

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**THE IMPACT OF THE MASTER'S PROGRAM ON THE GRADUATES**

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Pharmacy Practice and Clinical Pharmacy (by coursework) are new programs in UiTM. These two programs were introduced in 2009 and were offered for pharmacists. Being new, the programs were never reviewed and evaluated for improvement.

**Objective:** This study aimed to identify the graduates' perception on the masters programs that they have graduated from.

**Method:** This was a quantitative survey study involving 70 postgraduate students who have graduated from both programs. The questionnaire was distributed using Google form. The data was analysed by using SPSS version 22.

**Result:** 70 completed questionnaires were received. Majority of the graduates (n= 34, 49%) were within the age range of 31-35 years. 79% of the respondents (n=55) were graduates of pharmacy practice program. The main reason for taking up a master's degree program was for personal development (n=62) and the reasons for choosing UiTM was because of the location (57%) and reasonable and affordable fees (43%). The respondents agreed that the program had increased their confidence level (n=70,100%), had great impact on their personal development (n=69, 99%) and improved their skills (n=67, 96%). Respondents also agreed that the program helped to prepare them to further their studies (n=63, 93%) in which 74% (n=52) of respondents reported planning to further studies to PhD. Many agreed that the duration of the program (3 semester) was appropriate (n=67, 96%) however a small number claimed that the sequencing of the courses in the program was inappropriate (n=8, 11%) and the classroom facilities were inadequate (n=3, 4%). In addition, 63% of the respondents (n=44) claimed that they will definitely recommend these programs to others.

**Conclusion:** The graduates from both programs have good perception on these programs however some improvisations are still needed. Nevertheless, these programs are achieving their main goal that is to produce graduates with improved self-skills.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

Pharmacy is the health profession which relates to chemical sciences with the health sciences and is responsible to ensure the safe and effective use of pharmaceutical drugs (Merlin, 2011). A bachelor's degree of pharmacy in Malaysia is offered in many universities and the program is conducted for 4 years. To pursue a masters' degree, students need to have a degree in Bachelor of Pharmacy. In UiTM, there are two taught course programs: Masters in Clinical Pharmacy and Masters in Pharmacy Practice. These two programs were introduced in 2009 for pharmacists only. Clinical Pharmacy program is also offered by other universities but only UiTM offers the Pharmacy Practice program. The masters' program aim to prepare students with specialized skills and knowledge for the role in pharmaceutical care (AB FATAH & Bahari, 2004). Unlike other universities, the masters' program in UiTM are offered for 3 semesters (1 ½ years).

The most cited reasons for entering master's degree program were personal development, career advancement and the desire to change job responsibilities (Wilson & Wen, 2000). A study reported that upon graduating a doctor of pharmacy degree (Pharm D), most students prefer to work in clinical pharmacy and industrial pharmacy, while only a small number worked at hospital pharmacy (Saad, Sumbal, & Mohammad, 2012). There are increasing number of nurses pursuing master's level