

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**EXPLORATION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS ON THE
LIBERALIZATION OF PROVISIONALLY REGISTERED
PHARMACISTS (PRP) TRAINING**

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ABSTRACT

Background: A new policy was implemented by the Malaysian government that liberalizes the training of Provisionally Registered Pharmacists (PRPs) in Malaysia. The reason behind the implementation is because the placement for PRPs has been reducing due to saturation as the number of pharmacy graduates are increasing. Since this issue is very new, not many studies had been done to explore the readiness, benefits and the barriers to the stakeholders in becoming training centres for PRPs.

Objectives: This study explores the readiness of the stakeholders to become training centres for PRPs. This study also explores the barriers and the benefits of this liberalization policy to the stakeholders.

Methods: Participants from community pharmacies and pharmaceutical industries were identified and approached from February to June 2014 through snowball sampling. In-depth interviews were conducted and all face-to-face interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. For industrial pharmacists, phones interview were conducted, audio recorded and then transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were analyzed using framework analysis.

Results: Three main themes that emerged are: the readiness of the stakeholders, perceived benefits of the liberalization policy and perceived disadvantages of the liberalization policy. In term of readiness, the pharmaceutical industry is generally ready to train the PRPs but this is not the case for community pharmacies. The perceived benefits of liberalization mainly revolves around the increase in qualified human resources in private sector while the disadvantages are mainly on the issues of financial barriers, business secret and confidentiality as well as the quality of PRPs themselves.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

In 2012, a new policy was implemented by the Malaysian government that liberalizes the training of Provisionally Registered Pharmacists (PRPs) in the country. The policy has been effective since July 2012. The reason behind the implementation is because the placement for PRPs has been reducing due to saturation as the number of pharmacy graduates are increasing. The new policy allows pharmacy graduates to be trained as PRPs in settings other than hospitals run by Ministry of Health (MOH). The settings are private hospitals, community pharmacies, pharmaceutical industry plants as well as academic or research institutions that carry out Research and Development (R&D). The settings are collectively termed stakeholders.