

Gender Differences in Non-Prescribed Medicine Use: The Case of Turkey

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Abstract

Non-prescribed medicine use is prevalent in many health systems due to its impacts drug costs and access to medicine for individuals. However, irrational medicine use poses several risks and threats for public health. For this reason, previous research analyzes factors associated with non-prescribed medicine use at individual level. However, most studies analyze selected populations and limited number of studies delve into correlates of medicine use through gender perspective. In this regard, this study investigates gender differences in non-prescribed medicine use in Turkey. This study utilizes individual-level data set from nationally representative sample of 2019 Turkish Health Survey (THS). Logistic regression framework is employed for quantification of factors associated with non-prescribed medicine use. Further analysis is conducted for exploration of gender differences in determinants of non-prescribed medicine use. Empirical findings reveal a gender gap in non-prescribed medicine use which indicates that females are more likely to use non-prescribed medicine. Age and employment status are significantly related with non-prescribed medicine use. Additionally, several indicators of health needs and lifestyle indicators such as smoking, drinking, consumption of fruits and participation in physical activity are associated with non-prescribed medicine use for both females and males. Complementing earlier literature, results of this study imply that policy interventions concerning medicine use should avoid one-fit-all frameworks. Instead, policies targeting sub-samples of society with respect to individual-level characteristics may be more effective in prevention of irrational medicine use. Funding Acknowledgement: This research is supported by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey through TÜBİTAK-ARDEB-3501 Career Development Program (Project Number: 119K676).

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