

“BARRIERS TOWARDS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN ANTI-SMOKING CAMPAIGN PROGRAM IN MALACCA”

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ABSTRACT

Stopping cigarette smoking has become a big problem for all government agencies. In democratic countries, the economic strength of the tobacco industry is so great that measures taken by government agencies to protect the rights of nonsmokers cannot be applied effectively. In some undemocratic countries, on the other hand, government agencies cannot be trusted and they lack the motivation to deal with the problems. And under any political system, social conditioning and chemical habituation make banning tobacco a formidable task and one that would take a long time. Ironically, media campaigns are likely to focus exclusively on encouraging youths not to smoke are likely to be ineffective. The message that “kids shouldn't smoke” actually reinforces the tobacco industry's marketing of the cigarette as “one of the few initiations into the adult world” and as a symbol of the “growing-up, maturity process”. Furthermore, focusing on tobacco use as a problem only among young persons may undermine other facets of a comprehensive approach to tobacco control by counteracting efforts to change broader societal norms regarding tobacco use. Framing the epidemic of tobacco-related disease only as a problem of under-age smoking may also have other unintended effects as it may strengthen the social acceptance of adult tobacco use and may reinforce the perceived legitimacy of promoting this deadly product to adults. Effective communication plays a major role in anti-smoking campaign program especially on Anti-Smoking clinic. There are some communication barriers exist during the communication process on anti-smoking campaign program such as language barriers, stress, emotions, cultures differences and misinterpretation. These problems will be the focus of this study and the researcher will identify the types of communication barriers on anti-smoking campaign program. A combination of media and interpersonal communication has been found to be most effective in communicating health information. Media are an appropriate approach for certain objectives of communication campaigns, but not all. For instance, media will only provide limited involvement or interaction. For this reason, a combination of mass media and interpersonal communication tends to be more effective. Interpersonal communication often flows from media messages, as opinion leaders and others share what they have learned, endorse messages, and otherwise enhance the impact of the media activities. Interpersonal communication allows for much greater participation where interaction and feedback are required. The aim of this research is to identify the barriers that occur during anti smoking campaign program done by Malacca Health Department on Anti-Smoking Clinic, campaign effectiveness towards Malacca citizens and public perceptions and also to find out the strategies in improving communication skills while dealing with the public's especially the group of smokers. This study will utilize the phenomenological research tradition because the researcher intends to gain an in-depth understanding of a communication phenomenon instead of concentrating on just a causal relation in the communication world. Therefore, qualitative in-depth interview will be conducted in this research. Informants for this study have particular characteristics which enabled detailed exploration of the research study area. Social Judgment Theory will be selected in this study as it will guide researcher.

Key words: Smoking, anti-smoking campaign, attitude, communication factors, involvement.

1.0 Introduction

Booth-Butterfield (2003) describes smoking across a person's life span as a “thoroughly integrated, embedded behavior” that is difficult to alter, and argued for more focused communication interventions. Hansen (2010) contends that differential strategies should be applied to warn smokers against negative consequences of smoking as “death-related warnings are not effective”. Devlin (2007) study of young people in England found that fear-based anti-smoking appeals can encourage a defensive response and ultimately lead to the rejection of messages, especially by committed smokers.

A combination of media, interpersonal communication, and events has been found to be most effective in communicating health information. Media are an appropriate approach for certain objectives of communication campaigns, but not all. For instance, limited involvement or interaction is only possible through mass media. For this reason, a combination of mass media and interpersonal communication tends to be more effective. Interpersonal communication often flows from media messages, as opinion leaders and others share what they have learned, endorse messages, and otherwise enhance the impact of the media activities. Interpersonal communication allows for much greater participation where interaction and feedback are required.

It is often enhanced by the use of audio-visual aids, props and other forms of multimedia. Events combine both media and interpersonal communication and are often promoted and reported on through the media (e.g., news and features). Events are

designed to be newsworthy. For this reason, media coverage is a key objective and indicator of success. This type of combined approach reaches large numbers of people but also provides opportunities for participation through interpersonal communication.

Several studies have shown that mass media campaigns promote health knowledge (Ettema, 1983, Farquhar, 1990, Maibach, 1991), change attitudes (Farquhar, 1977) and may change behavior (Cummings, 1987, Ershoff, 1990). More recently, Flynn (1994) have shown that the effects of a 4 year program that combined mass media and school-based intervention persisted 2 years after the interventions' completion. In a critical review of mass media and smoking cessation, Flay (1987) showed that most Public Service Announcements (PSA) campaigns do not produce noticeable behavioral effects although he was more favorably disposed to paid advertisements. Redman (1990) was more skeptical and maintained that mass media campaigns alone do not produce noticeable behavior effects.

Theory suggests that mass media are more effective if they stimulate interpersonal communication (Flay and Sobel, 1983; Rogers and Storey, 1987) and research has shown that peer influence is a major determinant of adolescent smoking. Accordingly, mass media campaigns which succeed in stimulating interpersonal communication, and thereby contribute to mobilizing social support to behavior change, may prove to improve the behavioral effects.

This study focus on one dimension of an active audience as a concept which is the "perceivness". Public participation in many preventive health programs is suboptimal. All campaign messages and activities must be tied to the communication strategy. In consumer marketing, tremendous efforts are made to maintain strategic consistency in all marketing communication related to a company and its products. Integrated marketing communication is based on controlling "brand messages" to ensure that they are consistent, reinforce each other, and, most important, do not contradict each other.

Similarly, if the Anti-Smoking Campaign is to achieve its maximum potential, it is critical that all paid advertising and other communication components be an expression of the Communication Strategy. The central messages of the campaign should be repeated often and in a variety of ways. Repetition is important to enhance exposure to campaign messages; variety is important to capture the range of perspectives among audience members and to ensure that the messages will not be perceived as stale. When message planning and implementation are not integrated, work may go "off strategy," reducing the level of effectiveness.

Problem Statement

Stopping cigarette smoking has become a big problem for all governments. In democratic countries, the economic strength of the tobacco industry is so great that measures taken by governments to protect the rights of nonsmokers cannot be applied effectively. In some undemocratic countries, on the other hand, governments cannot be trusted and they lack the motivation to deal with the problem. And under any political system, social conditioning and chemical habituation make banning tobacco a formidable task and one that would take a long time.

Yet, current information campaigns are failing as worldwide use increases faster than the population. Totally banning cigarette smoking so far has been unsuccessful in all countries. An alternative approach includes either the prohibition of smoking in the workplace and public buildings or the strict limitation of smoking to specified areas. This movement may be the greatest success of the information campaign against tobacco.

Huge banners and the screaming television debut of the anti-smoking campaign, youth smoking in hiding after school and women seen smoking in public have yet to reduce in Malacca.

Evidence of more smoking hazards in Malacca frequently comes into the picture when a taxi driver pulls over at a shopping complex, puffing a cigarette and asking a potential passenger where he was heading to. Before the "Tak Nak" campaign, the authorities took several steps to make smoking in public places, taxis, trains and lifts as well as shopping complexes and restaurants illegal.

Not all anti-tobacco advertising is effective. Focus group research has suggested that commercials that expose the tobacco industry's manipulation of young persons or focus on themes of secondhand smoke and cigarette addiction are the most effective strategies for reducing tobacco use. Campaigns based on the short-term or long-term health effects of smoking are less effective.

Ironically, media campaigns are likely focuses exclusively on encouraging youths not to smoke are likely to be ineffective. The message that "kids shouldn't smoke" actually reinforces the tobacco industry's marketing of the cigarette as "one of the few initiations into the adult world" and as a symbol of the "growing-up, maturity process".

Furthermore, focusing on tobacco use as a problem only among young persons may undermine other facets of a comprehensive approach to tobacco control by counteracting efforts to change broader societal norms regarding tobacco use. Framing the epidemic of tobacco-related disease only as a problem of under-age smoking may also have other unintended effects: It may strengthen the social acceptance of adult tobacco use and may reinforce the perceived legitimacy of promoting this deadly product to adults.

2.0 Literature Review

Public Communication Campaign towards Societies

Public communication campaigns use the media, messaging, and an organized set of communication activities to generate specific outcomes in a large number of individuals and in a specified period of time. They are an attempt to shape behavior toward desirable social outcomes. To maximize their chances of success, campaigns usually coordinate media efforts with a mix of other interpersonal and community-based communication channels.

There are two main types of campaigns: 1) *individual behavior change campaigns* that try to change in individuals the behaviors that lead to social problems or promote behaviors that lead to improved individual or social well-being; and 2) *public will campaigns* that attempt to mobilize public action for policy change. Public will campaigns are less understood, but are increasing rapidly in number.

Public communication campaigns are growing more sophisticated and strategic. While there is still much progress to be made, campaign designers have begun to diversify their strategies and abandon the notion that information alone is the cure-all for society's behavioral ills. As a result, campaigns are decreasingly based only on the flawed notion that people will improve if they just know better. More campaigns are paying attention to context and linking their traditional media and behavior change strategies with on-the-ground community action to make the social and policy environment more supportive of the desired campaign results.

Evaluation of these efforts, however, has not kept pace with their innovation. At the same time funders are becoming more focused on results, we are still in the early stages of understanding how best to grapple with what many have called a "fuzzy" area of evaluation (Gould, 1996). Evaluators are trying to understand better the strategies and theories that guide campaigns, the right outcomes to measure, and appropriate methodologies to use in an increasingly sophisticated media and information-saturated world. Supports for both evaluators and nonprofit campaign planners and implementers trying to make their way in this field are lacking, with no definitive guides or mechanisms for learning what paths others have taken and what has been learned along the way.

Very rarely do public communication campaigns feature *only* communications through media channels. "Promotion is only part of the 'marketing mix'" (Balch & Sutton, 1997, p.64). Usually they coordinate media efforts with a diverse mix of other communication channels, some interpersonal and some community-based, in order to extend the reach and frequency of the campaign's messages and increase the probability that messages will successfully result in a change (Dungan-Seaver, 1999).

Anti-Smoking Campaigns

There is a growing concern that an increasing number of teenagers worldwide, mainly from the developing world, are getting addicted to smoking. A Global Youth Tobacco Survey by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Cancer Institute, the World Health Organization and the Canadian Public Health Association confirm that 14 % of world youth smoke, many even starting at the age of 10. There are 1.2 billion smokers worldwide of which half are expected to die prematurely from smoking related diseases.

In many developed countries smoking has become unpopular with the upper middle class that it has nearly ceased among the wealthy. However in the developing countries the number of smokers is increasing at a rapid rate.

The anti-smoking campaigns that have run over the years have primarily targeted smokers urging them to reduce or give it up entirely. However a new crop of smokers are springing up as more youths and women take up the habit. This is due to marketing tactics of cigarette companies who have widened their net to increase sales.

With new findings that reveal the harm smoking does to non-smokers it has become a national priority to address the problem. Smoking is a very serious matter, especially when children desire to adopt a smoking lifestyle. This is the result of a strategy by cigarette companies to "normalize" a bad habit. It is projected as "okay" in fact "cool" to smoke.

It is clear now that people have to be persuaded to make an educated choice to live right, to give up cigarette smoking and the Malaysian Government through the Ministry of Health bears the responsibility to steer its young population away from cigarette smoking.

History, Current Status, and Effectiveness of Media Programs

The use of media programs to counter tobacco use dates back to 1967, when John Banzhaf successfully petitioned the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to consider cigarette advertising under the Fairness Doctrine, a 1949 FCC policy that required broadcasters to air both sides of all controversial public issues. Beginning on 1 July 1967, the FCC required broadcasters to air one antismoking message for every three cigarette commercials; this amounted to \$75 million of advertising time per year from 1968 through 1970. The spots were so effective that in 1970, the tobacco industry agreed to congressional legislation to ban tobacco advertising on television and radio (and thus to eliminate the free antismoking ads).

Subsequent research has shown that the Fairness Doctrine antismoking advertisements resulted in a decline in per capita cigarette consumption of at least 5% and a reduction in the prevalence of teenage smoking of 3 percentage points. In fact, the antismoking advertisements were found to have had an effect that was nearly six times that of cigarette advertising during this period.

The potential effectiveness of mass media anti-smoking campaigns in preventing smoking has now been established on the basis of well-evaluated research and demonstration projects in Vermont and Minnesota. These field experiments show that community- and school-based interventions highlighted by a prominent mass media campaign can reduce the initiation of smoking in adolescents. Under the most favorable circumstances, the prevalence of smoking in young persons has been reduced by 40%.

Before 1988, mass media campaigns to prevent tobacco use or encourage smoking cessation were sporadic and relied on free advertising (public service announcements) or short-term funding for specific campaigns. For example, from 1983 to 1990, the Office on Smoking and Health (part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) ran a series of televised antismoking spots directed at youth, but these were public service announcements that relied on donation of advertising time by broadcasters. Public service announcements are not usually aired during prime time and therefore reach a far smaller audience than do paid advertisements. In 1987, the National Cancer Institute ran a paid, radio antismoking campaign featuring radio personality Casey Kasem, but this project lasted only a year.

The use of mass media for tobacco control increased in developed countries in the 1990s, particularly in the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. The emergence of significant funding sources, particularly legal settlements with tobacco companies and earmarked tobacco taxes, has allowed the implementation of sustained, mass media campaigns with sufficient audience reach to be effective. Media have been used to promote smoking cessation and smoke-free spaces, to raise awareness of health effects and of unethical tobacco industry behavior, and to create support for various policy measures. Although these campaigns have occurred almost exclusively in developed countries, the lessons learned have been consistent enough to be potentially widely applicable.

Public service announcements (advertisements for an issue aired free as a public service) have long been a staple of tobacco control and other health promotion strategies. However, there is very little evidence to support the efficacy of PSAs in reducing tobacco use. The airing of PSAs on a voluntary basis does not guarantee exposure to the public at a level sufficient to change attitudes and behavior on a broad scale.

The effects of these media campaigns, especially those in California and Massachusetts, have been striking. The California tobacco control program was associated with a 10% to 13% long-term decline in cigarette consumption; approximately 21% of this decline was estimated to be due to the media campaign. This translates into a media campaign-related reduction of cigarette sales by 232 million packs in California between 1990 and 1992 alone. Goldman and Glantz showed that cigarette consumption decreased in association with waves of the media campaign and that the decline in consumption nearly halted when Governor Pete Wilson suspended the media campaign in late 1991 and early 1992. Popham and colleagues surveyed adult smokers who quit smoking during 1990 and 1991 and found that in response to uncured questions, 6.7% (representing 33 000 former smokers in the state) cited the anti-smoking commercials as an influence in their decision to quit. When asked directly, an additional 34.3% (representing 173 000 former smokers in the state) indicated that the media campaign had influenced their decision to quit smoking.

The Massachusetts tobacco control program was also associated with a substantial decline in cigarette consumption that seems to be attributable in part to the antismoking media campaign. In addition, 1997 telephone surveys of a random sample of young persons from Massachusetts and throughout the United States revealed that Massachusetts youth were more likely to agree that smoking is an addiction, that tobacco companies lie to kids, that smoking inhibits athletic performance, and that smoking causes permanent wrinkles; all of these were themes of specific antismoking advertisements aired in the state during the previous year.

Factors that Influence Effectiveness of Anti-smoking Campaign Programs

Not all anti-tobacco campaign programs are effective. Focus group research has suggested that commercials that expose the tobacco industry's manipulation of young persons or focus on themes of secondhand smoke and cigarette addiction are the most effective strategies for reducing tobacco use. Campaigns based on the short-term or long-term health effects of smoking are less effective.

Ironically, media campaigns like the one in Arizona, which focuses exclusively on encouraging youths not to smoke, are likely to be ineffective. The message that "kids shouldn't smoke" actually reinforces the tobacco industry's marketing of the cigarette as "one of the few initiations into the adult world" and as a symbol of the "growing-up, maturity process". Furthermore, focusing on tobacco use as a problem only among young persons may undermine other facets of a comprehensive approach to tobacco control by counteracting efforts to change broader societal norms regarding tobacco use. Framing the epidemic of tobacco-related disease only as a problem of under-age smoking may also have other unintended effects: It may strengthen the social acceptance of adult tobacco use and may reinforce the perceived legitimacy of promoting this deadly product to adults.

More generally, the health communication literature suggests that public health messages based on the adverse health consequences of a behavior are only moderately effective in changing the behavior of adolescents. Austin, for example, argued that a "common mistake in campaign design has been to assume that portraying a behavior as bad or unhealthy will cause children to reject it." In fact, the prohibition of behaviors may enhance their appeal to adolescents. DiFranza and McAfee found that public service announcements that portrayed smoking as an adult behavior made smoking more appealing to youths. The Institute of Medicine suggested that "as adolescents venture more and more into the community, their perceptions that certain norms seem to apply only to them and not to adults may promote health-compromising behaviors". Behaviors that are restricted

for adolescents but not adults can become symbols of adult status. So that, directing kids not to smoke without challenging the acceptability of smoking among adults may reinforce adolescents' perceptions of smoking as a symbol of maturity.

The consistency of a health campaign message with messages from other sources also generally affects the success of a public communication campaign. Austin argued that to be effective, public communication campaigns must "provide consistent messages from a variety of sources and over a long period of time." Mixed messages from parents, communities, and health officials may lead adolescents to be skeptical of adult advice. Adolescents are more likely to imitate observed behavior than to do what they are told, especially when the two conflict. Thus, campaigns that focus exclusively on deterring young persons from smoking without challenging the social acceptability of smoking itself (and aiming to reduce tobacco use among everyone, adults and children alike) are unlikely to be effective.

Dorfman and Wallack have explained that the most effective counter-advertisements are those that...

"Challenge the legitimacy and credibility of the industry marketing the product. These are counter-ads, because they represent a clear transfer from the personal to the policy environment and focus on the corporate entity or public policy as a major player in that environment."

By definition, these advertisements are likely to be controversial. Nevertheless, "the power of counter ads may be in the controversy they generate".

Advertisements that directly attack the tobacco industry as the source of the tobacco problem; expose the way in which the industry manipulates, deceives, seduces, and addicts children and adolescents; and highlight the way the industry maintains adult smokers as life-long drug addicts to make profits are effective in challenging the legitimacy and credibility of the industry. Moreover, these themes frame tobacco as a problem because it kills people, not because those younger than 18 years of age use it. The theme of tobacco industry manipulation also demonstrates and reinforces the concept that smoking is a behavior that undermines adolescents' independence, reduces their control over life decisions, and makes them victims of the industry's deceit. Rather than mobilizing young persons to rebel against directives not to smoke, campaigns based on these themes empower them to rebel against an industry that is making its profits by deceiving them; seducing them; manipulating them; addicting them; and, ultimately, killing them.

The tobacco industry knows that messages aimed solely at changing individual behavior and focused mainly on health-related themes are ineffective in challenging social norms and are therefore unlikely to be effective in reducing tobacco use. When they were unsuccessful at eliminating mass media anti-smoking campaigns, the industry and its supporters instead attempted to control the content of the campaigns, ensuring that the result is a program that will have little ultimate impact. The tobacco industry's appreciation of this fact is illustrated by the settlement of Florida's Medicaid suit against the industry. The industry agreed to provide \$200 million for an anti-tobacco campaign but specifically forbade advertisements attacking the industry.

3.0 Methodology

The above objectives can be explained by the research questions:

1. What are the attitude showed by smokers, former smokers and program organizers towards anti-smoking campaign program in determining communication barriers?
2. What are the communication factors that contributed to an anti-smoking campaign program?
3. How smokers, former smokers and program organizers get involved in anti-smoking campaign program?
4. What are the impact of communication barriers towards attitude, factors, ways and involvement in an anti-smoking campaign program by smokers, former smokers and program organizers?

The procedure that would be employed to achieve the purpose of this study is described in the following sections. The descriptions would include the research design, qualitative research in communication, grounded theory, sample selection, criteria for the sample selection, data gathering techniques, interview, informant interview, the procedure of interview, document analysis, data analysis, validity and reliability, researcher as instrument, ethical issues, researcher's bias and pilot study.

Research design

Due to the nature of study, a qualitative research method and techniques is used to enable the researcher to investigate the barriers towards communication effectiveness on anti-smoking campaign program.

In accordance with Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative research is based on one fact; the reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social world. What a qualitative research wants to uncover is how human make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world.

The real purpose of conducting a qualitative study is due to the fact that the researcher wants to understand the natural complexity of the raw data and not to prove preconceived notions, result or theories. By employing qualitative approaches, patterns and similarities across cases emerge from the data, since in the final analysis, what the qualitative researchers is interested in is to understand the process rather than just the product (Meriam, 1998).

Qualitative research also calls for the use of inductive rather than a deductive research strategy. The intuitive understandings accumulated from the field and captured in the data are used to build abstraction, concepts, hypotheses and theories. The data from interview, observations, documents and field notes allow the researcher to understand the ways in which individuals experience the reality. Typically, findings from qualitative research are in the form of themes, categories, typologies, concepts, tentative hypotheses and even theories (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005)

Since qualitative research method has been found to be much used most often enough to understand enormously problems of complex nature in society (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), the key assumptions of qualitative paradigm need to be explained. Qualitative researchers like all human beings are guided by highly abstract principles or beliefs (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Therefore, as Denzin and Lincoln (2005), Guba and Lincoln (1985) and Guba (1990) acknowledged, there are three paradigm defining elements that researcher must be familiar with namely Epistemology, Ontology and Methodology.

4.0 Limitation and Conclusion

There are a few limitations while conducting this research such as, getting commitment from the informants especially smokers due to their ego and denial of the smoking negative effect. Most of the smokers tend to believe that their habit towards smoking will never give bad impacts and they will quit if they want to quit on their own.

For the government, they have tried so much to give the information about smoking and increase the cigarette price but still the numbers of smokers keep increasing. They will stress on the enforcement to succeed the planning and strategy.

Review of the study objective towards attitude of smokers, former smokers and campaigners against the effectiveness of the campaign we can see that in fact anti-smoking campaign can be said to be successful in awakening but not in making a change to change, because according to the study made to respondents mostly reacted quite negative but still has a positive element in their opinions concerning the attitudes expressed in the anti-smoking campaign.

In addition, the role of the public to attend the campaign is also one of the factors the effectiveness of anti-smoking campaigns are recommended. Most of the people interviewed, said that an effective campaign is a campaign that can make changes to the community. Also, it can find out how much change has been successfully implemented. The role of the community is very important to maximize the success of the campaign to change the public perception that the campaign said boring. People should take note that is very important to support the anti-smoking campaign.

Sharing experience by ex-smokers is also very helpful in anti-smoking campaigns. They can share their experiences, risks, and obstacles when they quit smoking. People can share problems to them and can accept an argument by former smokers. According to smokers who are also participated in the study they appreciate that the former smokers relate their experiences are also very useful in anti-smoking campaigns. They can create a question and answer session between them to solve problems.

Through objective of this study, the effects of the involvement of smokers, former smokers and organizer of the anti-smoking campaign is in Melaka clearly shows that the anti-smoking campaign is successful for some people, especially those who support or present themselves to the anti-smoking campaign in Melaka.

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