

# A Cross-Sectional Study of the Knowledge and Attitudes of Timor-Leste National Police (PNTL) Toward HIV/AIDS Prevention in Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit, Bairro-Pite, Timor-Leste, Year 2024

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## Abstract:

### ➤ Introduction:

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) remains a significant global health challenge, particularly affecting vulnerable populations. In Timor-Leste, the National Police play a crucial role in public health. However, their knowledge and attitudes toward HIV/AIDS prevention are not well understood. This research focuses on the Command of the Special Police Unit in Bairro-Pite, aiming to assess the current state of awareness and perceptions regarding HIV/AIDS among police personnel.

### ➤ Objective:

The primary objective of this study is to assess the knowledge and attitudes of the Timor-Leste National Police regarding HIV/AIDS prevention. Specifically, it seeks to explore the correlation between knowledge and attitudes and how these factors influence preventive behaviours within the police force.

### ➤ Research Method:

This quantitative study utilizes a cross-sectional design, surveying 61 police personnel selected through simple random sampling from a population of 713. Data were collected through structured questionnaires that assessed knowledge and attitudes toward HIV/AIDS prevention. Statistical analyses, including univariate and bivariate analyses, were performed using the Chi-squared test to identify significant relationships between variables.

### ➤ Results and Discussion:

The findings indicate that 44.3% of respondents demonstrated good knowledge of HIV/AIDS prevention, while 55.7% exhibited poor knowledge. Attitudinally, only 36.1% had a positive attitude towards prevention efforts. The Chi-Square test revealed significant correlations between knowledge and attitudes, and preventive behaviours, highlighting the need for targeted educational interventions. The results suggest a gap between awareness and action, emphasizing the importance of practical training and awareness campaigns.

### ➤ Conclusion:

The study underscores the necessity for enhanced collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the Timor-Leste National Police to implement effective training programs. Addressing negative attitudes and fostering a culture of health consciousness is crucial for improving preventive measures against HIV/AIDS. These initiatives are vital not only for police personnel but also for the broader community, ultimately contributing to better public health outcomes in Timor-Leste.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

HIV originates from the phrase Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It is a virus that weakens our immune system (CD4 cells), ultimately leading to AIDS, which stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2021). HIV is responsible for this chronic condition and has become a worldwide epidemic, affecting human health globally and presenting a public health challenge faced by all communities (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022). As a global threat, it poses a considerable risk to human life.

HIV/AIDS is an infection transmitted through sexual contact and is mainly spread during sexual interactions such as vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse, particularly when protective measures like condoms are not utilized, which are crucial for preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases [NIAID], 2020). Furthermore, HIV can be spread via the use of contaminated needles; if someone who is already infected uses these needles without proper sterilization, they present a risk (CDC, 2021). The transmission of HIV can also occur through blood transfusions, especially when blood donated by an infected individual goes untested, potentially transmitting the virus to those in need (WHO, 2022). Infected pregnant women may transmit the virus to their infants during pregnancy, childbirth, or breastfeeding if the necessary diagnostic tests and treatments are not performed prior to giving birth (NIAID, 2020).

It is commonly acknowledged that HIV is a contagious infection transmitted through sexual intercourse among individuals aged 15-45 who participate in unprotected sexual activity (UNAIDS, 2021). This virus targets white blood cells, which are essential for our immune system. When a person becomes infected with HIV, their immune defences weaken (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2022). If not addressed promptly, this can lead to severe health issues, such as tuberculosis (TB), Cryptococcal meningitis, severe bacterial infections, cancer, and Hepatitis C (Timor-Leste National AIDS Commission, 2012).

Key factors like education, health, and economic status play a significant role in the transmission of this virus. Individuals with limited financial means may turn to sex work to survive, increasing their vulnerability to the dangers associated with HIV/AIDS (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020).

When the immune system is compromised and struggles to combat various illnesses, it presents a significant health risk and heightens the chance of developing AIDS. Without

prompt diagnosis and treatment, this condition can ultimately lead to death (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS [UNAIDS], 2021). AIDS pertains to the advanced stages of HIV infection, during which the immune system is critically weakened and has difficulty resisting various diseases (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2022).

The first thing individuals with HIV should do is go to a healthcare facility for testing to ascertain their HIV status and gain access to necessary treatments that can prevent personal health deterioration and the potential spread of the virus (CDC, 2022); a lack of testing and treatment can lead to the advancement to AIDS and eventual death (WHO, 2020).

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that weakens the human immune system by targeting and reducing the number of CD4 cells (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, 2021). A significant decline in CD4 cells compromises the body's immune defenses against various illnesses (World Health Organization, 2022). Without treatment, an HIV infection can lead to serious complications and conditions, eventually resulting in AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), which is the final stage of HIV infection when the immune system becomes nearly or entirely ineffective in fighting infections (UNAIDS, 2021).

Concerns about HIV/AIDS are prevalent worldwide, particularly within the healthcare sector, as a definitive cure for HIV/AIDS has yet to be discovered (World Health Organization, 2023). However, the World Health Organization (WHO) has introduced ARV (Anti-Retro Viral) therapy, which is not a cure but serves to slow the progression of HIV and enhance the life expectancy of those living with HIV/AIDS (WHO, 2016).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2011), around 3.5 million people in South East Asia are living with HIV/AIDS. Countries such as Myanmar, Nepal, and Thailand have made strides in reducing new HIV/AIDS cases, confirming the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS prevention programs that promote 100% condom use (CUP). Between 2001 and 2010, the number of AIDS-related deaths varied significantly across different regions; in Eastern Europe and West Asia, deaths increased from 7,800 to 90,000, while in East and North Africa, they rose from 22,000 to 35,000, and in East Asia, the number of deaths reached 56,000 (WHO, 2011).

According to global data from the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), there were 39 million individuals living with HIV in 2022. That year, 630,000 people worldwide died from HIV/AIDS, alongside 1.3 million new

infections. The WHO reports that the countries with the highest rates of HIV cases include Eswatini, Lesotho, Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, and Equatorial Guinea (WHO, 2023). The WHO (2023) reported that these countries are significantly impacted by HIV/AIDS, as the illness presents major global issues and is an urgent matter within health systems around the world due to its substantial obstruction to human development and advancement in every nation.

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (RDTL) is a recently independent country in Southeast Asia, achieving sovereignty on May 20, 2002. Following its independence, Timor-Leste has faced numerous challenges across various sectors, including human development and resource management. The health sector is particularly critical, grappling with numerous diseases, both communicable and non-communicable, with HIV/AIDS being one of the most perilous diseases that threaten human life and national development (Ministry of Health, 2024).

From data provided by the Ministry of Health regarding HIV/AIDS in Timor-Leste from 2003 to December 2024, a total of 2,206 individuals have been affected by the disease, resulting in 245 deaths and 122 individuals remaining untreated (Ministry of Health, 2024). Of these, Dili, the capital, has the highest number of cases at 1,545 (one thousand five hundred and forty-five) compared to other municipalities. Followed by Bobonaro with 117 and Covalima with 83 (Ministry of Health, 2024). From this data, we can observe that Bobonaro municipality has the second highest number of HIV/AIDS cases following Dili, partly due to its geographical location along the land borders with Indonesia (UNICEF, 2023).

The figure below shows the number of HIV/AIDS cases, deaths, and untreated cases identified in Timor-Leste from 2003 to 2024.

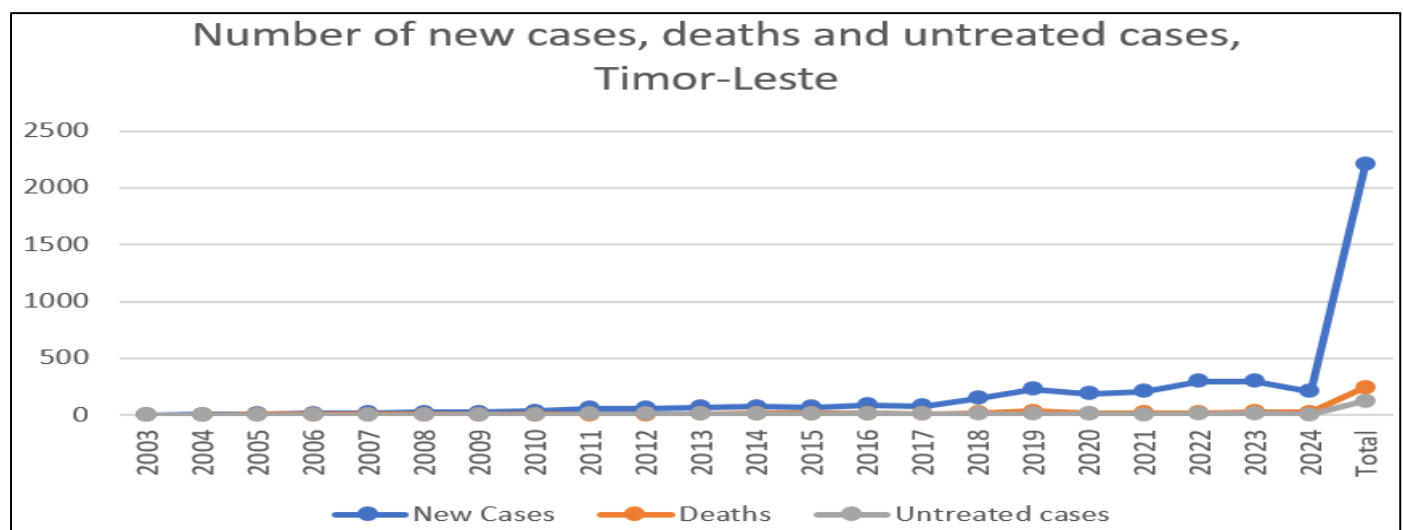


Fig 1 Number of New Cases, Deaths and Untreated Cases, Timor-Leste  
Source: Ministry of Health, Timor-Leste 2024

The primary elements contributing to the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Timor-Leste are education, health, and economic conditions, as these factors significantly influence the spread of the disease (World Health Organization, 2023). From 2003 until March 2024, the number of HIV/AIDS cases rose to two thousand twenty-four (2024) affected citizens in Timor-Leste, indicating a notable increase compared to earlier years (Ministry of Health, 2024).

The education sector plays a crucial role in a nation, particularly in Timor-Leste, since it enhances citizens' knowledge and attitudes (UNICEF, 2021). Education is essential for teaching individuals about important subjects, helping them grasp the differences between right and wrong and understand prevention methods against diseases, especially HIV/AIDS, which poses a significant risk globally and within our nation (World Health Organization, 2020). When the education sector fails to focus adequately on the knowledge and attitudes of the youth, it contributes to the rising rates of HIV/AIDS in Timor-Leste (UNAIDS, 2022).

Addressing the education sector, it is vital to enhance the knowledge and attitudes of everyone regarding HIV/AIDS prevention through strong collaboration with the health sector in Timor-Leste to effectively manage the spread of HIV/AIDS, which is currently claiming many lives in our country (Ministry of Health, Timor-Leste, 2023). The Ministries of Health and Education should implement educational materials focused on combating or preventing HIV/AIDS in schools and organize regular socialization and promotion efforts across all institutions to raise knowledge and awareness about prevention, as understanding is crucial for individuals to make informed lifestyle changes to protect themselves from diseases (UNESCO, 2021).

Considering the aforementioned points about the roles and responsibilities of the Health and Education Sectors in Timor-Leste, the lack of attention toward activities such as socialization, information dissemination, and health promotion by personnel is relatively low, with no established routines aimed at enhancing the knowledge and attitudes of

individuals within institutions. This situation has motivated researchers to undertake research entitled “A Cross-Sectional Study of the Knowledge and Attitudes of Timor-Leste National Police (PNTL) Toward HIV/AIDS Prevention in Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit, Dili Municipality 2024”.

The primary objective is to evaluate the knowledge and attitudes of the Timor-Leste National Police regarding HIV/AIDS prevention at the Headquarters of the Special Police Unit, located in Bairro-Pite, Timor-Leste, in 2024. The specific aims of this study are as follows: 1) To understand the correlation between the knowledge of police personnel on HIV/AIDS prevention at the Headquarters of the Special Police Unit in Bairro-Pite, Timor-Leste, in 2024; 2) To evaluate the attitudes of police personnel toward HIV/AIDS prevention at the Headquarters of the Special Police Unit in Bairro-Pite, Dom Alexo Administrative Post, Dili Municipality, in 2024; and 3) To examine the relationship between the knowledge and attitudes of police personnel regarding HIV/AIDS prevention at the Special Police Unit Headquarters in Bairro-Pite, Dom Alexo Administrative Post, Dili Municipality, in 2024.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

### ➤ Research Design

The research utilizes a quantitative method with a cross-sectional approach. It aims to address a specific problem, drawing on relevant theorists for reference (Sugiyono, 2015). The study will focus on two independent variables: knowledge (X1) and attitude (X2), while the dependent variable will be the prevention of HIV/AIDS (Y).

The research was conducted at the headquarters of the Special Police Unit Command in Bairro Pite, located in the Dom Alexo Administrative Post of Dili Municipality.

### ➤ Population and Sample

#### • Population

The study's population comprises all police personnel stationed at the Headquarters of the Command for the Special Police Unit in Bairro Pite. This group includes 713 dedicated individuals, both men and women, who play a vital role in maintaining public safety and security in the region.

#### • Sample

Ridwan (2013) states that a sample consists of a subset of the population. A research sample is derived from a population and serves as a representative sample of that entire population.

#### • Sample Size Determination Technique

To ascertain the appropriate sample size, the researcher employed the renowned formula established by scholar Slovin. With a total population of 713 individuals under consideration, the Slovin formula was meticulously applied, factoring in a precision level of 15 per cent. Through this systematic approach, the researcher calculated a total sample size of 61, ensuring that the sample accurately represents the

broader population while maintaining reliability in the findings.

#### • Formula

$$n = \frac{N}{N \cdot d^2 + 1}$$

#### • Annotation

n = Total of the sample

N = Total of Population

d<sup>2</sup> = Level of precision (15%)

#### • Computation:

$$n = \frac{N}{N \cdot d^2 + 1} = \frac{713}{713 \times 0.15^2 + 1} = \frac{713}{713 \times 0.0225 + 1} = \frac{713}{16.0425 + 1} = \frac{713}{17.0425} \approx 41.8$$

### ➤ Sampling Techniques

The sampling method employed in this study is grounded in a probability sampling technique known as simple random sampling. We opted for simple random sampling to effectively identify potential respondents, ensuring each individual had an equal chance of being selected. To guarantee a transparent and unbiased selection process, we utilised a sophisticated computer program that randomises the selection, eliminating any potential human bias. Before this step, we meticulously compiled a comprehensive list of 713 individuals, facilitating a seamless and efficient randomization process.

### ➤ Data Collection Tool

#### • Questionnaire:

A researcher uses a structured, closed-ended questionnaire as a tool to gather information from respondents systematically. This method enables the collection of quantifiable data through predefined questions designed to elicit specific responses (Fowler, 2014). This method streamlines data analysis and enhances the reliability of the research findings by ensuring consistency across all interviews (Bryman, 2016).

### ➤ Data Collection Techniques

According to Sugiyono (2015), data collection techniques are essential, as the primary objective of this research is to understand how to collect data effectively. To facilitate data gathering for this study, the researcher utilized several techniques, including a literature review intended to collect references like books, articles, and other written materials relevant to the analysis topic. Field research was carried out by gathering data directly from participants using the following methods:

#### • Questionnaire

This approach involves carefully distributing questionnaires designed to uphold respondents' privacy and



confidentiality. Each questionnaire contains a series of thoughtfully crafted questions that have already been addressed, allowing participants to select answers that best reflect their understanding and perspectives. This method encourages honest and open responses, facilitating a more precise analysis of the collected data (Sugiyono, 2015).

- *Interview*

An interview that employs closed-ended questions involves direct, in-person interaction between the participant and the researcher, promoting a lively exchange of information. This engaging method enables the researcher to explore the participant's thoughts, feelings, and experiences in greater depth. By utilizing closed-ended questions along with conversational dialogue, interviews can uncover rich, contextual insights, thereby offering a more thorough understanding of the participant's viewpoint and the subject matter being addressed (Creswell, 2014)..

- *Observation*

The observation technique is a valuable method for collecting information from various data sources by directly observing and analyzing the actual conditions present at the research site (Merriam, 2009). This approach allows researchers to immerse themselves in the environment, capturing nuanced details and dynamics that may not be apparent through other data collection methods. By closely monitoring behaviours, interactions, and contexts, this technique provides a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, contributing to a richer and more informed analysis.

- *Documentation*

This method involves the systematic collection of secondary data related to the research issue by examining a range of existing documents and archives available at the research site (Yin, 2018). By delving into these resources, researchers can uncover valuable insights and context, enriching their understanding of the subject matter and providing a comprehensive backdrop for their analysis.

➤ *Data Analysis Techniques*

According to Sugiyono (2007), it is crucial to connect the data before performing data analysis to examine the questionnaire results and then establish a cross-tabulation between the independent and dependent variables. This study aims to describe, analyze, or assess the relationship among these three variables. Thus, the data analysis techniques applied in this study include univariate analysis and bivariate analysis.

- *Univariate Analysis*

The investigator conducted a univariate analysis to depict the distribution values and frequencies of the variables, namely Knowledge and Attitude, with HIV/AIDS prevention serving as the dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2007). Furthermore, it details the attributes of the participants.

- *Bivariate Analysis*

The statistical analysis technique employed in this context is the Chi-Square test, which aims to explore and understand the relationship between the variables (Field, 2013). This method enables researchers to determine whether a significant association exists between these variables, providing valuable insights into their interactions. The Chi-Square equation used in this analysis is as follows:

$$\text{Formula: } \chi^2 = \sum \frac{(o - e)^2}{e}$$

- *Description:*

$\chi^2$  = Chi-Square Statistical Test  
 $o$  = Observation value  
 $e$  = Expected value

### III. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

➤ *Results*

The study lasted two months and took place at the Headquarters of the Special Police Unit, Bairo-Pite in 2024. The total number of National Police Personnel from Timor-Leste assigned to the Special Police Unit was 713.

Table 1 Distribution of Respondents Based on Sex in the Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit, Bairo-Pite, 2024.

No	Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Male	52	85.2
2	Female	9	14.8
Total		61	100

Sources: Primary Data, 2024

The table above shows that the total number of respondents to the survey reached 61, providing a snapshot of the workforce dynamics at the Headquarters. Among these respondents, the breakdown by gender paints a striking picture: 52 individuals, accounting for 85.2% of the total, identified as male. In stark contrast, only nine respondents, or 14.8%, were female. This overwhelming predominance of

male officers highlights a workforce that is skewed mainly toward one gender.

The survey conducted by the Special Police Unit reveals not only a pronounced gender imbalance but also the underlying implications of such a disparity. The findings serve as a call to action, emphasizing the necessity for targeted efforts to promote diversity and inclusivity.

Table 2 Distribution of Respondents Based on Age Group in the Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit, Bairro-Pite, 2024.

No	Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	20-29	10	16.4
2	30-39	25	41.0
3	40-49	17	27.9
4	50-61	9	14.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Sources: Primary Data, 2024

Table 2 illustrates the age distribution of respondents at the headquarters of the Special Police Unit, Bairro-Pite. The study encompassed 61 respondents and revealed insights into the demographics that shape the organization.

Among the age groups surveyed, the most significant representation came from individuals aged 30 to 39, accounting for 41% of the total respondents. Following this majority group, the second largest cohort was the 40- to 50-year-old age group, which included 27.9% of the respondents.

The younger demographic, represented by those aged 20 to 29, comprised only 16.4% of the respondents. Finally, the oldest age group, comprising individuals aged 51 to 61 years, had the least representation, at 14.8%. This trend underscores that few employees are in the latter stages of their careers, further intensifying concerns about impending retirements and the loss of invaluable experience and mentorship.

Table 3 Distribution of Respondents Based on Level of Education in the Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit, Bairro-Pite, 2024.

No	Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Pre-secondary	2	3.3
2	Secondary	36	59.0
3	D3 (Diploma Level)	1	1.6
4	Licenciature	22	36.1
<b>Total</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Sources: Primary Data, 2024

The table above provides an insightful overview of the educational backgrounds of respondents from the Headquarters of the Special Police Unit Bairro-Pite in 2024. With 61 individuals surveyed, the data sheds light on the educational qualifications held by these personnel and offers a glimpse into the broader implications for the unit as a whole.

Beginning with the distribution of educational qualifications, it is evident that a significant majority, comprising 36 respondents, or 59% of the total, have completed their secondary education. This substantial figure indicates that the prevailing educational foundation within the unit leans heavily towards a basic schooling level, suggesting

that many individuals may have entered the force with limited higher educational qualifications.

In contrast, only two respondents—accounting for 3.3%—fall into the pre-secondary category, along with just one individual (1.6%) holding a D3 diploma. These numbers reveal a stark lack of diversity in educational backgrounds at the lower tiers, indicating that the entry points for many in the Special Police Unit tend to favour those who have at least completed secondary schooling.

On the other hand, there is a notable representation of higher education among the respondents, with 22 individuals (36.1%) holding a licenciature.

Table 4 Distribution of Respondents Based on Type of Service in the Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit, Bairro-Pite, 2024.

No	Type of Service	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Batalhão de Ordem Pública (BOP)	15	24.6
2	Companhia de Segurança Pessoal (CSP)	26	42.6
3	Companhia das Operações Especiais (COE)	20	32.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Sources: Primary Data, 2024

Table 4 provides a comprehensive snapshot of the distribution of respondents at the headquarters of the Special Police Unit Bairro-Pite in 2024. With 61 respondents participating in the survey, the data offers valuable insights into the different types of services represented within the unit.

Breaking it down by service type, the *Companhia de Segurança Pessoal (CSP)* emerges as the leading category, with 26 respondents, which accounts for an impressive 42.6% of the total. Following closely is the *Companhia das Operações Especiais (COE)*, which garnered responses from

20 individuals, making up 32.8% of the total respondents. This statistic highlights a strong inclination towards special operations within the Special Police Unit. In contrast, the *Batalhão de Ordem Pública (BOP)* has the smallest representation, with only 15 respondents constituting 24.6%.

#### ➤ *Univariate Analysis*

The differentiation of results among the interview variables pertains to the level of understanding and perspective of the police regarding the prevention of HIV/AIDS at the headquarters of the Special Police Unit in Bairro-Pite, located in the Dom Aleixo Administrative Post of Dili Municipality, in 2024:

Table 5 Frequency Distribution of Respondents in the Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit, Bairro-Pite, 2024

No	Knowledge Towards HIV/AIDS Prevention	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Good	27	44.3
2	Poor	34	55.7
<b>Total</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Sources: Primary data, 2024

Table 5 above presents the results of an insightful analysis conducted at the Headquarters of the Special Police Unit, Bairro-Pite. A comprehensive survey was administered to assess personnel's knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS prevention. The findings reveal a troubling picture of awareness and understanding within the unit.

The survey comprised a total of 61 respondents, representing a cross-section of personnel within the Special Police Unit. The results revealed a significant disparity in knowledge levels among the respondents.

Out of the total participants, only 27 respondents, accounting for 44.3%, demonstrated a good understanding of HIV/AIDS prevention strategies. This figure indicates that a substantial portion of the personnel possess valuable information that can facilitate practical prevention efforts.

However, the concern arises from the contrasting results: a majority, 34 respondents or 55.7%, exhibited poor knowledge related to HIV/AIDS prevention. This stark division underscores a critical gap in understanding a public health issue that is both prevalent and impactful.

The implications of these findings are profound. With more than half of the respondents lacking sufficient knowledge, there is a clear risk to the unit's capacity to engage in effective HIV/AIDS prevention, both internally—within their ranks—and in outreach efforts to the surrounding community. This lack of knowledge not only hinders proactive measures but may also contribute to the ongoing stigma associated with the disease, which can prevent individuals from seeking help or engaging in preventive behaviours.

Table 6 Frequency Distribution of Respondents in the Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit, Bairro-Pite, 2024.

No	Attitude Towards HIV/AIDS Prevention	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Good	22	36.1
2	Bad	39	63.9
<b>Total</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Sources: Primary Data, 2024

The table above presents a detailed examination of the attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention among personnel at the Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit in Bairro-Pite for 2024. The findings are based on a survey of 61 respondents, providing valuable insights into their perceptions and awareness of this critical health issue.

The total number of respondents is 61, and their attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention demonstrate a concerning divide. Out of this group, 22 individuals, constituting 36.1%, expressed a good attitude towards HIV/AIDS prevention. This subset of respondents indicates a level of understanding and concern for the disease's challenges. In stark contrast, a significant majority—39 respondents, or 63.9%—reported a bad attitude towards HIV/AIDS prevention. This disparity raises alarms about the general awareness and concern within the unit regarding this pressing health matter.

The implications of these findings are particularly alarming. The overwhelming prevalence of negative attitudes

suggests a significant obstacle to effective prevention strategies. Such attitudes not only jeopardize the health and safety of the personnel within the unit but may also reflect broader societal stigmas toward HIV/AIDS. This could influence how officers interact with and support the community in addressing the disease, further compounding the issue.

#### ➤ *Bivariate Analysis*

This bivariate analysis aims to explore the relationship between knowledge and attitude regarding HIV/AIDS prevention at the Special Police Unit Headquarters, Bairro-pite, 2024. The statistical test used is chi-square. The degree of freedom used was 95% ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). When the P-value is less than  $\alpha$  ( $P < 0.05$ ), there is a significant influence between the two variables investigated by the researcher. When the P-value is greater than  $\alpha$  ( $P > 0.05$ ), there is no significant influence between the two variables investigated by the researcher.

Table 7 Frequency Distribution of Respondents Regarding the Relationship of Knowledge of Timor-Leste National Police Toward HIV/AIDS Prevention in Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit, Bairro-Pite, 2024

Knowledge	HIV/AIDS Prevention				Total		P=Value	X <sup>2</sup>	CI
	Prevent		Do not prevent						
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Good	19	70.4	8	29.6	27	44.3	0.00	9.161	95%
Poor	7	20.6	27	79.4	34	55.7			
Total	26	42.6	35	57.4	61	100			

Sources: Primary data, 2024

The analysis of Table 7 provides a comprehensive insight into the distribution of knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS prevention among 61 respondents. This study reveals significant trends that highlight both the strengths and weaknesses in understanding and the actions taken against this critical health issue.

Out of the total respondents, 27 individuals—representing 44.3%—exhibited a good understanding of HIV/AIDS. However, this statistical insight is accompanied by concerning behaviours. Among those with good knowledge, only 4 participants, or 14.7%, actively engaged in preventive measures against HIV/AIDS. This stark contrast suggests that while knowledge is present, it does not necessarily impel individuals to translate understanding into action. On the other hand, 34 respondents, accounting for 55.7%, demonstrated poor knowledge of HIV/AIDS.

Alarming, within this group, only seven individuals (20.6%) participated in preventive activities, while 27 respondents (79.4%) reported not engaging in such measures. This highlights a significant gap in effective action against the virus, underscoring a critical need for intervention.

The implications of this analysis are profound. The disparity between knowledge and action indicates that simply having awareness of HIV/AIDS is insufficient for fostering proactive behaviours. The situation calls for a dual approach: educational initiatives that impart knowledge and facilitate practical training to encourage behavioural change.

The hypothesis test results showed that the p-value was 0.00, which is lower than the determining value of 0.05 in the 95% confidence interval (CI = 95%). This means that Knowledge is significant for HIV/AIDS prevention.

Table 8 Frequency Distribution of Respondents Regarding the Relationship of the Attitude of Timor-Leste National Police Toward HIV/AIDS Prevention in Headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit, Bairro-Pite, 2024

Attitude	HIV/AIDS Prevention				Total		P=Value	X <sup>2</sup>	CI
	Prevent		Do not prevent						
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Good	17	77.3	5	22.7	22	36.1	0.00	11.333	95%
Bad	9	23.1	30	76.9	39	63.9			
Total	26	42.6	35	57.4	61	100			

Sources: Primary Data, 2024

The analysis presented in Table 8 offers a comprehensive look into the attitudes and behaviours of respondents regarding HIV/AIDS prevention. This study illuminates the critical intersection of attitudes and proactive health behaviours, providing valuable insights for future interventions and educational strategies.

The distribution of attitudes among the participants reveals a significant divide. A total of 22 respondents, representing 36.1% of the group, exhibited a good attitude towards HIV/AIDS prevention. Within this subgroup, an impressive 77% are actively engaged in prevention efforts, demonstrating a strong correlation between their positive outlook and proactive behaviour. This notable engagement underscores the potential of cultivating positive attitudes to enhance public health initiatives.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, 39 respondents—63.9% of the total—displayed a bad attitude towards HIV/AIDS prevention. Alarming, only 23.1% of this group is involved in preventive measures, while a staggering 76.9% are not taking any actionable steps to mitigate the risk of HIV/AIDS. This stark contrast highlights the detrimental

effects that negative attitudes can have on individual and community health initiatives. The findings indicate that unfavourable perceptions hinder personal engagement in preventive practices and may pose broader challenges to community health efforts.

The hypothesis test results showed that the value of  $p = 0.00$ , which is lower than the determining value  $0.00 < 0.05$  in the 95% confidence interval (CI = 95%). It means there is a significant relationship between Attitude and HIV/AIDS Prevention.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

This study employs a quantitative approach to analyze findings, effectively evaluating the collected data through statistical methods. The focus is on understanding the nuanced relationship between the knowledge and attitudes of the Timor-Leste National Police regarding HIV/AIDS prevention, specifically at the headquarters of the Command of the Special Police Unit located in Bairro-Pite during 2024. The primary objective of this investigation is to thoroughly explore the correlation between knowledge and attitudes



about HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. A chi-square test will be conducted to rigorously examine the data, highlighting the critical importance of informed attitudes in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

According to the findings from Table 7 of the hypothesis test, the p-value is less than the threshold of 0.05, specifically  $0.00 < 0.05$ , within a 95% confidence interval (CI = 95%). This indicates a significant relationship between knowledge and the prevention of HIV/AIDS, confirming that knowledge is essential for practical prevention efforts. Furthermore, Table 8's hypothesis test results reveal that the p-value is lower than the determining value, or  $0.00 < 0.05$ , within a 95% confidence interval (CI = 95%). This signifies a connection between attitude and HIV/AIDS prevention.

Moreover, the hypothesis testing conducted for this study strengthens these findings. With a p-value of 0.00, the results have statistical significance, reinforcing the crucial role of knowledge in HIV/AIDS prevention within the unit. This statistical evidence points to the need to bridge the gap between knowledge and its practical application.

The hypothesis testing conducted in this study provides compelling evidence of a significant relationship between attitudes and HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. The p-value of 0.00 suggests a statistically significant correlation, indicating that individuals' attitudes play a crucial role in shaping their actions related to HIV/AIDS prevention. This correlation underscores the importance of addressing attitudes within public health messaging and educational campaigns.

The results of this research align with previous studies, such as the one conducted by Duncan and Rouse (2019), which examines how health knowledge affects attitudes toward HIV prevention efforts among young adults, highlighting demographic differences. Additionally, a qualitative study by Bhowmik and Saha (2021) focuses on HIV/AIDS knowledge and attitudes among police personnel in India. This study explores the understanding and perspectives of police officers regarding HIV/AIDS, drawing comparisons to the findings of Duncan and Rouse within a different national context. Another study from Kumar & Gupta (2023) evaluates how attitudes impact the adoption of preventive behaviours against HIV/AIDS and emphasises the need for focused educational efforts. These sources can help contextualize the findings and support a broader understanding of the relationship between knowledge, attitudes, and HIV/AIDS prevention efforts across different populations and settings.

In light of these findings, several recommendations arise. First, there is a pressing need for enhanced training sessions that emphasize theoretical knowledge and focus on translating that knowledge into tangible actions. Such training could include interactive workshops, role-playing scenarios, and practical demonstrations to motivate personnel to adopt preventive strategies.

Additionally, awareness campaigns should be developed to promote proactive engagement among

personnel regarding HIV/AIDS prevention. These campaigns should inspire individuals to take ownership of their health and foster a collective culture of prevention within the community. In their article, Moges and Gebretinsaye (2022) discuss students' knowledge and attitudes regarding HIV/AIDS prevention, highlighting the importance of education and awareness campaigns.

Regular assessments are essential to monitor changes in knowledge and preventive behaviours over time (Smith & Jones, 2020). Ongoing evaluations will help determine the effectiveness of the implemented strategies and ensure that the approach remains relevant (Brown, 2021).

Analysis of Table 7 indicates that while respondents know about HIV/AIDS, this knowledge must be coupled with actionable strategies to spur practical prevention efforts (Taylor et al., 2022). By focusing on practical applications of knowledge, the Special Police Unit can make significant strides in combating HIV/AIDS and enhancing public health outcomes (White & Green, 2023).

Given these findings, the implications for policy and practice are substantial (Roberts, 2020). Cultivating a positive attitude towards HIV/AIDS prevention is essential for motivating personnel to engage in preventive actions (Clark, 2019). Negative attitudes can create serious barriers to the success of prevention strategies, rendering it imperative to confront these perceptions directly (Lee et al., 2021).

To this end, several recommendations emerge from the analysis. Firstly, it is crucial to design and implement programs explicitly targeted at transforming negative perceptions surrounding HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS, 2019). Creating a supportive and informative environment can facilitate this change significantly (World Health Organization, 2020). Secondly, conducting training sessions and workshops that emphasize the importance of proactive engagement will help participants recognize the impact of their attitudes on their behaviours (Bennett et al., 2017). These educational efforts should focus on dispelling myths and addressing misconceptions that may contribute to negative attitudes (Fenton et al., 2016).

Lastly, establishing robust feedback mechanisms will provide personnel with opportunities to express their concerns and misconceptions about HIV/AIDS. This dialogue can lead to targeted educational interventions tailored to meet the unique needs of the respondents (Meyer & Pies, 2019). By prioritizing these strategies, we can foster a culture of positivity and proactive engagement in HIV/AIDS prevention within the Special Police Unit.

Overall, this analysis reveals a distinct and critical link between attitudes and preventive behaviour in the context of HIV/AIDS (Weinhardt et al., 2016). By cultivating positive attitudes, the Special Police Unit can enhance its effectiveness in HIV/AIDS prevention and ultimately improve public health outcomes.

## V. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study underscore the urgent need for enhanced collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the Timor-Leste National Police, particularly the Special Police Unit. By fostering a strong partnership, both sectors can work together to implement effective training programs aimed at improving knowledge and attitudes toward HIV/AIDS prevention. These efforts are crucial not only for the health of police personnel but also for the broader community, as informed officers are better equipped to engage in preventive measures and provide accurate information to the public.

Moreover, the leadership of the Special Police Unit must actively promote participation in training and awareness programs. Encouraging all members to engage in these initiatives will help cultivate a culture of health consciousness within the unit. Such proactive involvement is essential for building a workforce that is knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS and capable of implementing effective prevention strategies. This commitment to education will empower officers to take personal responsibility for their health and the communities they serve.

Additionally, the study highlights the necessity of addressing negative attitudes towards HIV/AIDS within the police force. Implementing targeted educational interventions can help dispel myths and misconceptions that contribute to stigma. By creating a supportive environment where open discussions about HIV/AIDS are encouraged, the Special Police Unit can foster a more positive attitude among its members. This shift in perspective is vital for enhancing the effectiveness of prevention efforts and reducing the overall impact of HIV/AIDS in Timor-Leste.

In conclusion, the research emphasizes that improving the knowledge and attitudes of police personnel regarding HIV/AIDS is not merely a matter of health education but a critical public health priority. By establishing robust training programs, promoting active engagement, and addressing stigma, the Special Police Unit can play a pivotal role in combating HIV/AIDS in Timor-Leste. These initiatives will ultimately contribute to a healthier society and support the nation's ongoing efforts to reduce the prevalence of this disease.

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