Who are more likely to have quit intentions among Malaysian adult smokers? Findings from the 2020 ITC Malaysia Survey

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Abstract
Increasing quitting among smokers is essential to reduce the population burden of smoking-related diseases. Smokers’ intentions to quit smoking are among the strongest predictors of future quit attempts. It is therefore important to understand factors associated with intentions to quit, and this is particularly important in low- and middle-income countries, where there have been few studies on quit intentions. The present study was conducted to identify factors associated with quit intentions among smokers in Malaysia. Data came from the 2020 International Tobacco Control (ITC) Malaysia Survey, a self-administered online survey of 1047 adult (18+) Malaysian smokers. Smokers who reported that they planned to quit smoking in the next month, within the next six months, or sometime beyond six months were classified as having intentions to quit smoking. Factors associated with quit intentions were examined by using multivariable logistic regression. Most smokers (85.2%) intended to quit smoking. Smokers were more likely to have quit intentions if they were of Malay ethnicity vs. other ethnicities (adjusted odds ratio (AOR) = 1.82, 95% confidence interval (CI) = 1.03–3.20), of moderate (AOR = 2.11, 95% CI = 1.12–3.99) or high level of education vs. low level of education (AOR = 1.97, 95% CI = 1.04–3.75), if they had ever tried to quit smoking vs. no quit attempt (AOR = 8.81, 95% CI = 5.09–15.27), if they received advice to quit from a healthcare provider vs. not receiving any quit advice (AOR = 3.78, 95% CI = 1.62–8.83), and if they reported worrying about future health because of smoking (AOR = 3.11, 95% CI = 1.35–7.15 (a little worried/moderately worried vs. not worried); AOR = 7.35, 95% CI = 2.47–21.83 (very worried vs. not worried)). The factors associated with intentions to quit smoking among Malaysian smokers were consistent with those identified in other countries. A better understanding of the factors influencing intentions to quit can strengthen existing cessation programs and guide the development of more effective smoking-cessation programs in Malaysia.

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