

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**ADHERENCE TOWARDS MEDICATION
AMONG HYPERTENSIVE PATIENTS**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
TITLE PAGE	
APPROVAL FORM	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
ABSTRACT	viii
1.0 CHAPTER ONE (INTRODUCTION)	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	3
1.3 Significance of the study	4
1.4 Objectives	5
2.0 CHAPTER TWO (LITERATURE REVIEW)	
2.1 Hypertension	6
2.1.1 Introduction of Hypertension	6
2.1.2 Definition of Hypertension	7
2.1.3 Types of Hypertension	8
2.1.3.1 Primary Hypertension	8
2.1.3.2 Secondary Hypertension	9
2.1.4 Complications of Hypertension	10
2.2 Adherence	11
2.3 Attitude towards Medication	13
2.4 Discipline towards Medication	16
2.5 Aversion towards Medication	17
2.6 Adherence Study in Malaysia	19
3.0 CHAPTER THREE (METHODOLOGY)	
3.1 Study Design	20
3.2 Sample Selection	20
3.3 Instrumentation	21
3.4 Study Procedure	23
3.5 Data Collection Method	24
3.6 Limitations	24
3.7 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria	25
3.7.1 Inclusion Criteria	25
3.7.2 Exclusion Criteria	25

ABSTRACT

Hypertension is a chronic disease which generally requires long term pharmacological therapy and is the third most common cause of death in Malaysia. It is one of the most prevalent chronic diseases and is a major risk for cardiovascular diseases. Non-adherence towards medication is the main cause contributing towards poorly controlled hypertension. Adherence towards antihypertensive medications therefore, is paramount in order to achieve the goal of therapy (blood pressure is controlled) and avoid any possible complications of cardiovascular diseases. This study was set out to investigate adherence towards medication among hypertensive patients in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. A cross sectional and descriptive study design was employed by using convenience sampling. About 250 questionnaires were distributed throughout the retail pharmacies by using drop off method as well as approaching the participants. A total of 163 (65.2%) respondents completed the questionnaires of which 52.1% female and 47.9% male. Adherence towards medication were assessed by using general questions with a modification of the MUAH questionnaires with factors-related adherence. The statistical analysis was carried out using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (version 12.0). It was found that most of the respondents adhered to their medication therapy. Among the 163 hypertensive patients, 65.7% (n=107) of them took medication daily and 92% (n=150) of them did not take medication excessively. Based on factors-related adherence, most of them had positive attitude, better discipline and less aversion towards medication. This study also demonstrated the association between gender and factors-related adherence; attitude towards medication, discipline towards medication and aversion towards medication. Generally, both genders exhibited similar attitude towards antihypertensive medication and aversion towards medication. However, males had better discipline towards medication than their opposite gender. Although sample size was small, this study found that adherence towards the antihypertensive drugs is high in Malaysia.

Keywords: hypertension, adherence, antihypertensive medication, factors-related adherence, survey method.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

Hypertension or high blood pressure is a common disorder that affects a large number of heterogeneous patients (Freel, 2005). Hypertension is becoming a common health problem that increases worldwide because of the increase in longevity and prevalence of contributing factors such as obesity, an unhealthy diet and physical inactivity (William, 2003).

According to Tiwari et al (2004), hypertension contributes to high mortality and morbidity in the world today. In United Kingdom, this major chronic disease is poorly controlled. A study shown that treating hypertension has been associated with about a 40% reduction in the risk of stroke and about 15% reduction in the risk of myocardial infarction (WHO, 2003). One of the possible reasons leading is poor patient's adherence (Ross *et al* 2004).

Adherence can be defined as the extent of the person behaviour in terms of taking medication. It also can be defined as the extent to which patients' behaviour corresponds with the recommendations from a health care provider (WHO, 2003).