

# WILLINGNESS TO BE INVOLVED IN TOBACCO SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAM: A SURVEY OF PHARMACY STUDENT AT UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INDONESIA

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## **Abstract**

*Million of tobacco smoking related deaths will occur annually, and will continue to increase, if tobacco control program is not implemented seriously. Pharmacists and pharmacy students were encouraged to be involved in tobacco smoking control program, as recommended by International Pharmaceutical Federation. This study is aimed to know smoking behavior among pharmacy students at Universitas Islam Indonesia, and also to assess their attitude and willingness on tobacco-smoking cessation program. This study was a cross-sectional survey using self-administered questionnaire, involved 3rd year pharmacy students at Universitas Islam Indonesia as respondent. The questionnaire was derived and modified from global health professional program. Out of 200 respondents, 196 (98% response rate) filled the questionnaire according to instruction, and their information was analyzed as result of this research. Twenty-nine respondents (14.4%) stated that they had ever smoked, but only 4.5% of respondents are still smoking currently. Majority of respondents response positively on tobacco smoking cessation program (positive response to overall related questions > 85%), but only 9.7% of respondents know exactly World No Tobacco Day. It was can be concluded from this study, that smoking prevalence among pharmacy students at Universitas Islam Indonesia is low, their willingness on tobacco smoking cessation program is positively high, but awareness of global tobacco smoking control program remains low.*

**Keywords :** *pharmacy student, smoking cessation, tobacco control*

## INTRODUCTION

It was predicted that, at least, 10,000 million deaths is related to tobacco smoking in 2030. More than two third of these deaths will occur in developing countries, if the pandemic of tobacco smoking was not controlled (WHO 2009). Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable death worldwide, and the prevalence of smoking related diseases increased markedly (Armour et al. 2005). The number of smoking-individuals increases in some countries, including Indonesia, and it was estimated that Indonesia was the 3rd most number of smokers among the countries (MoH RI 2010). It was well known that tobacco smoking can induce many diseases, especially respiratory and malignancy diseases. Tobacco smoking can significantly decrease nasal mucociliary clearance, so that it can reduce respiratory function, leading to respiratory infections and other respiratory dysfunction (Proenca et al. 2010).

World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended five policies to decrease negative impacts of tobacco smoking: (1) smoke free environment (2) to support program for tobacco users who wish to quit (3) health warning on tobacco cigarette packs (4) to ban the advertising (5) to implement higher taxation of tobacco cigarette product (WHO 2003). To support the WHO program, International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has also established a global network of pharmacist against tobacco smoking. This network is a forum for pharmacists and pharmacy students who were interested in tobacco smoking cessation and tobacco control activities (GNPAT 2007). In 2003 congress, FIP recommended pharmaceutical organization and individual pharmacist to actively help individual who wish to quit smoking. Nationally, in 2009 Indonesian Pharmacist Association (IAI) has revised the standard of competencies for pharmacist in Indonesia, and in the new standard of competencies pharmacist is encouraged to involved in health promotion, including promoting tobacco-smoking cessation as one of the program.

This research is aimed to know smoking behavior among pharmacy students at Universitas Islam Indonesia, and also to assess their attitude and willingness on tobacco-smoking cessation program. This was a preliminary research to implement an effective measure in reducing tobacco smoking among students and to enrich health promotion subject in our curriculum.

## METHODS

A cross-sectional survey was conducted in May 2012, targetting the 3rd year pharmacy students at Universitas Islam Indonesia. A questionnaire consisted of 20 questions was distributed to the students for self-administration before lecture with prior brief explanation about the questionnaire, and the questionnaire were retrieved in same time. The questions in the questionnaire including demographic characteristics, smoking behavior status, attitude about smoking habits, and willingness to be involved in tobacco smoking cessation program. The questionnaire was derived and modified from Global Health Professional Survey (GHPS), but its validity and reliability have not been measured yet. In this survey, respondent was classified as had ever smoked if he/she has only tried or previously smoking but was not a smoker when he/she filled the questionnaire, regardless of frequency and duration of smoking. Respondent was classified as current smoker if he/she still smokes when he/she filled the questionnaire, regardless of frequency and number of smoked cigarette. Descriptive analysis was done to analyze the information from the questionnaire.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Two hundred of targeted respondents were involved as respondent in this study, and 196 of them filled the questionnaire according to the instruction (98% response rate). Number of female was about 4.5 fold of male (82.7% vs 17.4%), and 77.6% of respondent is 18-21 years old. Twenty-nine respondents (14.4%) stated that they had ever smoked, with 27.6% of them are

female, as shown in figure 1. This rate is higher than national level of had ever smoked individuals between 15-24 years old, 3.4% (MoH RI 2010).

Overall rate of current smoking was 4.5%, with 11.1% are female, as shown in figure 2. The rate of smoking individuals in this study is quite lower than national level of active smokers between 15-24 years old, 18.6%, (MoH RI 2010) and also than same studies targeted pharmacy students (Morell et al. 2008). The rate of smoking students at University of Lagos Nigeria was 5.5% (Aina 2009), and the higher rate (27.1%) was found in Greece (Barbouni et al. 2012), although it was lower than other health profession students right there.

Figure 3 shows that majority of had ever smoked respondents started to smoke at senior high school level (37.9%). The most stated reason of had ever smokers is peers influence (31%), and 14% of them stated it is just for having fun or curious about the taste. In current smoking respondent, the most notable reason is self-direction to suppress emotional stress (44%), and 56% of them were smoking between 1-5 cigarettes per day. One hundred seventy nine out of respondents (91.3%) believe the opinion that "tobacco smoking can lead to premature death", and 80.1% respondents gave agreement response to use the opinion as a campaigned statement for preventing tobacco smoking.

Table I shows a high agreement response on tobacco smoking reducing program and willingness on helping smokers to quit. Majority

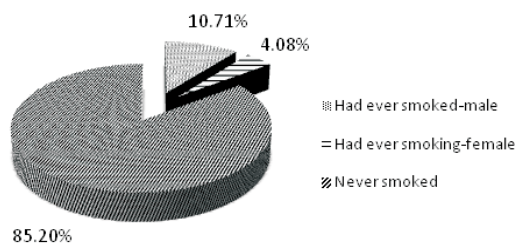


Figure 1. Distribution of had ever smoked respondents

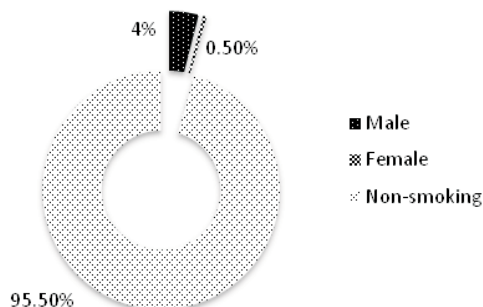


Figure 2. Distribution of current smoking respondents

of respondents agree to implement no smoking rule in campus area (96.4%) and in pharmacy student's event (89.3%). The response was also quite high, even in had ever smoked group respondents (79.3%)

**Table I. Responses to questions on attitudinal and willingness about tobacco smoking free program**

Questions	% of agreement
No smoking in campus area	96.4
Pharmacy student's events should be free from smoking	89.3
Pharmacist should not smoke	88.8
Pharmacist and pharmacy students should be involved in tobacco smoking cessation program	93.4
Willingness to help smokers to quit	93.4

Seventy-three out of respondents (37.2%) stated that they know about World No Tobacco Day, but only 26% of them (9.7% of total respondents) can state the definite date correctly, as showed on Figure 4. This phenomenon showed that although the rate of willingness to be involved in tobacco smoking cessation is high, the awareness about global policies on tobacco control program is still low among pharmacy students. This result was higher than pharmacy student in the University of Lagos, Nigeria, whose rate of awareness about it is only 9% (Aina et al. 2009).

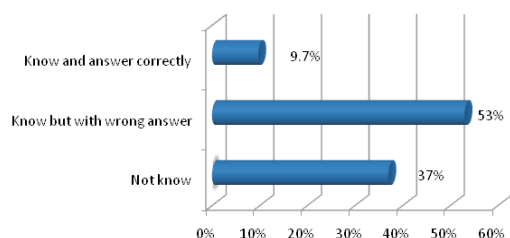


Figure 4. Responses to World No Tobacco Day

Results of this study indicate that pharmacy student response positively on tobacco smoking cessation program, but their knowledge and awareness about global policies still should be improved. Pharmacy curriculum in university may have to accommodate this need, by embed any related subjects in the curriculum. Pharmacy, and other health profession, students is a potential target to be encouraged as tobacco smoking cessation counselor, because as future professional health worker they have a big responsibility to perform health promotional activities, including promoting tobacco smoking cessation.

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from this study, that smoking prevalence among pharmacy students at Universitas Islam Indonesia is low, and they

have a high willingness to be involved in tobacco smoking cessation program. Any activities to increase awareness of global tobacco smoking cessation program is needed to be conducted, as students awareness of it remains low.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author thanks (1) the pharmacy students at Universitas Islam Indonesia, year 2009 intake, for responding to the questionnaire (2) Dr. Bolajoko A. Aina for sharing the questionnaire

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