UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

A STUDY OF THE KNOWLEDGE ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AMONG PHARMACY STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA PUNCAK ALAM

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: It is expected that there will be an increase the elderly population by the year 2050. Subsequently, there will be an increase in Alzheimer's disease (AD); a neurodegenerative disease affecting specifically the elderly.

Objective: To investigate the level of AD's knowledge among the pharmacy students in Universiti Teknologi Mara Puncak Alam (UiTM).

Method: A 30-item validate questionnaire, known as the Alzheimer's Disease Knowledge Scale among the pharmacy student in UiTM Puncak Alam was used to assess the pharmacy student's knowledge on AD.

Result: 439 (63%) of the pharmacy students had participated in the study. Their overall AD knowledge was slightly moderate. There was a statistically significant result on the demographic variable which influences the AD's knowledge among the pharmacy student. Those who scored higher were those who is older in age, on their 4th year of study and those who was confident with their own AD's knowledge. The student also scored poorly on 2 domains out of the 7 domains which was the risk factor and diagnosis of the disease.

Conclusion: The pharmacy students require more information regarding AD since their knowledge is only slightly above moderate. In order to compensate and manage with the upcoming increase in the AD's prevalence, the pharmacy students are required to have higher level of knowledge, specifically on the *risk factor* and *diagnosis* domain. A psychiatric centred academic course could be implemented to tackle this problem.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The decreased ability to remember or reduced thinking capability caused by damage to the neurons in the brain is known as dementia. The most typical kind of dementia is Alzheimer disease (AD) (Alzheimer's Association, 2014). As an individual age, AD will result to serious loss of memory and cognitive malfunction. This is due to the permanent damage of the neurons caused by neurodegenerative disorder. AD will be pictured as a worldwide threat since it is neither curable nor avoidable (Brookmeyer, Johnson, Ziegler-Graham, & Arrighi, 2007).

A study has mentioned that the adolescence's population of the United State (US) who will be reaching the age of 65 from the year 2010 to 2030 will cause a notable increase in elderly people (Fabiano, Waldrop, Nochajski, Davis, & Goldberg, 2005). Meanwhile in Malaysia, the number of elderly aged 60 and above will reach approximately 3.3 million in the year 2020. The increasing number of the geriatrics is expected to cause an increase number of prevalence in health issue including dementia (Mafauzy, 2000). The prevalence of Malays in the Selangor state aged 60 and above with a cognitive impairment was 24% (Sherina, Lekhraj S & Mustaqim, 2004). Meanwhile, the dementia prevalence among Malays aged 60 and above in Kuala Lumpur was 6% (Hamid, Krishnaswamy, Abdullah, & Momtaz, 2010).