

## **HOOKED UP ON SHISHA : EXPLORING THE INITIATION FACTORS AMONG FEMALE SHISHA SMOKERS IN KLANG VALLEY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

#### **Introduction**

Tobacco is considered a global public health threat and major cause of morbidity and mortality across the world. World Health Organization (WHO) reported out of 1 billion smokers globally, 200 million are women. National Health & Morbidity Survey 2015 revealed prevalence of female smokers in Malaysia increased from 1.0% in 2011 to 1.4% in 2015. Shisha smoking has become popular due to the misconception of it being a safer alternative to cigarette smoking. There are limited studies conducted on shisha smoking among women. Therefore, this paper aimed at exploring the initiative factors contributing to shisha smoking among women.

#### **Methodology :**

This qualitative research was carried out in Klang Valley between March 2016 and February 2017 amongst females 23 to 33 years old (n=19). Data collected using face-to-face in-depth interviews, transcribed verbatim and analyzed using thematic analysis.

#### **Result :**

Most participants acknowledged shisha smoking is more appealing than cigarette smoking. Reported reasons of inclination to shisha over cigarette smoking are as medium of socializing, less hazardous, family and friends acceptance, accessibility, less addictive, pleasant flavoured odour and relatively cheap.

#### **Conclusion :**

Misconceptions on unseen dangers of shisha smoking due to ignorance and false perceptions can become an emerging threat that needs addressing not only for women but also for the entire populations.