

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC AND STUDENTS
TOWARD HIV INFECTED PATIENTS**

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ABSTRACT

About 79, 000 out of 24, 821, 286 million Malaysians were diagnosed with HIV / AIDS in 2007. Apparently, 84, 630 cases of HIV infected patients were reported in 2008. The increment number of reported cases was frightening and need serious attention from everyone. This study was to determine and compare public and students' perceptions toward HIV infected patients based on different demographic factors. This study also investigated respondents' level of understandings on HIV including the awareness level of HIV dangerousness. Besides, this study was to determine whether the level of basic knowledge on HIV will influence respondents' perceptions toward HIV infected patient. A modified validated self administered questionnaire was used and distributed randomly. Approximately, 84.4% of respondents have positive perceptions toward HIV infected patients as 80.4% of them possessed strong basic knowledge on HIV. Independent T test had been used to fine the correlation between public and students' responds. There were significant differences between students and public in their attitudes toward HIV problems and also the influence of their social groups towards accepting HIV infected patients. Races and genders were two main factors that influenced respondents' perceptions. The study concluded that, there were significant differences between public and students' perceptions toward HIV infected patients that influenced by study demographic factors and level of basic knowledge and understanding on HIV.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Malaysians are known as friendly, generous and very kind to each other. This beautiful and harmony multi cultural surroundings is one of the advantages that allow us to be known and always be one of the exemplary to the world.

A proportion of the Malaysian population still suffers and dies from preventable infections, pregnancy and childbirth-related complications, and many chronic diseases (Ibrahim, 2003). At the same time, new health threats are overwhelming the ability of the nation's health care system to respond effectively. Besides the latest outbreak of H1N1, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection is one of the most important of such threats to mankind. HIV will suppress the immune system of the patients. Therefore, the HIV infected patients are unable to defend themselves from opportunistic infections which rarely seen in the normal people but can caused fatal for them. HIV is an infectious disease which is incurable but obviously preventable (Greet, 2003).