

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Health is an extremely important aspect and a priority for every individual. As humans, it is essential to maintain and pay attention to our health to ensure optimal well-being. However, the lifestyle choices individuals make and how they take care of themselves have a significant impact on their health. One of the factors that often disrupts a healthy lifestyle is the habit of smoking. Smoking remains one of the most pressing global challenges, contributing to a multitude of adverse health effects and imposing a significant economic burden on individuals and society (Adnan & Samed, 2024). According to the WHO (World Health Organization), there are approximately 1.3 billion tobacco users in the world, with up to half of them at risk of being killed by tobacco. The WHO said that more than 8 million people a year die from the tobacco epidemic. About 7 million people die from direct tobacco use or active smoking, on the other hand about 1.3 million people die from non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke.

In this case, Indonesia in particular is one of the countries with the highest percentage of tobacco consumption in the world. According to the Tobacco Atlas data, the report as of 2021 or the latest available data, the smoking prevalence of Indonesia reached 31%, which is high compared to other countries. Until 2022, the statistics revealed that there were 60.8 million adult men and 3.7 million adult women who were smokers, indicating a significant gender disparity in smoking prevalence (Martini, et al., 2022).

While conventional cigarettes have long been associated with various health risks, the rise of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) or vaping has added a new layer of concern, especially among youth. E-cigarettes, commonly known as ENDS (electronic nicotine delivery systems), include several devices. E-cigarettes, which come in many varieties, are becoming an increasingly important health issue of concern around the world. While they were initially considered a safer alternative to conventional tobacco cigarettes (Facts about E-Cigarettes | FDA, 2023), recent studies have shown that vaping or e-cigarette use also carries significant health risks (Polosa, O'Leary, Tashkin, Emma, & Caruso, 2019). As per the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) definition, e-cigarettes are devices that enable individuals to breathe in an aerosol that includes

nicotine or other compounds. Unlike traditional cigarettes, e-cigarettes rely on batteries and heating elements to vaporize e-liquid from a refillable pouch, releasing an aerosol containing various chemicals (Polosa, O'Leary, Tashkin, Emma, & Caruso, 2019). E-liquid, which is the main component of e-cigarettes, can be found in cartridges or tanks.

Herbert A. Gilbert, as the creator of this e-cigarette has several goals, namely providing a safe and harmless means and method of smoking, providing comfort through flavoring from harmless chemicals, and also making it easier for smokers so that when the cigarette is held in the fingers it does not interfere with the comfort of the user's hand. (United States Patent No. 3,200,819, 1965). These goals are being achieved little by little and can be seen by the increase in e-cigarette users each year. The results of the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) in 2021 stated that the prevalence of e-cigarette smoking increased from 0.3% in 2011 to 3% in 2021. Seeing the increase in percentages around the world, this is also happening in Indonesia. According to a survey conducted by Statista Consumer Insight, 25% of Indonesian respondents have used e-cigarettes at least occasionally. The Statista survey also stated that Indonesia is the highest country in the use of e-cigarettes.

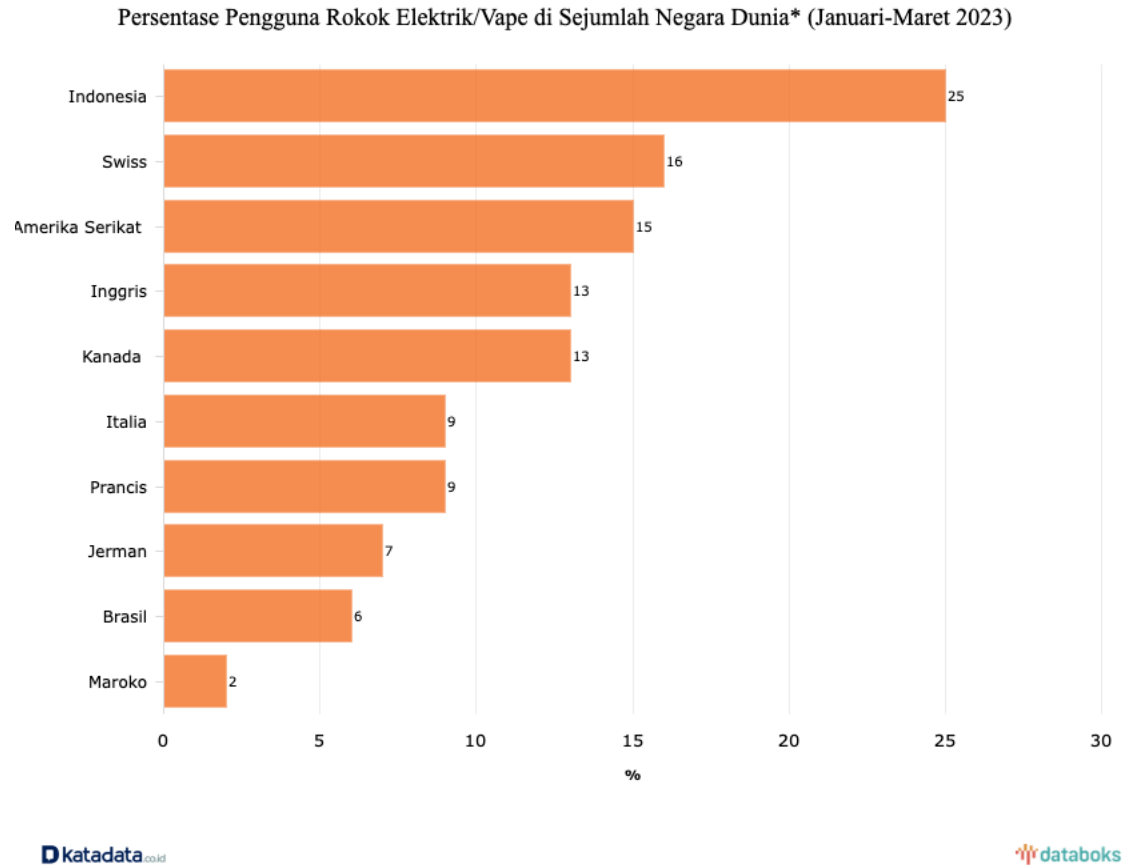


Figure 1 Chart of e-cigarette/vape users in some countries around the world (Source : Databoks)

Users and enthusiasts of e-cigarettes are very diverse, not only men who use e-cigarettes but many women also have an interest in consuming these e-cigarettes. Many women are just starting or trying this e-cigarette so that they become new users and not even a few decide to become active smokers. Reporting from the results of Statista survey data released in December 2022, the percentage of e-cigarette use based on gender is 64% for men and 36% for women from the total Indonesian vape users.

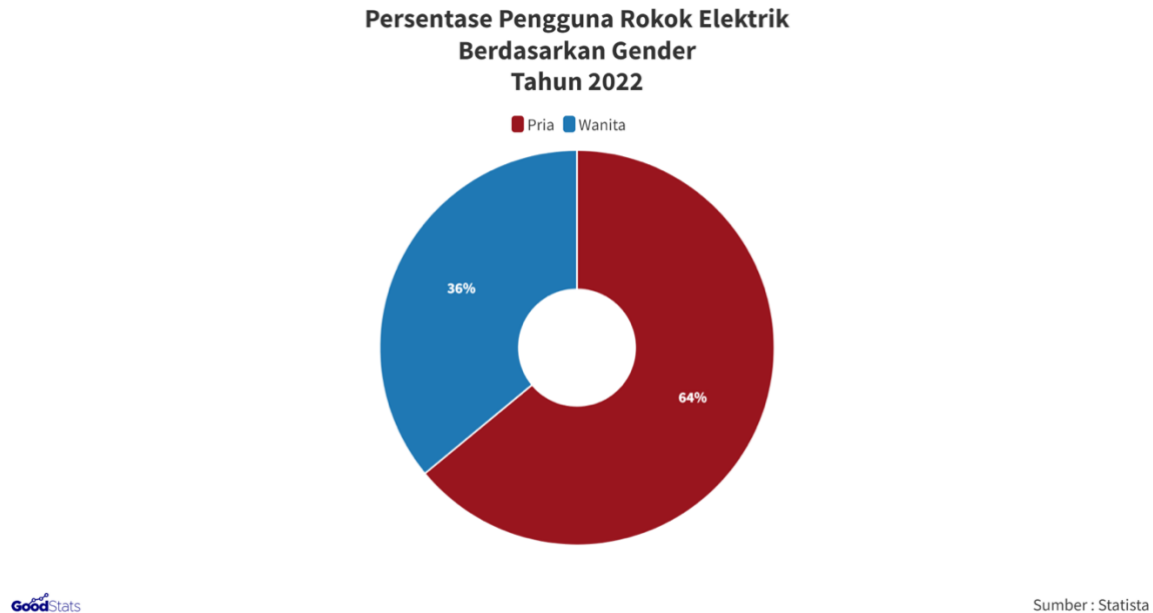


Figure 2 Percentage of e-cigarette/vape users by gender (Source : Statista)

E-cigarettes are still a serious problem or challenge for the welfare of society. Regardless of gender, this is still a challenge for young people, especially among students. Students, as a dynamic and vulnerable group, are often the main target in prevention and intervention efforts related to smoking and vape use. Reporting from Statista in 2022, 44% of vape users in Indonesia are dominated by young people aged 18-29 years. Meanwhile, 37% of vape users in Indonesia are aged 30 - 39 years old. The use of e-cigarettes tends to be more common among the younger generation, and as they get older, their use decreases significantly.

E-cigarettes or vaping has become a significant health issue, especially among young people. Considered a safer alternative to conventional cigarettes and having lower health risks, many individuals are turning to e-cigarette use in the belief that it can help them reduce the health risks associated with smoking (Dobbs, Branscum, & Wilkerson, 2020). However, this perspective is not entirely precise. While vapes have the potential to reduce some of the risks associated with conventional cigarettes, such as exposure to harmful substances produced by combustion, recent research has shown that e-cigarettes also carry serious health risks. Studies have found that vapes can cause respiratory problems, lung damage (EVALI), and increase the risk of nicotine addiction (Cao, et al., 2020).

The decision to focus this research on the issue of vaping is driven by the increasing prevalence and normalization of e-cigarette use, particularly among young adults in Indonesia. Vaping, initially marketed as a safer alternative to traditional smoking, has evolved into a widespread trend that is often perceived as less harmful and more socially acceptable. This misconception, coupled with the marketing strategies and appealing features of e-cigarettes, has led to a surge in usage, especially among youth and students. Indonesia stands out as a country where both smoking and vaping rates are alarmingly high, making it a critical context for research on health communication and behavior. The gap between widespread access to health information and the persistence of risky behaviors like vaping highlights the need to explore the psychological and communicative factors influencing individuals' attitudes and intentions.

In the digital age, social media platforms have become major sources of information and influence, particularly for younger generations. Platforms like TikTok have fundamentally transformed how health information is consumed, shared, and reacted to. Among the many content creators addressing health topics on TikTok, @geraldvincentt stands out due to his ability to discuss complex issues such as the dangers of vaping in an engaging and accessible manner. Although not a health expert, @geraldvincentt is well-known for presenting general knowledge and expert-backed insights on health risks in a way that resonates with a broad audience. Usually his content is taken from people's questions from the comment section and then he will research and explain by uploading videos. His engaging communication style, which combines visuals, expert opinions, and relatable narratives, makes his content both informative and compelling.



Figure 3 TikTok Content about Vaping

The decision to select @geraldvincentt's content as the subject of this study stems from his consistent and influential dissemination of information, particularly regarding the risks of vaping. His videos often generate significant audience interaction—ranging from agreement and intentions to quit vaping, to scepticism and resistance. These diverse responses offer a valuable opportunity to explore the complex relationship between exposure to health information and individual behavior. The viral nature of his content and the broad spectrum of feedback it generates suggest that @geraldvincentt is not just a source of information but also an influencer of attitudes and behaviors. By analyzing how his content impacts viewers, this study seeks to understand the role of social media health communication in shaping public perception, particularly within the framework of the Theory of Reasoned Action.

Thus, the focus on vaping and the selection of @geraldvincentt's content as a case study are grounded in the public health significance of the issue and the communicative power of social

media in the behavior change process. This research aims to contribute to the field of health communication by providing insights into how digital content can influence knowledge, attitudes, and intentions, particularly concerning vaping among young adults in Indonesia.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on this background, this study formulates the problem of how exposure to information about the dangers of vaping affects individuals' attitudes and intentions not to quit vaping. Although information about the health risks of vaping has been disseminated, there is still a gap between individuals' knowledge and actual actions regarding quitting vaping. Using the Theory of Reasoned Action approach, this study aims to understand the role of individuals' beliefs and social norms in shaping their attitudes and intentions towards quitting vaping, with the ultimate goal of contributing to more effective intervention strategies in the prevention of vaping use.

1.3 Research Objective

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effect of exposure to information on the dangers of vaping through the TikTok social media platform on individuals' attitudes related to vaping, analyze its impact on individuals' intention not to quit vaping, and identify psychological factors that moderate the relationship between exposure to information on the dangers of vaping and individuals' attitudes and intentions related to vaping, using the Theory of Reasoned Action. Thus, this study aims to provide in-depth insights into the role of social media information in shaping vaping-related attitudes and behaviors, as well as provide a basis for the development of more effective intervention strategies in vaping prevention efforts.

1.4 Research Significance

1.4.1 Theoretical Benefits

From this research, the theoretical use is that this research will help the development of science by understanding more about how individual attitudes and intentions related to vaping use are influenced by psychological factors, using the Theory of Reasoned Action perspective.

1.4.2 Practical Benefits

The results of this study can inform and provide information that may be new and useful to various parties, including individuals, families, the general public, and those involved in

counselling and interventions related to the problem of vaping use. Information from this study can also be used to design more effective education and intervention programs to prevent and control vaping use. Benefits include increasing awareness of the dangers of vaping, reducing the prevalence of vaping among adolescents and the general public, and improving the overall quality of life and health of the community.

1.5 Research Organization

a. CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, contains an explanation of the background of the research to be studied, followed by identification of the problem of the topic, the significance of the research both theoretical benefits and practical benefits, research time and period, and systematic writing of this research.

b. CHAPTER II : LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, it contains the theories related to the topic of this research. Then followed by previous research which is the basis for writing this research, the research framework, hypothesis, and scope.

c. CHAPTER III : RESEARCH METHOD

In this chapter, it contains the type of research used, writing about variables, operational variables, measurement scale, population and sample, sampling technique, data collection, reliability and validity, and data analysis technique.

d. CHAPTER IV : RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, will discuss the overall results from the results of the data distributed, to further explanation of the root causes that will be the result of the discussion of this research.

e. CHAPTER V : CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In this last chapter, the researcher will draw conclusions from the research and give suggestions theoretically and practically.