

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE LEVEL OF  
THERAPEUTIC COMMUNICATION AND DOCTOR-PATIENT  
COMMUNICATION SKILLS AMONG THE CLINICAL STUDENTS IN THE  
ACADEMIC DENTAL HOSPITAL UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH  
YOGYAKARTA (UMY)**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Backgrounds:** Knowledge and skills of therapeutic communication between dentist and patient plays an important role in the success of dental health treatment, improving the effectiveness of dental health services and patient satisfaction. The success of dental health services to patients, in addition to professional technical expertise required of a dentist and required of non-technical ability, such as therapeutic communication. The effort to improve knowledge and skills of therapeutic communication among the clinical students with patients in the academic dental hospital UMY become increasingly important.

**Aim:** The objective of this study is to assess the relationship between knowledge level of therapeutic communication and doctor-patient communication skills among the clinical students in the academic dental hospital UMY.

**Method:** This study is an analytic observational study with cross sectional design and conducted at the academic dental hospital UMY, involving 105 samples selected by simple random sampling method. The data were obtained from questioner for therapeutic communication knowledge and checklist for the therapeutic communication skill.

**Result:** The result of Spearman analysis showed p value 0.000 and strong relationship between two variables with coefficient correlation 0,574.

**Conclusion:** There is a relationship between knowledge level of therapeutic communication and doctor-patient communication skills among the clinical students in the academic dental hospital UMY.

**Keyword:** knowledge level of therapeutic communication, therapeutic communication skills, clinical students

## BACKGROUND

The knowledge and therapeutic communication skill of dentist with patients played an important and even determinant role in treatment success and in improving service effectiveness and patients' satisfaction. Paragraph 2 of the Article 5 of Indonesian Medicine Council (IMC) on medical practice stated that communication between physicians and patients was obligatory. The obligation related to the effort by the physicians in delivering medical service. The success in the treatment of patients' dental health required professional technical skills of a dentist in addition to non-technical ability that was communication skill.

The success of the effort depended on the information gathered from patients' history of diseases and on the information given to the patients about the treatment that would be conducted by physician.<sup>1</sup> Communication had very significant impact on the success of diagnoses, treatment plan, treatment process and post-treatment.<sup>2</sup> Sixty to seventy percent of the diagnoses and the

medical treatment plan was based on the information gathered during anamnesis or medical interview.<sup>3</sup> Effective therapeutic communication helped medical labors and patients build confidence and good therapeutic relationship between them.<sup>4</sup> The clinical students in the academic dental hospital of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) organized dental and oral treatment to the patients in the academic dental hospital of the University by applying the knowledge and the therapeutic communication skill they have got at bachelor degree. The effort to improve the knowledge and therapeutic communication skill of the clinical students in the academic dental hospital became increasingly important in gaining the success in the oral and dental treatment.

## METHOD

The study was an analytic and observational one with cross sectional design. The population of the study was the clinical students in the academic dental hospital UMY of the academic years of 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 and still active in

the academic dental hospital. The samples of the study were 107 clinical students of the academic years of 2009 and 2010 who were randomly drawn with simple random sampling technique.

The inclusion criterion of the study was the clinical students of the academic dental hospital UMY who were still active and willing to involve in the study. The exclusion criteria of the study was the clinical students who were not treating patients at the time the study was conducted and those treating children patients who were not in the companion of their parents.

The independent variable of the study was therapeutic communication knowledge level. The dependent variable was therapeutic communication skill. The instrument of the study was questionnaires of the therapeutic communication knowledge level consisting of 24 items that were responded by the respondents of the study. The second instrument was check list of therapeutic communication skill consisting of 21 items that were completed by

enumerators. The study was conducted in November-December 2015 in the academic dental hospital of UMY.

## **RESULT**

The results of the study showed that there were 2 respondents dropped out and resulted in 105 respondents valid for analysis based on the characteristics of age and sex.

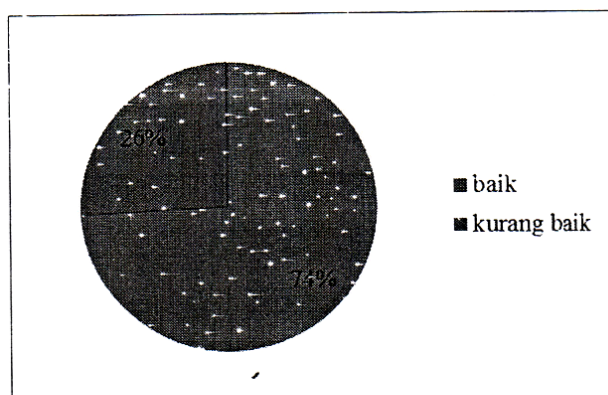
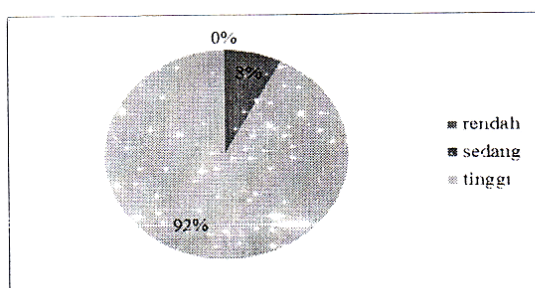
Based on the table above, the characteristics of the respondents of the 105 clinical students of the academic years of 2009 and 2010 were analyzed and the results showed that the majority of the students were of 23 years of age (46.7%) and the majority of them were female (76.2%).

The results of the study related to the correlation between the therapeutic communication knowledge level of clinical students and the communication skill with the patients in the academic dental hospital UMY were as follows:

1. The therapeutic communication knowledge level of the clinical students of the academic dental hospital UMY.

Table 1. The Characteristics of Respondents

No.	Characteristic	Presentage (%)	Frecuency
1.	Age (year)		
	22	6,7	7
	23	46,7	49
	24	39,0	41
	25	7,6	8
2.	Sex		
	Male	23,8	25
	Female	76,2	80



The diagram above showed that the majority of clinical students in academic year of 2009 and 2010 had high level of communication knowledge (92%).

2. The therapeutic communication skill of the clinical students with patients in the academic dental hospital of UMY.

The diagram above showed that the majority of the clinical students in academic year of 2009 and 2010 had good communication skill (74%).

3. Kolmogorov-Smirnov's normality test

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)			Keterangan
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	
Communication skills	.239	105	.000	abnormal
Knowledge	.270	105	.000	abnormal

Table 2. Normality Test

		Knowledge
Communication skill	Correlation Coefficient	.574
	Sig.	.000
	N	105

Table 3. Spearman's Analysis

The table above showed that the significance of 0.000 or  $<0.005$  was indicative of abnormal distribution that the analysis should be Spearman non-parametric analysis.

#### 4. Spearman's analysis

The table above showed that there was significant correlation between the two variables of the therapeutic communication knowledge level and the communication skill of the clinical students of the academic year of 2009 and 2010 with the number of the respondents of 105 students. The results of the test showed that there was significant correlation between the two variables because the correlation coefficient was 0.574. It was categorized into medium if the correlation coefficient was in the range of 0.40-0.599.<sup>8</sup>

### DISCUSSION

The respondents of the study were 105 clinical students of the academic years of 2009 and 2010. The results of the study showed that the distribution of the characteristics of the clinical students academic years of 2009 and 2010 was indicative of the

majority of the students of 23 years of age (46.7%) and 24 years of age (39.0%). The range of the ages of 23 and 24 years old represented those in the first and second years of the clinical education. Generally, they have completed their clinical study at the age of 25 years that the distribution of the age samples was only 7.6%. The majority of the students were female, 73 students (76.2%). There were more female students than male students who were interested in and willing to choose the study program of dentistry.<sup>9</sup>

The results of the study showed that there were 92% of the clinical students academic dental hospital UMY who had high therapeutic communication knowledge level. Individual knowledge level differed among the students and the influencing factors were age, education level, information source, experience, economic and social and cultural aspects.<sup>10</sup>

One of the influencing factors of the high level of the therapeutic communication of the clinical students of UMY was that they got the knowledge in the lecturing subject of

physician-patient communication during their bachelor study.

Communication skill was one of the lecturing subjects in curriculum that should be mastered by the students. Therefore, UMY gave the communication education since the first year they studied in the study program of dentist education of UMY. Education was experience that might be used to improve thinking capability and to boost self-motivation in making use of the knowledge and the skill.<sup>11</sup> The higher was someone's education, the easier he or she received or sent message or communicated.<sup>12</sup>

The results of the study showed that the communication skill of 74% of the clinical students with the patients in the academic dental hospital was categorized good. Based on the observation one of the influencing factors was the education and the training of *Skills Lab* of communication organized in the dental program study UMY during the bachelor study. The training was one of the aspects that could improve counseling and communication ability.<sup>13</sup> The experience in the

therapeutic communication training significantly correlated to the implementation of the therapeutic communication with patients.<sup>14</sup>

There was significant correlation between the working duration of medical labors and the therapeutic communication skill.<sup>15</sup> The lack of the therapeutic communication skill could result from the lack of experience of the medical labors.<sup>16</sup> The professional students of the academic years of 2009 and 2010 have got working experience for about 1-2 years and have applied the experience in the therapeutic communication with patients.

The results of Spearman's test showed that there was significant correlation between the therapeutic communication knowledge level and the communication skill of the clinical students academic dental hospital UMY. It indicated that the higher was the therapeutic communication knowledge level of the clinical student, the better their communication skill with patients would be. On the contrary, if the therapeutic communication knowledge level of the clinical students was low, their

communication skill with patients was also bad.

The results of study was corroborated by the study by Mahmud (2014) that there was significant correlation between the therapeutic communication knowledge and the therapeutic communication ability in delivering nursing service in hospitalizing ward of Toto Kabila Public Hospital of Bone Bolango district. According to Diana et. al., (2006) there was significant correlation between the therapeutic communication knowledge and the communication ability of nurses in Elisabeth Hospital in delivering nursing service. Different results were shown in the study by Shintana and Siregar (2012) that there was not any significant correlation between the therapeutic communication knowledge of nurses and the communication skill with patients in Dr. Pirngati Public Hospital in Medan City. It was described in their study that the cognitive domain of respondents might be in the knowing and understanding stages, but it has not been in application stage because the working

period of the nurses has not been long enough to apply their knowledge.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the results of the study and the discussion above, following conclusions were drawn:

1. The therapeutic communication knowledge level of the clinical students academic dental hospital UMY was 92% and in high category.
2. The communication skill of the clinical students academic dental hospital UMY with the patients was 70% and in good category.
3. There was significant correlation between the therapeutic communication level of the clinical students and the communication skill with the patients in the academic dental hospital UMY

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. It was recommended for the clinical students academic dental hospital UMY to continue and to improve their knowledge and therapeutic communication to increase better.
2. It was recommended for the dental study program to organize regular training in the therapeutic



communication skill for the clinical students of the academic dental hospital UMY.

3. It was recommended for clinical students of the academic dental hospital to attend trainings and to improve their knowledge and therapeutic communication skill.

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