

A Review on the Attitude and Purchase Intention Towards Generic Medicines in Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

The pharmaceutical industry is one of the biggest investors in research and innovation. Most countries have controlled the trade and patent of pharma products. Under the control of Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) (1994), many countries have controlled their patent protection for pharma products. This is used to induce investment in clinical trials and innovations. Most of the pharma product's production process can easily be duplicated with fewer investments than that of original brand-name products. After patent exclusivity expires, generic producers will face intense competition in the market, which may or may not lead to lower prices, making safe access to essential medicines more difficult. Our government introduced the generic drugs which are approved by Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in (i) dosage, (ii) concentration, (iii), safety and, (iv) route of administration must be comparable to the parent drug (the drug described in the reference). v) quality, vi) results and vii) utility. Generic medicines were formulated in different countries at many times, from 1984 in USA and 1996 in Italy. Generic medicines are gaining increasing interest from many stakeholders because they allow patients to have similar treatment at a lesser price. At the same time, the research shows that the progress of this market is deliberate. Against these conditions, research on customer buying behavior for generic drugs has been used by health policy-makers and business leaders, mainly in countries such as India and Brazil, where regulations boost the manufacture and sale of generic drugs. This research will review those studies which will throw light on the purchase intentions and attitudes towards generic medicines in Tamil Nadu.

Keywords: *Attitude of Buyer etc, Generic Medicine, Originated/Branded Medicine, Purchase Intention.*

Introduction

The pharmaceutical sector in India has experienced significant growth over the past few decades, with generic medicines emerging as a vital element in the country's healthcare landscape. In Tamil Nadu, a state known for its robust healthcare infrastructure, the adoption of generic medicines has gained considerable momentum due to their affordability and easy

accessibility. Generic medicines, which are therapeutically equivalent to branded drugs but available at much lower prices, are increasingly being recognized as an effective solution to the escalating costs of healthcare. Despite the numerous advantages, however, the acceptance of generic medicines among consumers remains a complex issue, shaped by factors

such as public perception, trust in their efficacy, and awareness levels [1].

Consumer attitudes towards generic medicines play a pivotal role in influencing their purchase decisions. In Tamil Nadu, a state characterized by its cultural, socio-economic, and educational diversity, factors such as income levels, education, and government-led awareness campaigns significantly impact consumer behaviour [2]. Moreover, long-standing traditional beliefs and concerns about the perceived quality of generic medicines compared to branded alternatives often add layers of complexity to consumer decision-making [3].

This study aims to delve into the attitudes and purchase intentions of Tamil Nadu's residents regarding generic medicines. By examining the factors that influence perceptions, barriers to acceptance, and the motivations behind purchasing generic drugs, the research seeks to provide insights that can aid policymakers, healthcare professionals, and pharmaceutical companies in fostering greater trust and acceptance of generic medicines. Ultimately, this understanding will contribute to expanding access to affordable medications, improving health outcomes, and strengthening the state's healthcare system [4-6]. By addressing the below stated objectives, this review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the attitudes and purchasing behaviours towards generic medicines in Tamil Nadu, offering actionable insights for improving healthcare delivery in the state.

1. To review existing studies and literature to understand the public perception, purchase intention and general attitude of consumers in Tamil Nadu toward generic medicines.
2. To assess the effectiveness of Tamil Nadu's state policies in promoting generic medicines, such as the establishment of generic drug stores and public health campaigns.
3. To review studies that investigate consumer perceptions of the quality and

efficacy of generic drugs versus branded alternatives in the Tamil Nadu context.

4. To provide recommendations for enhancing the acceptance and purchase of Generic Medicines
5. To highlight the gaps in current research on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions regarding generic medicines in Tamil Nadu.

The pharmaceutical industry in India has seen rapid growth, with generic medicines playing a critical role in increasing access to affordable healthcare. Tamil Nadu, being one of the most populous and economically significant states in India, provides a unique context for studying the public perception, attitudes, and purchase intentions toward generic medicines. This review aims to explore existing literature related to consumer perceptions of generic medicines in Tamil Nadu, the effectiveness of state policies, and the role of quality and efficacy concerns in shaping purchasing decisions.

1. Public Perception, Purchase Intention, and General Attitude Toward Generic Medicines in Tamil Nadu

The perception of generic medicines in India has evolved over the past few decades, but challenges remain. In Tamil Nadu, several studies have assessed the public's attitude toward generic drugs, focusing on factors like cost, efficacy, and trust.

- **Public Perception of Generic Medicines:** A study conducted in Coimbatore city of Tamil Nadu explored the customer buying patterns of generic medicines from Jan Aushadhi medical stores. The study revealed that factors such as cost, quality, promotional activities, customer awareness, and availability of required medicines significantly influenced customers' buying behaviour [4].
- **Purchase Intention of Generic Medicines:** Research on the Tamil

Nadu Medical Services Corporation (TNMSC) highlighted the state's efforts to ensure the availability of essential medicines at reasonable costs. TNMSC's centralized procurement system and rational use of drugs have been instrumental in promoting the purchase of generic medicines [7].

- **Knowledge and Perceptions Among Drug Retailers and Pharmacists:** A cross-sectional descriptive study surveyed community pharmacists and drug retailers in Tamil Nadu. The study found that while some respondents were aware of generic medicines, a significant portion still believed that generics were of inferior quality compared to branded medicines [8].
- **Consumer Patterns and Behaviours Towards Generic Medicines:** A systematic literature review investigated consumer patterns and behaviours related to generic medicines. The review found that consumer awareness varied widely, influenced by factors such as age, education, and exposure to information from healthcare providers. Government initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Yojana aimed to increase access to affordable generics, but awareness remained limited in some areas [9].

2. Effectiveness of Tamil Nadu's State Policies in Promoting Generic Medicines

Tamil Nadu has implemented various state-driven initiatives to promote the use of generic medicines.

- **Promotion of Generic Medicines: Laudable Efforts but Must Engage All Stakeholders:** This article discusses the efforts of the Tamil Nadu government in promoting generic medicines and highlights the importance of engaging all stakeholders to address concerns about drug quality

and ensure the success of these initiatives [10].

- **Tamil Nadu State Health Policy Vision 2030:** The Tamil Nadu State Health Policy Vision 2030 outlines the state's commitment to achieving universal health coverage and promoting the use of generic medicines through various policy frameworks and initiatives [11].
- **Mudhalvar Marunthagam to Cut Back on Soaring Medical Bills:** This article examines the impact of Tamil Nadu's policy of establishing a network of subsidised pharmacies, known as Mudhalvar Marunthagam, to reduce out-of-pocket expenditure on healthcare and promote the use of generic medicines [12].
- **Government Procurement and Distribution of Essential Drugs:** This review discusses the effectiveness of Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation (TNMSC) in pooling procurement and distribution of essential drugs, resulting in significant reductions in out-of-pocket expenditure and promoting the use of generic medicines [12].

3. Consumer Perceptions of Quality and Efficacy of Generic Drugs Versus Branded Alternatives in Tamil Nadu

One of the most critical factors influencing the acceptance of generic drugs in Tamil Nadu is the perception of their quality and efficacy.

- **Consumer Perception of Generic Drugs in Comparison to Branded Drugs: A Qualitative Study:** This study explores consumer perceptions of generic drugs compared to branded drugs, highlighting that consumers often prefer branded drugs due to perceived quality, despite being aware that generics are more economical. [13]
- **Exploring Consumer Choice and**

Factors Influencing Buying Behaviour in Purchasing of Generic vs. Branded Drugs:

This research investigates the factors influencing consumer behaviour when purchasing generic versus branded drugs, revealing that price, quality, and trust play significant roles in their decision-making process [14].

- **Insights on Patient Perception Towards Generic vs. Branded Drugs:**

This article discusses the general misconception that cheaper generic drugs are of inferior quality, despite having the same efficacy as branded drugs [15].

- **Factors Affecting Consumer Perceptions of Generic Medicines:**

This review examines various factors that affect consumer perceptions of generic medicines, including marketing, promotions, and the influence of healthcare providers [13].

4. Recommendations for Enhancing the Acceptance and Purchase of Generic Medicines

Based on the literature reviewed, the following recommendations can be made to enhance the acceptance and purchase of generic medicines in Tamil Nadu:

- **Understanding Doctors and Pharmacist Perspective on Generic Medicine:**

This review explores the perspectives of doctors and pharmacists regarding generic medicines, highlighting the importance of educational interventions, formulary management, and collaboration between prescribers and pharmacists to enhance acceptance [16].

- **Generic Medicines' Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, and Acceptance by Patients and Healthcare Professionals:**

This article discusses the importance of educating patients and healthcare professionals through

targeted campaigns and training programs to enhance knowledge and dispel misconceptions about generic medicines [17].

- **Prospects and Challenges of Generic Medicines Adoption in India:**

This study examines consumer and physician perspectives on generic medicines, suggesting that making it mandatory for doctors to prescribe generics and launching robust public awareness campaigns can significantly improve acceptance [18].

- **Enhancing Acceptance of Generic Medicines Through Policy Interventions:**

This review highlights the role of policy interventions, such as regulatory support and incentives, in promoting the use of generic medicines and improving patient access to affordable healthcare [17].

5. Gaps in Current Research on Consumer Attitudes and Purchase Intentions Regarding Generic Medicines in Tamil Nadu

Despite the growing body of research on consumer perceptions of generic medicines, several key gaps remain:

- **Consumer Attitude and Purchase Intention to Generic Drugs:**

This article highlights the need for more comprehensive research on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions towards generic drugs, emphasizing the importance of understanding the factors that influence these attitudes and intentions [19].

- **A Review on Consumer Patterns and Behaviours' Towards Generic Medicines:**

This review identifies gaps in the current literature, such as the lack of studies focusing on specific demographic groups and the need for more in-depth analysis of consumer behaviour patterns related to generic medicines [9].

- **Attitude and Purchase Intention to Generic Drugs:** This study points out the limited research on the perspectives of patients and healthcare professionals regarding generic drugs, suggesting that more studies are needed to understand their views and how they influence consumer behaviour [19].
- **Assessment of Risks Associated with Generic Medications:** This review discusses the need for more research on the risks associated with generic medications and how these perceptions affect consumer purchase intentions, highlighting the importance of addressing these concerns to improve acceptance of generics [19].
- **Inadequate Exploration of Socio-Economic Diversity:** Although socio-economic status is acknowledged as a factor, there is a need for more detailed research on how different socio-economic groups perceive and purchase generic medicines [20].
- **Scarcity of Comparative Studies:** Few studies compare consumer attitudes towards generic medicines with those towards branded medicines, which could provide valuable insights into the factors driving consumer preferences [21].

Conclusion

The exploration of attitudes and purchase intentions toward generic medicines in Tamil Nadu reveals a complex interplay of factors influencing consumer behaviour. While the state has made commendable efforts to promote generic medicines through policies and initiatives, challenges remain in terms of consumer perception and acceptance.

Consumers in Tamil Nadu exhibit a range of attitudes towards generic medicines, shaped by

perceptions of quality, efficacy, and cost savings. Despite awareness of the economic benefits, there is a lingering scepticism regarding the equivalence of generics to branded drugs. This scepticism is often fuelled by misinformation and a lack of trust in generic drug quality.

To bridge the gap between perception and reality, it is crucial to implement targeted educational campaigns that address consumer concerns and highlight the rigorous testing and regulatory standards that generic medicines must meet. Engaging healthcare providers in these efforts can also play a pivotal role in building consumer confidence and trust.

Moreover, fostering a collaborative environment among policymakers, healthcare professionals, and pharmaceutical companies is essential to creating a supportive ecosystem for generic medicine adoption. By addressing the barriers and leveraging the facilitators identified in this study, Tamil Nadu can enhance the acceptance and purchase of generic medicines, ultimately contributing to more affordable and accessible healthcare for its population.

In conclusion, while significant progress has been made in promoting generic medicines in Tamil Nadu, continuous efforts are needed to change consumer perceptions and improve purchase intentions. Through strategic interventions and stakeholder collaboration, the state can achieve its goal of providing quality healthcare at a lower cost, benefiting the entire community.

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Nil.

Conflicts of Interest

All the authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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