

HEALTH PROMOTION TO IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH ABOUT COVID-19  
THROUGH INTERACTIVE EDUCATION FOR SURYA NUSANTARA COLLEGE  
STUDENTS AND ACADEMY STUDENTS OF SMA SWASTA ADVENT IN  
PEMATANGSIANTAR

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### ABSTRACT

In the beginning year of 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus outbreak as a Global Public Health Emergency. Coronavirus is continuing its spread across the world. The virus is surging in many regions and countries that had apparent success in suppressing initial outbreaks are also seeing infections rise. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide and presents an unprecedented challenge to public health, food systems and the world of work. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was now beginning to spread to the world of education. The policies taken by many countries including Indonesia by dismissing all educational activities and related institutions must present alternative educational processes for students and students who cannot carry out the educational process in educational institutions. This community project was aimed to increase the knowledge of COVID-19 and to promote the health status of college students in Surya Nusantara Nursing School, School of Business, School of Theology and academy students as well. These schools are situated in the area of Pondok Sayur, city of Pematangsiantar. It is expected that those who completed the health promotion seminar would be able to conduct effective prevention and control activities for COVID-19 as per the guidelines in primary health centers across the country. The main aim of this community project was to encourage behaviour change among the people that will help them adapt helpful behaviours in the long fight against COVID-19.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, Health Promotion, Interactive Education, Students

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is defined as illness caused by a novel coronavirus called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2; formerly called 2019-nCoV), which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China (CDC, 2019). It was initially reported to WHO on December 31, 2019. On January 30, 2020, WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a global health emergency (Galegos, 2020). On March 11, 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, its first such designation since declaring H1N1 influenza as a pandemic in 2009 (The New York Times, 2020).

On January 30, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus outbreak a Global Public Health Emergency (World Health Organization, 2020). Announced as pandemic on 13 March, severe acute respiratory-related coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is not only leading to an unexpected public health crisis worldwide (Fauci et al., 2020), but it is also becoming an unprecedented socio-economic burden (Schoch-Spana, 2020). Coronavirus is continuing its spread across the world. The virus is surging in many regions and countries that had apparent success in suppressing initial outbreaks are also seeing infections rise. Up to March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, territories, states and countries outside of China reporting infections to world health organization (WHO), were 146, with an estimated 164.837 active cases and a staggering death toll of 6.470 globally (WHO, 2020). Worldwide, a total of 1,279,722 cases of COVID-19 and 72,614 deaths were confirmed in 212 countries by April 7, 2020 (WHO, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide and presents an unprecedented challenge to public health, food systems and the world of work. The economic and social disruption caused by the pandemic is devastating, tens of millions of people are at risk of falling into extreme poverty, while the number of undernourished people, currently estimated at nearly 690 million, could increase by up to 132 million by the end of the year (Chriscaden, K, 2020).

As the COVID-19 is a new and unknown disease, there is much uncertainty about it and no readymade solutions. Across the world, governments have used different approaches for dealing with the pandemic.

As of 8 March 2021, Indonesia has reported 1,386,556 cases, the highest in Southeast Asia, ahead of the Philippines. With 37,547 deaths, Indonesia ranks third in Asia and 17<sup>th</sup> in the world. Review of data, however, indicated that the number of deaths may be much higher than what has been reported as those who died with acute COVID-19 symptoms but had not been confirmed or tested were not counted in the official death ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19\\_pandemic\\_in\\_Indonesia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic_in_Indonesia)). WHO is working with the Indonesian Government to monitor the situation and prevent further spread of disease (Indonesia Ministry of Health). North Sumatra is ranked ninth with a total of 13,665 cases and has been keeping daily numbers within two digits in more than a month. (<https://jakartaglobe.id/news/covid-infections-rise-again-in-indonesia>). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was now beginning to spread to the world of education. The policies taken by many countries including Indonesia by dismissing all educational activities and related institutions must present alternative educational processes for students and students who cannot carry out the educational process in educational institutions. It is hoped that all educational institutions will not carry out activities as usual; as this will increase the spread of COVID-19.

Currently in Indonesia, several universities are starting to implement policies on teaching and learning activities from a distance or online lectures. This is actually not a problem for universities that already have an online academic system. But it will be a problem for universities that do not yet have an online academic system (Abidah, A, Hidayatullaah, H, N, Simamora, R, M, Fehabutar, D, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be more than just a threat to our health, it is become a disruption of our way of life, affecting everything in the life. And to answer this, Surya Nusantara School of Nursing in

partnership with School of Theology have conducted a seminar to promote the health of physical and spiritual aspect and to reduce the risk of COVID-19 to the community in the campus Surya Nusantara. During this time of COVID-19 pandemic crisis, health promotion becomes more important than ever to support the health and well-being of people in our communities. We agree with Van den Broucke (2020) that the real heroes in the fight against COVID-19 are: “virologists, epidemiologists, doctors and nurses, and even if many of the actions taken serve a preventative purpose, their focus is on the prevention of disease, not on promoting health.”

Simkhada, P, Mahato, P, Tamang, P, Teijlingen, E, Shah, P. (2020) states in their study that during this time of COVID-19 pandemic crisis, health promotion becomes more important than ever to support the health and well-being of people in the communities. Health promotion activities aimed at improving access to better information and services plays a vital role in giving people more control over their health and well-being. Health promotion can make an essential contribution to fighting a global pandemic such as COVID-19.

Since there is no vaccine available against COVID-19, the infection has been circulating rapidly within the population. Hence, the only measure that we can adapt at the moment is to prevent its further spread within the communities. Since there is no vaccine available against COVID-19, the infection has been circulating rapidly within the population. Hence, the only measure that we can adapt at the moment is to prevent its further spread within the communities.

Furthermore, Simkhada, P, Mahato, P, Tamang, P, Teijlingen, E, Shah, P. (2020) declare that health promotion can contribute to addressing the COVID-19 threat at different levels. Health promotion can improve preventing behavior, it empowers the organization and community. Empowering communities means educating people and encouraging them to change their behaviour for their own benefit but also that of others, in order to minimize the spread of COVID-19, but also to provide the resources and opportunities to make such changes. Health promotion enhances the health literacy among the society to provide a greater change of life style, and health promotion will deal with misinformation or false information in the society, to give the society reliable sources of information and guidance they might need to interpret the information provided.

## **2. PROBLEMS**

It was found that some of the students of these schools suffered from COVID-19 disease, but as the prevention is the best way in managing the disease, and to minimize the case, so the presenters initiated a program to conduct a prevention program through health promotion seminar in order to give students the information and knowledge needed about the disease and to educate them to change their behavior to minimize the spread of Covid-19.

This community project was aimed to increase the knowledge of COVID-19 and to promote their health status through the seminar of COVID-19 for college students in Surya Nusantara Nursing School, School of Business, School of Theology and academy students as well. These schools are situated in the area of Pondok Sayur, city of Pematangsiantar. The students mostly

stay in their respective place due to pandemic of COVID-19 but there are several students who reside inside the campus.



Figure 2.1 Location of community project in the city of Pematangsiantar, North Sumatera

### 3. METHODS

This health promotion project presented the topic of COVID-19 using Power Point slides, LCD and projector. The presenters conducted the seminar for one day. The strength of this program was that participants had the opportunity to digitally send their questions to the seminar resource persons during the seminar. The questions answered during the interactive seminar.

Prior to participating in the seminar, participants undertook a preliminary test. A follow-up test conducted after completing the seminar to measure the growth in knowledge and understanding of participants.

The community project was held in March 28, 2021, at 6.30 - 9.30 PM, in the Chapel building of the school that situated in Pematangsiantar, North Sumatera. The building can accommodate up to 1000 peoples, but due to pandemic situation, the health protocols regarding COVID-19 was applied during seminar. During the seminar, the participants sat 1 meter apart and used face mask.

The target population for this community project was the students of Surya Nusantara Nursing School, School of Business, School of Theology, academy students of SMA Swasta Advent, and faculty members of these schools. These schools were situated in the area of Pondok Sayur, city of Pematangsiantar, North Sumatera. The students mostly stay in their respective place due to pandemic of Covid-19 but there were several students who reside inside the campus.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In early August 2020, there were nearly 18 million confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 686,145 deaths globally; very rapid growth in prevalence since the first case was reported to the World Health Organization in December 2019 (WHO, 2020). In a desperate attempt to contain the further spread of the virus, governments across the world have taken public health interventions that are unprecedented. To prevent the further spread of

COVID-19 infection, many countries have taken strict measures such as the complete lockdown of a country restricting the movement of people in public, forcing people to stay at home except for emergencies and certain essential jobs.

The COVID-19 pandemic may be impacting how often people engage in behaviors that affect their health (Parekh & Deierlein, 2020). Greater engagement in health-promoting behaviors may promote resilience in face of infectious diseases like COVID-19 and prevent chronic diseases (Mokdad et al., 2018).

It is expected that those who completed the health promotion seminar would be able to conduct effective prevention and control activities for COVID-19 as per the guidelines in primary health centers across the country. As governments around the world struggle to use a range of prevention strategies, from imposing lockdowns to scaling up testing and contact tracing, one effective way to support the health and well-being of the general public is through health promotion. Community education and risk communication carried out by organizations at different levels and engagement of locals in order to understand the risk and seriousness of COVID-19 is what health promotion can offer. The main aim thus is to encourage behaviour change among the general people that will help them adapt helpful behaviours in this long fight against COVID-19. Below are the pictures during the health promotion seminar.



Fig 1. Students during registration for program



Fig 2. Opening ceremony



Fig 3. The speaker Dr. S. Simbolon



Fig 4. The speaker Dr. D. Muntu



Fig 4. The speaker Ibu Rosnancy Sinaga



Fig 5. The participants of the seminar



Fig.6. Participants who took part in asking questions

## 5. SUMMARY

Enabling people to increase control over their health and its determinants is at the core of health promotion. As such, health promotion may paradoxically be more important in this time of crisis than ever before. As a discipline within public health and a field of professional practice, health promotion can contribute to addressing COVID-19 threat at various levels. Health promotion becomes more important than ever to support the health and well-being of people in the communities.

It is expected that health promotion conducted in the area of schools would increase public knowledge as the main basis for preventing the occurrence of COVID-19. As the community exposed to the information needed regarding COVID-19, it will reduce the case of COVID-10 and prevent the spread. This community project encouraged behaviour change among the general people that will help them adapt helpful behaviours in this long fight against COVID-19.

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