

AWARENESS OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE AMONG DENTAL STUDENTS

Tandra Das.T

BDS 2nd Year

Saveetha Dental College and Hospitals

ABSTRACT:

Awareness of complementary and alternative medicine among Dental students

To conduct a survey and understand the knowledge about complementary and alternative medicine among Dental students. Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) has been defined as a group of diverse medical and healthcare systems, practices and products that are presently not considered to be a part of conventional medicine. Majority of the population have limited knowledge about CAM and it is the same when seen among the doctors of the present world. However, the use of CAM is on the rise. Due to its vast benefits, its prevalence amongst the ancient medicine like siddha field of medicine makes it significant. This questionnaire study will enable us to know the extent of knowledge about CAM in the Dental students. This study was conducted among 100 dental students in Saveetha Dental College and Hospitals, to determine the extent of usage, attitude and perception towards CAM.

INTRODUCTION:

It is evident from the history of healing through medicine that traditional therapies have been successfully used for treatment alongside the use of conventional medicine practices. The advancements in the field of conventional therapy have failed to overshadow the beneficial effects produced by traditional medicine (TM) among patients. The scope of TM is widely spread and is extended to various approaches of treatment, including materials extracted from plant herbs, animals, and mineral deposits. Moreover, spiritual remedies and physiotherapy treatment are also included in the domain of traditional medicine. These traditional therapies are included alone or in combination for the purpose of the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of illness [1]. Traditional medicine is known as “complementary and alternative medicine”(CAM) in some countries. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines TM as “the knowledge, skills, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, used in the maintenance of health and in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement, or treatment of physical and mental illness” [2]. CAM is defined by the WHO as “a broad set of health care practices that are not part of that country’s own tradition and are not integrated into the dominant healthcare system” [2]

There is a need to change the attitude of healthcare professionals regarding the use of complementary medicine on their patients due to the mere facts of its increasing use around the world. This awareness and knowledge attainment of CAM therapies will enable health care professionals to select the best and appropriate complementary medicine for their patients. The use of CAM in developing countries is more frequent than in developed countries.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The participants for this study were selected from Saveetha Dental College and Hospitals. 100 undergraduates from second year were included in this survey. The questionnaire distributed to the students had set of 13 questions out of which 4 were yes/no type and the rest had set of options depending upon the question.

The main aim is to assess the awareness of complementary and alternative medicine. The questionnaire used in this survey is given in the below mentioned appendix 1

Appendix: 1

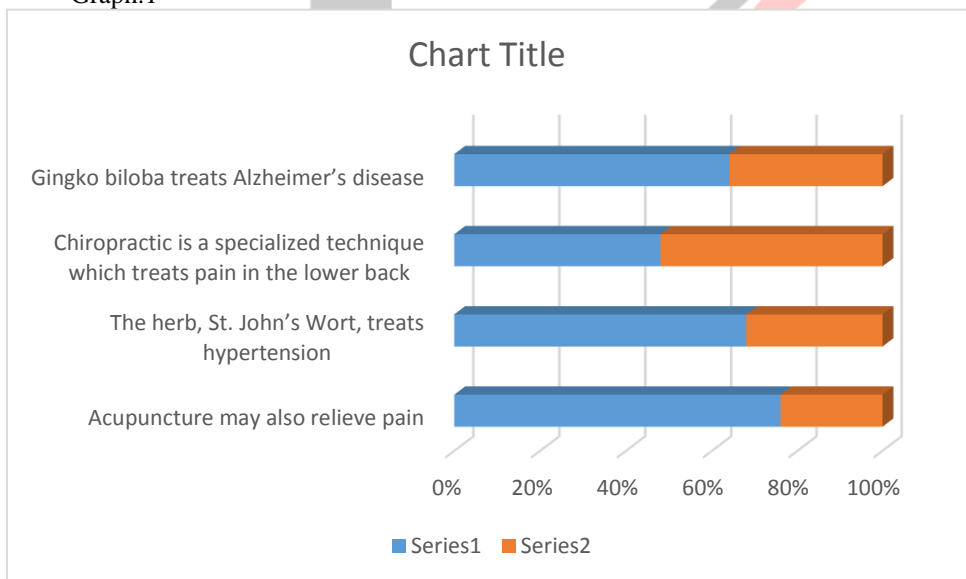
1. **Acupuncture may also relieve pain - Yes/No**
2. **The herb, St. John’s Wort, treats hypertension - Yes/No**
3. **Chiropractic is a specialised technique which treats pain in the lower back Yes/No**
4. **Ginkgo biloba treats Alzheimer’s disease -Yes/No**

5. Treatment/technique	
Acupuncture	A.No idea B. Moderate knowledge C. Maximum knowledge
Massage	A.No idea B. Moderate knowledge C. Maximum knowledge
Herbal Medicine	A.No idea B. Moderate knowledge C. Maximum knowledge
Spiritual healing	A.No idea B. Moderate knowledge C. Maximum knowledge
Magnetic therapy	A.No idea B. Moderate knowledge C. Maximum knowledge

6. Herbs	
Neem	A.No idea B. Moderate knowledge C. Maximum knowledge
Ginger	A.No idea B. Moderate knowledge C. Maximum knowledge
Feverfew	A.No idea B. Moderate knowledge C. Maximum knowledge
Garlic	A.No idea B. Moderate knowledge C. Maximum knowledge

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Graph:1

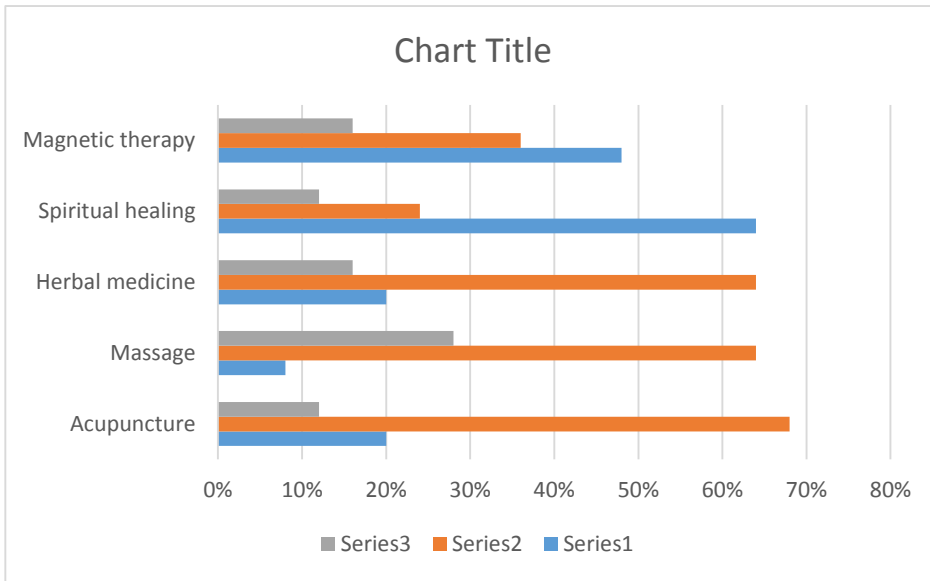


Graph:1 series 1- yes; series 2- No

The study gives a detailed idea of CAM knowledge among dental students . First set of questions included details about various CAM therapies . As the graph indicates 76% students had a positive knowledge and 24% had negative knowledge about acupuncture , one of key therapies in CAM. Whereas another technique, Chiropractic showed an contradicting result , which had 48% positive knowledge and 52% negative knowledge . Effects of two major herbs Gingko biloba and St. John wort were question both showed

similar results. Gingko biloba herb had 64% positive knowledge and 36% negative knowledge whereas , St. John wort showed 68% positive knowledge and 32% negative knowledge .

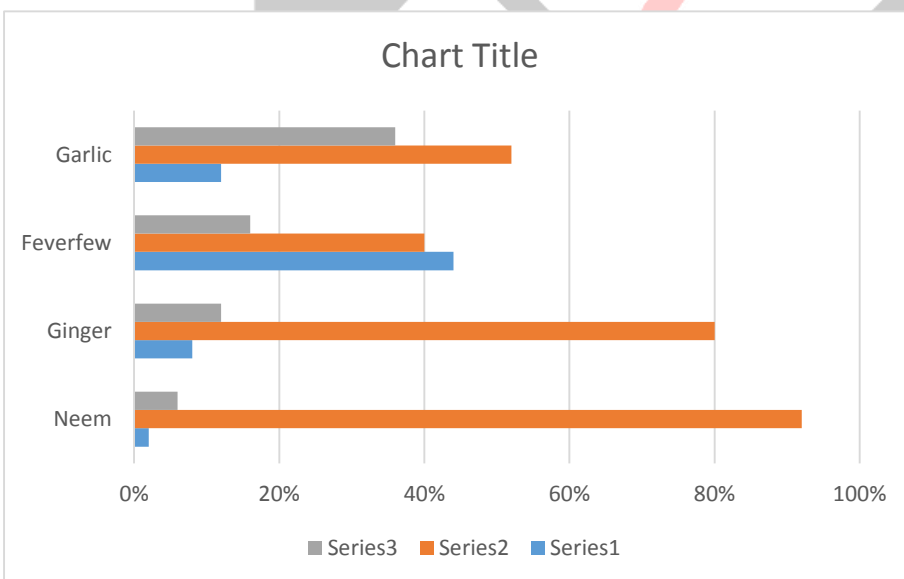
Graph:2 series:1-No idea; series-2: moderate knowledge; series:3-maximum knowledge



The second set of questions included in this survey aims in elaborating the knowledge in some significant therapies. Acupuncture as mentioned earlier, the most important therapy showed moderate knowledge of 68% , whereas 20% had no idea about about this therapy , and 12% of the student population had maximum knowledge. Massage , the most trending therapy had 64% moderate knowledge ,8% had no idea, and 28% had maximum knowledge . Herbal medicine had shown least knowledge, 64% moderate knowledge, 20% had no idea about this therapy and, 16% had maximum knowledge . Spiritual healing totally showed minimum knowledge, 64% had no idea about it and 26% had moderate knowledge and 10% had maximum knowledge. On Magnetic therapy 48% students had no idea, 36% revealed moderate knowledge,16% had maximum knowledge.

Graph:3 series:1- no idea; series:2- moderate knowledge ; series: 3 – maximum knowledge

The third set of questions included in this survey aims in elaborating the knowledge in some significant Herbs. Neem the majorly used herb showed moderate knowledge of 92% , whereas 20% had no idea about about this herb , and 16% of the student population had maximum knowledge. Ginger had 12% maximum knowledge ,8% had no idea, and 80% had moderate knowledge . Feverfew had shown least knowledge, 40% moderate knowledge, 44% had no idea about this therapy and, 16% had maximum knowledge .



Garlic showed 52% moderate knowledge ,12% had no idea about it and 36% had maximum knowledge .

CONCLUSION:

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) has grown into a huge health care industry. The major reason for opting for CAM is because it comes without any side effects. Overall study shows that most of the students have a fair knowledge on CAM.

REFERENCES:

- [1] B. T. Shaikh and J. Hatcher, "Complementary and alternative medicine in Pakistan: prospects and limitations," Evidence Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine, vol.2,no.2,pp. 139–142, 2005.
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- [3] SamiH.Alzahrani, Jamil Bashawri, Emad M. Salawati, and MarwanA.Bakarman Knowledge and Attitudes towards Complementary and Alternative Medicine among Senior Medical Students in King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia, Volume 2016; Hindawi

