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Factors Driving the Intention to Adopt a Tobacco-free Policy among Employees in a Public Higher Education Institution

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Abstract: Due to their role as a centre of knowledge and character development, public higher education institutions serve as the best platform for emphasising health communication messages and promoting a healthy lifestyle. Higher educational institutions' employees should have good physical and mental health to enable them to demonstrate good values to the students. Thus, the social cognitive theory (SCT) was specifically selected to take a close look at how a conducive environment and knowledge influence employees' intention towards the tobacco-free policy. This study used the partial least squares (PLS) and structural equation modelling (SEM) software to examine factors influencing the adoption of tobacco-free policy among employees in a Malaysian higher education institution. It also measured the impact of workplace health promotion on employees' intention to comply with tobacco cessation regulations. Statistical results confirmed that all three constructs of employees' environment, self-efficacy, and knowledge have a significant

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influence on employees' intention to adopt the tobacco-free policy. The results of the study contribute to a better understanding of the effectiveness of higher education institutions' tobacco-free policy in Malaysia. The findings are useful for policymakers, higher education institutions, and practitioners in enhancing tobacco cessation policy in Malaysia. Limitations and suggestions for future research are also included in this paper.

Keywords: environment, health communication, knowledge, self-efficacy, tobacco-free policy

Abstrak: Oleh kerana peranan mereka sebagai pusat pengetahuan dan pembangunan karakter, institusi pendidikan tinggi awam berfungsi sebagai platform terbaik untuk menyebarkan mesej komunikasi kesihatan dan mempromosikan gaya hidup yang sihat. Pekerja institusi pengajian tinggi harus mempunyai kesihatan fizikal dan mental yang baik sebagai contoh dan tauladan yang baik kepada para pelajar. Oleh itu, Teori Kognitif Sosial dipilih secara khusus untuk melihat bagaimana faktor keberkesanan diri, persekitaran dan pengetahuan yang kondusif mempengaruhi niat pekerja dalam menyokong pengaplikasian polisi bebas tembakau. Kajian ini menggunakan perisian *partial least squares (PLS) and structural equation modelling (SEM)* untuk mengkaji faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi niat pekerja dalam menyokong polisi bebas tembakau di institusi pengajian tinggi Malaysia. Ia juga mengukur kesan promosi kesihatan tempat kerja ke atas niat pekerja untuk mematuhi peraturan pemberhentian penggunaa produk tembakau. Hasil statistik mengesahkan bahawa ketiga-tiga persekitaran persekitaran pekerja, keberkesanan diri dan pengetahuan mempunyai pengaruh yang signifikan ke atas hasrat pekerja untuk mengamalkan dasar tembakau bebas. Hasil kajian menyumbang kepada pemahaman yang lebih baik mengenai keberkesanan dasar bebas tembakau institusi pendidikan tinggi di Malaysia. Penemuan ini berguna untuk penggubal polisi, institusi pengajian tinggi, dan pengamal dalam meningkatkan polisi pemberhentian tembakau di Malaysia. Batasan dan cadangan untuk penyelidikan masa depan turut disertakan dalam artikel ini.

Kata kunci: persekitaran, komunikasi kesihatan, pengetahuan, keberkesanan diri, polisi bebas tembakau

Introduction

Higher education institutions have often encountered the dilemma of producing successful graduates with quality skills. In line with the

essential role of higher education institutions as a centre of knowledge and virtue, their employees should possess not only good physical health but also first-class mental health to be able to achieve the vision of the institutions. The majority of smoking behaviour among smokers begin before the age of 24, which makes the higher education years a critical period for tobacco cessation to convince the students to not pick up the habit of cigarette smoking (Martínez, Méndez, Sánchez, & Martínez-Sánchez, 2016).

Many authors have argued that tobacco smoking in higher education institutions has become a significant public health concern, and hence, there has been an increase in the number of campuses enforcing a smoke-free policy as well as other cessation programmes to reduce the prevalence of tobacco smoking (Jancey et al., 2014; Braverman, Hoogesteger, & Johnson, 2015). Therefore, to educate the students to leave the habit of smoking, higher education institutions should adopt the concept of leadership by example starting with the employees then followed by the students (Al-Naggar, Al-Dubai, Al-Naggar, Chen, & Al-Jashamy, 2011). However, due to the employees' stubbornness in choosing to neglect the bans and continuing to smoke cigarettes, smoking cessation programmes have become pointless.

Thus, banning smoking and prevalence activities alone is not enough. Strict tobacco-free policy needs to be enforced at higher education institutions. In Malaysia, the tobacco-free policy is not yet well received at higher education institutions as smoking is seen as a private matter (GATS Malaysia, 2011; Lee & Tam, 2014). According to the Malaysia Ministry of Higher Education, as of the 31st of July 2017, there were 21 public higher education institutions and 495 private higher education institutions in the country.

Among the higher education institutions in Malaysia that envision a tobacco-free culture as part of creating excellent human capital is a public higher education institution (Dzulkipli, 2004; Yasin, Retneswari, Moy, Koh, & Isahak, 2011). The public higher education institution is one of the active organisations that uphold tobacco cessation seriously and have launched a tobacco-free policy. The policy's objective is to make the university's campuses free from tobacco smoke. For the realisation of this policy, higher education institutions provide free consultation, motivation, and training for the relevant parties (Mohamad, 2013).

According to Omar (2013), the public higher education institution is committed to making the tobacco-free campus a reality, not only in terms of cigarette smoke pollution but also regarding advertising, promotions, sponsorships, and sales of cigarettes.

In line with this commitment, the public higher education institution has collaborated with the Ministry of Health on the enforcement against smoking. The legal action under regulation 11 (w) and 11 (x) of the Tobacco Rule Control Regulations will be enforced on anyone found guilty of smoking on campus. This research was conducted to examine how a conducive environment and knowledge influence the employees' intention towards the policy.

Literature Review

Social Cognitive Theory

The social cognitive theory explains that human behaviour is caused by two basic factors, which are the personal factor and environmental factor (Bandura, 1989). These basic factors contribute to developing the intention towards engaging a behaviour. It is an extension of social learning theory which states that people's learning process is influenced by their environment through the process of observational learning (Bandura, 1989). In other words, human intentions are based on knowledge level, confidence in executing, and a favourable environment towards the behaviour.

According to Bandura (1999), the first determinant of human intention is the amount of knowledge that one has about the desired behaviour. This is because human intentions always begin with an analysis of the consequences of the intended behaviour. Thus, the more knowledge an individual possesses, the easier for him to analyse and make decisions. The second determinant, self-efficacy, refers to the belief that develops the individual's internal ability to perform the desired behaviour successfully. Self-efficacy is what a person believes he or she can accomplish with his or her ability in a particular situation (Snyder & Lopez, 2007).

The third determinant, a conducive environment, refers to the surroundings' encouragement as to whether or not to engage in the behaviour. The more favourable the environment is, the more likely the individual's intention to perform that behaviour. Environment plays a

critical role because perceived social pressure has a substantial influence on developing human intention.

Tobacco-Free Policy in Higher Education Institutions

The implementation of a tobacco-free policy in higher education institutions could range from simple campaign activities to show support towards the policy to more strict enforcement which is specifically tailored for a particular organisation. Many higher education institutions only commit to conducting tobacco-free campaigns because of the indifferent attitude towards the dangerous effect of tobacco smoke (Braverman, Hoogesteger, Johnson, & Aarø, 2017). Russette, Harris, Schuldberg, and Green (2014) argued that most higher education institutions do not enforce the tobacco-free policy. Moreover, the non-compliant higher education institutions' employees have less knowledge of the location where smoking is permitted, and they have a higher tendency to violate the policy compared to the higher education institutions that comply with the policy.

Establishing a tobacco-free policy in higher education institutions has the potential to increase cessation rates among the employees. Studies conducted on higher education institutions in many countries such as the United States (Mamudu, Dadkar, Veeranki, He, Barnes, & Glantz, 2014), Australia, Germany, and Canada (Fichtenberg and Glantz, 2002), Saudi Arabia (Almutairi, 2014), and Malaysia (Yasin, Masilamani, Ming, & Koh, 2011) found that with the efficient enforcement of a tobacco-free policy, allocation of efforts and resources for cessation programmes among the employees are more likely to reduce tobacco use in such environments.

Benefits, Drawbacks, and Challenges of the Tobacco-Free Policy in Higher Education Institutions

In their exploratory study on the effectiveness of the tobacco-free policy, Yasin, Masilamani, Ming and Koh (2011) found that the tobacco-free policy in higher education institutions has a potential of increasing the cessation rates not only among the employees but also among the employers. According to Bergen and Caporaso (1999), higher education institutions will realise many advantages from implementing the tobacco-free policy. First, a tobacco-free work environment creates a safe and healthy workplace. Second, the tobacco-free policy is a good

strategy for employers to express their care and interest in employees' well-being. Third, the non-smoking employees will not be exposed to dangerous tobacco smoke at the workplace. Finally, higher education institutions that comply with the tobacco-free policy will develop a better corporate image.

On the other hand, there are some drawbacks of the tobacco-free policy in higher education institutions which are mostly related to criticisms that tobacco bans are a violation on smokers' personal liberty, as smoking is a personal choice on which everybody has the autonomy to decide. Also, banning tobacco use at the workplace will provide smokers with no choice but to smoke somewhere nobody can see them (Veeranki, Mamudu, & He, 2012), which might expose them to danger such as when they smoke near a gas tank. Smokers will also tend to leave the higher education institutions' compound so that they can smoke, thus wasting more time and reducing employees' productivity. Banning tobacco smoking will also expose the higher education institutions to the risk of losing their best talents as the smokers who might feel their personal right has been violated may move to other organisations that are not in favour of tobacco bans (IARC, 2009).

Radwan, Loffredo, Aziz, Abdel-Aziz, and Labib (2012) in their study pointed out the challenges in implementing a tobacco-free policy at the workplace. The main barrier to the implementation of this policy is related to inadequate enforcement. Some employers do not have a good strategy for putting the policy into practice. Moreover, the committee in charge of the policy does not have proper cessation knowledge and training. Another critical obstacle is to get the top management's commitment to practising the policy. In any organisation, the law will only be carried out seriously when the leaders are firm in enforcing compliance.

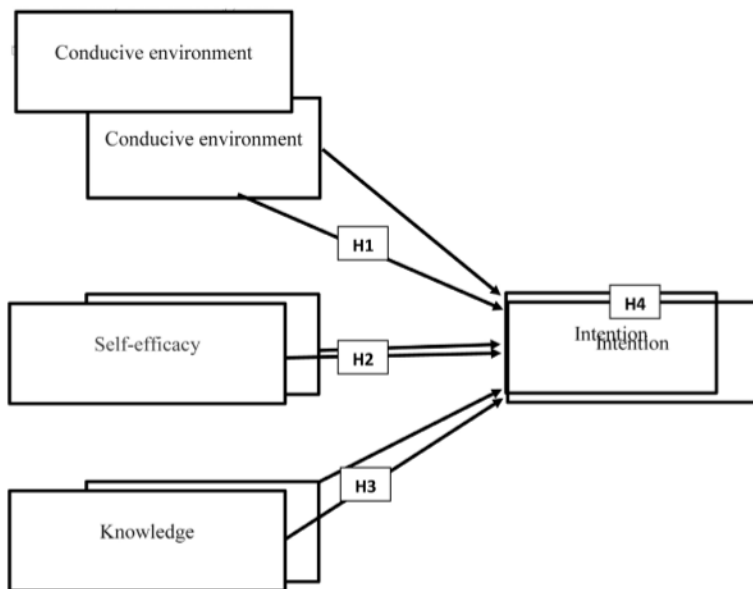
Also, policy enforcement requires funds for its execution. Thus, the top management needs to commit to not only approving the policy but also providing support through funds allocation and a willingness to implement the policy. Finally, the barrier to achieving success in implementing the policy is related to the attitude of the employees towards tobacco use. Tobacco is still being portrayed as less harmful than drug abuse. Therefore, many non-smoking employees tend to ignore it when they see someone smoking in the workplace. This

situation causes smokers to think that they are not committing any wrongdoing. Therefore, non-smoking employees also need to play their role by showing that they do not like to be exposed to tobacco smoke.

Research model and hypotheses

Previous research has shown that higher education institutions' tobacco-free policy is influenced by multiple factors (Russette, Harris, Schulberg, & Green, 2014; Braverman, Hoogesteger, Johnson, & Aarø, 2017). This study investigates four factors thought to be fundamental to the higher education institutions' tobacco-free policy: conducive environment, self-efficacy, knowledge, and intention. Figure 1 presents the hypothetical model for this study.

Figure 1. Key dimensions of higher education institutions' tobacco-free policy



Conducive Environment

Tobacco use in an organisation has become a social justice issue. This is because of the behaviour of the smokers who are more likely to smoke in groups in which the harmful effect is five times higher (Chin, Hung, Sun, & Lin, 2016). Thus, non-smoking employees are vulnerable to the consequences of disease and death from tobacco-related illnesses.

The environment that is free from tobacco smoke reduces the risk of illnesses caused by exposure to second-hand smoke such as lung diseases and heart failure. Creating a tobacco-free environment is a substantial contribution to improving the health and welfare of the employees. Also, MacNaughton, Adamkiewicz, Arku, Vallarino, and Levy (2016) found that the implementation of a tobacco-free environment is able to reduce second-hand smoke exposure and protect the non-smokers.

Creating a tobacco-free environment presents a consistent message that the organisation views smoking as harmful. The aim of a tobacco-free environment is not to infringe upon the rights of smokers but to encourage and support the smokers to reduce the number of cigarettes they smoke and eventually help them to quit (Chen, Lee, Chou, Kuo, & Hsu, 2007). Furthermore, it highlights the management's dedication to preserving the health and wellbeing of the employees.

Cigarette butts and matches pollute the workplace in addition to exposing the workplace to the risk of fire damage, explosions, and other accidents. Thus, having a tobacco-free workplace will lead to low cleaning maintenance fees and a reduction in the risk of workplace hazard. It is also beneficial to the employer in reducing the employees' health care costs. Similarly, healthy employees are able to perform a good job, reduce absenteeism, and enhance employee productivity and the higher education institutions' service. This discussion leads to the formulation of hypothesis 1:

H1 A conducive environment around the employees has a direct positive effect on the extent of their intention.

Self-efficacy

Despite the well-known dangers of tobacco, the rates of tobacco use are increasing every year. Even though numerous cessation activities have been conducted to assist tobacco users to quit smoking, the success rate remains very low. Not many people are interested in supporting the cessation policy. Previous studies identified that tobacco cessation failure is caused by insufficient motivating factors such as self-efficacy among smokers and non-smokers (Schuck, Otten, Kleinjan, Bricker, & Engels, 2014).

Self-efficacy in the tobacco cessation context is defined as people's judgement of their ability to plan and implement causes of action to

support a tobacco-free policy. The idea of self-efficacy was derived from the social cognitive theory, which was introduced by Albert Bandura in 1977. According to Bandura (1994), efficacy is a belief and effort that will determine whether one will be able to cope with the intended behaviour. Self-efficacy is an important component to the success of the tobacco-free policy in higher education institutions.

As noted in many smoking prevalence studies, the people who believe about their capability to comply with the policy are motivated to behave accordingly with the policy's objectives (Zheng, Guo, Chen, Fu, Ye, & Fu, 2007; Berndt et al., 2013; Morphett, Carter, Hall, & Gartner, 2016). Fallin, Johnson, Riker, Cohen, Rayens, and Hahn (2013) in their study suggested that merely adopting a tobacco-free policy in higher education institutions is not enough to initiate behaviour transformation. Successful implementation requires stimulation of self-efficacy among the stakeholders by the task force of the policy.

When a person has the confidence that he can stay free from tobacco smoking, the chances of supporting the tobacco-free policy is high. Similarly, Nguyen, Nguyen, Chapman, Nguyen, Kumar, VanDevanter, and Shelley (2017) argued that 92.2% of employees agreed that self-efficacy plays a significant role in the tobacco cessation policy at the workplace. Thus, the element of self-efficacy is incorporated into this study to measure the employees' motivation to support and implement a tobacco-free policy. This leads to the formulation of hypothesis 2.

H2 Self-efficacy among the employees has a direct positive effect on the extent of their intention.

Knowledge

Many higher education institutions in Malaysia have adopted the policy to ban the use of tobacco products on campus. This action is in line with the declaration on non-smoking areas in the Food Act 1983 (Attorney General's Chambers of Malaysia, 2011). However, many people are still violating the policy (Fasoro, Rampal, Sherina, & Salmiah, 2013). Russette, Harris, Schuldborg, and Green (2014) argued that a lack of knowledge on the benefits of the tobacco-free policy causes low compliance towards the policy. Grassi et al. (2014) highlighted that many people with medical knowledge still have limited and inadequate knowledge of the benefits of stopping smoking. Also, Awan, Hammam,

and Warnakulasuriya (2015) in their study found that misunderstanding of tobacco hazard is the main cause of the failure of the tobacco cessation policy.

Thus, knowledge on the importance of the tobacco policy and its benefits must be disseminated consistently to all higher education institution employees. Previous research acknowledged the importance of knowledge in providing employees with good support and assistance to combat smoking (Bader, Travis, & Skinner, 2007; Mitzzy, Fitriani, Rasmin, & Antariksa, 2017). Moreover, Rashid, Manan, Yahya and Ibrahim (2014) suggested that knowledge of the adverse effects of tobacco must be up to date and aligned with the changes in the smoking trend. Perhaps the higher education institutions' tobacco-free task force can be more creative in disseminating knowledge about the policy through new mobile applications or games, which would attract people to support the tobacco-free policy. Thus, this leads to the formulation of hypothesis 3.

H3 Knowledge among the employees has a direct positive effect on the extent of their intention.

Intention

Intention is an important element in measuring human behaviour. This is because it measures an individual's indication of readiness in performing the desired behaviour (Conner & Norman, 2005). Fallin, Roditis, and Glantz (2015) in their study highlighted the importance of intention to the success of the tobacco-free policy. Puljević and Segan (2018) in their systematic review further confirmed the significance of intention in supporting the tobacco-free policy. They argued that people who are intent on supporting the tobacco-free policy have a higher tendency to comply compared with those who are not.

Furthermore, Cai et al. (2015) argued that a tobacco-free environment plays an important role in developing a positive intention among the community. People who live in a smoke-free area will have a strong intention to comply with the policy. Cremers, Mercken, De Vries, and Oenema (2015) further confirmed the importance of a supportive environment in ensuring the success of the tobacco-free policy.

However, focusing on a conducive tobacco-free environment alone is not sufficient to initiate intention. The people themselves need

to have the will power to develop a positive intention towards the tobacco-free policy (Owusu, Quinn, Wang, Aibangbee, and Mamudu, 2017). Brouwer-Goossensen et al. (2016) found that self-efficacy is the strongest determinant of intention. Thus, positive self-efficacy puts forward signals of readiness to apply the necessary motivation to cease smoking. Consequently, a person's self-efficacy is an important factor and predictor of intention to support the tobacco-free policy.

Hence, it is not an overstatement to say that the people who live in a tobacco-free environment and have a positive self-efficacy are more likely to have the intention to support the tobacco-free policy. This leads to the formulation of hypothesis 4.

H4 Employees' intention is influenced by their conducive environment, self-efficacy, and knowledge.

Methodology

This study used the survey method to collect data. This method is practical for this study as the respondents were located in three different campuses. Employees are always occupied with their daily duties; thus, the distribution of questionnaires had to enable them to complete the questionnaires at their convenient and appropriate time (Mohd. Yusof, 2006). This approach would provide more reliable data for the study. A total of 400 employees were identified as the research respondents using systematic, stratified random sampling. The ratio of the sample size for each campus was based on the percentage of employees for each campus: Main Campus (N1 = 174) respondents, Health Campus (N2 = 192) respondents, and Engineering Campus (N3 = 34) respondents.

In ensuring data reliability, only respondents who had been working for at least one year were selected. This is because new respondents might not have sufficient knowledge regarding the tobacco-free policy.

This research employed the Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis technique using the SmartPLS 3.0 software (Ringle et al. 2015) for data analysis. Following the recommended two-stage analytical procedures by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), we tested the measurement model (validity and reliability of the measures) followed by an examination of the structural model (testing the hypothesised relationships) (Ramayah et al., 2011, 2013). To test the significance of the path coefficients and loadings, a bootstrapping method was used (Hair et al., 2014).

Goodness of measures

The two main criteria used for testing goodness of measures are validity and reliability. Reliability is a test of how consistently a measuring instrument measures the concept it is measuring, whereas validity is a test of how well an instrument that is developed measures the particular concept it is intended to measure (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010).

Table 1. Goodness-of-fit measures

Types of Fitness Value	Acceptable Value of Fitness
Factor Loading	Acceptable if greater than or equal to .50**
Composite Reliability	Acceptable if greater than or equal to .70**
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Acceptable if greater than or equal to .50**
Discriminant validity	Correlation value must not be greater than .90**
Q2	The value must be greater than 0.0 to predict

*Source: Hair et al. (2010)

Results of the Study

Convergent validity

Data analysis begins with examining the construct validity to testify how well the results obtained from the use of the measure fit the theories around which the test is designed (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). This can be assessed through convergent and discriminant validity.

Convergent validity analysis of the constructs was conducted to check the degree to which the multiple items used to measure the same concept were in agreement. As suggested by Hair et al. (2010), we used factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) to assess convergent validity. The loadings for all items exceeded the recommended value of .50.

First, the respective loadings and cross-loadings (refer Table 2) were observed to assess the presence of problems with any particular items. A cut-off value for loadings of .50 indicates a significant measurement (Hair et al., 2010). Table 2 shows that all the items measuring a particular

construct have loadings ranging from .602 to .844, thus confirming construct validity.

Next, the composite reliability values (see Table 2), which depict the degree to which the construct indicators measure the latent constructs, are from .757 to .814 thus exceeding the recommended value of .70 (Hair et al., 2010). Hence, it can be concluded that the measurements are reliable.

Finally, to measure the variance captured by the indicators relative to the measurement error, the AVE value was observed. The values should be greater than .50 to justify using a construct (Barclay et al., 1995). As displayed in Table 2, the AVE values are between .509 and .597.

Thus, the results show that of all the four factors for the higher education institution's tobacco-free policy: a conducive environment, self-efficacy, knowledge, and intention are valid measures of their respective constructs based on their parameter estimates and statistical significance.

Table 2: Results of convergent validity measurements

Model construct	Measurement item	Loading	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Conducive Environment			.794	.562
	env442	.713		
	env443	.767		
	env444	.769		
Intention			.757	.509
	intn441	.710		
	intn442	.739		
	intn444	.691		
Self-efficacy			.814	.597
	self441	.830		
	self442	.844		

	self443	.623		
Knowledge			.783	.551
	know441	.602		
	know 442	.833		
	know 443	.771		

Loadings: correlation of the items with the latent construct

AVE = (sum of squared factor loadings)/{(sum of squared factor loadings) + (sum of error variances)}

Composite reliability (CR) = (square of summed factor loadings)/{(square of summed factor loadings) + (square of summed error variances)}

Discriminant validity

The study continues with the second analysis to test the discriminant validity. The discriminant validity of the measures (the degree to which items differentiate among constructs or measure distinct concepts) was assessed by examining the correlations between the measures of potentially overlapping constructs. Items should load more strongly on their own constructs in the model, and the average variance shared between each construct and its measures should be greater than the variance shared between the construct and other constructs (Compeau et al., 1999). As shown in Table 3, the values in the diagonal (in bold) are higher than all other values in its own construct, thus indicating that the measurements have adequate discriminant validity.

Table 3: Discriminant validity of constructs

Variable	1	2	3	4
1 Environment	.750			
2 Intention	.417	.714		
3 Self-efficacy	.315	.516	.772	
4 Knowledge	.299	.512	.216	.742

Diagonals (in bold) represent the AVE while the other entries represent the squared correlations

Hypothesis testing

After confirming the model's validity and reliability, path analysis was conducted to test the four research hypotheses. This stage involves the assessment of the relationship between the latent constructs and other latent constructs which is also where the hypotheses are tested. Table 4 provides a summary of the overall results of hypothesis testing.

The R^2 value of .460 suggests that 46% of the variance in the higher education institution's tobacco-free policy can be explained by the conducive environment, self-efficacy, knowledge, and intention. A close look shows that knowledge is the most significant contributor ($\beta = 0.376$, $t = 6.443$, $p = .000$) to the intention to adopt the tobacco-free policy, followed by self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.376$, $t = 4.749$, $p = .000$), and a conducive environment ($\beta = 0.064$, $t = 2.927$, $p = .004$). As for the overall model prediction, as suggested by Ramayah (2011), for the model to be considered valid to predict Universiti Sains Malaysia's (USM) corporate brand equity, Q^2 value needs to be greater than .00. Thus, $Q^2 = .199$ in this study indicates that the model is valid for predicting the higher education institution's tobacco-free policy. Therefore, based on the analytical results, H1, H2, H3, and H4 of this study are supported.

Table 4: Path coefficients and hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Error	t	p	Decision	f ²	R ²	Q ²
H1	Environment → Intention	.186	.064	2.927	.004	Supported	.055	.460	.199
H2	Self-efficacy → Intention	.376	.079	4.749	.000	Supported	.234		
H3	Knowledge → Intention	.376	.058	6.443	.000	Supported	.235		

Discussion

This study provides new knowledge regarding the effectiveness of the tobacco-free policy at a higher education institution in Malaysia. Moreover, this study fills the information gap on the issue in the context of Asian countries. The findings indicate that knowledge, self-efficacy, and a conducive environment are required to foster a positive intention on the tobacco-free policy.

Among the contributing factors, knowledge is the strongest factor in the success of the tobacco-free policy. The result shows that the employees are knowledgeable and have access to the information on the tobacco-free policy. The finding aligns with Nuzzo et al. (2013), who argued that knowledge on tobacco hazard will develop a sense of worry on how tobacco affects personal health. Thus, this leads the employees to develop the intention to support the policy. This finding also suggests that organisations need to consistently educate their employees on tobacco hazard. Furthermore, employees must be exposed to the benefit of the policy. When employees can connect their personal benefit with the policy, they will be motivated to stay away from tobacco. This will further develop a form of urgency among the employees to combat tobacco abuse.

Another finding of this study that is significant to employees' positive intention towards the tobacco-free policy is their ability to plan and implement the causes of intention to support the tobacco-free policy. Thus, the finding indicates that the employees have a positive self-efficacy towards the tobacco-free policy. In other words, the employees are confident that they can comply with the policy's objective. This finding also indicates the importance of employees' support in ensuring the success of the tobacco-free policy. This further confirms the previous finding by Nguyen et al. (2017) that employees acknowledge the importance of self-efficacy as a contributor to tobacco cessation at the workplace. Hence, employees must continuously show their support for the policy to be a success.

The third factor, which is a conducive environment, is also important in developing positive intention. This finding highlights the importance of preparing an environment that supports the tobacco-free policy in higher education institutions. When the environment is supportive, it will boost the motivation of employees to comply with the policy. Thus,

this leads to the success of the buy-in of tobacco-free policy ideas in higher education institutions. This finding supports the prior study by MacNaughton, Adamkiewicz, Arku, Vallarino, and Levy (2016) which highlighted the importance of organisation management providing a smoke-free, friendly working environment to support the tobacco-free policy.

The finding portrays the success of the Malaysia higher education institution in implementing a tobacco-free policy. This shows that Malaysians are starting to gain awareness and realisation of the dangerous effects of tobacco on their health and the environment. The finding also highlights the important role of higher education institutions in promoting and implementing a tobacco-free policy. If all higher education institutions in Malaysia are able to implement the tobacco-free policy fully, it will significantly contribute to the success of tobacco cessation activities in this country.

Conclusion

This research showcases employees' knowledge, self-efficacy, and a conducive environment in relation to their intention towards the tobacco-free policy at a Malaysia higher education institution. These employees were found to be highly satisfied with their knowledge on the tobacco-free policy, which led to their favourable intention towards the tobacco-free policy. They also perceived that their self-efficacy had provided them with a positive intention towards compliance with the policy.

Apart from that, the employees indicated their readiness to practise the tobacco-free policy for themselves, at their workplace, while using transportation, and at home. They received great support from their workplace environment, making them feel more inspired in supporting the tobacco-free policy. Furthermore, the employees had started to plan on ways to implement the tobacco-free policy as well as converting the plan into action. This implies that the employees' knowledge had been transformed into intention and behaviour. Overall, the combination of excellent knowledge, self-efficacy, and a conducive environment had ensured the realisation of the benefits of the tobacco-free policy and the policy's success as a whole.

In addition, the employees were noted as ever ready to contribute towards the success of the tobacco-free policy. The success of the tobacco-free policy will undoubtedly lead to the enhancement of employees' health quality as well as creating a conducive atmosphere in their working environment. Hence, this research highlighted the potential of the tobacco-free policy at the workplace as well as the employees' success in complying to be better than other institutions.

While this move will promise greater career achievement, it will also assist the higher education institution in achieving its collective goals, and hence, becoming a better-recognised organisation. The positive development and acceptance of the tobacco-free policy are a result of increasing workplace health promotion activities, manifesting a growing interest among organisations in Malaysia. Thus, this predicts a brighter future for the development of a smoke-free workplace policy in Malaysia.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, this research is in cognisance of its limitations, especially in the research design and data analysis. This research used the quantitative method due to its suitability with the research objectives. Thus, this research might miss the gap supported by qualitative data. Another limitation of the research concerns the generalisation of its findings. Considering the respondents selected for this study, the findings could only be generalised among public higher education institutions. Therefore, the findings may not be applicable to private higher education institutions and other types of organisations.

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