

A Study On Perception Of Illness And Health Seeking Behaviour Among Community In Selected Villages In Samarahan District

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Introduction

- Illness perception is based on beliefs or cognitive representations that a patient has about their illness.
- Its components include
 - the name of the illness
 - range of symptoms associated with it
 - beliefs on cause of the illness
 - how long it will last, personal consequences if any
 - and the extent in which the illness is amenable to personal control or require treatment.

Literature Review

- Illness perception
 - Important determinants of behaviour and associated with important outcomes in treatment adherence and functional recovery (Petrie, Jago & Devcich, 2007)
 - Strong associations exist between illness perception and use of healthcare (Giri et al, 2009)

Literature Review (2)

- Health seeking behaviour
 - Utilization of a health care system is dependent on various factors, either physical, socio-economic, cultural or political influence (Shaikh & Hatcher, 2004)
 - Various models have been used to explain behavioural changes in utilization of health care including the Health Belief Model and Theory of Planned Behaviour

Literature Review (3)

- Health seeking behaviour
 - Influenced by socio-economic variables, age, sex, social status of women, type of illness, access to services and perceived quality of service (MacKian, 2003)

Objectives

- To determine the pattern of health seeking behaviour and perception of illness in 4 selected villages in Samarahan

Methodology

- Cross sectional study
- 4 selected villages in Samarahan
 - Kampung Tanjong Bundong
 - Kampung Baru
 - Kampung Niup
 - Kampung Tanjong Parang
- Simple Random sampling

Area of Study

Samarahan District

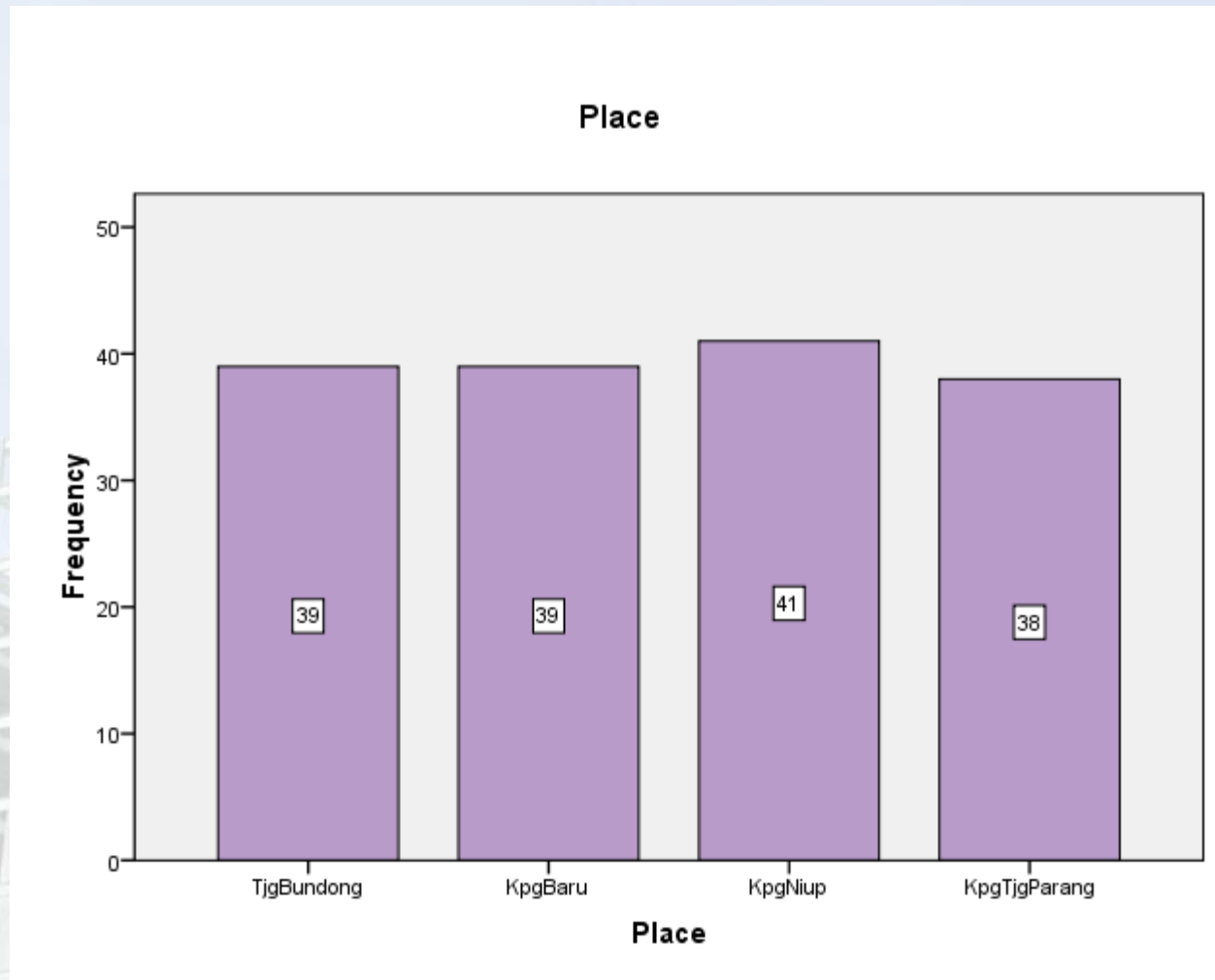
- Population 246,782 (2010)
- Race – Malays, Bidayuh, Iban and Chinese
- Main activity – agriculture
- 4 villages situated 10-20 km from the nearest clinic



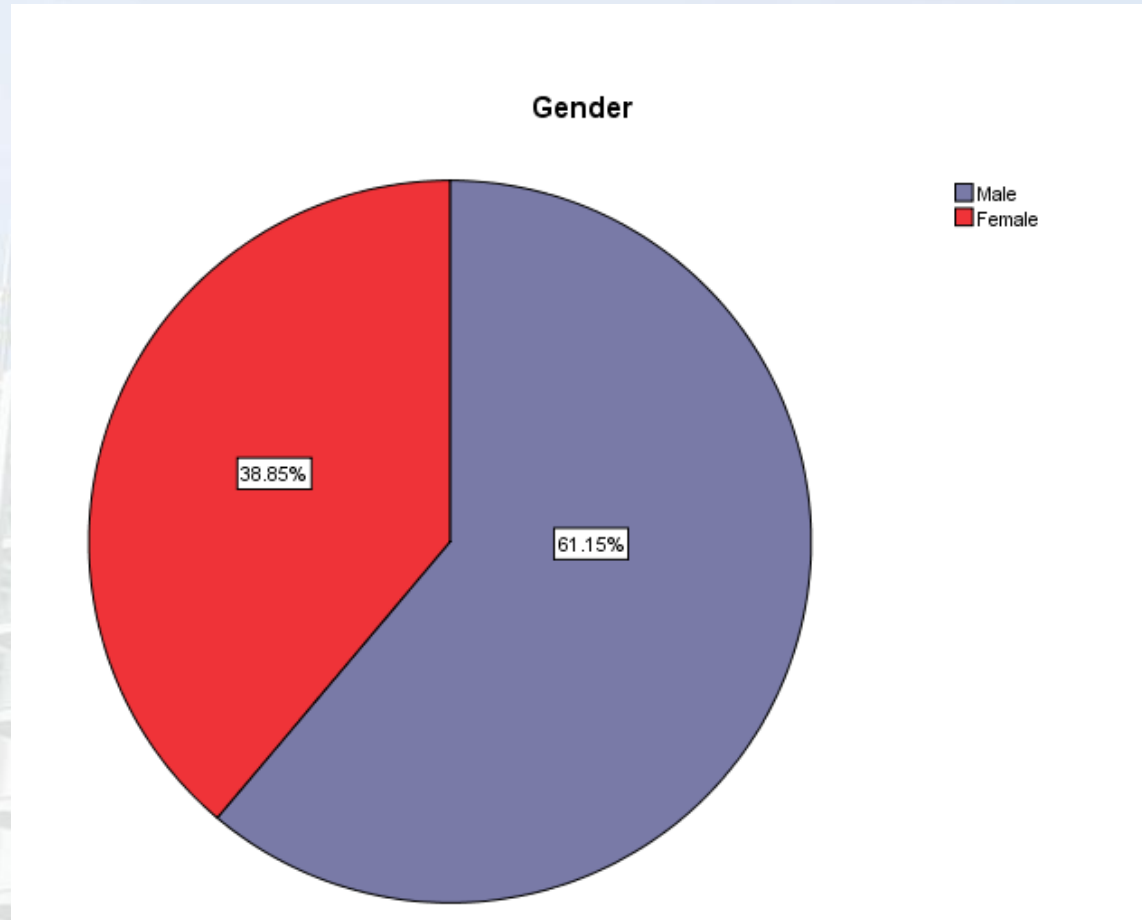
Questionnaire

- Interviewed, 2 parts of questionnaire
- Part I (Perception on illness)
 - Diet, physical activity, immunization, antenatal follow-up, pap smear, breast self-examination, sexual promiscuity, alcohol and substance abuse, cigarette smoking and general perception on health
- Part II (factors on health seeking behaviour)
 - Traditional medicine practices, vitamin and supplement intake, treatment preferences and beliefs on illness

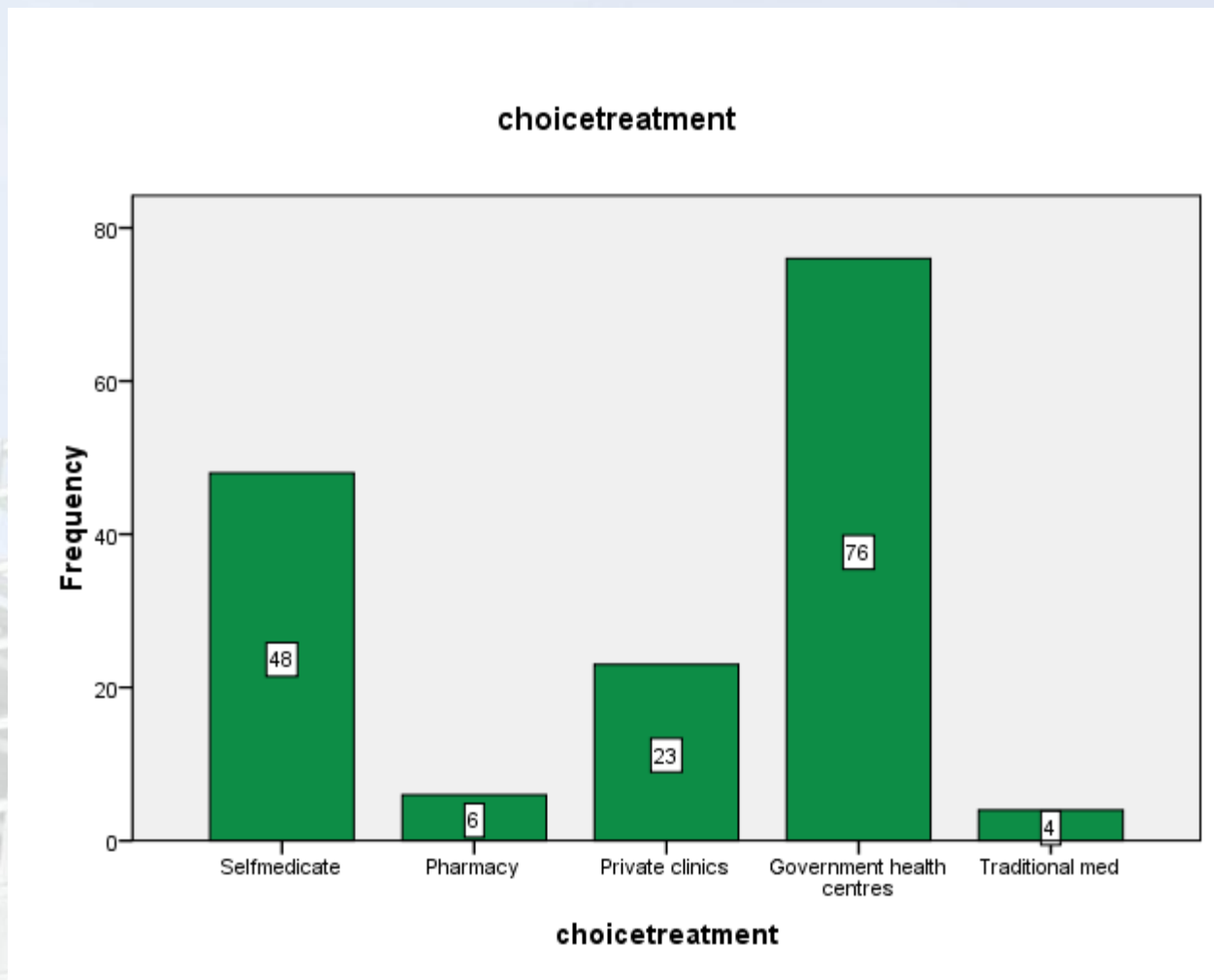
Distribution of respondents by village



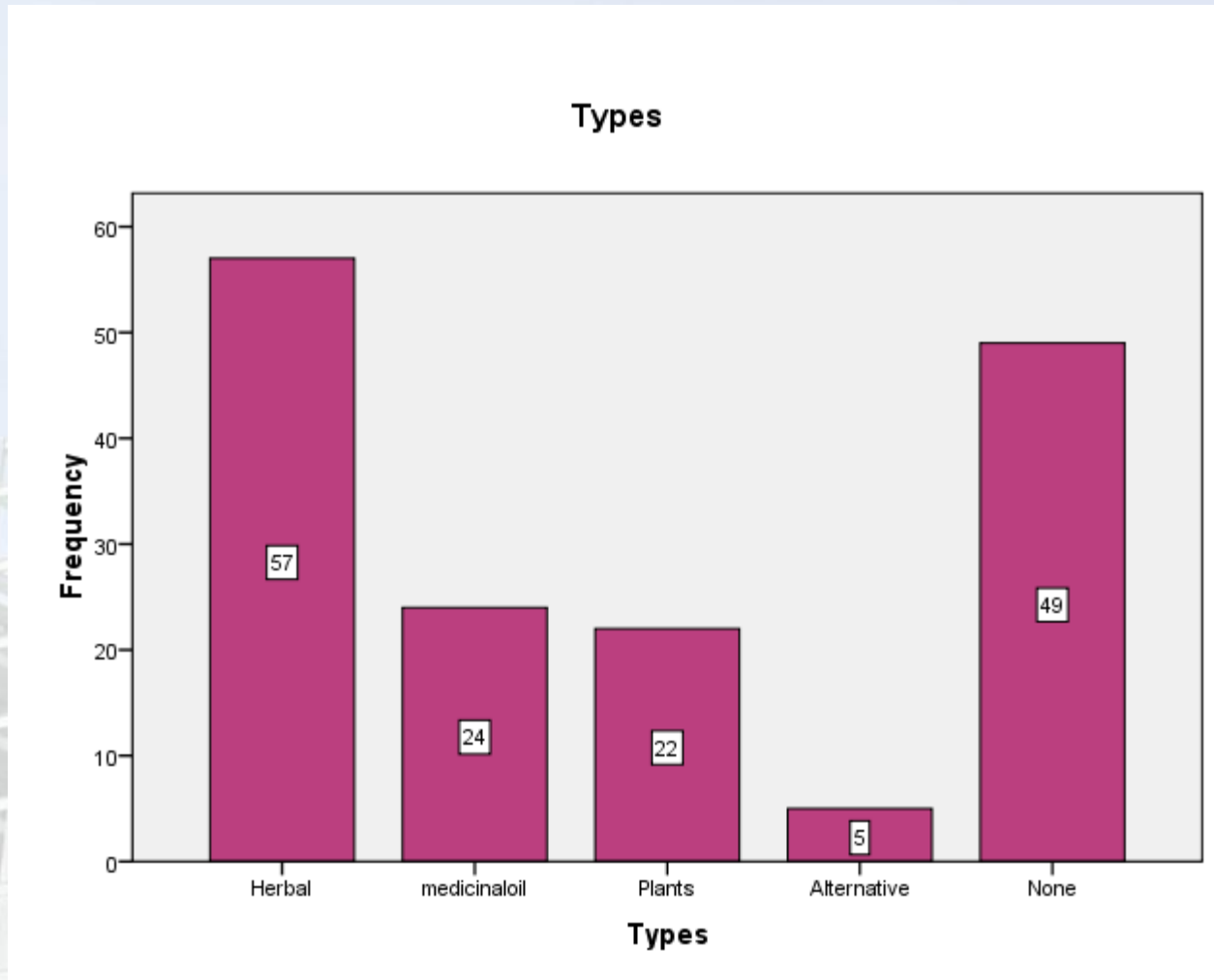
Distribution of respondents by gender



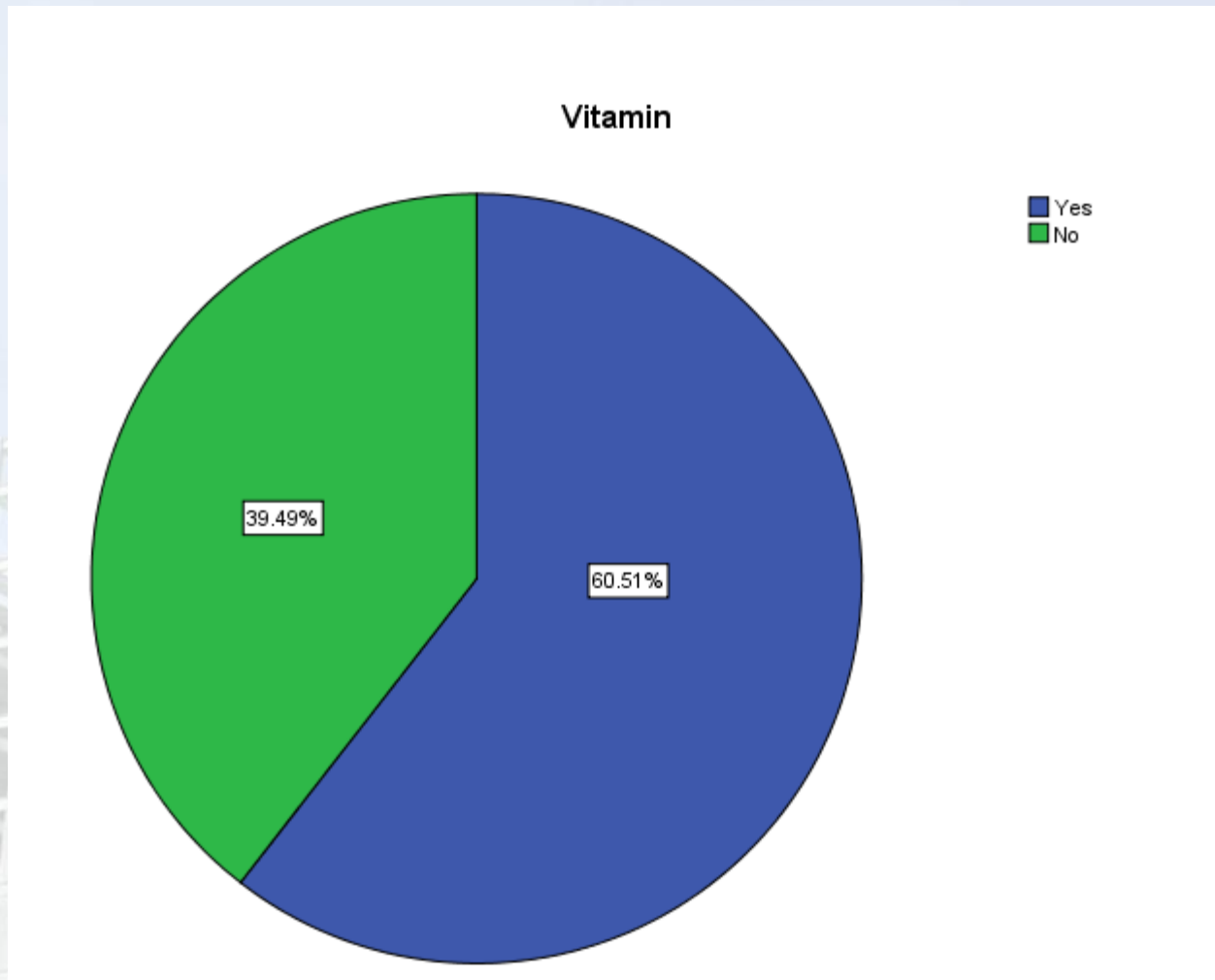
Choice of seeking treatment preferred



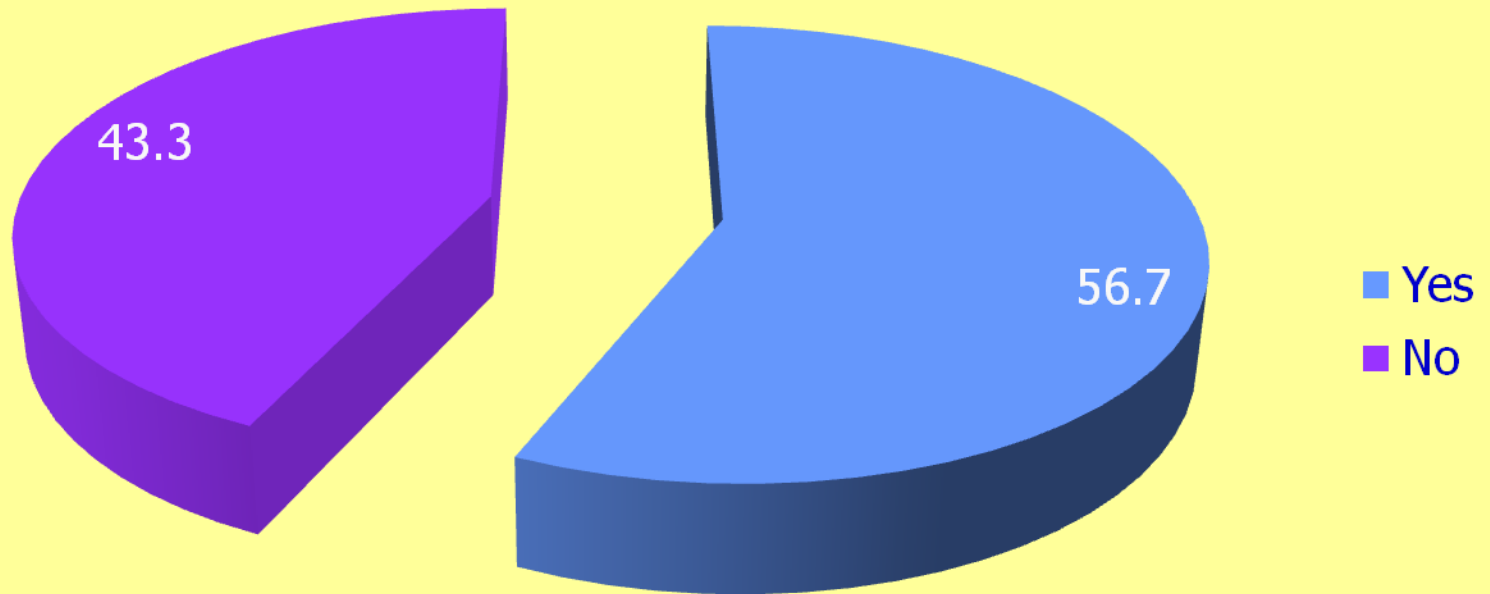
Types of traditional medicine used



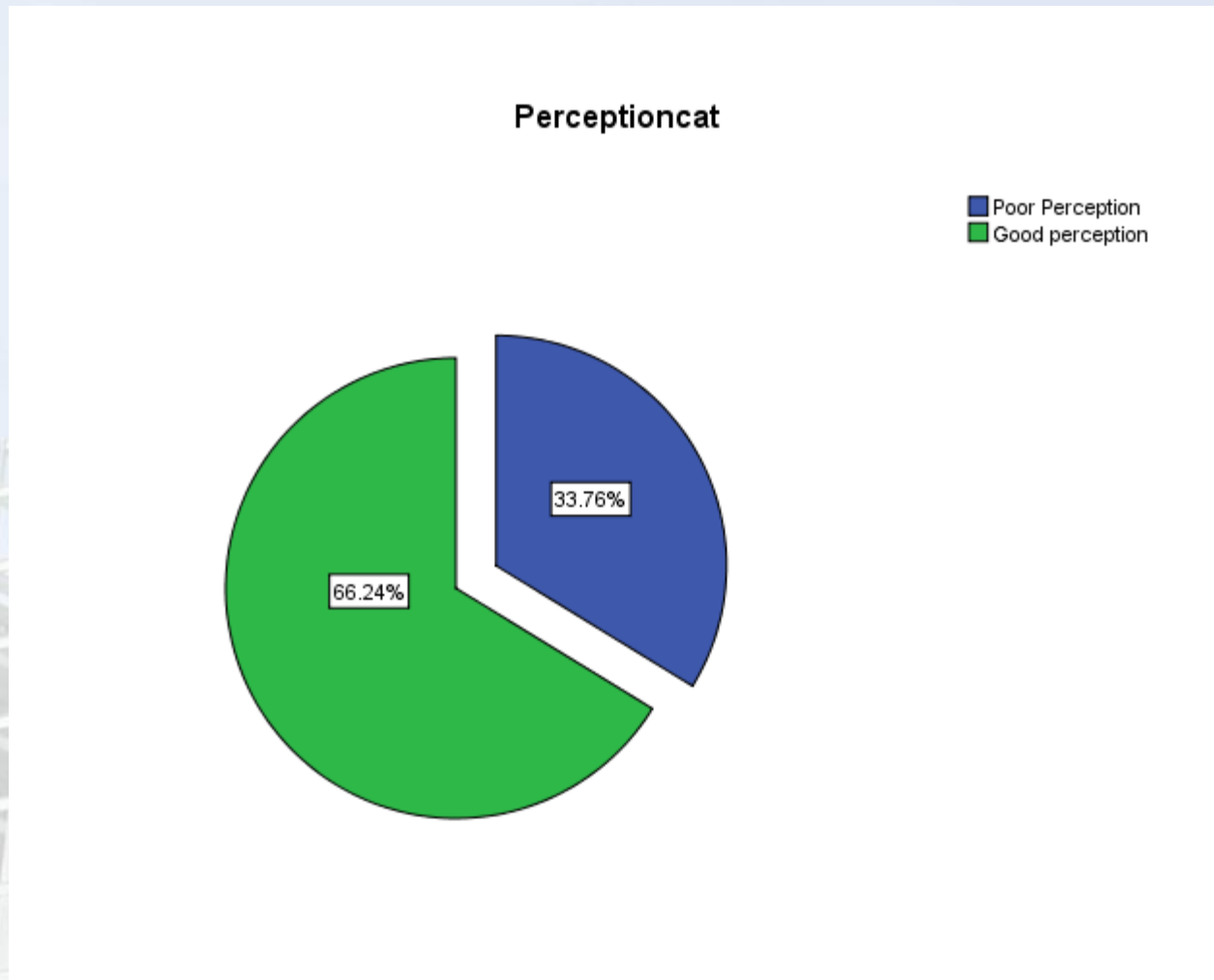
Intake of vitamins & supplements



Belief on cause of illness



Perception score



Perception score by village

	Poor Perception	Good Perception
Kpg Tanjung Bundong	12	27
Kpg Baru	13	26
Kpg Niup	14	27
Kpg Tanjung Parang	14	24
	53	104

$(\chi^2 = 0.323, df = 3, p = 0.956)$

Perception and vitamin intake

	Good Perception	Poor Perception
Vitamin intake - yes	72	35
Vitamin intake - no	32	30

$(\chi^2 = 9.806, df = 1, p = 0.02)$

Gender and Beliefs on cause of illness

	Males	Females
Beliefs - yes	62	27
Beliefs - no	34	34

$(\chi^2 = 6.276, df = 1, p = 0.012)$

Discussion

- Despite living in rural areas, government health clinics is still the preferred centre for seeking treatment among this community.
- However a large proportion of the community surveyed still use traditional medicine, vitamin intake and believed that illness is due to causes other than micro-organisms.

Discussion

- Those taking vitamin and supplements were noted to have better perception on health.
 - Daily multivitamin intake, especially among the elderly has been shown to reduce number of illness days due to infection by 50% (Jasti et al, 2003)

Discussion

- Males were noted to be more likely to believe that illness is due to causes other than micro-organisms
 - Studies on gender difference have shown that more women visited traditional healers before diagnosis and men tended to visit government medical establishments first (Yamasaki-Nakagawa et al, 2001)
 - Prevailing system of values preserves the segregation of sexes and confinement of women to her home (Shaikh & Hatcher, 2005)

Conclusion

- Majority of respondents in this community still preferred to seek treatment from government health centres, despite its distance.
- Despite utilization of the health care system, a large proportion of the surveyed community practice traditional medicine and vitamin supplements.
- Most of the respondents surveyed have good perception to health, particularly those taking vitamin supplements
- Patient's perception to illness can influence their coping ability, compliance to treatment and functional recovery.

Thank You

