Reviewer’s report

Title: Factors affecting commencement and cessation of smoking behaviour in Malaysian adults

Version: 1 Date: 27 October 2011

Reviewer: Abdul Rashid Ismail

Reviewer’s report:

Summary

The manuscript sought to examine factors affecting the commencement and quitting smoking in Malaysian population. It was a well-designed two-stage stratified random sampling involving Malaysian population in private households. The instrument used was pre-tested before the study. Nevertheless, it was a professional led questionnaire and the common issues of validity and sensitivity should be addressed. Log-rank test and multiple regression tests were completed to compare the differences among the groups and calculate the hazard rate ratio for commencing and quitting factors. The reported results indicate that gender, ethnicity, history of quid chewing and alcohol consumption are factors for commencement of smoking while ethnicity, quid chewing and type of tobacco smoked are factors influencing the smoking cessation behaviour. The discussion and conclusion are well written and interesting to read.

a. Major Compulsory Revisions

There is no major revision needed from the study. Part of the study regarding factors affecting commencement and cessation of betel quid chewing behaviour in Malaysian adults was published in the BMC Public health 2011; 11:82 issue.

b. Minor Essential Revisions

The introduction was well written with relevant information to build interest in reading. The methodology was well explained. Nonetheless, under Data collection (third lines) should be elaborated to address the common measuring issues using questionnaire. Since, the questionnaire was pre-tested, it is best to describe the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire.

Under the Data Collection the definition of current smokers and a person who has stopped smoking (last sentence) was well defined. However, under the heading of statistical analysis (line 7-8) the definition of current smokers was conflicting to the definition in Data Collection. Consider, revising the definition from the words “at least” to “less than” in line 8 under the heading of statistical analysis. (If it is not a typing error it led to serious misinterpretation of the analysis).

c. Discretionary Revision

Tremendous campaign, strategies and policies were employed by the
government of Malaysia to encourage people to stop smoking and reduced the prevalence of smokers in the country. It is worth to mention some of these efforts in the discussion in relation to the finding of the study. It would assist relevant agency (especially Ministry of Health Malaysia) to formulate future policies and strategies in tobacco cessation promotion.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.