

## Exploring the Knowledge and Self-Prescription with Antibiotics in Punjab, Pakistan

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**SUMMARY.** The emergence and spread of resistance related to the irrational use of self-medication is a major global public health problem. The aim of this study was to assess knowledge and self-prescription rate of antibiotics in Punjab, Pakistan. By using a questionnaire-based survey, we collected 965 interviews and performed analysis on those patients who had their last course of antibiotic within the past 12 months (695 subjects). The data was analysed using SPSS version 11.5. Approximately 35% of the subjects declared that they self-prescribed antibiotics. After adjusting for all covariates, major predictors for the self-prescription of antibiotics were younger age (> 30 years), female gender (married) and higher socioeconomic and low educational status ( $p < 0.001$ ). The findings of this study have assessed the widespread pattern of poor antibiotic-taking behaviour and have important implications for understanding the goals of future education campaigns to control the use and misuse of antibiotics.

**RESUMEN.** La aparición y propagación de la resistencia relacionada con el uso irracional de la automedicación es un importante problema de salud pública mundial. El objetivo de este estudio fue evaluar el conocimiento y la tasa de auto-prescripción de antibióticos en Punjab, Pakistán. Mediante el uso de una encuesta basada en un cuestionario, realizamos 965 entrevistas y efectuamos el análisis de aquellos pacientes que tuvieron su último ciclo de antibióticos en los últimos 12 meses (695 sujetos). Los datos se analizaron utilizando SPSS versión 11.5. Aproximadamente el 35% de los sujetos declararon que se recetaron antibióticos. Después de ajustar todas las covariables, los principales predictores de la auto-prescripción de antibióticos fueron la edad más joven (> 30 años), el sexo femenino (casado) y un nivel socioeconómico más alto y bajo nivel educativo ( $p < 0.001$ ). Los resultados de este estudio han evaluado el patrón generalizado de un comportamiento deficiente en la toma de antibióticos y tienen implicaciones importantes para comprender los objetivos de las futuras campañas educativas para controlar el uso indebido de antibióticos.

**KEY WORDS:** antibiotics, Pakistan, self prescription.

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