

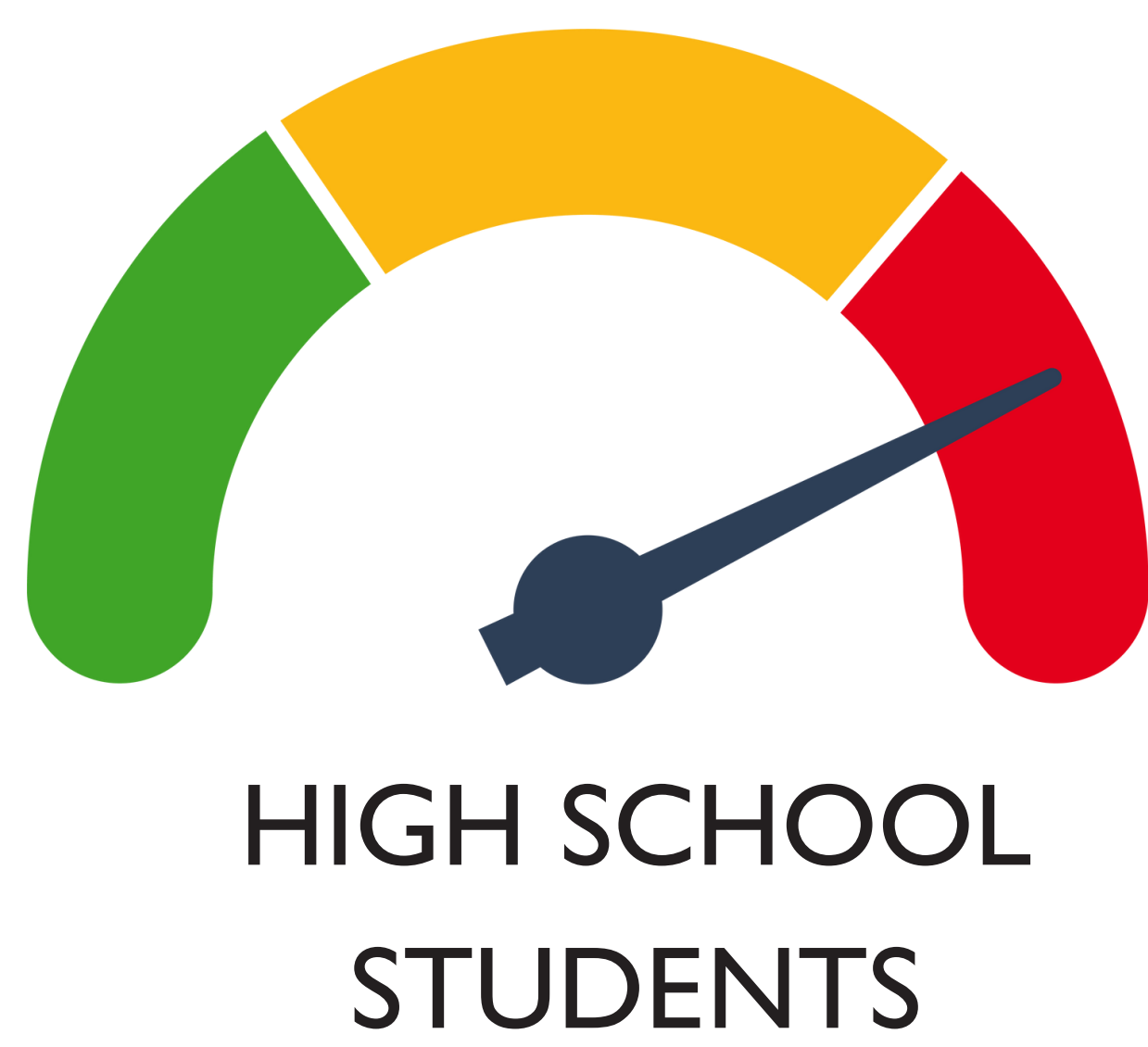
DETERMINANTS OF TUBERCULOSIS-RELATED STIGMA AMONG SCHOOL-AGED ADOLESCENTS IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

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BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENTATION

TB STIGMA



TB remains a major global public health concern and continues to be a leading cause of morbidity in Thailand. Stigma related to TB significantly impacts the quality of life of those affected. Several factors contribute to TB-related stigma, including limited knowledge, low awareness, and negative perceptions about the disease. Notably, high school students have been reported to exhibit stigmatizing attitudes toward individuals with TB, reflecting the influence of these factors among adolescents. However, there is still limited data focusing on the underlying causes of TB stigma among age group.

METHODOLOGY



A descriptive study design was employed. The participants were school adolescents aged 15-19 years old, who were studying in grades 10-12 in Bangkok-based schools under the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC). A systematic sampling was used for the selection of the participants. Data were collected by questionnaires consisting of the following four parts including 1) factors related to demographic characteristics, 2) knowledge about pulmonary tuberculosis (TB), 3) attitudes toward pulmonary tuberculosis, and 4) TB stigma. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, while Chi-square tests and Fisher's exact tests were employed to examine proportions and assess associations between variables.

RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNT



This study found that factors related to demographic characteristics significantly associated with TB stigma were sex, age, classes, and type of accommodation (p-value < 0.05). Similarly, attitudes toward pulmonary TB were significantly associated with TB stigma (p-value= 0.014), while knowledge about pulmonary TB was no associated with TB stigma.

CONCLUSIONS AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:



The study suggests that targeted interventions should be implemented to improve TB knowledge, promote positive attitudes toward pulmonary TB, and strengthen advocacy and social mobilization.

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