

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
HEALTH LITERACY,
KNOWLEDGE OF CERVICAL
CANCER,
KNOWLEDGE OF PAP SMEAR
AND
ATTITUDE TOWARDS PAP SMEAR
AMONG MALAY MUSLIM WOMEN
ATTENDING
PRE-MARITAL COURSE**

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MMEd (Family Medicine)

November 2019

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

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Thesis Title : Relationship Between Health Literacy, Knowledge of Cervical Cancer, Knowledge of Pap Smear And Attitude Towards Pap Smear Among Malay Muslim Women Attending Pre-Marital Course

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ABSTRACT

Cervical cancer is a preventable disease. However, despite good awareness of the disease among women in Malaysia, the Pap smear uptake is still poor. Measuring health literacy level could explain this discrepancy. This study aims to determine the relationship between health literacy, level of knowledge of cervical cancer and Pap smear with attitude towards Pap smear among women attending pre-marital course. A cross sectional study was performed in three randomly selected Pejabat Agama Islam Daerah (PAID) that organised pre-marital courses. All Malay Muslim women aged 18 to 40 years old attending the pre-marital course during the study period were recruited while non-Malaysian, illiterate, and had hysterectomy were excluded. Validated self-administered questionnaires used were European Health Literacy Questionnaire (HLS-EU-Q16 Malay) and Knowledge, Attitude towards Cervical Cancer and Pap Smear Questionnaire and were administered on the first day of the two-day course. The mean percentage score was calculated, with higher scores showed better outcomes. Further analysis applied multiple linear regression to measure the relationship of independent variables with attitude towards Pap smear. Total of 417 participants recruited with mean age of 24.9 ± 3.56 years old. Prevalence of awareness of cervical cancer was 91.6% (n=382, 95% CI: 89.0%, 94.2%), mean percentage score of knowledge of cervical cancer $74.7\% \pm 7.6$ SD. Prevalence of awareness of Pap smear was 59.0% (n=246, 95% CI: 54.2%, 63.8%), mean percentage score of knowledge of Pap smear $80.2\% \pm 6.5$ SD. The health literacy mean score was 13.3 ± 3.6 SD, with minimum score 0, maximum score 16. The mean percentage score of attitudes towards Pap smear was $64.8\% \pm 9.3$ SD. Multiple linear regression analysis demonstrated significant linear relationship between health literacy (p=0.047) and knowledge of Pap smear (p<0.001) with attitude towards Pap smear. A higher health literacy with high knowledge of Pap smear improves the attitude towards Pap smear. Pre-marital course is an opportunistic platform dissemination and intervention to improve information appraisal regarding cervical cancer and Pap smear screening.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I wish to extend my gratitude to Allah, for watching over me during this journey. Alhamdulillah I was able to embark this journey with my supervisor Associate Prof Dr. Farnaza Ariffin who has been my mentor, companion and my biggest supporter. It would not be complete without the meticulous guidance by Assoc Prof Dr. Mohamad Rodi Isa and Assoc Prof Tin Tin Su.

My heartiest appreciation to my parents, Assoc. Prof Dr. Baharum bin Baharudin and Assoc Prof Dr. Puteri Nor Hashimah bt Megat Abdul Rahman, for being my inspiration, and beam of support.

I hope to inspire my two children Ahmad Muaz and Ilya Maisarah, that with patience, comes success and gratification.

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to the man that made me realise my true worth, Dr. Mohd Adzlan bin Mohd Amin. You are truly one of a kind.

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