

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

BACHELOR OF PHARMACY STUDENTS'  
PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS  
PSYCHIATRY

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## ABSTRACT

Psychiatric disorders have become the public problem in both developing and developed countries. Worldwide, there are about 40 million people suffered from severe psychiatric disorders like schizophrenia and dementia. It is important to improve the pharmacy students' perception towards mental illness patient and there are various strategies can be done include practically contact with psychiatric patient, providing education and by suppressing negative attitude and representations of mental disorder. The aim of the study is to determine the perception of pharmacy students toward psychiatric patients and to investigate the pharmacy students' attitude toward psychiatry. A cross-sectional survey was conducted using a validated modified social distance scale or SDS and modified attitude towards psychiatry questionnaire. One hundred and ninetee eight students from two Pharmacy faculty participated in the survey. Data entry and statistical analysis were carried out using the SPSS version 17.0. For the attitude towards person with mental illness most students' have negative perception towards person with mental illness. There is no significance different between gender in their perception towards person with mental illness ( $p>0.05$ ). For the attitude towards psychiatrist most students show positive attitude towards psychiatrist. There is no significant difference between gender and their attitude towards person with mental illness ( $p>0.05$ ). For the attitude towards psychiatric courses most students' shows slightly positive attitude towards psychiatric courses. But they refused to involve in psychiatry care. There is significant difference ( $p<0.05$ ) between male and female which they agree pharmacotherapy cannot be taught effectively. For attitude towards psychiatric treatment most students' have positive attitude towards psychiatric treatment. They agree that psychiatric hospital is not the worse place for the psychiatric patient but it is the place for them to get treatment and get monitoring from the specialist psychiatrist for their own good and future. There is no significant different between gender and their attitude towards psychiatric treatment and hospitals ( $p>0.05$ ). This study shows that most of pharmacy students have negative perception towards person with mental illness. But they have positive perception towards psychiatrist, psychiatric courses and psychiatric treatment. Early exposure with psychiatric courses or training can increase the positive perception and attitude of the students' towards person with mental illness.