

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**ATTITUDE OF UiTM STUDENTS ABOUT THEIR  
HEALTH LIFESTYLES**

**NURUL HAIZA BINTI MOHD NUROL HADI**

**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Bachelor of Pharmacy**

**Faculty of Pharmacy**

**October 2007**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful, Salam to our Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. His companion and friends as well as to all people who follow his path.

I would like to express my highest appreciation to my supervisor Assoc. Professor Dr. Salmiah Mohd Ali for her advice and guidance during the course of this research. Her impartial, invaluable assistance and the constructive criticisms offered have resulted in the completion of this project.

Also, my deepest appreciation and thanks to all the participants who have given their time to make this study a success. Thank you Puan Dasimah binti Mohd Drus, the officer of Pusat Perancangan Strategik, UiTM for her willingness to help, cooperate and assistance in giving me the UiTM students' population data.

Last but not least, I would like to express my special gratitude to my parents for their persistent support in my studies at UiTM and especially in giving their encouragement and advice. Also to my colleagues, your help is really appreciated and will be remembered forever. I am very grateful to Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) for making this survey possible.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>TITLE PAGE</b>	
<b>APPROVAL</b>	
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE (INTRODUCTION)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER TWO (LITERATURE REVIEW)</b>	
2.1 INTRODUCTION	4
2.2 HEALTH-RELATED BEHAVIOUR	
2.2.1 EATING HABIT	7
2.2.2 HEALTH RESPONSIBILITY BEHAVIOUR	9
2.2.3 SOCIAL SUPPORT AND LIFE APPRECIATION	10
2.2.4 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	12
2.3 HEALTH-RISK BEHAVIOUR	
2.3.1 SMOKING	14
2.3.2 DRUGS AND ALCOHOL	16
<b>CHAPTER THREE (METHODOLOGY)</b>	
3.1 STUDY DESIGN	18
3.2 SAMPLE SELECTION	18
3.3 INSTRUMENTATION	19
3.4 STUDY PROCEDURE	21
3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHOD	21

## ABSTRACT

Research on health attitude and behaviour of Malaysian youths is lacking. This study was set out to investigate current health-related behaviour and health risk behaviour of youths studying in Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam, Malaysia. Cross-sectional descriptive design and convenience survey methods were used. The sample consisted of 300 students between the ages of 17 and 28 years who completed the questionnaires. Health behaviours were assessed with a modification of the Adolescent Health Promotion (AHP) questionnaires and health risk behaviours were assessed with a modification of the Oban Youth Health and Lifestyle Survey. Thirty-one health behaviour and risk behaviour items were analyzed and classified into eight factors: smoking behaviour, drinking behaviour, drugs abuse, eating habits, physical activity, health responsibility behaviour, life appreciation and social support. It can be concluded that students' health lifestyles attitude can be improved. The eating habits, life appreciation, and health responsibility attitudes of both genders are not significantly different. However, female students have better social support than their opposite gender. Male students practise healthier behaviour than female students for physical activity dimension. Overall, students have low level of risk behaviours in terms of smoking (21.4%), alcohol consumption (4.0%), and drugs abuse (2.73%). Although the study sample has geographic limitations, future national studies with similar populations of youth in Malaysia will help government and non-government agencies to understand youths' stressors and needs which in turn affect their health-related behaviours. Intervention strategies are needed to encourage behaviours to keep this population healthy.

Key words: youths; university; health-related behaviours; health risk behaviours; survey method

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Health Lifestyle Attitude

Attitude is defined as the way an individual behaves towards something that shows how the individual thinks and feels (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Sixth Edition). Current Malaysia National Youth Policy identified youths as those persons falling between the ages of 15 and 40 years (Kempen, 2007). Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 1948). Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary Sixth Edition defined lifestyles as the way in which a person or a group of people lives and work.

A New Perspective on the Health of Canadians argued that the major cases of death and disease lay not in biomedical characteristics but in the environment and individual behaviours and lifestyles (Healthpromo, 2005). Although most young people seem to understand what an unhealthy lifestyle is, they have relatively unhealthy lifestyles as compared to other age groups. Therefore from a public health perspective, they may be categorized as at risk or a vulnerable group (Exel et al.,