

The role of media and people's perception on electronic cigarette / vape in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The use of electronic cigarette / vape (ECV) has increased rapidly around the world ever since its introduction into the global market. This study investigated the Malaysian general public's sources of information and their perception on ECV. **OBJECTIVES:** To explore role of media and people's perception of e-cigarette. **Methods:** A questionnaire (NECS Questionnaire Survey Form) was designed and validated, and given to 6,000 Malaysians ages 18 and above in 6 different geographical zones in the entire Malaysia. SPSS and STATA were used for data analysis. **Results:** A total of 4,288 individual responded, representing 19 million of Malaysian population. Majority of them were aged 25-44 years old (44%), completed at least secondary education (69%), of Malay ethnicity (73%), were Muslims (79%), and married (68%). Less than half of the respondents knew about ECV through media. Social media, the internet, and vape shops were the most frequently used platform to promote ECV. About one-fifth of the respondents received information on the danger of using ECV from television. More than half of the respondents thought a lot about the health risks on using ECV after obtaining information on its health effects. Majority of the respondents disagreed that ECV is more effective than medications in quitting smoking, ECV helps people maintain cigarette abstinence, and ECV is less harmful to health. **Discussion:** Social media, internet, and vape shops are the main effective promoters for ECV use for the general public. Television played an important role in educating the general public on the dangers of using ECV as well as motivating people to quit using ECV. The general public remain concerned about the negative health effects caused by ECV.

KEY WORDS:

Electronic cigarette, vape, smoking, tobacco

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The spatial clustering of food outlets around schools using a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based analysis approach in Kelantan, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the present study was to assess the spatial distribution of all food outlets around schools using the Geographic Information System (GIS)-based analysis approach method. Four schools from the total lists of public schools in Kota Bharu area were randomly selected. All food outlets access around in these schools were then obtained based on 40meter buffer distance and 1km radius distance from each school assessed. Street View tool of Google Earth (©2011 Google) was used to confirm the location of food outlets and a distance between food outlets and schools were also determined. Food availability of all food outlets were gathered during school day. A total of 213 food outlets were found within these schools, in which 115 restaurants, 96 hawkers stall and 2 fast food outlets. In contrast, there was no food outlet found within 40 meter radius distance. There was a high degree of clustering of food outlets in all schools regardless of the size of the schools in terms of the types of food outlets, ranging from 41.7% to 77.8% restaurant, and 22.2% to 58.3% hawker stalls, whereas only 1.7% fast-food outlets were found in one secondary school located in the town area. Snacks as the highest food sold in hawker stalls. In general, the distribution and type of food outlets access around these schools were almost quite similar, regardless of geographic location and size of school. The present findings highlight the importance of refining the type of foods sold and available around schools and it is also hoped that more options of healthier food choices can be offered around schools to encourage healthy eating choices among these schoolchildren in order to prevent the risk of excess weight gain and obesity during these critical years of growth.