

Cigarette Smoking: The Perceptions of Islamic Religious Leaders in the Province of Tawi-Tawi, Philippines

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Abstract: Cigarette smoking is a day-to-day practice of some Muslims, particularly in the province of Tawi-Tawi. The issue of the specific legal rule on cigarette smoking is controversial and debatable among Muslim scholars. This study shows qualitative and quantitative results on the perceptions of Muslim religious leaders on cigarette smoking in Tawi-Tawi. The key-informant interview of this study finds that cigarette smoking is *haram* following verses from Qur'an, 4:29, 2:195, 17:26-27; and *hadith*: "there should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm." Although few regarded it as *makruh*, the Binary Logistic Regression Analysis test result shows that age has a negative correlation with the chance of *haram* responding to smoking. At the same time, female respondents indicate consistency in responding to *haram* compared to their male counterparts. Educational attainment shows positively correlated with *haram* as ruling for cigarette smoking. This study concludes that cigarette smoking is *haram* from the Islamic perspective.

Keywords: cigarette smoking, Muslims in Philippines, logistic regression

I. INTRODUCTION

The essential gift that Allah has ever given us is life[1], for it is due to this gift of life we could still be able to repent and correct our misdeeds (*ma'shiah*) and further increase and develop our good deeds (*ibadah*), if Allah so wills[2].

Thus, we have to give life value as Allah Himself values it. A such valuable gift which He inculcates in the Holy Qur'an and makes us obligated to give value by neither harming nor killing ourselves, and the Holy Qur'an states: "Nor kill (or destroy) yourselves." [3]

The Holy Prophet, in this regard, had also given his divinely inspired saying (*Hadith Qudsi*) stating: "Abu Jundab (r.a.) narrated that the Prophet (s.a.w.) said, a man was inflicted with wounds and he committed suicide, and so Allah said: my slave has caused death on himself, so I forbid paradise for him [4]."

In recent years, cigarette smoking is only a matter of *makruh* (discouraged) regarding its respective ruling [5]. However, upon the arrival of our scholars who acquired Islamic education from foreign countries such as Saudi Arabia, Syria, Pakistan, and Egypt [6], the Muslim *'Ummah*,

particularly in Tawi-Tawi, is now in the dilemma of confusion, for these Muslim scholars are now arguing and claiming that cigarette smoking is not *makruh* but is *haram*.

Such newly asserted view often leads to an exchange of words, discussions, and even argumentation among the native Muslims in the said province. Hence, the study about the Islamic ruling on cigarette smoking is hereby undertaken to document the opinions of *'ulama* and analyze them in the light of both qualitative and quantitative research method.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The study of Islam and Johnson looked at the "Influence of known psychosocial smoking risk factors on Egyptian adolescents' cigarette smoking behavior" using cross-sectional survey in 2003; they randomly administered the survey questions to 1930 students in grades 7, 9, and 12 in the city of Alexandria, Egypt. It finds that adolescents are more influenced to smoke a cigarette by their family members than their peers outside the home. They concluded that government smoking prevention programs should target adult family members of the community [7].

Gilliland, Islam, Berhane, Gauderman, McConnell, Avol, and Peters found that new-onset asthma was associated with regular cigarette smoking. Three hundred or more cigarettes per year smoked by children are found to have relative risk (R.R.) for said asthma compared to nonsmokers. Such risk in regular smokers is also found to have greater in nonallergic than in children with allergies. However, the most significant risk of becoming an active smoker is those exposed to maternal smoking during gestation. The study was conducted among 2609 fourth and seventh-grade students in California who do not have life-long asthma history [8].

Ghouri, Atcha, and Sheikh's "Influence of Islam on smoking among Muslims" examined the prevalence of smoking cigarettes in 30 Muslim countries. The study finds that the prevalence of smoking cigarettes in most Muslim countries is higher than in the United Kingdom. The study recommends thoroughly understanding Islam and its culture to appropriate the best intervention and health promotional messages [9].

On the contrary, the study of Yong, Borland, Fong, Omar, and Maizurah looked closely at the case of Muslim and non-Muslim countries, which was conducted among 1482 Malaysian Muslims and 1971 Thai Buddhist adult smokers. The study finds that about 58% of the Buddhists and 61% of the Muslims reported that their respective religious leaders had encouraged them to quit smoking. The logistic regression model result shows that Muslim religious leaders were successful in attempting smokers to make them stop, while it was not that successful for the case of Thai Buddhists [10].

Despite health issues associated with cigarette smoking that prompted most religious scholars to declare it *haram* [11], some scholars are still persistent that it is *makruh*. Point one case at hand is Syarifah (2016) study of why cigarette smoking is *haram*, *mubah*, or *makruh*. She finds no clear and unequivocal verse from the Holy Qur'an stating its ruling, and Islamic scholars are disunited on its injunction. Hence, she concluded that the Qur'an and Sunnah do not expressly prohibit such permissible under the general principle of Islam and so as cigarette smoking. However, due to its interference with the people's health and environment, it is *makruh*[12].

Indeed, cigarette smoking is *haram* yet *makruh* for some religious leaders. Therefore, in this connection, the study about the opinions of the Islamic religious leaders in the province of Tawi-Tawi, Philippines, was hereby conducted.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in the province of Tawi-Tawi, Philippines, where Islam firstly settled before spreading throughout the country [13]. It was participated by the Islamic religious leaders in the province. The researcher used the purposive sampling procedure [14] based on the participants' educational attainment in Islamic schools who graduated locally or abroad. The researcher made use of two parts of the interview guide being set of questions soliciting the demographic profile of the participants in the first part and questions relevant to their perceptions of cigarette smoking in the second part of the guide. It used both qualitative and quantitative research designs specifically; it made use of clustering of ideas to lamp sum the narratives of the research participants into one common theme. This study also utilized quantitative research design by using descriptive statistics like the percentage and frequency distribution as well as inferential statistics like the Binary Logistic Regression Analysis to look into the correlation between the participants' profile and their response on whether or not cigarette smoking is *haram* in Islam.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Respondents Understanding About Cigarette

Question	Response	f	%
What is your understanding of a cigarette?	A cigarette is manufactured from tobacco, which has nicotine and other substances that are not good for human consumption.	14	93%
	Cigarette is <i>makruh</i>	1	7%
Total		15	100%

Table 1 shows that most of the respondents, constituting 93% relatively, view that cigarette is made of tobacco which is injurious to human health, while one of the respondents which constitutes 7% has irrelevant response that cigarette smoking is *makruh*.

Table 2. Respondents' Perceptions on Cigarette Smoking

Question	Response	f	%
What is your understanding of cigarette smoking?	Cigarette smoking is an addictive habit that not only takes away the smoker's good health but also his wealth.	13	87%
	Cigarette smoking has two dimensions for people addicted to cigarette smoking, which are beneficial to them. However, for the people who are not smoking, it is a parable of committing suicide.	2	13%
Total		15	100%

Table 2 shows that most of the respondents perceived that cigarette smoking would be destructive to the physical condition of human health. At the same time, few of them opined that cigarette smoking has the same benefits for smokers' suicide, according to nonsmokers.

Table 3. Issue On Whether or Not the Respondents Smoke Cigarette

Question	Response	f	%
Do you smoke a cigarette? Yes or no? If yes, why do you smoke? If no why don't you smoke?	Yes, I smoke simply because it makes me feel well and helps me feel relaxed in times of depression.	1	7%
	No. I don't smoke for it endangers my health.	14	93%
Total		15	100%

Table 3 shows that almost all of the respondents prefer not to indulge in the practice of smoking cigarettes simply because they believe it to be harmful to human consumption. In contrast, only one (1) of the respondent's view that cigarette smoking does not harm him; instead, it provides tranquility and helps him relax, especially in times of depression.

Table 4. Issue On Whether Or Not The Practice Of Smoking Cigarette Has Religious Benefits

Question	Response	f	%
Does cigarette smoking have religious benefits? Yes or No? If yes, what are the religious benefits of smoking cigarettes? If not, what are the disadvantages of cigarette smoking?	No, there are no religious benefits to smoking cigarettes. Cigarette smoking is the sifah (attribute) of those in hell. Besides, it has several disadvantages. Such as it causes lung cancer, wastes money, and produces tar on the teeth.	13	87%
	Yes, there are benefits of smoking as follows: Protection against mosquito bites; • Protection against thieves; • Protection against snake bite; and • Prevention against old age	2	13%
Total		15	100%

Table 4 shows that most of the respondents, constituting 80%, viewed cigarette smoking as having no religious benefit, for it is harmful to physical and economical consumption. Only a few of them, constituting 20% of the sample data, considered cigarette smoking as having some protective benefits for smokers.

Table 5. Issue On Whether Or Not Islam Encourage Cigarette Smoking

Question	Response	f	%
Does Islam encourage cigarette smoking?	No, Islam does not encourage cigarette smoking.	15	100%
Total		15	100%

Table 5 shows that all respondents unanimously perceive that Islam does not encourage everyone to indulge on the practice of cigarette smoking because it is harmful to one's health and what is harmful to the body must not be consumed.

Table 6. The Legal Rule Of Cigarette Smoking

Question	Response	f	%
What is the legal rule of Islam concerning cigarette smoking?	It is <i>haram</i>	12	80%
	It is <i>makruh</i>	3	20%
Total		15	100%

Table 6 shows that most of the respondent *ulama* in Tawi-Tawi, constituting 80%, perceived that cigarette smoking is *haram* for it endangers one's health, wealth, and even other people around him, while few of them, comprising 20% hold their views that cigarette smoking is only *makruh*.

Table 7 (A). Respondents' Legal Evidence On The Rule Of Cigarette Smoking

Question	Response	f	%
What are the legal bases of Islam on cigarette smoking?	Qur'an And do not kill you selves (Al-Qur'an, 4:29)	14	93%
	Has not presented the same ayat	1	7%
Total		15	100%

Table 7 (a) shows that almost all of the respondents, which constitutes 93 % based their response on the afore-

cited verse of the Holy Qur'an in support to the rule of prohibition of cigarette smoking.

Table 7(B)

Question	Response	f	%
What are the legal bases for cigarette smoking?	And do not throw yourselves into destruction (Al-Qur'an, 2:195)	14	93.24%
	Has not presented the same ayat	1	7%
Total		15	100%

Table 7 (b) shows that most of the respondents, constituting 93%, perceived that cigarette smoking is *haram* due to its destructive effect on owned health on the basis of the above-cited ayat.

Table 7-(C)

Question	Response	f	%
What are the legal bases of Islam on cigarette smoking	But spend not wastefully (your wealth) in the manner of spendthrift, verily, spendthrift are brothers of shaitan (Al-Qur'an, 17:26-27).	14	93%
	Has not presented the same ayat	1	7%
Total		15	100%

Table 7-(c) shows that most respondents comprise 93. % perceived cigarette smoking as *haram* due to property waste based on the above-given ayat.

Table 7-(D)

Question	Response	f	%
What are the legal bases of Islam on cigarette smoking	There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm.(Hadith Saheeh Al-Jami' # 7517)	13	87%
	Has not presented the same hadith	2	13%
Total		15	100%

Table 7 (d) indicates that the majority of the respondents do not only view cigarette smoking as *haram* due to its injurious effect on one's health but also on others' health as well based on the above-cited hadith of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.).

Table 8. Binary Logistic Regression Analysis

Variables in equation	Estimate	p-value	Remarks
Age	-0.22086	0.00 ***	Significant
Gender	-0.35555	0.01 *	Significant
Tribe	0.05159	0.47	Not Significant
Secular Educ'l Attainment	0.29978	0.001**	Significant
Islamic Educ'l Attainment	0.03737	0.64	Not Significant
Note: Significant. codes: 0 '****' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1			

Table 8 shows that of the demographic profile tested that included age, gender, tribe, secular educational

attainment, and Islamic educational attainment, only age and gender, $p = 0.00$ and $p = 0.01$, respectively, are negatively correlated with the perception statement "Cigarette smoking is *haram*." In contrast, secular education, p -value = 0.00, with 0.29 est., reveals a positive correlation with the same perception statement.

The data revealed that for every one unit increase in age of the respondents, it is associated with a 0.22 decrease in the chance to respond cigarette smoking is *haram*. On the other hand, since the male was coded 1 while the female was coded 0 in this study, it shows that female participants are more likely to say it is *haram* consistently than their male counterparts.

The regression analysis further indicated that secular education attainment is found to have a positive correlation with the above-stated perception statement. This means that the higher the secular educational attainment of the respondents is, the more likely they respond that cigarette is *haram*.

In contrast, tribal affiliation and Islamic educational attainment yielded p -values higher than the 0.05 significant level, indicating that they do not have a significant correlation to the perception statement used in this study.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

- Respondents have common knowledge of the concept of cigarettes which are made from tobacco that is injurious to health, according to their personal observation and cognitive understanding of the written literature.
- The respondents have differences in perception of the benefits of cigarette smoking, whether it brings secular or spiritual benefits, because of differences in interpretation of the text from the Qur'an and the Ahadith.
- The respondents also have differences in perception as to the specific legal rule of cigarette smoking, considering the fact that its disapproval is presumptively interpreted either as an absolute prohibition (*haram*) or not absolute (*makruh*) by way of interference from the Qur'an verses and the Prophetic Hadith.
- Islam prohibits the consumption of harmful things and waste of property as a general rule.
- Younger people tend to respond to cigarette smoking as not *haram*; female participants were consistent in saying its *haram*, and people with higher educational

attainment have a better chance to respond that it is forbidden in Islam.

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