

**SURVEY ON KNOWLEDGE, OPINIONS AND USAGES  
OF DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS AMONG  
UNDERGRADUATES OF FOOD  
SCIENCE AND NUTRITION  
AT UCSI UNIVERSITY**

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## ABSTRACT

As health awareness increases, there arises an interest in the dietary supplements products. This survey was aimed at examining the knowledge level, opinions and consumption pattern of dietary supplements among UCSI University Food Science and Nutrition undergraduates. There were 115 dietary supplements consumers out of 246. The majority of respondents scored moderately in terms of nutritional knowledge. Year 1 undergraduates scored between 41 to 50% whilst Year 2 and Year 3 undergraduates scored between 61 to 70%. The nutritional knowledge scores scored by all the participants were not normally distributed, tested by Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. The comparison of knowledge between Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 undergraduates showed significant difference using Kruskal Wallis test ( $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ ). Furthermore, chi-square test was applied to identify the difference between year of study in programme and nutritional knowledge level. The distribution curve was significantly different among the different years of study ( $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ ). Next, dietary supplements consumers had lower mean knowledge score ( $60.1 \pm 13.6$ ) than non-consumers ( $61.0 \pm 14.2$ ). Through Mann-Whitney test, no significant difference was found between the two groups; consumers and non-consumers. The 10 five-point likert scale question was used to identify the correspondents' opinion towards dietary supplements which concluded that different beliefs yield different opinions. Most consumed dietary supplements to improve health conditions, followed by enhancing diets and lastly improving physical appearance. This study was focussed on undergraduates, thus there would be an apparently lower consumption rate. Hence, they believed that balance diets would provide a better effect than dietary supplements. The nutritional knowledge results obtained showed room for improvement. Curriculum can be amended to improve the knowledge while the results from this study could serve as a reference for future studies for lecturers, health care professionals, junior students and other researchers.