

# PREVALENCE OF AND FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SMOKING AMONG UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

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**Abstract.** Tobacco smoking is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality. The aim of this study was to determine the prevalence of and factors associated with smoking among University of Malaya students in Malaysia, in order to inform programs to reduce the prevalence of smoking in the study population. Inclusion criteria for study subjects were being a student of the study institution and being aged  $\geq 18$  years. The exclusion criterion was not being willing to participate in the study. All students of the study institution were sent an email inviting them to participate in the study; 843 were willing to participate. Each subject was asked to complete a self-administered online questionnaire asking about sociodemographic characteristics, smoking status and their knowledge and attitudes about smoking. The Pearson's chi-square test and multiple logistic regression analysis were used to evaluate potential associations between selected variables and smoking status. A total of 843 subjects were included in the study; 22.4% of subjects were smokers, 17.5% of females were smokers and 82.5% of males were smokers. On multiple logistic regression analysis, factors significantly associated with smoking were male gender (OR=12.64; 95% CI: 8.04-19.89), having a mother with a primary level education (OR=4.02; 95% CI: 1.40-11.54), having favorable attitude toward smoking (OR=9.09; 95% CI: 4.98-16.59) and having an equivocal attitude about smoking (OR=2.98; 95% CI: 1.78-5.00). Our study shows the prevalence of smoking among study subjects at the study institution was high. Males entering the study institution, who have a mother with a poor education level or who have a positive of equivocal attitude about smoking should be screened for smoking and appropriate intervention provided. Further studies are needed to determine if such interventions are effective.

**Keywords:** smoking, prevalence, associated factor, student

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