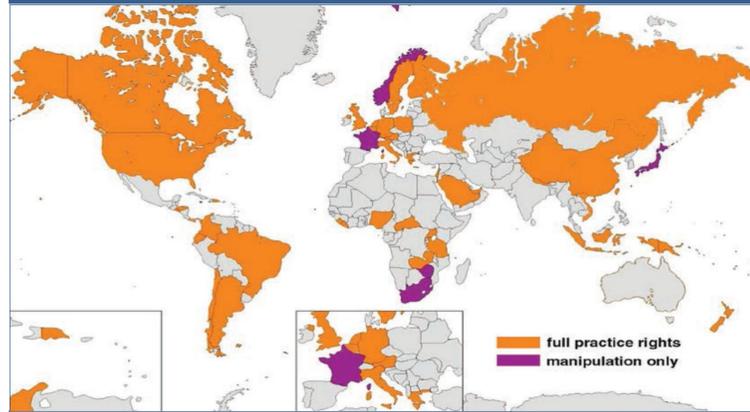


# Assessing the Knowledge of the Osteopathic Profession in New York City's Asian Communities

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## Introduction



From its inception in the late 19th century, osteopathic medicine has attracted a wide base of patients that appreciate its holistic, interconnected, whole body approach to medicine<sup>1,2</sup>. With allopathic physicians serving as the primary healthcare provider in their native countries, many immigrant communities may have never been exposed to an osteopathic physician (DO) prior to re-establishing healthcare in America<sup>5,7</sup>. This study aims to initiate a discussion about osteopathic awareness by assessing the familiarity of DOs and osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM) in the Chinese population in Manhattan-New York's Chinatown.

Figure 1: International recognition of the osteopathic profession and osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) has been relatively limited, despite having varying degrees of practice privileges in over 50 countries<sup>3-6</sup>.

## Methods and Materials



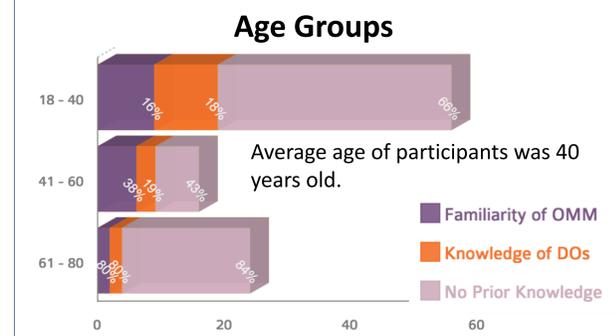
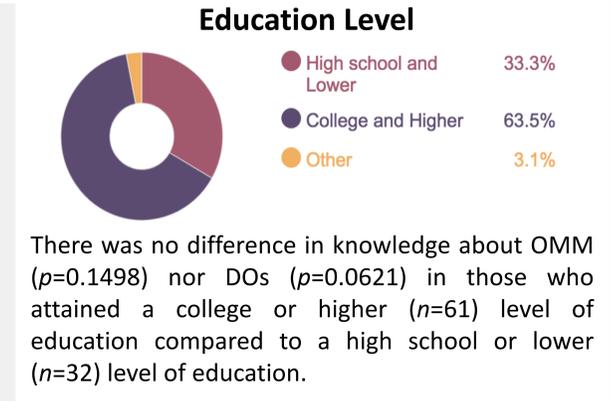
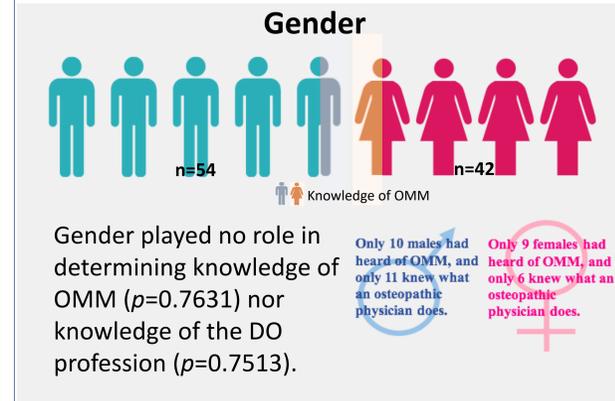
Figure 2: High density areas in Manhattan's Chinatown were selected for the desired population. Participants were randomly surveyed with a paper survey in an anonymous fashion.

This study was approved by Touro College's Health Sciences IRB for the Protection of Human Subjects (HSIRB #1777). The survey was conducted in Chinese and English, and asked for demographics, education, healthcare habits, and knowledge of OMM (Figure 3)<sup>8</sup>.

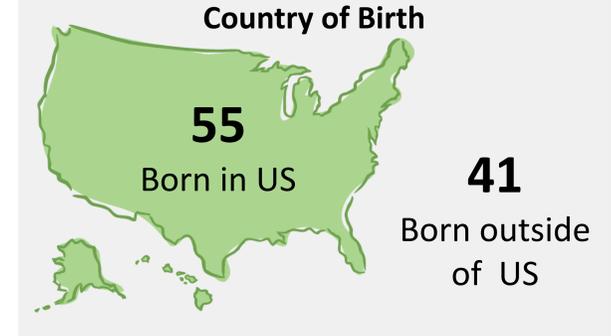
Statistical significance was measured with one sample t-testing, with p-values of <0.05 were reported as statistically significant.

## Results

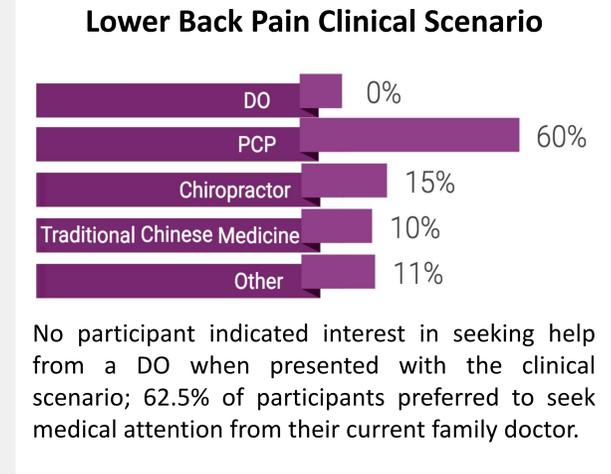
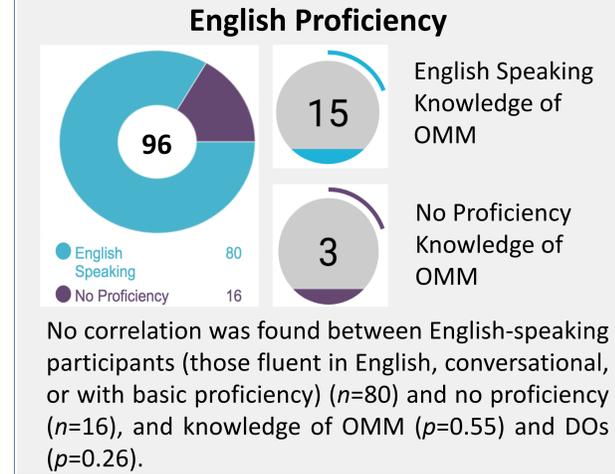
117 people were surveyed, with 21 surveys excluded due to being incomplete or outside the age range, resulting in 96 surveys included in the final study. Overall, only 17% of surveyees ( $n=17$ ) demonstrated any knowledge about OMM and even less at 15% ( $n=15$ ) seemed to recognize the DO profession.



16% of 18-40 year old ( $n=56$ ) indicated familiarity of OMM and 18% indicated knowledge of DOs; 41-60 year old ( $n=16$ ) were at 38% and 19%, respectively, and 61-80 year old ( $n=24$ ) were at 8% for both.



Data between participants born within the United States ( $n=55$ ) and immigrants ( $n=41$ ) born outside of the United States yielded no significant difference in knowledge of OMM ( $p=0.35$ ) or DOs ( $p=0.81$ ).



## Figure 3: Translated Survey

Osteopathic Medicine Survey 整骨療法調查

Age 年齡: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sex 性別:  Male 男  Female 女  Other 其他 \_\_\_\_\_

- Where were you born? 你在哪裡出世?  
 China 中國  Taiwan 台灣  Hong Kong 香港  Vietnam 越南  USA 美國  
 Other (please write) 其他 (請寫) \_\_\_\_\_
- How many years have you lived in the United States? 你到美國幾年?: \_\_\_\_\_
- What is your primary language that you speak? 你在家裡說什麼語言?  
 Cantonese 廣東話  Mandarin 普通話  Taishanese 泰山話  Taiwanese 台語  
 Other Chinese dialect 其他中國方言  English 英文  Other (please write) 其他 (請寫) \_\_\_\_\_
- What is your proficiency in English? 你的英語水平怎麼樣?  
 No proficiency 不會說  Basic level 基本  Conversational 會話水平  Fluent 流利
- What is your highest education level? 你的最高學歷是什麼?  
 High School 中學  College 大學  Graduate School 研究生院  
 Other (please write) 其他 (請寫) \_\_\_\_\_
- In your hometown, what kind of doctor do you see? 在你家鄉, 你看那種醫生?  
 Family doctor 家庭醫生  Osteopathic physician 整骨醫師  Chiropractor 按摩師  
 Acupuncture 針灸  Chinese Medicine Doctor 中醫  Physician Assistant 醫生助理  
 Other (please write) 其他 (請寫) \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you see a doctor regularly? 你有看醫生的習慣嗎?  
 Yes 有  No 沒有
- Have you heard of osteopathic manipulative medicine? 你聽說過整骨手法藥嗎?  
 Yes 有  No 沒有  Unsure 不確定
- Do you know what an osteopathic physician does? 你知道整骨醫師做什麼嗎?  
 Yes 有  No 沒有  Unsure 不確定
- If you had low back pain, what doctor would you go see? 如果你有腰痛, 你會去看什麼醫生?  
 Family doctor 家庭醫生  Osteopathic physician 整骨醫師  Chiropractor 按摩師  
 Acupuncture 針灸  Chinese Medicine Doctor 中醫  Physician Assistant 醫生助理  
 Other (please write) 其他 (請寫) \_\_\_\_\_

## Discussion and Conclusion

Within NYC's Manhattan Chinese community, there exists a general lack of awareness of DOs and OMM, regardless of age, gender, country of origin, English proficiency, or level of education. Compared with similar studies in the past, this study found the gap in minority osteopathic familiarity even greater than previously noted<sup>11</sup>. In the decennial osteopathic surveys, Asians are included in the category of "Other" and "Non-Hispanic", leading to a gross simplification and lack of targeted data for the Asian population in America<sup>8-10</sup>. Current research has also focused primarily on osteopathic recognition in European settings, with minimal attention in Asian communities<sup>16,17</sup>. Numerous studies have validated the need for disaggregated data as a way of dissecting health trends and practices within Asian communities<sup>12,13,18</sup>.

While this study was unable to definitively determine a sole cause, exploring the numerous factors such as linguistics and history can provide context for lack of osteopathic awareness and potential barriers to outreach.

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