

# A Literature Review on the Adoption of Complementary and Alternative Medicine Related to Mental Health in Asia

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**Abstract:** In medical treatment, conventional doctors sometimes suggest their patients to receive remedies hand in hand with complementary and alternative treatments ,shortly known as CAMs. Asia is the origin of several complementary and alternative medicines,for example herbal medication and meditation ,so this review focused on how this treatment was used in Asia related with mental health.Certain countries like China,India,Thailand and Japan popularly have adopted this way of remedies and used them up until now to boost their mood, brain performance, reduce depression and so on. However,each country uses different CAMs.

**Keywords:** alternative medicine, complementary medicine, conventional medicine, mental health, brain performance, depression.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Diseases affecting mental health are increasing rapidly in today's stressful and competitive world. It is important to have the right balance of physical and mental health to be able to lead a healthy and happy life. People were more likely to seek ways that could help lower their stress or make them relax. In addition, doctors are likely to utilize this complementary and alternative treatment more and more. Hence,this research would be a lot advantageous for several people.

Since the benefits of conventional and alternative medicines were discovered, studying deeper about these benefits and how conventional and alternative medicines were adopted in Asia,in turn, would provide good consequences to every group of people. The more insight of Asia conventional and alternative treatment can shred the light for the global world about these currently popular remedies.

Fortunately, there are certain previous findings and details about these treatments. This research mainly collected data as much as possible and analyzed the information. Hopefully, mental health problems will reduce and the medical system will be developed.

## 2. BODY

Background

Similarity and Difference between Complementary and Alternative Medicines

Both terms were used to define medical treatment that fell aside of conventional healthcare. However, complementary medicine was used along with conventional healthcare. The example of this treatment is using aromatherapy to help lessen a patient's discomfort following surgery. while alternative medicine was used in place of conventional medicine. Art therapy, herbal products and dietary supplements were the examples. Some treatments might be considered as both complementary and alternative medicine.

Conventional doctors treated their patients in different ways. The process might include surgery, radiation and using drugs. Moreover, there were also some terms that were not recognized in conventional medicine like balancing and energizing. [1] [2]

### **Complementary and Alternative Medicines or CAMs used in Asia**

#### Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy is the practice of using essential oils which are basically plant extracts. Essential oils become gases and spread quickly, going directly to the 'limbic system' in the brain, which is our primary response controlling our breathing, here the aroma alters out brain chemistry, endorphins to boost your mood or relaxing the central nervous system to instill calm. Although there's not enough research to determine their effectiveness in human health, people found it effective in terms of relaxation and stress relief. Some scents like rosemary, peppermint and lemon were reputed for alleviating anxiety, depression and a mood booster. [3] [4]

In Asia, the essential oils markets in countries like China, India, Indonesia and Singapore grew rapidly. People adapted to use the aroma scents together with other daily products like soap, showering gel and face care. Aromatherapy candles were one of the most popular, for better sleep, better focus and de-stress. [5]

#### Medical herbalism

Herbalism based on the use of plants and plant extracts. Herbalism is also known as phytotherapy. It is often advised that those wishing to use herbal remedies first consult with a physician. Two obvious examples in Asia of this treatment are the Ayurvedic from India, and Chinese herbal medicine. [6]

Ayurveda is a treatment process combining both mind and body. Ayurveda describes that a possibility for disease is due to imbalance in the mind which are the reactive tendencies which vitiate the mind and leading to emotional imbalance, also results in psychological disturbances. On the other words, it is believed that if your mind is good and stress-free, you have good health. Herbs that were used to reduce tension in the mind consisted of turmeric, Gotu Kola, and pumpkins. [7] [8]

Chinese herbal products have been studied for many medical problems, including mental disorders. Asian ginseng is native to the Far East, including China, Korea, and far-eastern Siberia. It has been used for health-related purposes in traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years. Chinese herbal products are usually produced as a dietary supplement such as Ginseng and green tea. Asian ginseng is also promoted as a dietary supplement for a variety of other reasons—to improve concentration, and memory; and relieve various other health problems, such as depression and anxiety. Green tea as a beverage or dietary supplement is promoted for improving mental alertness. [9]

#### Meditation

The mental health benefits of meditation include better focus and concentration, improved self-awareness and self-esteem, lower levels of stress and anxiety, and fostering kindness. In a review published in March 2014 in the journal *JAMA Internal Medicine*, researchers reviewed more than 18,000 scientific studies looking at the relationship between meditation and depression and anxiety. The results showed that mindful meditation programs over an eight-week period had moderate evidence in reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety [10] [11]

Meditation is one of the most popular ways to cope with mental health in Asia since certain religions such as Buddhism encourage people to meditate. Thai, Chinese, Mongolia monks practiced meditation most of their time and so do people. They claim that it makes them feel calm and peaceful from the inside.

#### Art therapy

Art therapy is one kind of psychotherapy. From the idea that art is a way of liberating emotions, feelings, thoughts according to the needs of each person. Psychologists and art therapists could utilize art to diagnose and provide the most suitable remedies.

Art therapy was composed of such several forms of activities as visual arts, music, and literature. It was considered as supportive, boosting mental confidence and concentration. [12]

Practitioners throughout Asia are creating innovative art therapy programs that reflect cultural diversity and draw on ideas from Chinese medicine and Eastern philosophy, spirituality and art traditions. Leading art therapists and community artists could be found widespread in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Cambodia, Thailand, China, India and Singapore.

To give an example of Thailand, a community organization ,named Arts for Cancer by Ireal, utilized this therapy to help cancer patients combat the disease.[13]

Yoga

The benefits of yoga were similar to an aerobic exercise. Most people know that yoga can ease stress. It could boost memory, cognitive performance and concentration as well. Some studies show that it could improve your sleep and brain functioning. People around the world joined yoga courses or some practiced on their own. [14]

It was obvious that yoga was popular in Asia according to several retreat centers seen in many countries. For instance, in Bali Indonesia, in Koh samui Thailand, in Sri Lanka and in India. We could see all age groups do yoga in Asia, especially the elderly.[15]

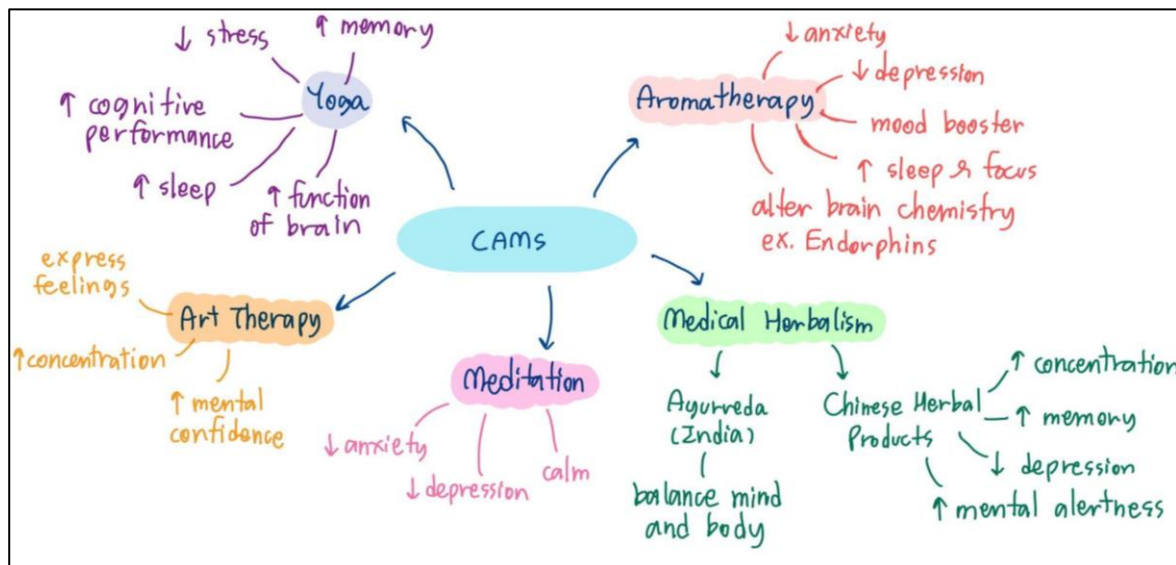
**Overall Summary**

treatments countries	Aroma Therapy	Medical Hebalism	Meditation	Art Therapy	Yoga
China	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
India	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
South-east Asia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

\*This table analysis was made in January 2022.

✓ Adopted such treatment

✗ Not found



**Next Steps**

Hopefully, this research will be of great help to many researchers and people around the world especially healthcare workers. Apart from that, I would continue reading and searching for other previous researches and articles for more insight of this issue.. My next step will highlight more on the both pros and cons of each CAMs treatment so that people will be able to choose their best option for themselves.

### Author Contributions

This study began with a simple idea of finding ways to treat patients with other options apart from having now in the healthcare system. Preedaporn Pholphuet provided some concise and clear guidelines for brief concepts. Pacharada Pentrakulchai wrote the manuscript, interpreted data and the platform. Pacharada worked methodically and progressively after receiving instructions and Preedaporn helped approve, read and fix the final manuscript. This research paper was completed with the joint efforts and perseverance.

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