


Islamic Education Teachers' Efforts in Mitigating the Hazards of Smoking at SMP Negeri 28 Mataleo

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A B S T R A C T

Smoking habits can have negative impacts on health, especially for adolescents who are still growing. As an educational environment, schools have a crucial role in increasing students' awareness of the dangers of smoking. This study is to investigate the methods used by Islamic Religious Education instructors at SMP Negeri 28 Mataleo, Bombana Regency, to discourage smoking. Descriptive qualitative research methodology is applied, and data is gathered by documentation, interviews, and observations. The results of the study demonstrate that PAI instructors actively participate in educating students using a methodology grounded in religious principles, thematic learning, and character building through extracurricular activities and positive habits. In addition, cooperation between schools and parents also contributes to increasing the effectiveness of smoking prevention programs. Consequently, it can be said that PAI teachers are important in raising awareness of the risks associated with smoking by using a religious perspective and ongoing moral development.

Keywords: *Islamic Education Teachers, Dangers of Smoking, Education.*

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INTRODUCTION

Schools serve as pivotal educational institutions that significantly influence the lives of adolescents. Junior high school students typically spend approximately seven hours per day within the school environment, which functions as a social institution where they mature, develop, and transition into adulthood. Throughout this period, they acquire diverse experiences, cultivate habits, enhance their skills, and gain various attitudes and knowledge (Eccles & Roeser, 2011).

Beyond knowledge transmission, schools play an integral role in shaping the character and personality of students. By instilling moral values, educational institutions help young individuals develop noble character, uphold ethical principles, and refrain from actions that contravene existing laws and regulations (Lickona, 2004).

A nation's prosperity is largely contingent on its investment in human capital through education. As scientific advancements and technological progress continue, education aims to nurture individuals who are knowledgeable, competent, and ethically upright. Fundamentally, education empowers students to enhance their quality of life while significantly contributing to societal and national progress (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2020). According to the National Education System Law (Law No. 20 of 2003), the primary objective of national education is to maximize students' potential, fostering individuals who are devout, morally sound, healthy, intelligent, capable, creative, independent, and responsible members of a democratic society.

Despite the structured learning environment, not all students navigate their academic journey seamlessly. Many face numerous challenges, both academic and social, including smoking habits. It is undeniable that smoking is prevalent among adolescents, affecting both male and female students. The habit is difficult to break as it becomes deeply ingrained in their daily lives (WHO, 2021).

Smoking is a widespread social practice observed in various settings and circumstances, contributing significantly to global mortality rates. In the school context, students constitute a primary demographic for smoking prevention initiatives. Therefore, early education on cigarettes—their harmful chemical composition, adverse health effects, and the challenges associated with quitting—is crucial. Unfortunately, many smokers' attempts to quit are often undermined by their strong dependence on nicotine and other addictive substances in tobacco (NIDA, 2020).

Despite longstanding discussions on smoking, the issue persists without a definitive resolution. Often dismissed as a trivial matter, smoking remains inadequately addressed, with only a fraction of the population recognizing its detrimental consequences. Presently, a concerted effort from various stakeholders is imperative to raise awareness and foster a more serious approach to combating smoking. Unbeknownst to many, smoking exerts a profoundly negative impact on personal health (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014).

Smoking involves the combustion of tobacco and the inhalation of its smoke, leading to addiction—especially among adolescents. During this developmental phase, teenagers experience a transition between childhood and adulthood, making them highly susceptible to external influences. In addition to parental and familial guidance, school environments and peer interactions significantly shape adolescent behavior and personality (Steinberg, 2017).

Quitting smoking is an arduous process for individuals with nicotine dependence, though it is not insurmountable. Gradual cessation is achievable for those possessing strong willpower and determination. However, knowledge alone is insufficient; real action and unwavering commitment are essential. The primary determinant of success in quitting lies within the individual. Personal health is largely dictated by one's lifestyle and behavioral choices. Consequently, cultivating habits that promote long-term well-being is fundamental to achieving a healthier life (Prochaska, Redding, & Evers, 2015).

Prohibiting students from smoking aligns with school policies centered on health promotion. One method of reinforcing this policy is the installation of anti-smoking posters to create a conducive learning environment. Additionally, non-physical approaches such as counseling services provided by guidance counselors (BK teachers) and religious education teachers (PAI teachers) serve as preventive measures, motivating students to abstain from smoking (Glantz & Bareham, 2018).

School-based smoking prevention programs aim to eliminate student smoking within the school environment. Adolescents in middle school undergo significant social adjustments, making them particularly susceptible to peer influence. One effective strategy involves appointing peer educators, as teenagers are often more receptive to guidance from their peers than from parental figures. These peer educators play a crucial role in supervising fellow students and disseminating knowledge on smoking's harmful effects (Bandura, 1986).

Strict enforcement of anti-smoking policies fosters a safe and comfortable school environment while providing counseling services for students who already smoke. These services, facilitated by BK and PAI teachers, form part of a broader prevention initiative. To combat student smoking, PAI teachers have implemented various measures, including health education campaigns and motivational sessions highlighting smoking prohibitions from a religious perspective (Chapman & Freeman, 2008).

Preliminary research findings indicate that a considerable number of male students engage in smoking during recess. Some discreetly smoke in the school cafeteria, while others exit school premises to evade supervision. Additionally, students often resort to smoking in

secluded areas, such as restrooms, where they are less likely to be detected by school authorities.

Interviews with students reveal that smoking is predominantly perceived as a recreational activity. Environmental factors, peer influence, and exposure to social media and online advertisements significantly contribute to this behavior. For some students, smoking transitions into an unconscious habit, exacerbated by nicotine dependence and social interactions with smokers, which encourage non-smoking peers to adopt the habit (Sargent, Tanski, & Stoolmiller, 2012).

As a consequence, students squander their time engaging in detrimental activities. Time is one of the greatest blessings granted by Allah SWT, and it should be utilized wisely. A devout Muslim should always remain mindful that Allah is an omnipresent witness to all actions, speech, and thoughts. As stated in the Quran (Surah Yunus: 61):

﴿وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ﴾

Translation: "And you do not do any work but We are witnesses over you while you are doing it."

The above verse underscores the importance of avoiding sinful behavior and engaging in righteous deeds. Idleness often leads to harm, whereas productive engagement fosters personal growth and spiritual fulfillment.

SMP Negeri 28 Mataoleo, located in Bombana Regency, has undertaken numerous initiatives to curb smoking among students. These efforts encompass strict enforcement of disciplinary measures, provision of guidance and counseling services—including both individual and group therapy—and direct communication with students' parents to address concerns and collaborate on solutions.

METHOD

The descriptive qualitative approach used in this study is in line with Creswell's (2018) statement that the purpose of qualitative research is to understand and investigate how individuals or groups view social or humanitarian problems. The research location was conducted at SMP Negeri 28 Mataoleo for 1 month, with the research subjects being Islamic religious education teachers. Data collection was carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, in line with Yin's (2018) opinion, which emphasized that various methods can be used to obtain data in qualitative research. Hallahan, DP & Kauffman, JM (2020) discuss the data analysis approach, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Patton (2019) believes that assessing data validity involves triangulation of sources and methods.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Smoking is a dangerous habit that affects both active and passive smokers. Research conducted by Atikah and Eni (2012) highlights the numerous health risks associated with smoking, including lung disease, heart attacks, strokes, cancer, and even infertility. The chemicals found in cigarettes contribute to serious health complications, making smoking one of the leading causes of preventable death worldwide. Furthermore, Umi Istiqomah (2003) emphasizes that the number of deaths caused by smoking-related diseases, such as lung cancer, is comparable to past epidemics like cholera and tuberculosis. In the United Kingdom, official reports state that smoking causes more deaths than alcohol, drugs, suicide, drowning, and other sudden causes of death combined.

Cigarette smoking directly impacts the lungs and heart, leading to chronic respiratory diseases and cardiovascular issues. Research indicates that smoking causes mucosal cell hypertrophy and an increase in mucus glands, which contributes to breathing difficulties.

Over decades of research, a strong correlation between smoking and lung cancer has been identified, with carcinogens such as benzopyrene and tar being major contributors to cancer development. Additionally, smoking significantly increases the risk of heart disease. According to the World Health Organization, circulatory diseases, primarily caused by smoking, result in millions of deaths annually. Studies also show that smoking multiplies the risks of coronary heart disease when combined with other health issues like hypertension and high cholesterol levels.

Teenagers are particularly susceptible to smoking, often perceiving it as a sign of maturity or peer acceptance. This perception is evident among students at SMP Negeri 28 Mataoleo, Bombana Regency, where smoking is a common behavior among teenagers. Based on Mu'tadin's theory, students who smoke can be categorized as moderate, heavy, and very heavy smokers. The research findings revealed that one student smokes between one and six cigarettes per day, another smokes more than fifteen cigarettes, and the last informant consumes up to twenty-five cigarettes daily. These students admitted that their initial reason for smoking was curiosity or peer influence, but over time, smoking became a habit they struggled to quit due to nicotine addiction.

The addiction to cigarettes among teenagers is fueled by nicotine dependence, which leads to withdrawal symptoms when smoking is stopped. Many students acknowledge that they feel restless or dizzy when they do not smoke, indicating their dependency on nicotine. Peer influence, emotional stress, and social activities play a significant role in reinforcing smoking habits among teenagers. According to the Hall hypothesis, smokers exhibit physical and psychological signs when engaging in smoking activities, such as handling cigarettes skillfully, appearing relaxed while smoking, and consuming multiple cigarettes in one sitting. These observations suggest that smoking among students is deeply ingrained in their daily routines and social behaviors.

Efforts to prevent smoking among students have been implemented at SMP Negeri 28 Mataoleo, with Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers playing a crucial role. One of the primary prevention strategies involves educating students about the dangers of smoking. This is done through regular guidance during school assemblies and classroom discussions. PAI teachers, in collaboration with counseling (BK) teachers, continuously provide information about the negative health effects of smoking. By using emotional approaches and constant reminders, teachers hope to instill awareness among students and discourage them from picking up the habit.

Another preventive measure taken by the school is the strict enforcement of smoking prohibitions within school premises. Teachers actively monitor student behavior and provide guidance when students are caught smoking. Although the school does not have a specialized program for treating smoking addiction, teachers focus on educating students about the risks and encouraging open discussions. The counseling teacher, Mr. AW, emphasizes that while smoking behavior is difficult to eliminate completely, continuous reminders and moral support can help students make better choices. The school also maintains an open communication system with students to provide guidance and solutions to personal issues that may contribute to smoking habits.

Religious activities have also been introduced as a preventive strategy to discourage smoking among students. Islamic teachings emphasize healthy living, and through religious programs, students are encouraged to adopt positive habits. These programs include honesty discussions, where students openly share their smoking experiences, and collaborative efforts with parents and stakeholders to address the issue. By integrating religious values into education, students develop a stronger awareness of the negative consequences of smoking and are motivated to avoid it.

Lastly, instilling good behavior habits is another key strategy implemented by PAI teachers. Moral education and character-building activities are conducted both inside and outside the classroom to help students develop self-discipline and a sense of responsibility.

Daily routines such as reading short religious texts before class help shape students' character and reinforce positive values. These efforts are complemented by direct interventions, such as personal counseling and discussions with parents, to ensure that students receive the necessary guidance and support to quit smoking. By combining education, discipline, and moral teachings, SMP Negeri 28 Mataoleo aims to reduce smoking behavior among students and promote a healthier lifestyle.

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that smoking habits among students of SMP Negeri 28 Mataoleo, Bombana Regency are influenced by the surrounding environment, especially peers. Based on Mu'tadin's theory, three informants in this study were classified as moderate, heavy, and very heavy smokers, according to the number of cigarettes they smoked each day. Initially, they smoked only because they wanted to try due to social influence, but over time, this habit developed into an addiction. However, by using preventive and rehabilitative methods, BK instructors and Islamic Religious Education teachers have attempted to make smoking habits less common. Preventive approaches include education about the dangers of smoking, implementing school rules, increasing religious activities, and encouraging positive behavior. Meanwhile, curative approaches are carried out through direct interaction, religious guidance, and parental involvement in dealing with students who are already accustomed to smoking. Although in the last four months the number of students who smoke has decreased, some of them still have difficulty quitting due to dependence. Overall, this study indicates that although various efforts have been implemented, social and psychological factors remain the main challenges in suppressing smoking habits among students. Therefore, a more comprehensive and sustainable strategy is needed to significantly reduce smoking behavior.

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