

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS AND PUBLIC  
TOWARDS MENTAL ILLNESS**

**HAWA BINTI SAMSUDIN**

**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for  
the  
degree of Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons)**

**Faculty of Pharmacy**

**November 2009**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First of all, thanks to Him for giving me the strength and patience in completing this thesis. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Nahlah Elkudssiah Ismail, my project supervisor for her guidance, advices, ideas and help during the process of completing this thesis. I would also like to express my special thanks to ‘Atikah Zahir, Wirdiana Yusoff, Azilea Ghazali and Nurliah Hussin whom I always work together and to all the lecturers for their guidance, idea, support, comment and also consultation. Finally, I also want to express my appreciation to my parents, other family members and classmate for their help and support throughout this project.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
TITLE PAGE	
APPROVAL	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATION	ix
ABSTRACT	x
CHAPTER ONE (INTRODUCTION)	
1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. Significance of study	1
1.3. Objectives of study	2
1.4. Problem of statement	2
1.5. Research questions	3
1.6. Hypothesis	3
CHAPTER TWO (LITERATURE REVIEW)	
2.1. Introduction	4
2.2. Definition of mental health	4
2.3. Types of mental illness	5
2.4. Description of people with mental illness	6
2.5. Attitude to mental illness people	7
2.6. Treatment of mental illness people	8
2.7. Effects of mental illness people toward community	9
CHAPTER THREE (MATERIALS AND METHODS)	
3.1. Study design	11
3.2. Sample selection	11
3.3. Instrumentation	11
3.4. Study procedure	13
3.5. Data collection and analysis	13
3.6. Reliability of scale	14
3.7. Questionnaire	14
CHAPTER FOUR (RESULTS)	
4.1 Introduction	15
4.2 Demographic data	15
4.2.1 Percentage of gender	16
4.2.2 Percentage of age	17
4.2.3 Percentage of race	18
4.2.4 Percentage of religion	19
4.2.5 Percentage of marital status	20
4.2.6 Percentage of education level	21
4.2.7 Percentage of career	22

## ABSTRACT

Mental illness people are among the vulnerable population that must be treated equally in a society. The main objective of this study was to assess the public and students' perceptions toward mental illness people. A survey based questionnaire method was used. A total of 400 respondents that consist of 200 for each public and students were randomly selected in completing the questionnaires, with response rate of 91% and 82%, respectively. In general, according to overall study results, there were significant differences in perception between those groups due to selected demographical data as such age, race, gender and educational level hence may affect level of knowledge and attitudes that may influence by exposure and experiences associated with mental illness people. The positive attitudes and well-acquired knowledge influenced better perceptions toward mental illness, hence creating an understanding and concerned society.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Mental health problems are one of the universal diseases across the world. These illnesses are associated in the public mind with an astoundingly broad range of negative attributes such as being dangerous, dirty, cold, worthless, bad, weak and ignorant (Olmsted & Durham, 1976). The worst part was family members also suffered from these negative perceptions such as having their own mental health status questioned, rejection by friends and other relatives (Phelan et. al, 1998).

### 1.2 Significance of study

The mental illness awareness among society is considered as low due to inability to differentiate between those who need further medical treatment than those due to unknown causes such as 'black magic'. These are worsened by negative perceptions toward mental illness patients that may extend to family members, hence the affected patients and family become reluctant to seek appropriate medical treatment and assume the mental illness will be faded by time. This research was first to determine the perceptions of students and public toward mental illness people. Based on the validated questionnaires that were distributed to the respondents, the perceptions of the public and students that related to any issues of mental illnesses can be determined. Apart from that, this research may provide adequate information