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### The Role of Self Stigma towards Psychological Well-Being in Leprosy Patient

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#### ABSTRACT

**Background.** This study aims to determine the role of self-stigma towards psychological well-being to the people who have had leprosy in South Sumatera. The study hypothesis that there is a role for self-stigma towards psychological well-being viewed from psychological distress in people who have had leprosy in South Sumatera. **Methods.** The participants of this study were people who have had leprosy who finished their medical treatment. The research sample was 112 people who have had leprosy. This study used the consecutive sampling technique. Psychological well-being and self-stigma were measured by the scale. The research used simple regression analysis. **Results.** The result obtained by the value of  $R=0.442$ ,  $R\text{ square}=0.178$ ,  $F=11.821$ , and  $P=0.000$  ( $p<0.05$ ). It was proved that self-stigma has a significant role in 17.8% towards psychological well-being. **Conclusion.** There is no difference in psychological distress based on the role of self-stigma and psychological well-being of people who have had leprosy in South Sumatera.

#### 1. Introduction

Leprosy is a chronic disease that causes very complex problems, which are not only from a medical perspective but extend to psychological, social, economic, cultural, security and national resilience problems<sup>1</sup>. Even though individuals who have had leprosy have been claimed as recovered and are considered to have completed all the series of treatments are identified as RFT (release from treatment), even within a certain period through a laboratory examination an individual is considered as RFC (release from control). However, the status or predicate of people with leprosy will remain with them for the rest of their lives<sup>1</sup>.

This is usually the basis of psychological problems in people with leprosy. In addition to experiencing health problems, people who have had leprosy will also experience problems in their lives such as social

relationship problems, problems with the environment and psychological well-being disorders<sup>1</sup>. According to Kataoka and Nakamura, people who suffer from leprosy have low psychological well-being.<sup>2</sup> Psychological well-being is a term to describe an individual's psychological health condition based on fulfilling the criteria for a positive psychological function<sup>3</sup>. A study revealed that psychological well-being is the realization and full achievement of the potential possessed by an individual where the individual can accept weaknesses and strengths, can create positive relationships with others, be able to make decisions independently, have mastered the environment, have purposes in life and can develop personalities.<sup>3</sup>

Self-stigma is the internalization of public stigma and is a reaction that includes negative feelings about the individual himself, especially for those who have

disabilities<sup>4-6</sup>. Self-stigma is also interpreted as conformity or agrees with these feelings and behavioural responses from existing prejudices<sup>7-9</sup>. Self-stigma is formed when people internalize this public attitude and experience many negative consequences as a result<sup>10</sup>. Based on the analysis above, this study was aimed to explore the role of self-stigma against psychological well-being in terms of psychological distress in people who have had leprosy.

## 2. Methods

The population of this study was people who have had leprosy who finished their medical treatment or as known as a release from treatment (RFT) with unpredicted numbers. The research sample was 112 people, and the try out was 40 people. This study used the consecutive sampling technique. Researchers collected data with 40 respondents to try out the scale of the study. The researchers analyzed research data using SPSS 16.0 software to determine validity and reliability on both scales of psychological well-being and self-stigma.

The psychological scale created by the researcher uses the Likert scale model. If using a Likert scale, researchers see that the variables to be measured are translated into indicator variables. Then the indicator is used as a benchmark for compiling instrument items that can be statements or questions<sup>11</sup>. Consists of favourable and unfavourable statements, with four possible answers, starting from very positive to very negative gradations, namely Very Appropriate (SS), Appropriate (S), Unsuitable (TS), Very Unsuitable (STS), which use 1 to 4 response scale.

The psychological well-being scale consists of 6 dimensions, namely self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, independence, mastery of the environment, life goals and personal development<sup>12</sup>. The psychological well-being scale consists of 30 items with correlation ranges of items are between 0.307 - 0,641, and the reliability Cronbach's alpha was 0.906.

Self-stigma in people who have had leprosy in this study will use a scale which consists of 3 components,

namely the stereotypes agreement, self-concurrence, and self-esteem decrement.<sup>13</sup> The self-stigma scale consists of 18 items with correlation ranges of items are between 0.620 - 0.823, and the reliability Cronbach's alpha was 0.952.

To measure psychological distress, the Indonesian language Self-Reporting Questionnaire 20 (SRQ-20) is used. This instrument has been used in essential health research for the population of Indonesia, which aims to determine the status of psychological distress<sup>14-16</sup>. This questionnaire has good validity in terms of 88% sensitivity, specificity 81%<sup>17</sup>. The SRQ-20 includes 20 items all use a 0 (No) or 1 (Yes) response scale.

## 3. Results

Based on the results of the categorization, it can be seen that participants with a low level of psychological well-being are 33 people with a percentage of 29.5%, subjects with a moderate level of psychological well-being are 73 people with a percentage of 65.2% and subjects with a high level of psychological well-being are only six people with a percentage of 5.3%.

Based on self-stigma, a low level of self-stigma of 7 people with a percentage of 6.3%, subjects with a moderate level of self-stigma of 41 people with a percentage of 36.6% and subjects with a high level of self-stigma of 64 people with a percentage of 57.1%. Last, based on psychological distress level, no one without psychological distress, 30 participants experienced less (26.8%), and 82 participants experienced high psychological distress with a percentage of 73.2%.

The results of the hypothesis test using simple linear regression analysis in this study were obtained based on a significance value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ) with an F of 11.821. Based on these results it can be concluded that self-stigma has a significant role in psychological welfare variables. R Square value of 0.178 which shows that the role of the self-stigma variable towards psychological well-being is 17.8%.

**Table 1. Baseline characteristic of participants**

Individual Characteristics		Percentage	Frequency
Sex	Male	67	59.8%
	Female	45	40.2%
Age	Early Adult (25-40 yo)	12	10.7%
	Middle Adult (40-60 yo)	50	44.6%
	Late Adult (60 yo and up)	50	44.6%
Leprosy Type	PB (Pausi Basiler)	25	22.3%
	MB (Multi Basiler)	87	77.7%
Disability Level	Nothing	8	7.2%
	Disability not seen	10	8.9%
	Disability is seen by others	94	83.9%
RFT Duration	5-23 years	58	51.8%
	24-42 years	51	45.5%
	43-60 years	3	2.7%
Education Level	Not school	25	22.3%
	Elementary school	78	69.6%
	Junior high school	4	3.7%
	Senior high school	5	4.4%
Marital Status	Not Married	12	10.7%
	Married	100	89.3%

**Table 2. Data description**

Variables	Hypothetic Data				Emphirical Data			
	Max	Min	Mean	SD	Max	Min	Mean	SD
Psychological Well-Being	120	30	75	15	106	46	65.71	11.893
Self- Stigma	72	18	45	9	71	20	53.04	9.671

**Table 3. Data categories**

Variables	Formula	Categories	Percentage	Frequency
Psychological Well-Being	$X < 60$	Low	33	29.5%
	$60 \leq X < 90$	Medium	73	65.2%
	$X \geq 90$	High	6	5.3%
Self-Stigma	$X < 36$	Low	7	6.3%
	$36 \leq X < 54$	Medium	41	36.6%
	$X \geq 54$	High	64	57.1%
Psychological Distress Level	Score 0	No distress	0	0%
	Score 1-5	Mild distress	30	26.8%
	$\geq 6$	High distress	82	73.2%

**Table 4. Regression analysis test**

Variables	R	R-Square	F	Sig.	Description
Psychological well-being <i>Self-Stigma</i>	0.422	0.178	11.821	0.000	there's a role

**Table 5. The Role Of Self-Stigma Towards Psychological Well-Being Viewed from Psychological Distress**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Levene test</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Description</b>
Psychological Well-Being	0.901	0.671	There's no difference
<i>Self-Stigma</i>	0.140	0.092	There's no difference

#### 4. Discussion

In this study, the hypothesis test was carried out using simple linear regression techniques. The hypothesis in this study can be said that self-stigma has a significant role in psychological well-being. In line with the statement of Chan and Mak (2015) who stated that to reduce self-stigma can be done by increasing psychological well-being, Garin et al (2015) stated that self-stigma has a negative relationship with three measures of well-being which are psychological well-being, life satisfaction and the effect of balance. The higher the self-stigma, the lower psychological well-being will be.<sup>9,18</sup>

Furthermore, self-stigma is negatively related to psychological well-being where all components of self-stigma are negatively correlated with all dimensions of psychological well-being. This is consistent with the fact that researchers find in the field that subjects who agree with stereotypes in society tend to judge themselves according to the public's view of them. Besides, the subjects also have a decline in self-esteem caused by the subjects agreeing with negative beliefs internalized to themselves. That way, negative views from the public internalized by the subject may create difficulties to accept themselves because of the internalization of the views of others, lack of positive relationships with others because others perceive them negatively.<sup>18-19</sup>

Thus, it proves that other factors might influence the rest. Several factors that may affect psychological well-being are demographic factors, assessing the importance of health, optimism, religiosity, and spirituality. Hereafter, researchers conducted different tests of psychological well-being and self-stigma variables based on the level of disability. The result shows that there is a difference in psychological well-being based on the level of disability in which subjects who are not disabled have higher psychological well-

being than subjects who have physical conditions with levels of disability that are not a visible and visible disability.

Several studies stated that individuals with disabilities have low psychological well-being.<sup>19-21</sup> Disability is related to decreased psychological well-being where most of the relationship between physical disorders and low psychological well-being is caused by disability<sup>22</sup>.

Several other things found in this study are, there is no difference in psychological distress based on self-stigma and psychological well-being of individuals, but of 112 respondents it is known that 73.2% experience symptoms of high psychological distress; 26.8% experienced mild distress symptoms. This means that 100% of respondents experience symptoms of distress. According to research on the mental health of people with leprosy<sup>23-25</sup> it is known that people who have had leprosy tend to experience mental distress and have a higher prevalence to experience psychiatric problems compared to patients with other chronic diseases

Generally, individuals who are in a state of illness will inevitably experience mental imbalance (disequilibrium) by displaying certain behaviours and bringing up mental distress as their comorbidities. Individuals who are ill, both treated at home and in the hospital will experience anxiety and stress. Especially if this is related to the mental state of people with leprosy who tend to experience stress in their daily lives, if sufferers are unable to manage their stress well, they will have a greater chance to experience mental health disorders<sup>26</sup>.

#### 5. Conclusion

There is no difference in psychological distress based on the role of self-stigma and psychological well-being of people who have had leprosy in South Sumatera.

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