

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE UTILIZATION OF OVER THE COUNTER
WEIGHT LOSS PRODUCTS AMONG THE PUBLIC**

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**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons.)**

Faculty of Pharmacy

2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alhamdulillah, with the help and blessings from Allah S.W.T, the Most Grateful and the Most Gracious, this research has been done successfully. Praises also to Prophet Muhammad (May peace be upon on him), the greatest creation who brought light and peace throughout the universe.

First of all, I offer my sincerest gratitude to my supervisor, Madam Ezlina binti Uzir, who has supported me throughout my thesis writing and project with her patience and knowledge. I attribute the level of my Bachelor (Hons) to her encouragement and effort. Besides, without her advice and guidance, this thesis would not have been completed successfully. Special thanks also I dedicated to all the owners and the representative from Farmasi RoyalePharma, Farmasi Allcare, Farmasi Unimira, Farmasi Cosway and Farmasi Greenlife to allow me to distribute the questionnaire at their pharmacies. Thanks also to all the respondents in this study for giving their full cooperation in completing my data collection.

Lastly, I thank to my family especially to my mother and father who support and encourage me throughout my studies on Degree of Pharmacy. Not to forget, thanks to all my friends who help and give me never-ending support during my studies and for being there when I need them. Thank you.

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ABSTRACT

Medication therapy becomes an attractive alternative choice to counter the rising obesity problem but most of the approved drugs for the obesity therapy previously were withdrawn from the market. Thus, there is an increasing consumption of over the counter weight loss products. A cross-sectional survey was carried out using a set of validated questionnaire adapted from Blanck H, Khan L, & Serdula MK, 2001 consisted of four sections: demographic background, the lifestyle and general practices, the use of OTC weight loss products and the public references toward pharmacist in weight management. Results showed 106 respondents had completed the questionnaire, majority of the OTC weight loss products user were female (67.9%) and at younger age (68.9%) from Malay ethnic (81.1%). Green tea extract showed the highest percentage of use (24.1%). The public somewhat preferred the pharmacist to monitor and manage their obesity problem while they expect the pharmacist to give advice and counselling on obesity and weight loss products. In conclusion, higher use of weight loss products in younger adult, Malay ethnic, works in non-health related sector, degree holders and from urban area. The utilization of the green tea extract shows the highest frequency among other products including orlistat and other supplements. Public perception and expectations from the pharmacist in weight management can be improved in the future.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Obesity is defined as the accumulation of fat in the body system that is excessive and abnormal which may lead to various health impairment. It becomes the most obvious malnutrition sign in developing countries and also increases the chances of a person to get other noncommunicable diseases. (Ellulu, Abed, Rahmat, Ranneh, & Ali, 2014). The statistic shows that there are relatively more than 10% adult are obese from the whole population. The most current statistics on obesity by World Health Organization (WHO) highlight those 1.6 billion adults are overweight and 400 million are obese. Meanwhile, 43% adults is categorized under overweight and obesity groups in Malaysia ('Obesity', n.d.). According to World Health Organization (WHO), over 2.8 million adults die yearly due to the overweight and obesity problem thus placing it as the fifth death leading factor in the world.

The factors lead to obesity is varied and have complex interaction between biological, behavioural, social and environment. Environment factors are the primary influence that contributes to the quick high prevalence in obesity since 30 years ago.