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**Non-prescribed antibiotic usage, its awareness, and associated factors among people between 20-40 years in Oruwala public health midwife area**

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**Background:** In the modern society many people tend to get self-medication because of their busy life style. Among them antibiotics play an important role, as frequent irrational use of antibiotics leads to an emergence of resistance which is a major healthcare concern.

**Objective:** To determine the proportion of non-prescribed antibiotics usage, its awareness, and associated factors among people between 20-40 years age group in Oruwala Public Health Midwife area (PHM).

**Method:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted on a random sample of 100 people between 20-40 years of age, who are residing in Oruwala PHM area. A pre-tested online questionnaire was used for the data collection. Knowledge score was calculated based on a questionnaire including twenty questions. Marks were given out of hundred and according to the median value of the total marks of each individual, and the score was categorized as poor and good. Quantitative data were analysed using mean and standard deviations, while qualitative data were presented using percentages. Chi squared tests were performed to assess associations and p value <0.05 was taken as significant.

**Results:** The majority of the study population were females (64%) and 51% had taken non-prescribed antibiotics, while 70.6% of them have taken antibiotics from a past prescription of a family member or of themselves. Most commonly used antibiotic was amoxicillin (86.2%), the majority of people (49%) had taken non-prescribed antibiotics due to lack of time to meet a doctor. Common cold is the commonest disease (58.8%) for which they have used non-prescribed antibiotics. The majority had poor knowledge regarding non-prescribed antibiotic usage (54%) and the adverse consequences. Statistically significant associations were found between knowledge regarding antibiotic usage and gender (p=0.02), and monthly income (p=0.01). However, educational level (p=0.26) and occupational category (p=0.24) were not significantly associated with knowledge or with non-prescribed antibiotic use.

**Conclusion:** The majority has poor knowledge regarding non-prescribed antibiotic usage and used non prescribed antibiotics irrespective of their level of education and occupation.