ABSTRACT

CORRELATION OF KNOWLEDGE WITH ATTITUDE AND STIGMA TOWARDS LEPROSY AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS AND NON-MEDICAL STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITAS AIRLANGGA

Background: Leprosy or Morbus Hansen is a chronic skin disease, caused by Mycobacterium leprae. The prevalence is still high, especially in developing countries like Indonesia. Its disfigurement and deformities outcomes tend to draw stigma from community that can decrease the life quality of person affected by leprosy.

Purpose: This study was conducted to determine the current level of knowledge and attitude towards leprosy among students in medical setting and non-medical setting in Indonesia.

Method: This study was conducted using the Explanatory Model Interview Catalogue Community Stigma Scale (EMIC-CSS) and Social Distance Scale (SDS). The questionnaires were administered to a voluntary participating sample of 271 students from medical faculty and non-medical students of Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia.
Results: It was found that 97.4% of medical students had heard about leprosy, while 13.9% of non-medical students never received information regarding leprosy. Using Pearson correlation test, it was found that knowledge and EMIC scores had no correlation, while knowledge and attitude based on SDS scores have a weak correlation.

Conclusion: The results suggest that knowledge and attitude towards leprosy were generally positive in medical students rather than non-medical students. Knowledge of leprosy is important in medical students since it influences the attitudes that will be practiced in becoming healthcare workers. Nevertheless, there is still a need to improve certain knowledge and understanding of leprosy among both medical students and non-medical students.

Keywords: Leprosy, Knowledge, Attitude, Stigma, Medical students, Students, Indonesia