PENGGUNAAN ROKOK ELEKTRONIK DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR INSTITUSI PENGAJIAN TERTIARI SWASTA DI SELANGOR

ABSTRACT

Globally, e-cigarettes has dramatically become popular and claimed as 95% safer compared to conventional cigarettes by UK Public Health. This cross-sectional study was conducted to identify characteristics associated with e-cigarette use among private tertiary students in Selangor. The duration of this study was from May until December 2015. This study aims to identify the awareness, beliefs, usage, reasons, and factors associated with e- cigarettes use. This study involved 138 of e-cigarettes users among Malaysian aged 18 years and above. Information collected through self-administered questionnaires adopted from International Tobacco Control (ITC) Australia, 2013 and validated by smoking cessation experts in assessing demographic factors, awareness, beliefs, usage and reason for initiation of e-cigarette used. E-cigarettes were more common in men (92.8%), young adults aged 18-24 years (84.1%), Malay (90.6%), single (92.8%), fulltime students (82.6%) and smokers (68.1%). Awareness of e-cigarettes was higher among users (98.6%). E-cigarettes users were categorized as daily users (69%), weekly users (13.8%), occasional users (11.6%) and former users (5.8%). Most believed e-cigarette would help them to quit smoking (39.9%), were less harmful (60.9%) and less addictive (31.2%) compared to conventional cigarettes. Reason for initiation of e-cigarette use were that e-cigarettes are odorless (55.8%), curiosity (52.9%), the variety of e-cigarettes flavors available (50.7%) and to aid in smoking cessation (48.6%). Initiation of e-cigarette use was significantly associated with demographic characteristics include marital status (p=0.014), employment status $(p$=0.004), smoking status (p=0.019), similarly with belief characteristics includes e-cigarette potentially as quit aids (p=0.000) and less addictive compared to conventional cigarette (p=0.081). In contrast, initiation with e-cigarettes used was not significantly associated with gender (p=0.534), race (p=0.213), age (p=0.071) and harmful belief on e-cigarettes (p=0.396). In conclusion, this study provides baseline information and useful references of e-cigarettes used among Malaysian adults. Communities require an adequate exposure on the health risk and effect of e-cigarettes used in order to prevent unknown risks especially to young adults in Malaysia.