a study named “A Study on Customer Awareness towards Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Jan Aushadi Kendra’s with Reference to Shimoga” which concluded that the pharmaceutical industry in India has the capability to supply quality medicines, but the poor still cannot afford them. To help the underprivileged, the government has started the Jan Aushadhi Campaign and put legislation into place. The difficulty will be making sure that clients do not receive counterfeit medications. But in order for everyone to have access to high-quality healthcare, the program must be implemented. Only when high-quality medications are reasonably priced and physicians are encouraged to prescribe generics will universal healthcare be possible.

Rajasekaran et al. (2021)² in his paper titled, ““A Study on customer awareness towards Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra’s with reference to Tirupur district” found that the customers of Jan Aushadhi medical stores are satisfied with the quality of the generic medicines. They also found that the customers show good customer loyalty towards the Jan Aushadhi medical stores. Through the research paper entitled, “A study on customer satisfaction towards Jan Aushadhi”, it is concluded that the demographic variables such as age group, gender and occupation are having less impact on the factors of customers satisfaction. According to the research's findings, the majority of consumers expressed satisfaction with Jan Aushadhi Medial Store in relation to the parameters that were selected. In a cutthroat market, businesses want to boost quality and customer happiness while gaining more committed customers. To lead the market, you need them. The most important thing of all is to learn what makes a consumer more loyal. Additionally, this survey shows that Jan Aushadhi's client loyalty is strong.

Thomas George Shrinath Baliga et al.(2021)³ in his paper titled, "Generic Anticancer Drugs of the Jan Aushadhi Scheme in India and Their Branded Counterparts: The First Cost Comparison Study" stated that from a social perspective, decreasing the cost of drugs will improve affordability, medication compliance, and the patient's financial burden. Thus, it is imperative that treating physicians are informed about the relative differences in the costs of these medications, as well as their financial benefits to patients from marginalized communities, in order to promote the prescription of Jan Aushadhi medicines. Furthermore, it is imperative to raise awareness among the general population regarding the advantages of the Jan Aushadhi plan. Efforts in these areas will assist the underprivileged members of society and aid in the popularization of generic Jan Aushadhi medications.

Pawar et al. (2021)⁴ revealed no significant difference among the quality and efficiency of generic medicines available in Jan Aushadhi medical stores over the other brand medicines available in the market. One prevalent misconception about inexpensive medications is that their quality has been degraded, whereas conventional treatments with greater prices tend to have superior quality and efficacy. We have examined several medication items with different price ranges in this study. It was discovered that there is no discernible difference in the effectiveness of expensive, medium-priced, and inexpensive pharmaceutical items purchased from the Jan Aushadhi shop, a government-run social project. This would accelerate the public access and improve perception to the essential drugs at affordable cost, supporting the initiative undertaken by government in the form of Jan Aushadhi.

Nirmala Devi M (2021)⁵ in his paper titled, "A study on customer buying pattern of generic medicines from Jan Aushadhi medical stores in Coimbatore city of Tamil Nadu" stated that the major factor influencing the purchasing of generic medicine from the Jan Aushadhi medical store is its cheaper price and quality. The study also revealed that customers' economic condition plays an important role in buying generic medicines over expensive branded ones. Customers are made aware that generic medications are identical to branded medications in terms of their chemical makeup and quality and are not adulterated by the government, Jan Aushadhi medical shop owners, and friends and family. Customers are given a positive impression by the government's promotion of generic medications through Jan Aushadhi medical outlets. Customers' knowledge and these incentives are having a significant influence on how generic medications are purchased from Jan Aushadhi medical outlets. The availability of customer required medicine in Jan Aushadhi medical store also plays a crucial role in customers purchasing behavior.

RESEARCH GAP

The review of literature has shown various studies that have been conducted to identify and assess the attitude and perception of the people towards buying the generic medicines. Most of the authors covered the price and quality of the generic medicines in their studies. So, I am going to assess the area of awareness towards the public because of the lack of knowledge towards the poor people. This also helps the public to save the money for spending unwantedly in the branded medicines.

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

S.NO	FACTOR	NO.OF. RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	GENDER (MALE)	135	50.2
2	AGE (41 – 50 YRS)	132	49.1
3	ANNUAL INCOME (RS. 2,50,001 – RS. 5,00,000)	105	39.0
4	AWARE OF JAN AUSHADHI MEDICAL STORE (9 – 12 YEARS)	106	39.4
5	FIRST COME TO KNOW ABOUT THE JAN AUSHADHI MEDICAL SCHEME (NEWSPAPER)	112	41.6
6	COMPARISON OF GENERIC MEDICINES WITH BRANDED MEDICINES (YES)	269	100
7	FACTOR INFLUENCE THEIR DECISION TO PURCHASE THE GENERIC MEDICINES (COST EFFECTIVENESS)	85	31.6
8	GENERIC MEDICINES WILL REDUCE THE SIDE EFFECTS (YES)	269	100
9	WILLINGNESS TOWARDS BUYING THE GENERIC MEDICINES (BUYING AT THE TIME OF NEED)	118	43.9

10	GENERIC MEDICINES HELPS TO CONTROL THE FINANCIAL EXPENSES (TRUE)	263	97.8
11	PROBLEMS FACED WHILE PURCHASING THE GENERIC MEDICINES (PRESCRIPTION REQUIREMENT)	93	34.6
12	THEME OBSERVED AT THE TIME OF ATTENDING THE AWARENESS PROGRAM (PRICES OF THE GENERIC MEDICINES)	79	29.4

FINDINGS

- Majority 50.2% of the respondents are Male.
- Majority 49.1% of the respondents are between the age of 41-50 years.
- Mostly 39% of the respondents are between the earning category of Rs. 2,50,001 – Rs. 5,00,00 for a year.
- Mostly 39.4% of the respondents are aware about the Jan Aushadhi Medical store for more than 9 – 12 Years.
- Mostly 41.6% of the respondents are first come to know about the Jan Aushadhi scheme with the help of the Newspaper.
- Majority 100% of the respondents are agreed with the factor that the prices of the generic medicines is low as compared with the branded medicines.
- Mostly 31.6% of the respondents are influenced their purchasing decision with the factor cost effectiveness.
- Majority 100% of the respondents have agreed with the factor that the generic medicines will reduce the side effects while consuming.
- Mostly 43.9% of the respondents have agreed with the factor buying at the time of needed of the generic medicines.
- Majority 97.8% of the respondents are agreed with the factor that generic medicines help to control the financial expenses.
- Mostly 35.3% of the respondents are agreed with the factor quality assurance which contributes their satisfaction to the affordability.
- Majority 100% of the respondents are agreed with the factor that they had faced some problems at the time of documentation process or purchasing the generic medicines.

- Mostly 34.6% of the respondents are agreed with the factor prescription requirement that they faced at the time of purchasing the generic medicines.
- Majority 54.3% of the respondents are agreed with the factor that they had experienced stigma from other brands while purchasing the generic medicines.
- Majority 100% of the respondents are agreed with the factor that they had attended the community awareness program.
- Mostly 29.4% of the respondents are agreed with that they aware of the prices of the generic medicines while attending the community program.
- Mostly 35.3% of the respondents are agreed with the factor collaborate with health-care professionals for improving the overall customer experience.
- Majority 100% of the respondents are agreed with the factor that they had recommended the Jan Aushadhi scheme to their friends or family members.

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

FACTOR	CALCULATED VALUE	TABLE VALUE	RESULT
AWARENESS AND PROMOTION OF PMBJP IN THEIR LOCALITY	0.935	21.026	ACCEPTED
VARIETY OF THE GENERIC MEDICINES	0.957	21.026	ACCEPTED
AFFORDABILITY OF THE GENERIC MEDICINES	0.849	21.026	ACCEPTED
QUALITY OF THE GENERIC MEDICINES	0.374	21.026	ACCEPTED
OVERALL SERVICES OF THE PMBJP	0.809	21.026	ACCEPTED

INTERPRETATION

Through chi-square analysis, the relationship between the two variables i.e. Age and the Satisfaction level for the usage of generic medicines is analysed.

There is no significant relationship between age with awareness and promotion of PMBJP in their locality, variety of the generic medicines, affordability of the generic medicines, quality of the generic medicines and overall services of the PMBJP.

ONE-WAY ANOVA ANALYSIS

FACTOR	CALCULATED VALUE	TABLE VALUE	RESULT
AWARENESS AND PROMOTION OF PMBJP IN THEIR LOCALITY	0.191	9.01	ACCEPTED
VARIETY OF THE GENERIC MEDICINES	0.677	9.01	ACCEPTED
AFFORDABILITY OF THE GENERIC MEDICINES	0.586	9.01	ACCEPTED
QUALITY OF THE GENERIC MEDICINES	0.406	9.01	ACCEPTED
OVERALL SERVICES OF THE PMBJP	0.362	9.01	ACCEPTED

INTERPRETATION

Through ONE-WAY ANOVA analysis, the association of two variables i.e. Age and the satisfaction level for the usage of the generic medicines is analysed.

There is no significant association between age with awareness and promotion of PMBJP in their locality, variety of the generic medicines, affordability of the generic medicines, quality of the generic medicines and overall services of the PMBJP.

RANKING ANALYSIS

FACTORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL	RANK
Cleanliness and hygiene of Jan Aushadhi Stores	50	35	36	18	26	25	23	11	18	27	1698	1
Assistance and services provided by	42	33	17	20	27	27	25	22	35	21	1547	2

Jan Aushadhi staffs												
Availability of specialized medicines for chronic conditions	37	13	24	25	21	32	29	39	22	27	1444	7
Staff's communication to customers	30	27	17	26	29	25	37	23	22	33	1454	6
Promotion of scheme in your area	12	28	18	28	28	40	22	30	32	31	1353	10
Support from the government	28	30	27	20	43	16	24	28	27	26	1504	3
Conducting the public awareness campaigns	15	25	29	37	18	21	34	32	23	35	1392	9
Sustainability and scalability of the generic medicines	18	21	47	30	27	21	23	32	30	20	1490	4
Feedback mechanism	21	36	25	27	21	32	22	26	35	24	1469	5
Infrastructure and facilities of the Kendra's shop	16	20	30	34	28	31	32	27	27	24	1428	8

INTERPRETATION

The above table depicts that the cleanliness and hygiene of Jan Aushadhi stores shows first rank, assistance and services provided by Jan Aushadhi staff's shows second rank, availability of specialized medicines for chronic conditions shows seventh rank, staff's communication to customers shows sixth rank, promotion of scheme in your area shows tenth rank, support from the government shows third rank, conducting the public awareness campaigns shows ninth rank, sustainability and scalability of the generic medicines shows fourth rank, feedback mechanism shows fifth rank and infrastructure and facilities of the Kendra's shop shows eighth rank.

SUGGESTION

1. Government should promote the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Yojana scheme through the TV Advertisement, hoardings, posters and as well as in social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc., which helps the public to aware of the scheme.
2. Through the prices of the generic medicines are compared low with the branded medicines, the government should take necessary steps to promote the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Yojana to the general public by the advertising the prices of the generic medicines through the wall posters, banners etc.,
3. Government should reduce the complexity of the documentation process while opening the Jan Aushadhi Kendra's and the pamphlets should be circulated to each primary healthcare centres.
4. The details of medicines available in the nearby Jan Aushadhi medical store, and the location of nearby Jan Aushadhi medical store are needed to be made available in that web portal for the benefit of the customers.
5. Like the major pharmaceutical retail chains, these Jan Aushadhi medical stores also need to come up with the initiative of delivering the generic medicines at the patient's doorstep.
6. Doctors of government hospitals should be encouraged to prescribe Jan Aushadhi Medicines to the lower and middle level class of the people.

CONCLUSION

The Government of India breathed life into the Jan Aushadhi Programme, 2008, and plans to run it on a Campaign Mission Mode. The Jan Aushadhi Campaign could be a self-sustaining business model re-launched in March 2015 by the Department of Pharmaceuticals under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Scheme. It supported the principle of Not for Profits but with Minimal Profits, this program has been re-launched with the target of ensuring the availability of quality medicines at affordable prices to all or any. From the above analysis it is clear that majority of the respondents are aware about Jan Aushadhi Shops from Advertisement, friends and relatives but very few are not aware about these shops. This study defines that both low-income and high-income people will prefer Jan Aushadhi Shop medicines. Most of the people prefer Jan Aushadhi for its good quality and low rate. Researchers have got positive responses from majority of the respondents that there is no side effect after the usage of Jan Aushadhi shop medicine. In conclusion,

the PMBJP scheme has been instrumental in making quality generic medicines available and affordable to all sections of society, especially the economically weaker sections in India. However, there are still challenges that need to be addressed, such as ensuring the availability and accessibility of medicines in remote areas. The potential of the PMBJP to expand and cover more medicines and medical devices is promising, and it can play a crucial role in achieving the goal of universal health coverage in India. Pharmacists play a vital role in making the PMBJP and other similar schemes effective and important, and their contribution in ensuring the quality of medicines, promoting their rational use, and collaborating with other healthcare providers can help in achieving the goal of universal health coverage in India.

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