



The 13th World Conference on Tobacco OR Health

Building capacity for a tobacco-free world

July 12-15, 2006, Washington, DC, USA

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Friday, 14 July 2006 - 12:00 PM
103-74

Evaluation of a Nationwide Media Campaign in Malaysia: Findings from International Tobacco Control Policy

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Objective: To evaluate the effects of a one-year nationwide media campaign on Malaysian smokers and non-smokers with respect to knowledge, attitude and behaviour towards smoking.

Methods: A total of 2007 adult smokers (including male and female) and 1011 adolescent between 13-17 years, regardless of smoking status were surveyed from household using a multi-stage cluster sampling design between January and March 2005. An additional of 1,500 adult non-smokers (male and female) were also sampled. Adult respondents were subjected to a face-to-face interview using a standardized survey questions while adolescents completed a 30-minute self-administered questionnaire.

Results: Exposure to the campaign was very high among adult smokers and non-smokers as well as adolescents. All media channels utilized were cited with television and billboards being the most reported. The rates of unprompted recall of the campaign messages were high. The campaign had stimulated discussions about smoking and health among family members and friends particularly by non-smokers and adolescents. Many adult smokers and non-smokers felt that the campaign would definitely be effective in discouraging children and young adults from picking up smoking habit. The adolescent also reported that the campaign had made them less likely to smoke in the future while those who smoke were motivated to quit as a result of the campaign.

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