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# Smoking among school-going adolescents in selected secondary schools in Peninsular Malaysia- findings from the Malaysian Adolescent Health Risk Behaviour (MyaHRB) study

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## Abstract

**Background:** A multitude of studies have revealed that smoking is a learned behaviour during adolescence and efforts to reduce the incidence of smoking has been identified as long-term measures to curb the smoking menace. The objective of this study was to determine the prevalence as well as the intra and inter-personal factors associated with smoking among upper secondary school students in selected schools in Peninsular Malaysia.

**Methods:** A study was carried out in 2013, which involved a total of 40 secondary schools. They were randomly selected using a two-stage clustering sampling method. Subsequently, all upper secondary school students (aged 16 to 17 years) from each selected school were recruited into the study. Data was collected using a validated standardised questionnaire.

**Results:** This study revealed that the prevalence of smoking was 14.6% (95% CI:13.3–15.9), and it was significantly higher among males compared to females (27.9% vs 2.4%,  $p < 0.001$ ). Majority of smokers initiated smoking during their early adolescent years (60%) and almost half of the respondents bought cigarettes themselves from the store. Multivariable analysis revealed that the following factors increased the likelihood of being a current smoker: being male (aOR 21.51, 95% CI:13.1–35), perceived poor academic achievement (aOR 3.42, 95% CI:1.50–7.37) had one or both parents who smoked (aOR 1.80, 95% CI:1.32–2.45; aOR 6.50, 95% CI:1.65–25.65), and always feeling lonely (aOR 2.23, 95% CI:1.21–4.43). In contrast, respondents with a higher religiosity score and protection score were less likely to smoke (aOR 0.51, 95% CI:0.15–0.92; aOR 0.71, 95% CI 0.55–0.92).

**Conclusion:** This study demonstrated that the prevalence of smoking among Malaysian adolescents of school-going age was high, despite implementation of several anti-smoking measures in Malaysia. More robust measures integrating the factors identified in this study are strongly recommended to curb the smoking epidemic among adolescents in Malaysia.

**Keywords:** Adolescent smoking, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, School-going adolescents, Peninsular Malaysia

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# Smoking Among Secondary School

**Léo Pomar**



## **Smoking Among Secondary School:**

## **Smoking Among Secondary School** Book Review: Unveiling the Magic of Language

In an electronic era where connections and knowledge reign supreme, the enchanting power of language has become much more apparent than ever. Its ability to stir emotions, provoke thought, and instigate transformation is truly remarkable. This extraordinary book, aptly titled "**Smoking Among Secondary School**," compiled by a very acclaimed author, immerses readers in a captivating exploration of the significance of language and its profound effect on our existence. Throughout this critique, we shall delve into the book's central themes, evaluate its unique writing style, and assess its overall influence on its readership.

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