

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

FACTORS DETERMINING ATTEMPT-TO-QUIT SMOKING AMONG ADULT CURRENT SMOKERS IN SARIKEI, SARAWAK, MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Achieving smoking cessation is an arduous process, where smokers try different methods or approaches to achieve cessation. Quit smoking attempts play an important role in smoking cessation. Thus, this study was conducted to determine the factors associated with attempt-to-quit smoking among the current smokers in Sarawak. This cross-sectional study was conducted among adult smokers in Sarikei, Sarawak by face-to-face interview using an adapted and validated questionnaire. Non-probability sampling method was used to select the study place. An adult smoker was selected systematically from each selected household. A total of 482 smoker households were identified with a response rate of 92.3%. Data was analysed using IBM SPSS Version 22.0. A p-value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant. The mean (SD) age of the smokers was 36.3(13.3) years. However, the mean (SD) age of smoking initiation was 18.5(4.8) years. Majority of the smokers were male (91.5%), with the male to female ratio being 1:0.1. Mean (SD) score on The Fagerström Test for Nicotine Dependence was 4.75(2.4), while motivation to quit smoking score was 3.04(1.0). Majority of the smokers (83.1%) had ever seen pictorial health warnings on cigarette packs. More than half of the smokers (54.8%) had ever tried to quit smoking. Binary logistic regression analysis revealed that marital status, religion, ethnicity, pictorial health warnings on cigarette packs and motivation to quit smoking appeared to be the significant predictors of attempt-to-quit smoking ($p<0.05$). Understanding the attempts to quit smoking will assist in clinical expectations. Thus, a smoking cessation programme should be designed in line with these factors, to aid quit smoking attempts.

Keywords: Smoking, Attempt-to-quit, Addiction, Motivation, Pictorial Health Warning, Sarawak

INTRODUCTION

Issues pertaining to tobacco have been present among the community for a long time. Cigarette smoking is associated with both communicable and non-communicable disease. Smoking remains the world's leading preventable cause of death and is estimated to be responsible for about six million deaths yearly, with many of the deaths occurring prematurely^{1,2}. There were over 1.1 billion smokers in 2015, with the numbers continuing to increase². In Malaysia, prevalence of smoking among Malaysian adults varies from 23.3% to 43.9%, with about 20% of total mortalities associated with smoking³⁻⁶.

Acknowledging smoking as an issue in Malaysia, the government have taken many measures to tackle the rising number of smokers, such as raising cigarettes prices, enforcing public health policies, setting up of Quit Smoking Clinics (QSCs), and enforcing pictorial health warnings on cigarette packaging⁷. With the many measures taken, a large percentage of smokers have attempted to quit smoking, however, only a small percentage of the smokers have successfully quit smoking⁸. One of the attributing factors is the lack of motivation to quit smoking, where motivation is one of the key elements in the sustainability of the quit smoking attempt⁹. Understanding the

factors that motivate smokers to attempt-to-quit smoking can determine the success and long-term maintenance of the quit smoking attempt¹⁰.

A global voluntary tobacco target was established by the World Health Assembly in 2013 to help reduce and prevent premature avoidable mortality from non-communicable diseases. To achieve the targets, evidence-based, concrete analysis of the smoking situation in the country is required⁶. Thus, to combat the rising number of smokers, it is crucial to know the factors determining attempt to quit smoking among smokers, to enable more effective measures to be taken, for the community's health.

METHODOLOGY

Study design and sampling procedure

This was a cross-sectional community-based study conducted among the smokers in Sarikei town, Sarawak, Malaysia. All Malaysian adult smokers aged more than 18 years, irrespective of gender, who were current smokers living in Sarikei town, were included as the study population. Using 48.6% prevalence of smokers who had tried to quit smoking⁶, with 95% confidence interval, a total of 384 sample smokers were calculated to get a plausible estimate of an "attempt to quit smoking". However, considering the possibility of