

**Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)**

Volume 4, Issue 4, August 2019

e-ISSN : 2504-8562

Journal home page:
www.msocialsciences.com**Awareness on Smoking Behaviour Among Students in Faculty of Quranic and Sunnah Studies, Islamic Science University of Malaysia (USIM)****Zainora Daud¹, Muhammad Arif Musa¹, Siti Nor Azirah Mohd Riduan¹**¹Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM)

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Abstract

Research has shown that smoking has bad implications on smokers and society as a whole. For that matter, the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOHM) have taken various initiatives through information technology and social media to educate the public and students about the negative effects of smoking. The objective of this study is to identify the level of awareness among students on factors which lead to smoking behaviour and the negative effects it has on society. This study was conducted on 228 students at the Faculty of Quranic and Sunnah Studies, Islamic Science University of Malaysia. The research is quantitative in nature using questionnaire method. The quantitative data were then analysed descriptively in Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) to obtain the frequency and percentage. The finding of the study shows that the level of students' awareness on factors leading to smoking habit is at a satisfactory level. The students are aware that peers are the main contributing factor towards smoking habit. The level of awareness on the harmful effects of smoking is also at a satisfactory level. The students' awareness is influenced by their field of study which is Islamic studies as well as their modest purchasing power considering their average family income range from RM1000 to RM3000. The conclusion of the study is the importance to educate students on the harmful effects of smoking, as well as to maintain the level of awareness among them.

Keywords: smoking behaviour, awareness, smoking habit, negative effects of smoking**Introduction**

Smoking is a derivative of the intransitive verb "smoke" meaning, to inhale and exhale the fumes of burning plant material and especially tobacco (Morris, 2011). According to medical dictionary, smoking is the inhalation of the smoke of burning tobacco encased in cigarettes, pipes and cigars. Casual smoking is the act of smoking only occasionally, usually in a social situation or to relieve stress. A smoking habit is a physical addiction to tobacco products. Many health experts now regard habitual smoking as a psychological addiction too, and one with serious health consequences (medical-dictionary .the free dictionary).

Currently, smoking is one of the major causes of death due to the content in a cigarette which is poisonous and can be fatal in the long term. Nearly 10,000 Malaysians die each year due to smoking-related illnesses (Azillah, 2014).

Smoking habits have become a norm in current society. The data from MOHM shows 50% of males in Malaysia are smokers. In Kuala Lumpur, the ratio between male and female smokers under the age of

30 is 5: 1. While 25% of school children aged 15 and over have tried smoking and 70% of these groups will become smokers after leaving school. Only 50% of smokers will be able to reach the age of 70 and Malaysians spend RM1.5 billion annually to buy cigarette. (Ministry of Health Malaysia, www.infosihat.gov.my.)

Data from MOHM shows that there is a high statistical increase in purchase among smokers in Malaysia. There have been 23.7 billion cigarettes lighted annually compared to only 18 billion in 1998. This data is in accord with the increase of smokers from 3.1 million in 2007 to 4.7 million in 2011. The data also shows that most of the smokers have been involved in smoking since the age of 19 with an estimation of 50 new smokers per day among teenagers (Azillah, 2014).

The trend of smoking is perceived by teenagers as a sign of maturity and greatness. Even there is also a sense of pride among smoking teenagers. This perception is heavily influenced by social factor, culture and mass media. To be accepted by a certain social group may contribute to smoking behaviour. The community acceptance towards smoking behaviour also normalise smoking habit. The illustration of smoking in mass media as something admirable attracts teenagers to be involve in smoking. (Ministry of Health Malaysia, www.taknak.myhealth.gov.my/)

The Islamic law states smoking as unlawful (*haram*) due to the harmful effects on smokers and the public. A general rule of the Islamic Shariah is that it is haram for Muslim to consume anything which may cause his death, either quickly or gradually, such as poison or any substance which is hazardous to health or harmful to his body. It is also haram to consume any large quantities of a substance if any large quantity can cause illness. A Muslim is not entirely his own master; he is also an asset to his religion and his community, and his life, health, wealth, and all that Allah SWT has bestowed upon him are a trust with him which he is not permitted to diminish (Qatar Islamic Cultural Center (Fonar), 2010).

Methodology

This study is a quantitative study. A quantitative study is suitable to identify and to test laws and regulations based on unique behaviour and situations (Mok Soon Sang, 2009). The research was conducted by survey through distributing questionnaires to students. This instrument was chosen for it consumes less time and resources compared to interview. Questionnaires are best administered personally to groups of people because of (Uma Sekaran, 2003). The samples were selected based on a criterion that suit with the objective of the study i.e. the *proportionate stratified random sampling* (Uma Sekaran, 2003). The samples consist of final year students at the Faculty of Quranic and Sunnah Studies, USIM. The total of respondents is based on Krejcie and Morgan's sample size in Educational and Psychological Measurement (1970) of 228 respondents. The questionnaires were used to collect the data through quantitative data analysis. The use of the questionnaire is more practical and more effective in the case where the sample size is large (Mohd Majid Konting, 1998). Quantitative data analysis is the main instrument of the study.

Results

Demographic background

The respondents of this study are 116 (50.9%) final year students from bachelor's degree of Quranic and Sunnah Studies with Honours, 57 (25%) students from Bachelor of Quranic Studies and Multimedia with Honours and 55 (24.1%) students from Bachelor of Sunnah Studies with Information Management with Honours at the Faculty of Quranic and Sunnah Studies, USIM. The respondents consist of 134 (58.8%) female students and 94 (41.2%) male students, from all of whom are Muslims.

The majority of the respondents (98.2%) aged between 21 to 24 years old excluding four persons (1.8%) whose age between 25-27 years old. The respondents age shows that majority of the

respondents enrolled in the Faculty of Quran and Sunnah Studies, USIM after graduated from STAM, STPM or Diploma degree. Majority of the respondents reside in rural areas with 142 (62.3%) students, while the other 86 (37.7%) students live in urban cities. The average family income of the respondents is 108 (47.4%) students with an average income between RM1000 to RM3000, 67 (29.4%) students between RM 500 to RM 1000, 45 (19.7%) students between RM 3000 to RM 5000, 8 (3.5%) students with an average income of < RM 5000.

Factors for Smoking Behaviour

Majority respondents agree that the main factors for smoking behaviour is peer pressure and influence by 62.3% (142), this is followed by smoking is the common practice in the society by 43% (98), 41.7% is stress while learning, 40.8% (95) is to overcome boredom and lastly 35.9% (79) is problems in social relationship.

On the intention of smokers, 56.2% (128) of respondents disagree with the fact that the intention of new smokers is to portray maturity compared to 25.8% (59) of respondents who agree, while 18% (41) are not sure. A number of 61.8% (141) also disagree that smokers intend to reduce weight through smoking compared to 8.3% (19) respondents who agree, while 29.8% (968) are divided.

The finding of this study is supported by another qualitative study conducted in Universiti Malaysia Sabah by Mahathir Yahya. He stated that the contributing factors towards smoking behaviour are peer influence, stress during learning, couple and family problems (Mahathir Yahaya, n.d.).

Students' Level of Awareness on Smoking Negative Effects

The study shows that level of awareness among respondents on the negative effects of smoking is at a high level where 214 (93.9%) respondents view that smoking behaviour cause deterioration of health, while 211 (92.6%) respondents believe that society have negative perception towards smokers. On the topic of addiction, a total of 206 (90.3%) respondents agree that smoking behaviour leads towards addiction. Additionally, 201 (88.1%) respondents view that smoking behaviour is fatal to humans. The notion of smoking habit is a waste of wealth is agreed by 183 (80.3%) respondents. Lastly, a total of 120 (52.7%) respondents believe that smoking behaviour may lead to alcohol consumption.

Ways to overcome smoking behaviour

The finding of the study shows that the main cause for the respondents to not be involved in smoking habit is due to their concern for their health and others; 204 (89%). This is followed by the fatwa gazetted by the Department of Islamic Affairs; 197 (86.4%). On this matter, Mook Soon Sang (2008) states that a person's perception towards a particular matter is influenced by their understandings, feelings and actions. This clearly demonstrates that if an individual knows and understands clearly the negative effects of smoking on himself and his surroundings in addition to the knowledge of Islamic law, they will refrain themselves from being involve with smoking.

A total of 196 (85.9%) respondents agree that encouragement from family members and friends play an important role in quitting smoking. Religious awareness also is one of the major factors as agreed by 187 (82.1%) respondents. This is followed by information spread through mass media, 153 (67.1%). On this matter, Shamsuddin (n.d.) asserts that teenagers' 'reality' is a social construct shaped by family relationship or information received through mass media. Teenagers' behaviour is an actual representation of the social construct built by the adults through mass media. The least item chosen by the respondents as a way to overcome smoking behaviour is through law enforcement against manufacturers, sellers, buyers and smokers, 71.

Conclusions

The study shows that level of students' awareness on smoking behaviour is at a satisfactory level for all three constructs; factors for smoking, awareness on negative effects and ways to overcome smoking behaviour. Peer influence is the main cause for students to be involve in smoking. This shows that friends with good behaviour contribute towards healthy personality especially in the case where family members are not around. It is important for students to have positive self-esteem. Mook Soon Sang (2008) has stated that an individual behaviour mirrors his self-esteem and belief. The respondents possess high level of awareness towards the harmful effects of smoking on oneself and on surrounding people. The students' perception on smoking habit is influenced by their field of study which is Islamic studies in addition to their modest purchasing power considering the average income of the respondents' family range between RM 1000 to RM 3000.

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