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PHAM QUYNH HUONG: HIV/AIDS KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES IN VIETNAM. THESIS ADVISORS: PHILIP GUEST Ph.D., CHURNRURTAJ KANCIANACHITRA Ph.D. 85p. ISBN-974-661-481-9

This study is aimed at identifying those social and demographic characteristics and sources of information of HIV/AIDS that are related to knowledge and attitudes towards HIV/AIDS among adults in Vietnam. The study employs data from a knowledge, attitudes, belief, and practice (KABP) survey conducted by the National AIDS Committee of Vietnam (NACVN) in 1997. A total of 5,040 people, both male and female, aged 15-49 were sampled from six provinces.

The study confirms significant differences between males and females in terms of individual characteristics and sources of HIV/AIDS information. These differences reflect the higher status of men compared to women in Vietnamese society as well as different types of accessibility to sources of information about HIV/AIDS.

Different types of information sources are suitable for various groups and have different effects on knowledge and attitudes of HIV/AIDS. Persons of higher Socio-Economic Status (SES) are most likely to rely on mass media for HIV knowledge. Persons of lower SES are more likely to rely on face-to-face contact (including health workers, meetings, mobile team, friends, relatives) for their knowledge. Those who are less advantaged (women, rural residents, farmers, low education, low living standard) have less accessibility to HIV information and so have lower knowledge about HIV/AIDS and less positive attitudes towards persons with HIV/AIDS.

The study reveals that persons with higher HIV knowledge have more positive attitudes towards HIV infected persons compared to those with lower levels of knowledge. The pattern of influences of individual characteristics and information sources on knowledge and attitudes are the same. A combination of mass media (TV, newspaper, radio, poster) and face-to-face contact is most successful at improving HIV/AIDS knowledge and generating positive attitudes, particularly among low socio-economic people. When any source of information is combined with information from face-to-face contact, HIV knowledge and attitudes increases significantly. The sources of information associated with the lowest levels of knowledge and attitudes are TV only, or media only, or a combination of health worker and relatives.