

Supplementary Information

Article: Complementary vs. Alternative Medicine Use, Related Attitudes and the Role of the Internet: A Cross-Sectional Study Using the ISSP 2021

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S1: Sample by country of residence

Country	n	%
Australia	1,050	2.16
Austria	1,546	3.19
China	2,689	5.54
Croatia	1,101	2.27
Czech Republic	1,262	2.60
Denmark	1,672	3.44
Finland	1,002	2.06
France	1,584	3.26
Germany	1,744	3.59
Hungary	1,008	2.08
Iceland	1,086	2.24
India	1,683	3.47
Israel	1,187	2.45
Italy	1,138	2.34
Japan	1,453	2.99
Mexico	1,001	2.06
Netherlands	1,269	2.61
New Zealand	1,135	2.34
Norway	1,518	3.13
Philippines	1,800	3.71
Poland	1,098	2.26
Russia	1,597	3.29
Slovakia	1,013	2.09
Slovenia	1,020	2.10
South Africa	2,829	5.83
Spain	2,059	4.24
Suriname	1,468	3.02
Sweden	1,930	3.98
Switzerland	3,349	6.90
Taiwan	1,604	3.30
Thailand	1,497	3.08
United States	1,146	2.36
Sum	48,538	≈ 100.0

Percentage does not sum to exactly 100 due to rounding errors

S2.1: Descriptive sample analysis – categorical variables

Variable	n	%
<i>CAM usage</i>		
No CAM	34,497	73.02
Complementary medicine	11,538	24.42
Alternative medicine	1,208	2.46
<i>Attitude: CAM > school medicine</i>		
Agree	8,890	18.40
Disagree & cannot say	39,427	81.60
<i>Internet access</i>		
Yes	44,223	91.11
No	4,315	8.89
<i>Frequency internet usage</i>		
Never or almost never	10,743	22.75
Several times a year	16,544	35.04
Several times a month	8,774	18.58
Several times a week	4,776	10.11
At least once a day	6,384	13.52
<i>Digital health literacy</i>		
Low	30,221	62.71
Neutral	11,831	24.55
High	6,140	12.74
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	22,433	46.30
Female	26,021	53.70
<i>Education</i>		
Primary education or less	4,952	10.37
Secondary education	24,969	52.29
Tertiary education	17,832	37.34
<i>No money for medical treatment</i>		
No	32,152	66.68
Yes	4,008	8.31
No treatment needed	12,058	25.01
<i>Poverty</i>		
No	37,681	77.63
Yes	10,857	22.37
<i>Missing income information</i>		
No	36,338	74.87
Yes	12,200	25.13
<i>Subjective health status</i>		
Bad	2,044	4.26
Fair	10,628	22.14
Good	18,697	38.95
Very good	12,685	26.43
Excellent	3,946	8.22
<i>Satisfaction healthcare system</i>		
Not satisfied	7,099	14.92
Neutral	7,782	16.35
Satisfied	32,705	68.73

Percentages do not sum to exactly 100 due to rounding errors

S2.2: Descriptive sample analysis – numerical variables

Variable	Min.	1st Quartil	Median	3rd Quartil	Max.	Mean	Standard Deviation
<i>Age</i>	16	35	50	64	111	49.76	17.49
<i>Out of pocket</i>	0.07	0.11	0.16	0.23	0.45	0.16	0.11
<i>HAQ</i>	0.35	0.53	0.86	0.90	0.93	0.74	0.20

S3: Variable coding

Variable	Variable name	Question text and original labelling	Own label (original label)
CAM usage	v38 & v39	During the past 12 months, how often did you visit or were visited by ... v38: ...a doctor? v39: ...an [alternative/ traditional/ folk] health care practitioner? 1=Never 2=Seldom 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Very often	1=No CAM (v38=1,2,3,4,5 & v39=1) 2=Complementary medicine (v38=2,3,4,5 & v39=2,3,4,5) 3= Alternative medicine (v38=1 & v39=2,3,4,5)
Attitude: CAM > school medicine	v30	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? It is not easy to distinguish between reliable and unreliable health information on the internet. 1=Strongly agree 2=Agree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Disagree 5=Strongly disagree	1=Agree (1,2) 2=Disagree (3,4,5)
Internet access	v22	During the past 12 months, how often, if at all, did you use the internet on any device (such as computers, tablets and smartphones) to look for health or medical information for yourself or someone else? -4=I do not have access to the internet 1=Several times a day 2=Once a day 3=Several times a week 4=Several times a month 5=Several times a year 6=Never or almost never	1=Internet access (1,2,3,4,5,6) 2=No Internet access (-4)
Frequency internet usage	v22	During the past 12 months, how often, if at all, did you use the internet on any device (such as computers, tablets and smartphones) to look for health or medical information for yourself or someone else? -4=I do not have access to the internet 1=Several times a day 2=Once a day 3=Several times a week 4=Several times a month 5=Several times a year 6=Never or almost never	1=Never or almost never (6) 2=Several times a year (5) 3=Several times a month (4) 4=Several times a week (3) 5=At least once a day (1,2, -4)
Digital health literacy	v30	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	1=Low (1,2, v22=-4) 2=Neutral (3) 3=High (4,5)

		It is not easy to distinguish between reliable and unreliable health information on the internet.	-
		1=Strongly agree 2=Agree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Disagree 5=Strongly disagree	
Gender	sex	Are you...?	1=Male (1) 2=Female (2)
		1=Male 2=Female	
Age	age	Age is either derived from birthyear or from the following question.	Open question
		What was your age at your last birthday, in full years?	
Education	edulevel	Education is based on the following question, with an additional simplification according to ISCED 2011 scale.	1=No formal education & primary education (0,1) 2=Secondary education (2,3,4) 3=Tertiary education (5,6,7,8)
		What is the highest level of education you have ever completed?	
		0=No formal education 1=Primary education 2=Lower secondary 3=Upper secondary 4=Post secondary, non-tertiary 5=Short-cycle tertiary 6=Lower level tertiary, BA 7=Upper level tertiary, MA 8=PhD, Post Tertiary Specialization	
No money for medical treatment	v40	During the past 12 months did it ever happen that you did not get the medical treatment you needed because... ...you could not pay for it? -4 = Did not need medical treatment 1 = Yes 2 = No	1=No 2=Yes 3= Did not need medical treatment
Poverty	[country]_inc, hompop	Household income <i>Questions based on country.</i> Example 1 (India): Before taxes and other deductions, what on average is the total monthly income of your household? Example 2 (Hungary): Overall, what is your household's total net (after tax) monthly income (including your income as well)? Combination of open question and categories	1=Not poor ($\geq 50\%$ of median EHI) 2=Poor ($< 50\%$ of median EHI)

		Household population Including yourself, how many people - including children - usually live in your household?	
		Equivalized household income (EHI) $EHI = \frac{\text{household income}}{\sqrt{\text{household population}}}$	
Missing income information	[country]_inc	Household income <i>Questions based on country.</i> Example 1 (India): Before taxes and other deductions, what on average is the total monthly income of your household? Example 2 (Hungary): Overall, what is your household's total net (after tax) monthly income (including your income as well)? Combination of open question and categories	1=No missing value ([country]_inc ≠ NA) 2=Missing value ([country]_inc = NA)
Subjective Health	v51	In general, would you say your health is ... 1=Excellent 2=Very good 3=Good 4=Fair 5=Poor	1=Poor 2=Fair 3=Good 4=Very good 5= Excellent
Satisfaction healthcare system	v44	In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the health care system in [country]? 1=Completely satisfied 2=Very satisfied 3=Fairly satisfied 4=Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 5=Fairly dissatisfied 6=Very dissatisfied 7=Completely dissatisfied	1=Satisfied (1,2,3) 2=Neutral (4) 3=Dissatisfied (5,6,7)
Country	country	The country of residence is not directly asked. 36=Australia 40=Austria 156=China 158=Taiwan 191=Croatia 203=Czech Republic 208=Denmark 246=Finland 250=France 276=Germany 348=Hungary 352=Iceland	1=Australia 2=Austria 3=China 4=Croatia 5=Czech Republic 6=Denmark 7=Finland 8=France 9=Germany 10=Hungary 11=Iceland 12=India 13=Israel 14=Italy 15=Japan

356=India	16=Mexico
376=Israel	17=Netherlands
380=Italy	18=New Zealand
392=Japan	19=Norway
484=Mexico	20=Philippines
528=Netherlands	21=Poland
554=New Zealand	22=Russia
578=Norway	23=Slovakia
608=Philippines	24=Slovenia
616=Poland	25=South Africa
643=Russia	26=Spain
703=Slovakia	27=Sweden
705=Slovenia	28=Suriname
710=South Africa	29=Switzerland
724=Spain	30=Taiwan
752=Sweden	31=Thailand
740=Suriname	32=United States
756=Switzerland	
764=Thailand	
840=United States	
