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I-CReST 2025: 122-086 – Exploring Malaysian Medical Doctors' Knowledge of AYUSH and TCM in Menopausal Symptoms Management

*[1]Sook Yan Goh, [2]Hemaniswarri Dewi Dewadas, [1]K Gengeswari, [3]Yang Mooi Lim, [1]Teh Hong Piow

Faculty of Business and Finance, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Jalan Universiti, Bandar Barat, 31900 Kampar, Perak, Malaysia.

[2]Centre for Biomedical and Nutrition Research, Faculty of Science, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Jalan Universiti, Bandar Barat, 31900 Kampar, Perak, Malaysia.

[3]Department of Pre-Clinical Sciences, M. Kandiah Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Jalan Sungai Long, Bandar Sungai Long Cheras, 43000 Kajang, Malaysia.

*E-mail: gohyan99@1utar.my

ABSTRACT

Menopause is a natural stage in woman's life but it often with symptoms such as hot flashes, mood changes, sleep disturbances, and vaginal dryness, that significantly affect quality of life. Although Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is common treatment, women worried about its potential side effects such as breast cancer, and stroke. Hence, women are looking for alternative options like AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) which offer natural and holistic approaches to manage menopause. These systems are well-integrated in countries like China and India; however, their adoption in Malaysia's mainstream medical practice remains limited, mainly due to the low engagement and recommendations among medical doctors. Hence, this study aimed to explore Malaysian medical doctors' knowledge of AYUSH and TCM in managing menopausal symptoms. A qualitative phenomenological design was used, 25 medical doctors specializing in internal medicine, family medicine, and obstetrics and gynaecology were purposively selected and interviewed through one-on-one online sessions. Key themes were identified focused on doctors' awareness and knowledge of AYUSH and TCM, familiarity with applications, and perceived recommendations in clinical practice. Findings revealed that while most participants were aware of the existence and increasing use of T&CM among Malaysians often through media, family or peer conversations. They reported having limited knowledge of the principles, mechanisms, role and clinical evidence supporting these systems. This knowledge gap was primarily due to the lack of formal education and clinical exposure contributed to hesitancy in recommending such therapies. In conclusion, this study highlighted general awareness but limited knowledge among Malaysian medical doctors regarding the use of AYUSH and TCM for managing menopausal symptoms. This gap showed the need for more structured education, interprofessional collaboration, and evidence-based integration into Malaysia's healthcare system in order to support for more holistic, patient-centred care for menopausal women

Keywords: Menopausal symptoms; Knowledge; TCM; AYUSH; Medical doctors