

## Preliminary Study on Evaluation of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Pharmacy Workers on Generic vs Branded Medicine in Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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**Background:** The pharmaceutical industry plays a role in fulfilling basic human needs by ensuring the highest standards of health. In addition to the registered pharmacists, there are apprentice pharmacists and other supporting staff working in the Sri Lankan pharmacy system. Although there are locally produced generic medications accessible in the Sri Lankan pharmacy system, branded medications are prioritized by some of the medical professionals and pharmacy staff for a variety of reasons.

**Objective:** To examine pharmacy employees' knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) about the distribution of generic vs. branded medications in the Colombo area to evaluate the correct operation of a pharmacy

**Methods:** Using a structured questionnaire, a descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among pharmacy employees (n=100) in the Colombo area, comprising pharmacists and non-pharmacists.

**Results:** Out of 100 participants, 15% were pharmacists, 37% were assistant pharmacists and 48% were pharmacy-supporting workers. Among the participants, 60% had a view of substituting generics for branded medicines in all cases where a generic is available. While 14% disagreed with that, 26% were neutral. However, 61% believed some medicine brands are more effective, and 6% disagreed. Among participants, 33% mentioned that sometimes they believe some brands are more effective. Further, 5% of participants always select other brands in addition to the brand which the doctor has prescribed. While 89% are only selected to other brands when the prescribed brand is unavailable, 6% have never done so. Also, 93% of participants usually inform the patients when they change the brand, and 7% do not inform.

**Conclusions:** Although, non-pharmacists are not directly involved in dispensing of the drug to the patient, their KAP on medicine is important for the proper functioning of the pharmacy system. Hence, it is concluded that some workers at pharmacies require further improvement based on KAP on generic vs branded medicine.

**Keywords:** *Branded medicine, Generic, Pharmacist*