

# Traditional and complementary medicine and modern medicine: Patient's perception & preference in outpatient pharmacy, Hospital Melaka

Koh Yu Hang, Janice Wong, Noor Azira Abdul, Norhamizah Ismail, Esha Darshini

Department of Pharmacy, Hospital Melaka, Malaysia

## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Traditional and Complementary Medicine (T&CM) holds a significant place in Malaysian healthcare and is gradually being integrated into the national healthcare system. Understanding patients' perceptions and preferences regarding T&CM effectiveness compared to modern medicine, as well as their preferences for integration into modern healthcare settings, is essential for informed healthcare decision-making and service provision. **Objectives:** To investigate patients' perceptions of T&CM effectiveness compared to modern medicine, their preferences for integration into modern medicine, and the correlation between patients' beliefs and perceptions of T&CM and their desire to implement T&CM services in Hospital Melaka. **Materials and Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted involving 450 consented outpatients from Hospital Melaka. Data were collected using a validated and structured self-administered questionnaire from 1st September to 31st December 2019. Statistical analysis was performed using Pearson's correlation test and independent t-test in SPSS software. **Results:** Out of 450 participants, 30.0% practiced T&CM for their current illness, while 43.3% believed it could help. Concerns about side effects and public health risks were prevalent, with 43.56% are recommending T&CM to others. Income levels significantly influenced T&CM preferences ( $P=0.037$ ) and the desire for its inclusion in hospital services ( $P=0.017$ ). Patients' perceptions and preferences for T&CM showed a significant and positive correlation with their desire for implementing T&CM services at Hospital Melaka. However, less than 15% wanted T&CM services at Hospital Melaka. **Conclusion:** The study highlighted mixed views on T&CM, balancing concerns about side effects with its perceived suitability for various diseases and potential integration with modern medicine.