

# An evaluation of a capacity-building and empowerment program for university students, teachers, and secondary school students using the technique of Visualization In Participatory Programmes (VIPP)

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Track: Advocates and Community Leaders

Theme: Tobacco-free Generation

## ABSTRACT

The increasing use of e-cigarettes (ECs) among secondary school students has become a significant concern for school administrators. This issue is largely driven by the wide variety of flavours and product designs available, which complicates efforts to implement effective prevention and advocacy programs in schools. Moreover, the lack of accessible educational resources further hinders the ability to inform students about the health risks associated with EC use. In response to these challenges, the Malaysian National Poison Centre, in collaboration with the Pulau Pinang Department of Education and undergraduate students, launched a comprehensive program titled "Capacity-Building and Empowerment Program for University Students, Teachers and Secondary School Students using the VIPP Technique", which was implemented between June 2023 and May 2024. This initiative aimed to enhance awareness and foster a proactive attitude towards ECs prevention through a participatory educational method. To assess the program's effectiveness, a series of pre-and post-intervention surveys were administered, focusing on participants' knowledge, perception, attitudes and beliefs regarding the danger of ECs use. Descriptive analysis using SPSS version 22 revealed marked improvement across all evaluated dimensions. Notably, the program enhanced the understanding of EC-related health risk among participants. They also expressed a stronger sense of responsibility in addressing ECs use, particularly within school environments. The findings underscore the importance of equipping educators and students with the tools to combat EC use through awareness and education. Given the positive outcomes, the program will be expanded to other secondary schools across Malaysia. This initiative supports the broader public health goal of the Malaysian Ministry of Health, which seeks to protect the younger generation from the growing threat of e-cigarette use. Overall, the program demonstrates a promising model for collaboration, education-based intervention in tobacco control efforts among adolescents.

Keywords: E-cigarettes, Adolescents Prevention, Health Education, Capacity-Building Program, Public Health Intervention