

## Student Smoking Behavior in the Implementation of the Smoke-Free Area Policy at SMA Negeri 1 Palu

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### ABSTRACT

Smoking behavior is defined as the activity of inhaling smoke from cigarettes made of rolled dried tobacco leaves that are burned and subsequently exhaled by the individual. Smoking behavior is considered a public health issue that contributes to various health problems and even death, affecting both active smokers and passive smokers who are exposed to cigarette smoke. Smoking behavior among adolescents is no longer a new phenomenon. Low self-motivation to quit smoking, along with environmental and peer influences, are factors that make it difficult for individuals to stop smoking.

This study aimed to identify students' smoking behavior in the implementation of the Smoke-Free Area policy at SMA Negeri 1 Palu. The study employed a qualitative method with a case study approach. A total of 10 informants participated in this study. Data were managed using matrix analysis techniques. The findings indicated that students' knowledge regarding the harmful effects of smoking was relatively good. However, students' attitudes toward peer invitations to smoke were still inadequate, as some students continued to accept such invitations. In addition, the availability of facilities and opportunities that enabled students to obtain cigarettes, such as using pocket money provided by parents or receiving cigarettes from friends, also supported smoking behavior. On the other hand, support from certain peers in the form of advice and encouragement helped male adolescents avoid smoking behavior.

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### INTRODUCTION

Cigarettes are classified as addictive substances that can lead to dependency and addiction when consumed continuously. Smoking behavior refers to the activity of inhaling smoke produced from burned rolled dried tobacco leaves and exhaling it afterward. Smoking is recognized as a major public health concern

because it contributes to various health disorders and increases the risk of mortality, both among active smokers and passive smokers who are exposed to cigarette smoke (Riyanti et al., 2022).

In Indonesia, the prevalence of smokers currently reaches 28.8%, with the highest proportion found in West Java Province, where 32.0% of individuals smoke daily. Meanwhile, Central Sulawesi ranks seventh among provinces with the highest proportion of daily smokers. In Central Sulawesi, approximately 37% of individuals aged 10 years and older are reported to smoke every day, indicating that smoking behavior remains highly prevalent within the community (Robert V. Pelima, 2020).

Data from the 2018 Basic Health Research Survey (Riskesdas) showed that the smoking prevalence among Indonesians aged 15 years and above increased from 34.2% to 36.3% in 2018. Among individuals aged over 10 years, 27.1% were identified as daily smokers, while 5.6% smoked only occasionally. The proportion of active smokers by age group was reported at 0.5% among adolescents aged 10–14 years, 11.2% among those aged 15–19 years, and 27.2% among individuals aged 20–24 years. Based on gender, the prevalence of smoking was significantly higher among males (47.5%) compared to females (1.1%). The Riskesdas findings indicate that smoking prevalence has increased across all age groups, particularly among adolescents (Novariana, Rukmana, et al., 2022).

Several factors contribute to smoking behavior. According to Kurt Lewin, smoking behavior is influenced by both individual and environmental factors. Green further explained that smoking behavior is affected by predisposing factors, including knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, traditions, and values; enabling factors, such as the availability of facilities and resources; and reinforcing factors, which involve the attitudes and behaviors of people within an individual's social environment. In the Health Belief Model, individual behavior is strongly influenced by personal motivation and beliefs (Supeno et al., 2021).

Smoking behavior among adolescents has become increasingly common. It is not unusual to observe junior and senior high school students smoking either openly or secretly, individually or with peers, even while wearing school uniforms. According to Erikson, adolescent smoking behavior is closely related to the psychosocial crisis experienced during adolescence, a developmental stage characterized by identity exploration. Adolescence is often described as a period of “storm and stress” due to the imbalance between psychological and social development (Setiawan et al., 2020).

There is also a relationship between the implementation of Smoke-Free Areas (SFA) and smoking behavior. The government has introduced clean and healthy living programs that support smoke-free policies. Cigarette smoke generated by smoking activities contributes to air pollution and negatively affects public health. Therefore, limiting air pollution is essential, as every individual has the right to breathe clean and healthy air. Smoke-free area policies, which restrict smoking activities in certain places, are expected to help communities obtain a healthier environment free from cigarette smoke exposure (Susanti, 2019).

Based on a preliminary study conducted by the researchers at SMA Negeri 1 Palu involving interviews with two teachers and two students, the first teacher stated that although the learning process during the pandemic was shortened to noon, students' smoking behavior did not decrease. The second teacher reported that four students had been found smoking in the school restroom. Interviews with two smoking students revealed that the first student was aware of the harmful effects of smoking but continued smoking due to addiction. Meanwhile, the second student stated that quitting smoking was difficult because of social interactions with peers who smoke and the sense of comfort gained from smoking..

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design, which is a method used to investigate phenomena in natural settings rather than experimental conditions. In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument for data collection. Data collection techniques were conducted through triangulation methods, while data analysis was carried out inductively. Furthermore, qualitative research emphasizes the interpretation of meaning rather than generalization of findings (Sugiyono, 2016).

The study applied a case study approach, which is one of the qualitative methods focused on understanding human behavior based on differences in values, beliefs, and scientific theories (Yona, 2014).

This research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Palu. Three categories of informants were involved in this study, namely key informants, primary informants, and supporting informants. The key informant was the school principal, the primary informants were students who smoked, and the supporting informants consisted of teachers and members of the school community.

The informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, in which participants were chosen based on specific objectives, considerations, and criteria relevant to the research problem. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with all informants. The interview guidelines only contained general outlines of the issues explored during the interviews. The duration of the interviews was determined based on the point of information saturation.

The study also employed source triangulation to ensure data credibility. Source triangulation refers to the process of verifying data obtained from multiple sources. In this study, triangulation involved the key

informant, namely the principal of SMA Negeri 1 Palu; the primary informants, namely students who smoked within the school environment; and supporting informants, consisting of individuals closely associated with the primary informants (Sugiyono, 2016).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Knowledge

Based on in-depth interviews conducted with the primary informants regarding their understanding of cigarettes, the informants explained that cigarettes produce smoke, can cause addiction, lead to various diseases, and may even result in death. The key informant stated that smoking is harmful and can negatively affect future generations. Meanwhile, the supporting informants described cigarettes as products containing nicotine that can lead to addiction.

The findings indicate that the informants generally had a good level of knowledge regarding cigarettes; however, their understanding was limited to the conceptual level and had not yet been translated into practice. Although the informants were aware of the definition of cigarettes and their harmful effects on health, they had not applied this knowledge in their daily lives. Consequently, despite possessing adequate knowledge, nicotine addiction prevented them from reducing or quitting smoking, ultimately leading them to become heavy smokers.

In-depth interviews were also conducted with the primary informants regarding the types of cigarettes. Almost all informants stated that cigarettes are commonly classified based on the presence or absence of filters, namely filtered and non-filtered cigarettes. Some informants also mentioned that cigarettes differ in size, with some being larger and others smaller.

Further interviews explored the informants' knowledge about the dangers of smoking. Nearly all informants reported that smoking could lead to serious health problems, including cancer, lung disease, and throat disorders. These statements were supported by both the key informant and supporting informants, who similarly explained that smoking can cause cancer, lung damage, and other illnesses.

The interviews also examined the informants' knowledge regarding the substances contained in cigarettes. The results showed that all informants identified nicotine and tobacco as the primary components of cigarettes. This finding was reinforced by statements from the key and supporting informants, who also noted that cigarettes contain nicotine and tobacco. Nicotine is recognized as the main addictive substance in cigarettes that causes dependency and has harmful effects on health.

In-depth interviews were further conducted to identify the sources from which informants obtained information about cigarettes. Most informants stated that they received information from cigarette advertisements, leaflets, billboards, and cigarette packaging. Similarly, the key and supporting informants explained that information regarding cigarettes was commonly obtained through television advertisements, promotional media such as leaflets and billboards, as well as warning labels displayed on cigarette packaging.

### Attitude

In-depth interviews were conducted with the primary informants to identify the reasons why they consumed cigarettes. Almost all informants stated that they initially started smoking out of curiosity after observing people around them who also smoked. Over time, this behavior developed into a habit and eventually led to addiction.

Interviews were also conducted to determine the situations in which students usually smoked. Most informants reported that they commonly smoked while gathering with friends, after meals, and during break times or free periods at school. These findings were supported by statements from the key informant and supporting informants, who similarly explained that students tended to smoke when socializing with peers, after eating, and during school breaks or vacant class hours.

Further in-depth interviews explored students' responses when invited by their friends to smoke. All informants admitted that they usually accepted such invitations. This finding was reinforced by statements from both the key informant and supporting informants, who confirmed that students generally agreed to smoke when encouraged by their peers.

The interviews also examined the perceived benefits experienced after smoking. All informants stated that smoking provided them with feelings of calmness and pleasure. Supporting informants similarly explained that the main effects experienced after smoking were relaxation and enjoyment. This finding is consistent with the study by Almaidah et al. (2020), which reported that individuals smoke to obtain pleasure and satisfaction. High school students who smoke often perceive smoking as a way to relieve stress and achieve psychological comfort. These findings are also in line with the study by Sari (2019), which found that smoking is perceived as a means of reducing problems and creating feelings of comfort and relaxation.

However, a different perspective was expressed by the key informant, who stated that smoking provides no real benefits and instead only causes harm to health.

In-depth interviews were further conducted to explore students' responses toward health warning images displayed on cigarette packaging. All informants stated that the warning images had little to no influence on their smoking behavior because they viewed them merely as pictures without personal relevance. This statement was also supported by the key informant and supporting informants, who expressed similar opinions.

According to the informants, the pictorial health warnings on cigarette packages did not create fear or discourage them from smoking because they considered the images to be only visual displays and had never directly witnessed such health consequences in real life. Furthermore, their nicotine dependence made it difficult for them to quit smoking despite being exposed to the health warnings presented on cigarette packaging.

### **Facilities and Infrastructure.**

In-depth interviews were conducted with the primary informants to identify how they obtained cigarettes. All informants stated that they usually acquired cigarettes by purchasing them from small shops located near their homes or by receiving them from peers. Similar statements were also expressed by the key informant and supporting informants.

Further interviews were conducted to determine where the informants commonly purchased cigarettes. All informants reported that they typically bought cigarettes from local shops near their residences. This finding was reinforced by statements from the key informant and supporting informants, who likewise explained that cigarettes were generally purchased from nearby neighborhood stores.

In-depth interviews were also carried out to explore the locations where informants frequently smoked. All informants stated that they often smoked in the school restroom during free periods or vacant class hours. This finding was supported by the key informant and supporting informants, who similarly explained that school toilets or restrooms were the most common places used for smoking. These findings are consistent with the study conducted by Zulfa et al. (2019), which reported that students who smoke tend to prefer isolated and more private locations. School toilets or restrooms are commonly chosen because their enclosed nature allows students to smoke more freely, resulting in cigarette butt litter frequently being found in school bathrooms.

Additional interviews were conducted to determine whether the informants used their pocket money to purchase cigarettes. All informants admitted that they used their daily allowance to buy cigarettes. This finding was further supported by the key informant, who explained that some students had excess pocket money, which was then used to purchase cigarettes. Supporting informants also expressed similar statements.

### **Peers at School**

Peers are considered one of the most influential role models during adolescence. Smoking behavior is often transmitted among adolescents through peer interactions, such as offering cigarettes to friends, promoting the perceived pleasure of smoking, or emphasizing group solidarity. Through these interactions, adolescents who previously did not smoke may interpret smoking as a way to gain comfort, social acceptance, and recognition within their peer group. As a result, these perceptions can strengthen the belief that acceptance from peers is an important social need during adolescence.

In-depth interviews were also conducted with the primary informants to explore the forms of support or attention provided by friends in encouraging them to stop smoking. All informants stated that most of their female friends often advised them to quit smoking. This finding was reinforced by the key informant, who explained that female peers frequently provided advice and even prohibited students from smoking. Similar statements were also expressed by the supporting informants.

The findings of this study are consistent with the research conducted by Meyer, as cited in Suri (2018), which stated that smoking cessation requires motivation from family members, support from peers, and awareness of health-related reasons. These factors can play an important role in motivating smokers to consider quitting smoking.

However, these findings differ from the study conducted by Rohmadani (2016), which reported that adolescents generally showed little concern regarding the negative consequences associated with smoking. Furthermore, adolescents were found to be indifferent toward friends who smoke, perceiving smoking behavior as something ordinary and even tolerating exposure as passive smokers.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results and discussion regarding Student Smoking Behavior in the Implementation of the Smoke-Free Area (SFA) Policy at SMA Negeri 1 Palu, several conclusions can be drawn. First, students' knowledge regarding smoking behavior can generally be categorized as adequate. However, the informants' understanding was still limited to recognizing cigarettes and their harmful health effects, without being able to apply such knowledge in their daily lives. Second, students' attitudes toward smoking behavior were reflected in their tendency to accept and comply with invitations from peers to smoke. Although the informants

acknowledged that smoking is harmful and may lead to various health problems, they continued smoking because they had already developed nicotine dependence. Third, the ease of access to cigarettes contributed to students' smoking behavior. Informants reported obtaining cigarettes by purchasing them from small shops near their homes or receiving them directly from peers. In addition, having excess pocket money encouraged students to buy cigarettes. Fourth, peer support remained one of the dominant factors influencing smoking behavior among students at SMA Negeri 1 Palu. Informants admitted that they generally accepted invitations from friends to smoke. Nevertheless, some peers also provided advice and encouragement for the informants to quit smoking.

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