




AN EVALUATION OF SENIOR PHARMACY STUDENTS' PERCEPTION AND KNOWLEDGE ON COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINES

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Introduction

- ▶ Complementary medicine refers to a group of therapeutic and diagnostic disciplines that exist largely outside the institutions where conventional healthcare is taught and provided.
- ▶ Alternative medicine is also used to cover certain health practices (such as homeopathy, naturopathy, chiropractic and herbal medicine). It has been broadly defined as "every available approach to healing that does not fall within the realm of conventional medicine".

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Introduction...

The popularity of Complementary and Alternative Medicines (CAM) utilization and practice has dramatically increased in different countries of the world during the past decade.

The possibilities of potentially dangerous adverse interactions between CAM and other pharmacotherapeutic agents make discussions about CAM with patients useful, in order to optimize clinical effects.

The question to assess outcomes of teaching efforts that may arise at this point is what do pharmacists and pharmacy students know and believe about CAM?

This is essential to measure and assess whether they receive sufficient amount of knowledge about CAM, and how they plan to utilize this knowledge in the future.



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Methodology

▶ Study design:

A cross sectional survey employing a 20-item questionnaire was used to collect the required data.

▶ Population:

Senior pharmacy students at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM).

▶ Validation and reliability process:

Face and content validation was done by using comments received from four pharmacy experts.

▶ Method of statistical analysis:

Data were analyzed using SPSS, version 14.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL) and Microsoft® Excel. Descriptive statistics including frequencies and % were used for data analysis. Non-parametric tests such Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis tests were also used wherever appropriate.



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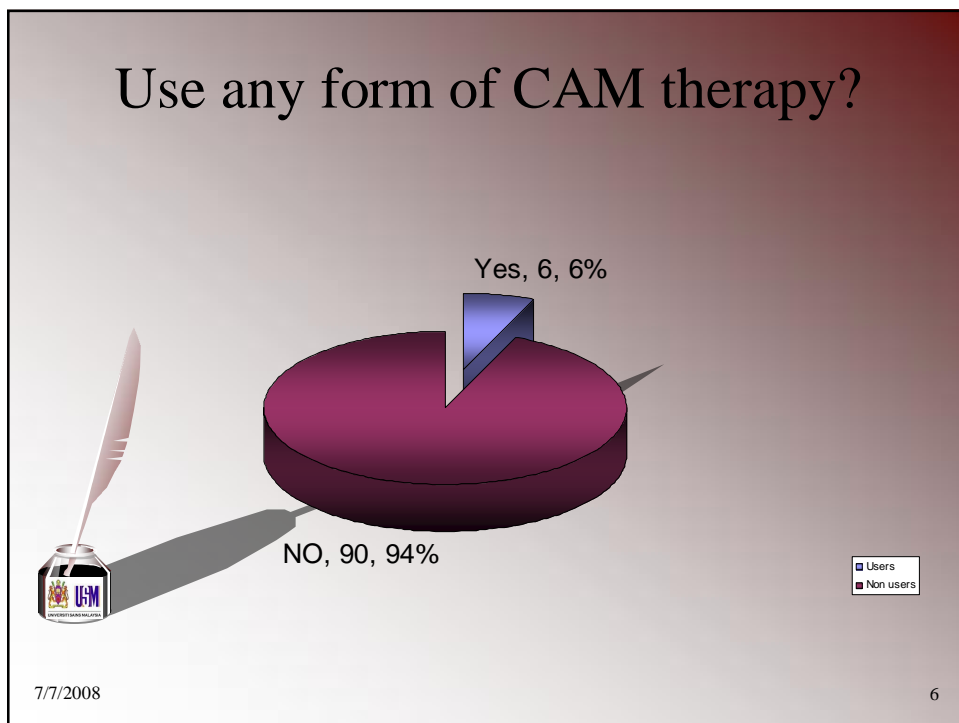
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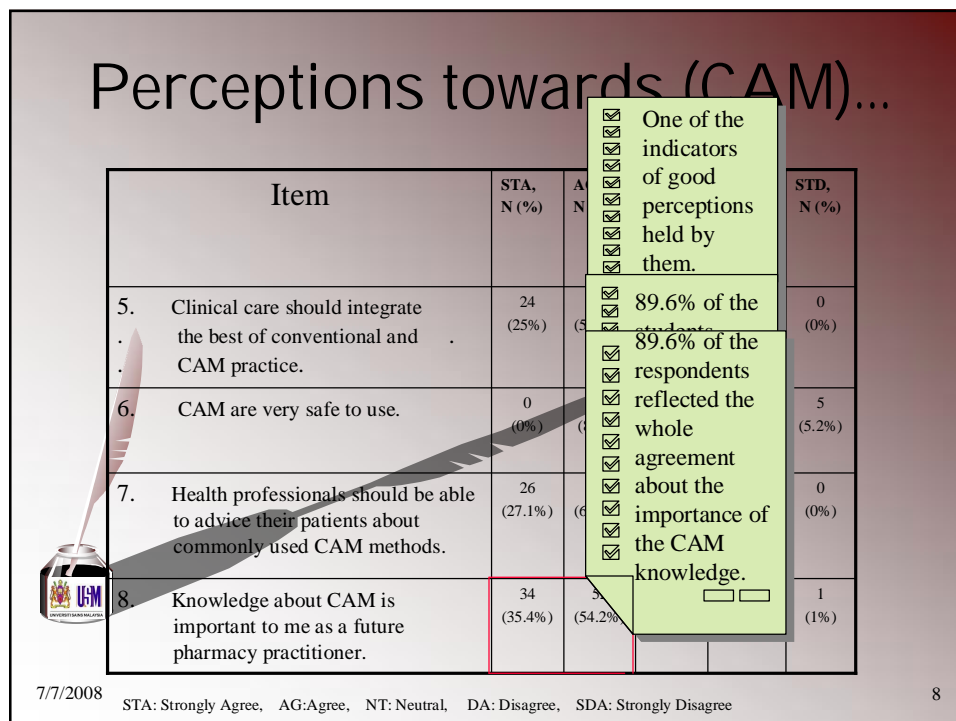
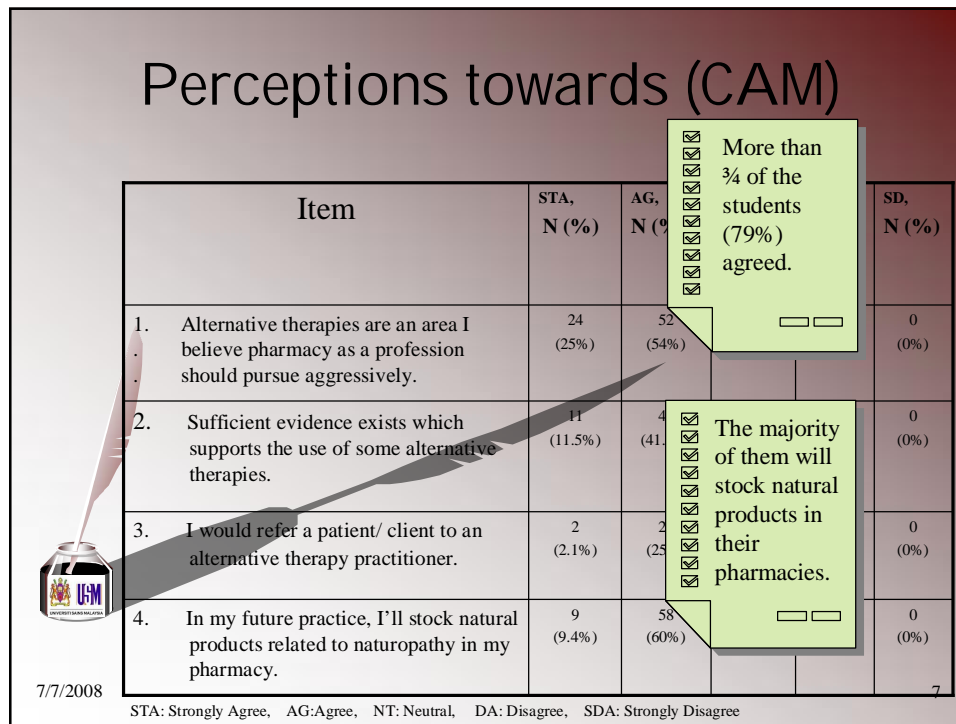
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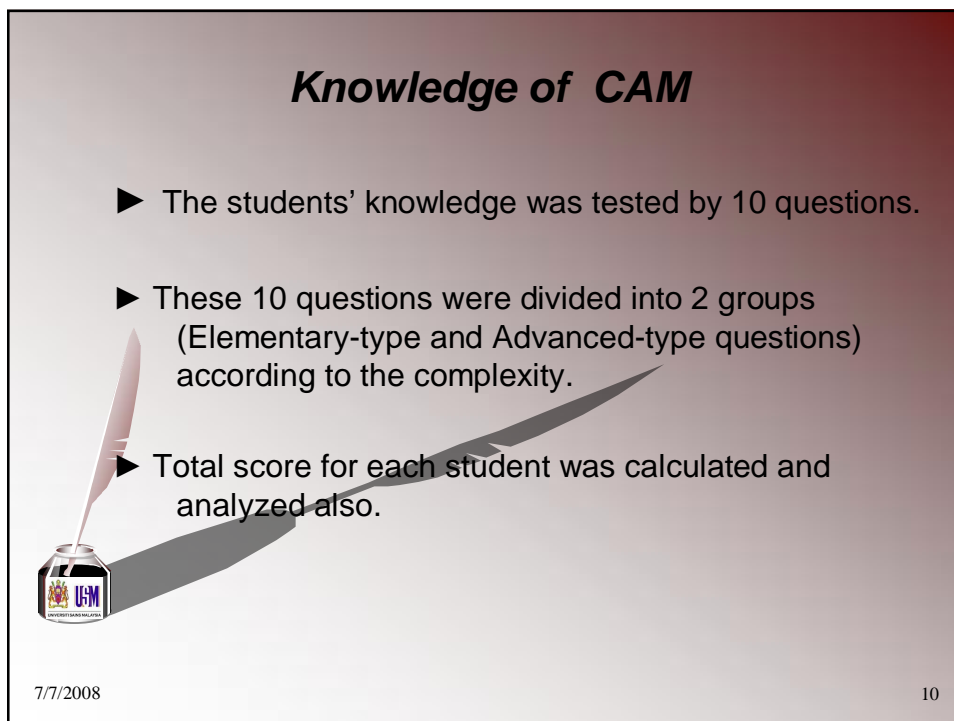
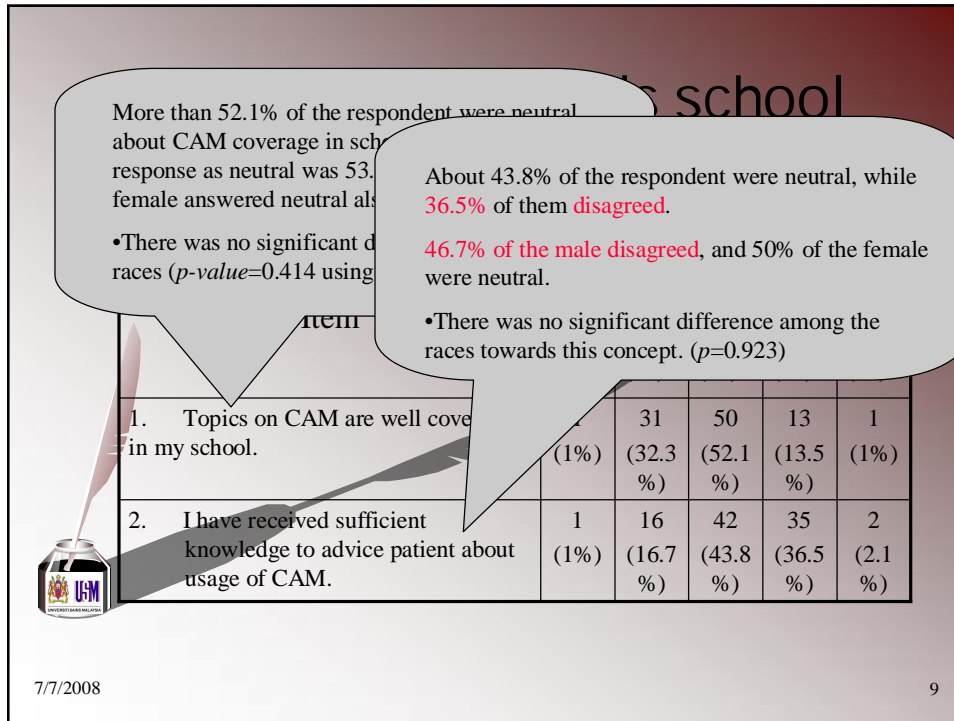


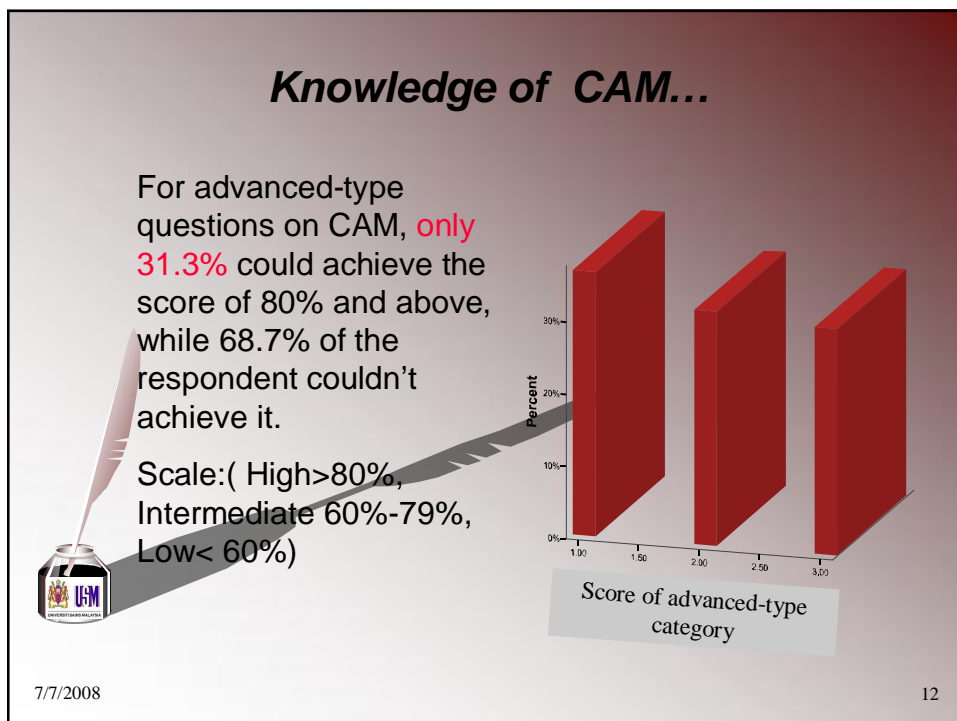
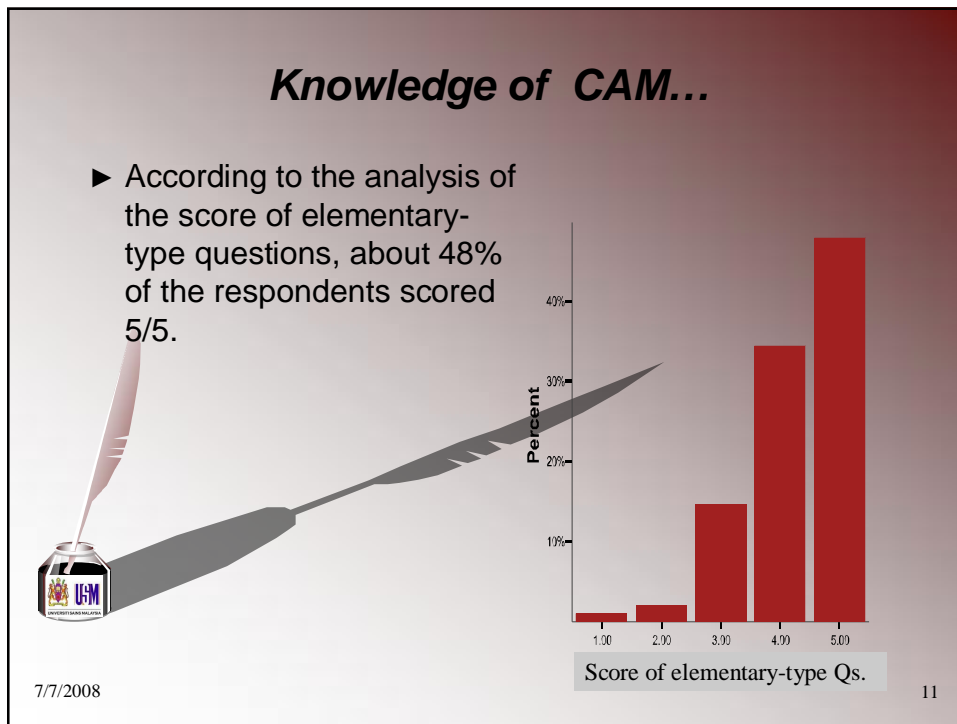
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Mode of entry into pharmacy programme

- ▶ This study also found that there was no significant difference in level of knowledge of CAM by mode of entry (matriculation vs. STPM vs. others).
- ▶ Kruskal Wallis test ($p\text{-value}=0.113$).

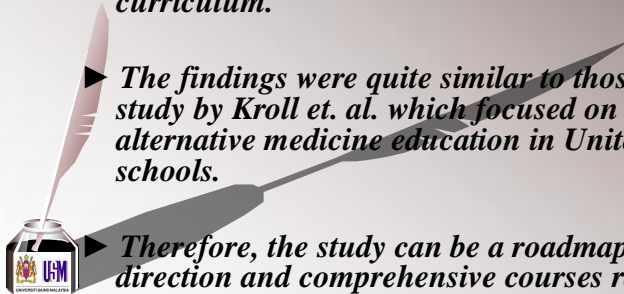


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Conclusion

- ▶ *This study showed that senior pharmacy students at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) had an overall positive perception towards CAM, but the level of knowledge of the students might have reflected the insufficiency of information about CAM in the present pharmacy curriculum.*
- ▶ *The findings were quite similar to those reported in another study by Kroll et. al. which focused on complementary and alternative medicine education in United States' pharmacy schools.*
- ▶ *Therefore, the study can be a roadmap for introducing new direction and comprehensive courses related to CAM in pharmacy curriculum.*



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The 8th Asian Conference on Clinical Pharmacy: "Toward Harmonization of Education and Practice of Asian Clinical Pharmacy"

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