



MEDICAL CANNABIS EDUCATION: KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS (KAP) OF MEDICAL AND ALLIED HEALTHCARE STUDENTS AT A CARIBBEAN UNIVERSITY

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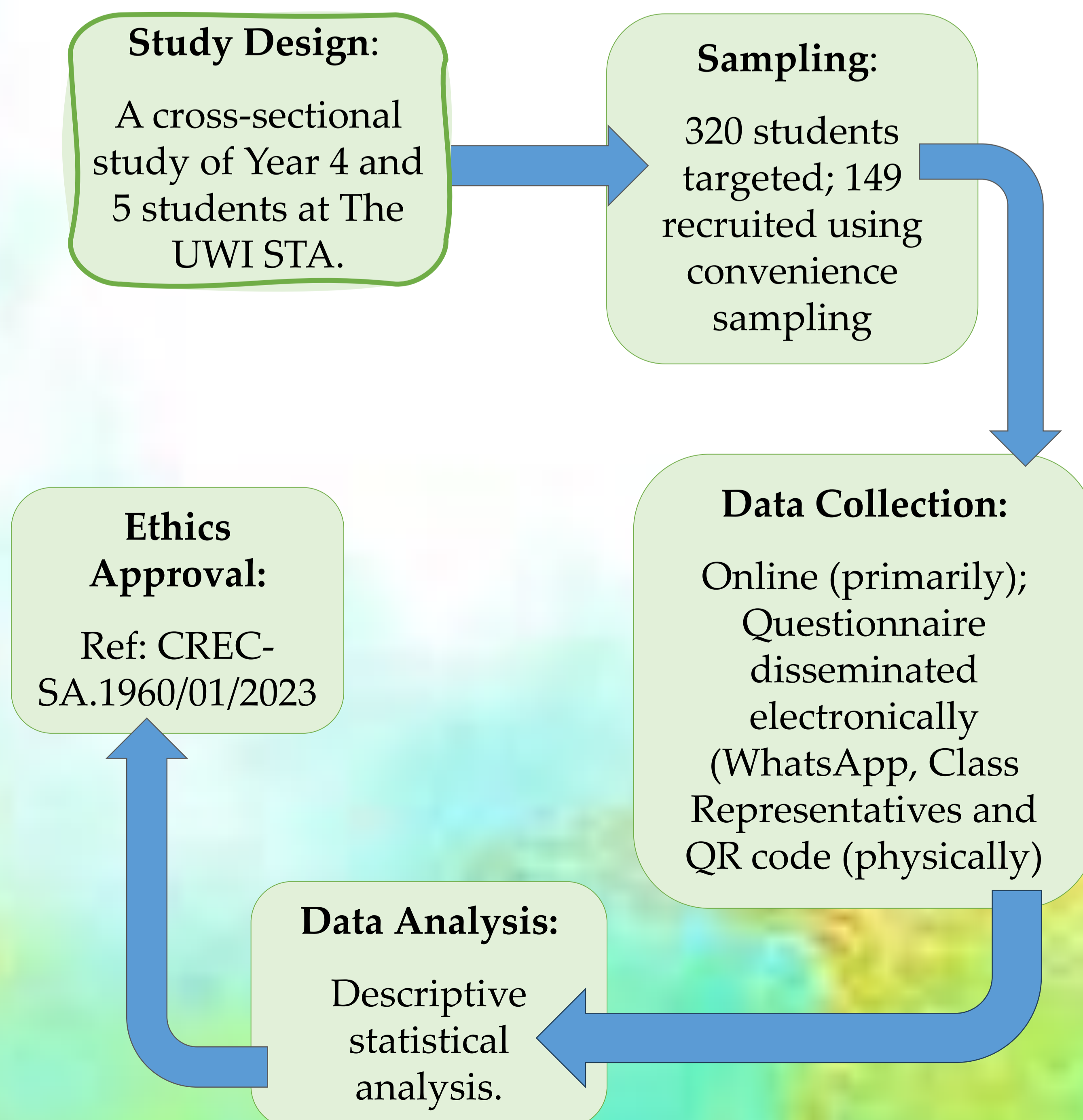
Introduction

The decriminalisation of cannabis, in 2019, by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, as well as the passing of the Cannabis Control Bill (2020)¹, allows for the regulatory control of cannabis for specific purposes such as medicinal use. Thus, MAHC students should remain abreast of current medicinal treatments, including medical cannabis, as this directly impacts their professional efficacy.

Objective

To determine the KAP of MAHC students at the University of the West Indies (The UWI), about medical and recreational cannabis (MRC) and the inclusion of MRC education into the curriculum.

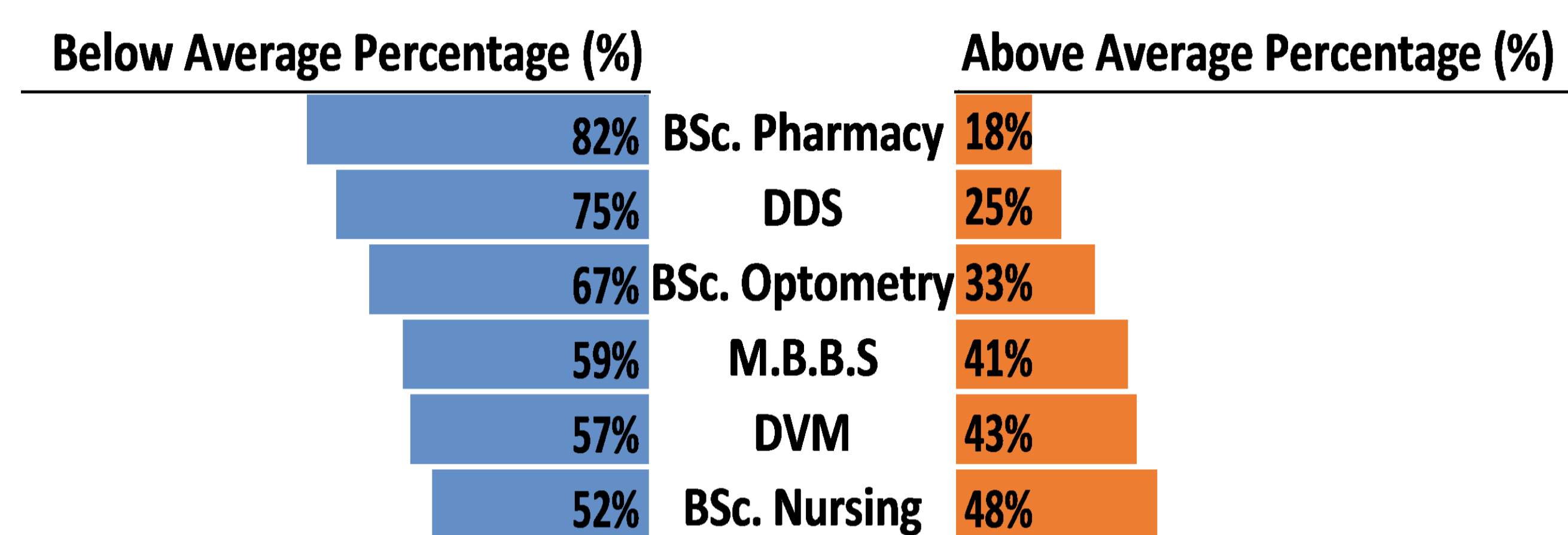
Methodology



Results

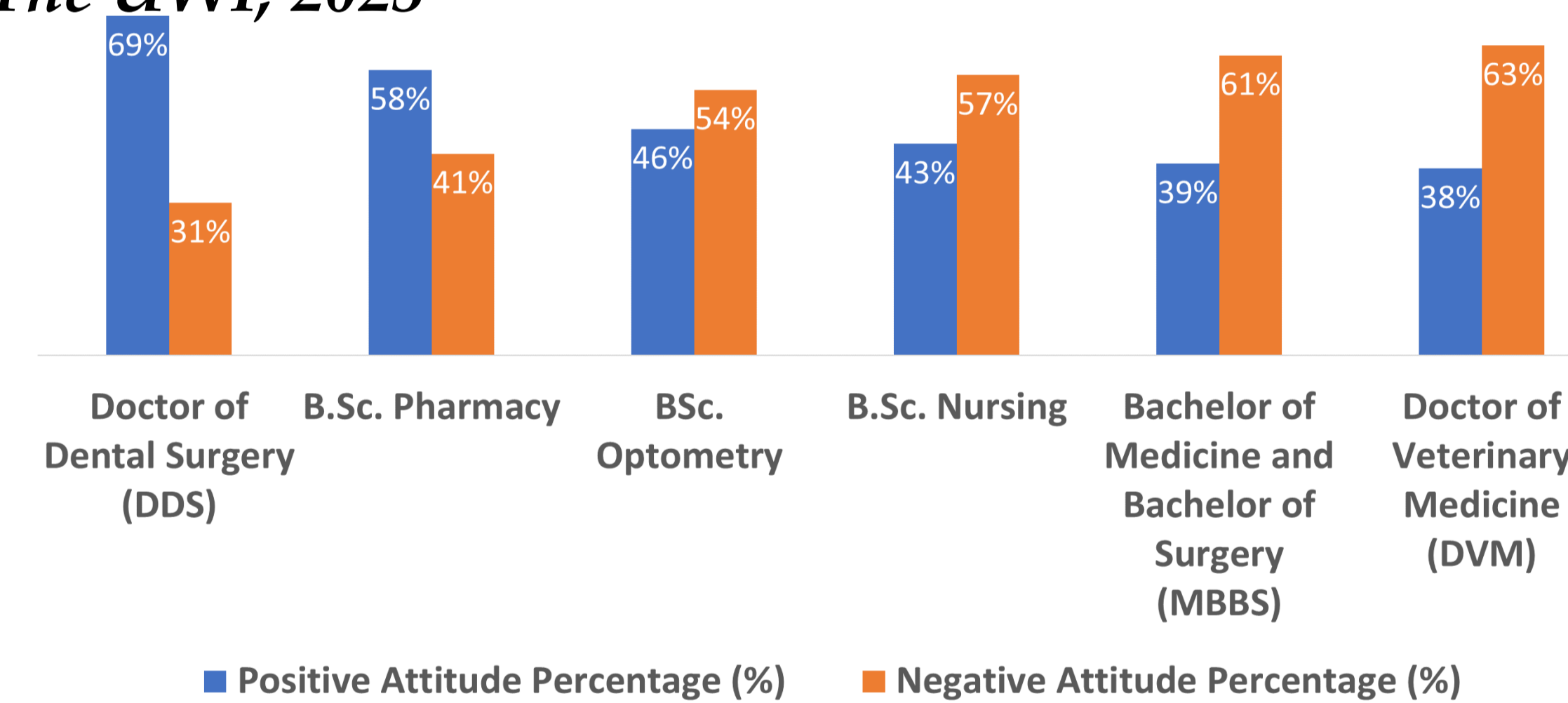
Demographics (n = 149): M = 26%, F = 73%, Other = 1%

Figure 1: Knowledge of MAHC Students on MC, The UWI, 2023



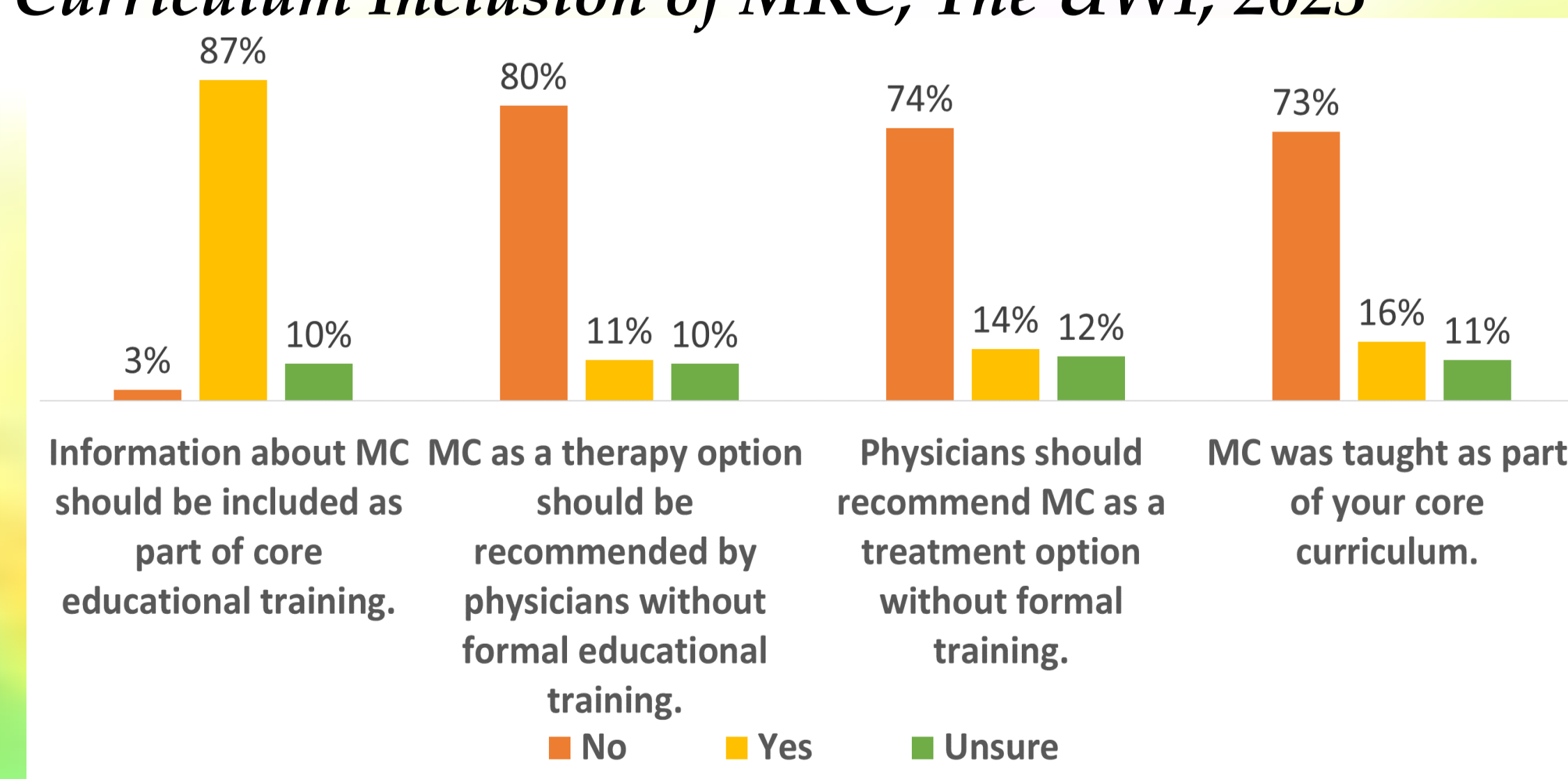
Across all programmes, the majority scored "Below Average" in knowledge about MC.

Figure 2: Attitude of MAHC Students Toward MC, The UWI, 2023



Majority of respondents had a negative attitude towards MC. DDS students (69%) had a more positive attitude toward MC.

Figure 3: Perception of MAHC Students on Curriculum Inclusion of MRC, The UWI, 2023



Majority of respondents (87%) perceived the inclusion of MRC education into the curriculum as beneficial.

Discussion

- MAHC students scoring "Below Average" in knowledge about the therapeutic and adverse effects of MC highlights the lack of MC education in MAHC programs.
- Positive attitude toward MC and its legalization was observed. Increase in cannabis usage since legislation supports need for physicians and students to be equipped with requisite knowledge.
- Majority of students agreed that MC should not be recommended as a therapy option without formal training. Supports the importance of the inclusion of MRC education into the curriculum.

Conclusion

Although MAHC students exhibited a "below average" knowledge of MC, they had a positive attitude towards its inclusion into the curriculum.

Past studies^{2,3}, as well as this study, suggest that whilst MC is a viable option for management of certain diseases, MAHC students must be educated on all aspects of MC through its integration into the core curriculum, thus, allowing to be more competent when recommending MC as a therapy option.

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