

## THE IMPACT OF DRUGS: AN ANALYSIS OF TRENDS IN COMBATING DRUGS IN MALAYSIA

*(Kesan Dadah: Satu Analisis Trend Memerangi Dadah di Malaysia)*

FAISAL HUSEN ISMAIL  
ARWANSYAH KIRIN  
WAN AINAA MARDHIAH WAN ZAHARI  
NORHAFIZAH AHMAD

Centre for General Studies and Co-Curricular, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia,  
Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia

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### ABSTRACT

Drug abuse is on the rise and has become a matter of public and governmental concern at both local and global levels. The Malaysian government continues to seek ongoing initiatives to implement alternative detention and treatment methods for drug users in Malaysia. The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between the lack of knowledge about drug abuse and the increasing number of new addicts in Malaysia. Additionally, this study aims to explore effective strategies to combat drug addiction and analyse the significance of religion in addressing the drug addiction crisis in Malaysia. Through a systematic literature review, aspects of drug dependence, influencing factors, and drug treatment in Malaysia have been examined. Article searches were conducted in Scopus, WoS, MyJournal, BMC Public Health, and Google Scholar databases for articles published between 2006 and 2021 using keywords such as “Drug abuse treatment,” “Recovery,” and “Malaysia”. A total of 82 studies were identified, but only 10 research papers meeting the study’s criteria were selected for review. This paper emphasizes the urgent need to combat drug abuse in Malaysia through a comprehensive strategy that involves education, religion, awareness, recovery, and law enforcement. The findings and insights from

this study can contribute to raising public awareness and guide future research in addressing drug addiction in Malaysia.

**Keywords:** Drug abuse; Drug abuse treatment; Rehabilitation; Malaysia

### **ABSTRAK**

*Penyalahgunaan dadah semakin meningkat dan menjadi perhatian publik dan kerajaan di peringkat lokal mahupun global. Kerajaan Malaysia terus mencari inisiatif berterusan untuk melaksanakan penahanan dan rawatan alternatif bagi pengguna dadah di Malaysia. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan antara kekurangan pengetahuan tentang penyalahgunaan dadah dengan peningkatan bilangan penagih baru di Malaysia. Selain itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk meneroka strategi berkesan untuk memerangi penagihan dadah dan menganalisis kepentingan agama dalam menangani krisis penagihan dadah di Malaysia. Melalui tinjauan literatur sistematik, aspek kebergantungan dadah, faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhinya, dan rawatan dadah di Malaysia telah dikaji. Pencarian artikel melalui pangkalan data Scopus, WoS, MyJournal, BMC Public Health, dan Google Scholar telah dilakukan untuk artikel-artikel yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2006 hingga 2021 dengan menggunakan kata kunci “Rawatan penyalahgunaan dadah,” “Pemulihan,” dan “Malaysia”. Sejumlah 82 kajian telah didapati. Namun hanya 10 kertas kajian yang memenuhi keperluan kajian telah dipilih untuk ditinjau. Kertas ini menekankan keperluan mendesak untuk membanteras penyalahgunaan dadah di Malaysia melalui strategi komprehensif yang melibatkan pendidikan, agama, kesedaran, pemulihan, dan penguatkuasaan undang-undang. Dapatan dan wawasan daripada kajian ini boleh menyumbang kepada peningkatan kesedaran awam dan membimbing penyelidikan masa depan dalam membanteras penagihan dadah di Malaysia.*

**Kata kunci:** *Penyalahgunaan dadah; Rawatan penyalahgunaan dadah; Pemulihan; Malaysia*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Various parties have discussed the dangers of drug use in society. Physicians, psychiatrists, academicians, scholars, and social activists have been discussing the effects of drug abuse (Ali et al. 2019). Even drugs are scary monsters that lurk in society at a young and old age (see Figure 1). Drug use can be done by inhalation, injection, smoking, absorption through patches on the skin, suppositories, or dissolving them under the tongue (Abdullah, Abdullah & Ali 2020).

According to the National Anti-Drug Agency (AADK) definition in 2010, drugs are classified as psychoactive substances used for non-medical purposes and are prohibited. Despite numerous warnings, threats, and penalties for drug abuse, the number of users continues to rise. Recent reports from the National Anti-Drug Agency (2021) indicated a concerning increase in the number of new addicts in Malaysia. For instance, in 2016, there were a total of 22,923 cases, followed by 18,440 cases in 2017, and 17,474 cases in 2018.

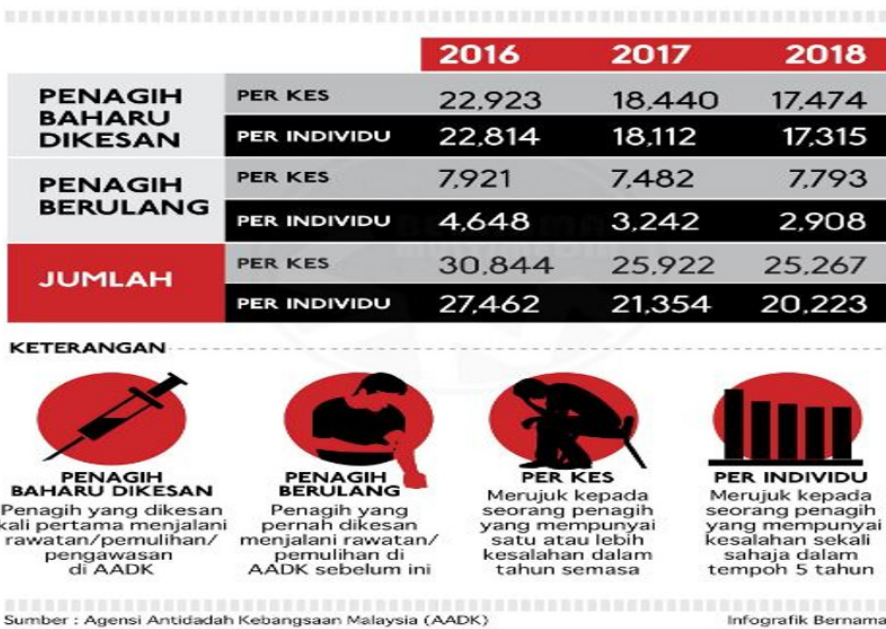


FIGURE 1 Statistics of new and repeat drug addicts in the range of 2016-2018 in Malaysia  
Source: National Anti-Drug Agency (AADK)

Drug abuse wreaks havoc on individuals' lives, leading to devastating consequences (David & Solomon 2021). Furthermore, the ingestion of drugs triggers the release of dopamine, a chemical in the brain that induces feelings of euphoria or delusion among addicts (Ariffin 2017). Uncontrolled exposure to such substances can easily result in addiction. Additionally, reckless drug consumption can impair nerve activity in the brain, cause heart complications, and damage the kidneys (Haron et al. 2017). The perils of drug addiction extend beyond physical health, impacting the financial well-being of addicts who continually spend their resources on acquiring drugs. Equally, concerning is the strain on relationships between drug addicts, their families, and society, as their preoccupation with obtaining drugs eclipses other important aspects of life (Nen et al. 2017). Hence, combatting drug

abuse demands a serious and systematic approach to address the crisis and mitigate its far-reaching consequences. It is imperative to confront and prevent the drug abuse crisis with full determination in order to alleviate its continuous impact on society, particularly in Malaysia.

## **BACKGROUND RESEARCH**

The issue of drug abuse has transcended borders, becoming a global concern. It encompasses the non-medical use of drugs, disregarding the guidance of medical professionals. The repercussions of uncontrolled drug consumption are far-reaching, affecting individuals, societies, and countries worldwide, with Malaysia being no exception (refer to Figure 3). Drug abuse has plagued Malaysia for a significant period (Shafie et al. 2022), resulting in substantial losses for the nation (Ibrahim et al. 2021). The surge in drug addicts has given rise to a host of associated problems, including an upsurge in cases of robbery and even murder. These ripple effects further compound the challenges faced by the country.

Furthermore, the combination of unhealthy lifestyles and severe addiction issues drives individuals suffering from drug addiction to resort to desperate measures in order to acquire their drug supplies. As a consequence, drug addicts become highly susceptible to various diseases, as excessive drug use weakens their immune systems (Ismail et al. 2019). The escalation in criminal activities not only jeopardises the nation's peace but also instils anxiety and fear within the community. These adverse consequences impede the progress envisioned by the government in building a developed nation. It is evident that the problem of drug addiction not only inflicts harm upon individuals but also poses a significant threat to society and the nation as a whole.

The proliferation of drug trafficking and addiction poses a significant threat to the socio-economic, spiritual, and cultural well-being of society, ultimately undermining national resilience and compromising national security. Despite the concerted efforts and initiatives implemented by authorities, including the government, to combat and alleviate this crisis, the statistics of drug abuse have not shown a decline and, in fact, have continued to increase over time (refer to Figure 2). The measures undertaken thus far have proven insufficient and have had a limited impact on the community at large. Compounding the issue is the recurring problem of relapse among former inmates of rehabilitation centres, rendering the management of this drug crisis an ongoing challenge (Isaacs et al. 2019).

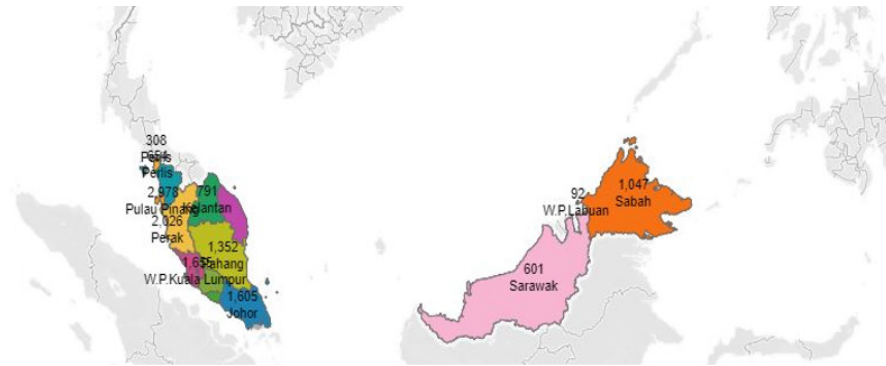


FIGURE 2 Statistics of drug addicts among youths by state in 2013–2017 in Malaysia.  
 Source: National Anti-Drug Agency (AADK)

However, the Malaysian government has taken firm action to combat drugs. Beginning as early as 1983, the Malaysian government took an alternative approach to combating the drug crisis in the country. In 1983, it declared drugs a major threat to national security (Yasid, Zulkifli & Kamaruddin 2021). This was to combat drug abuse among Malaysians. The Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad inaugurated the anti-drug policy on February 19, 1983 while launching the Anti-Drug Campaign. In 1985, the Anti-Drug Committee at the national level planned the national drug policy and prevention as the key strategy for combating drugs, which included early prevention, admission prevention and law enforcement, followed by rehabilitation. They also produced support strategies through cooperation and coordination at the ASEAN regional level and around the world (Yasid 2022).

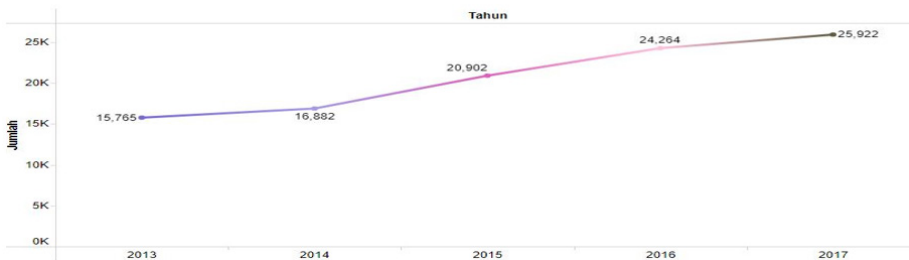


FIGURE 3 Projections of drug addicts among youth based on the year range 2013-2017  
 Source: National Anti-Drug Agency (AADK)

Therefore, drug eradication has been further enhanced through the establishment of AADK in 1996. However, drug abuse offences continue to occur to this day.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to offer an overview of research articles related to the issue of combating drugs in Malaysia. The community needs to be more aware of the dangers of drugs and take responsibility to make family members and other communities aware of the evils of drugs and stay away from them. I hope that government researchers or private researchers can utilise this study in conducting research on drugs in Malaysia to continue to raise public awareness to be a moral person and to be a society that adheres to the Rukun Negara.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Drug abuse continues to be debated. The Malaysian government has to allocate high costs for treating and rehabilitating drug addicts in drug rehabilitation centres throughout Malaysia. The study by Jamal Ali et al. (2014) showed an estimated expenditure for enforcement and rehabilitation agencies in 2008 of RM 177 million. The government has also allocated more than RM 221 million to cover the cost of health care, the cost of lost productivity and related crimes committed by 63,884 drug addicts, which was equivalent to RM 332 per capita of drug addicts.

Drug addiction treatment requires a steadfast commitment from individuals themselves. A noteworthy study conducted by Adam Mohamed (2006) unveiled the success of respondents involved in drug abuse who managed to break the cycle by engaging in a Tabligh congregation. This research further highlighted the crucial role of moral support and continuous spiritual encouragement from both family and the community, as they empower drug addicts to resist the temptation of relapse and maintain abstinence from drugs.

In the study by Fauziah Ibrahim et al. (2014), drug addiction also entangled consumers among women. The study also found that as many as 60.5 per cent of the causes of drug addiction among women were due to moderate family relationships. In addition, the need to improve the treatment process for female drug addicts needed to be increased by institutions involved in drug rehabilitation among women in Malaysia.

Various factors greatly influence drug addiction in society. According to a study by Mohamad Johdi Salleh (2012), there were several major factors contributing to the increase in drug addiction, such as the influence of friends, the attitude of wanting to try, self-resilience or weak motivation, and a lack of religious education. Suppiah Nachiappan's research corroborated the results of a prior study conducted by et al. (2014), which highlighted additional factors contributing to individuals' involvement in drug abuse. These factors include environmental influences, family

issues, and the pressures of everyday life. According to the study by Wahyuni Ismail (2012), the drug situation is easy to obtain, and the efficacy of drugs is among other contributing factors to drug abuse.

Viewed from a broader scope, the increase in the crisis of abuse in Malaysia is also due to family problems faced by individuals. This happens because the children are not able to meet the expectations of their families, so there is a lot of stress on them. As a result of not being able to control the stress they experience, they take the easy and wrong path to get rid of the stress. They will experience depression and prefer to be alone.

In addition, life stress is one aspect influencing the drug use crisis. The problem is handled by the individuals in continuing lives. However, problems such as financial problems, learning and others cause the person to not be able to think rationally. This will change the way they think, causing them to take drugs to find temporary peace. Unbeknownst to them, this has caused various problems that could threaten their respective futures.

The increasing crisis of drug abuse in Malaysia can also be attributed to inadequate education provided to individuals. Inappropriate upbringing can contribute to the vulnerability of children to drug addiction. When parents neglect the education of their children, it hampers the development of a strong personal identity that can resist the allure of drugs. Hence, education plays a vital role in equipping individuals with the knowledge to discern between right and wrong. It is imperative for parents to provide their children with the best education possible to shield them from the influence of drug abuse. As the ancient proverb goes, "Bend the bamboo, let it be from the shoots". The quality of education directly impacts the personality and thought processes of children. If the education imparted neglects religious and societal values, it compromises the potential of the children to envision a bright future.

The eradication of drug addiction is not only due to the addicts themselves, but the existence of drug trafficking syndicates also plays a role in the increase in the number of addicts in the country. A study conducted by Zarina Othman & Mohamad Daud Druis (2015) showed the role played by drug trafficking syndicates in recruiting juveniles as traffickers. Furthermore, the organization intends to establish an obligation for these young individuals to distance themselves from the syndicate upon their release from detention in the future. Consequently, it is imperative to develop a more efficient policy, such as the notion of social protection, to address the risk to juveniles.

Therefore, the progress of national development must also be balanced with human development. Sabir Bin Abdul Ghani's study (2013) found that the increase in drug addiction every year shows the need to balance between national progress and spirituality in the formation of society's identity today. Therefore, the increase in knowledge and awareness of the problem of drug abuse must be enhanced. The exposure to the dangers of drug abuse should be disseminated to all levels of society, as well as the appreciation of religion as the core of reducing and eradicating drug abuse.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study aims to explore the connection between the lack of knowledge about drug abuse and the increasing number of new drug addicts, as well as to analyse effective strategies to combat drug addiction and the significance of religion in addressing the drug addiction crisis in Malaysia. A comprehensive search was conducted using databases such as Scopus, WoS, MyJournal, BMC Public Health, and Google Scholar. The search included articles published from 2006 to 2021, using keywords such as "Drug abuse treatment", "Rehabilitation" and "Malaysia". A total of 82 studies were examined, and 10 research papers meeting the study requirements were selected for review. The findings section presented key findings from the selected research papers, including common drug-related problems among older individuals, socio-demographic and clinical profiles of drug-dependent subjects, and perspectives on rehabilitation programs for incarcerated drug offenders. The limitations and strengths of each study were also discussed.

By conducting a systematic review of the literature, researchers can gather existing knowledge and insights on drug addiction, contributing factors, and drug treatment in Malaysia. This approach allows them to synthesize the findings from multiple studies and provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of drug abuse in the country. The results can be used to raise public awareness, inform future research, and develop effective strategies to combat drug addiction in Malaysia.



TABLE 1 Findings....

Researcher (Year)	Title	Finding		
		Weakness	Strength	Reviews
Sundus, Tan& Sellappans (2021)	Drug-related problems encountered by community-dwelling older persons in the Klang Valley, Malaysia: An exploratory study	This study aimed to highlight common drug-related problems among seniors living in communities ( $\geq 65$ years) with polypharmacy. The study found issues related to home medication review, as well as the need for patient education and detailed counseling in an informal and patient-friendly manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study was conducted on a limited study sample of a specific place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study was targeted in terms of age and place.</li> <li>Methodology: in-depth interviews.</li> <li>Suggested further study.</li> </ul>
Jamil et al. (2021)	Socio-demographic and clinical profile of mixed opioid and amphetamine-type stimulant dependent subjects in Malaysia: A preliminary report.	The study found that the mean age of standard deviation (SD) of patients was 40.98 years (SD: 4.64), and the most common age of onset was 15–20 years (42%). Most educational backgrounds were up to the secondary school level (44%). Morphine and methamphetamine were the most frequently abused substances. This study provided up-to-date information and support for socio-demographic and clinical characteristics of opioid-dependent and ATS subjects undergoing MMT programs that may contribute toward comprehensive management to address the significant surge in ATS use among opioid-dependents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study was conducted on a limited study sample in a particular place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study was targeted in terms of age and place.</li> <li>Methodology: in-depth interviews.</li> </ul>

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<p>108 Cheah, Unnithan &amp; Raran (2019)</p>	<p>Rehabilitation programs for incarcerated drug offenders in Malaysia: Experience-based perspectives on reintegration and recidivism</p>	<p>Exploring the life experiences of repeat drug offenders in Malaysia. Classification of studies based on inmate experience and rehabilitation procedures based on inmate views. As a result, the researchers provided a description of the inmates' perspectives on drug addiction rehabilitation treatment efforts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The study sample is limited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The study was targeted in terms of age and place.</li> <li>• Methodology: qualitative through in-depth interview method.</li> </ul>
<p>Zarina Othman &amp; Mohamad Daud Druis (2015)</p>	<p>Ancaman sindiket dadah terhadap juvenil di Malaysia</p>	<p>The findings of the study indicated the role of drug syndicates in recruiting and controlling juveniles as drug traffickers and users. The study suggested a more effective and systematic policy, such as the concept of social security is created to address threats to juveniles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specified number of respondents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target focused study.</li> <li>• Stated methodology.</li> <li>• There was secondary data.</li> <li>• Reasonable and workable recommendations.</li> </ul>
<p>Jamal Ali, Sallahuddin Hassan &amp; Noor Al-Huda Abdul Karim (2014)</p>	<p>Kos Ekonomi Penyalahgunaan Dadah</p>	<p>This study examined the expenditure costs of drug rehabilitation enforcement agencies in Malaysia. The study found an increase in drug rehabilitation costs, such as health care costs, lost productivity costs and crime-related costs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did not specify the number of respondents.</li> <li>• Many research objectives (three objectives), which were difficult to detail in the discussion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target focused study.</li> <li>• Combination of library methods and structured questionnaires and interviews.</li> <li>• Reasonable study recommendations.</li> </ul>
<p>Fauziah Ibrahim et al. (2014)</p>	<p>Pengguna dadah wanita di Malaysia: Pengalaman penagihan dan hubungan kekeluargaan</p>	<p>The study concluded that the majority of 60.5 per cent of female drug addicts showed moderate levels of family relationships. In addition, the study also has had an impact on the improvement of drug treatment and rehabilitation processes in institutions, especially for female drug users in Malaysia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No support from secondary data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target study focused on women only.</li> <li>• Large number of respondents.</li> <li>• using the questionnaire method.</li> <li>• Reasonable suggestions.</li> </ul>

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Suppiah Nachiappan et al. (2014)	Penyalahgunaan dadah dan langkah mengatasi dari segi kognisi di Pusat Pengasih Malaysia.	The findings of the study showed that environmental factors, the influence of friends, the desire to try, family problems and life stress encouraged most people to get caught up in this drug abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four objectives of the study made them so difficult to detail in the discussion.</li> <li>• Suggestions were less appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target focused study.</li> <li>• Used hermeneutic and interpretive pedagogy methods to interpret the interview text of the respondents.</li> </ul>
Sabir & Fadzli (2013).	Pemulihan dadah menurut perspektif agama di Malaysia	This study found that the weakness of spirituality in the formation of identity caused the community to be involved in drug addiction. This study suggested that drug rehabilitation based on Islamic methods that use the method of zikr and prayer has an effect on the rehabilitation of drug addiction. The study also found that drug bans were agreed upon by all religions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specified study methodology.</li> <li>• No respondent.</li> <li>• No questionnaires and interviews.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple religious perspectives in drug addiction rehabilitation.</li> <li>• Adequate problem statement.</li> </ul>
Salleh (2012)	Permasalahan denagihan dadah: Tinjauan di Pusat Serenti Selangor	The study found that the main factors in the increase in drug addiction cases were the influence of friends, the attitude of wanting to try, self-reliance or poor motivation, and a lack of religious education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The objectives of many sub-fields were discussed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target focused study.</li> <li>• Respondents were focused.</li> <li>• Supported secondary data.</li> <li>• Used quantitative and qualitative methods.</li> <li>• Reasonable suggestions.</li> </ul>
Ismail (2012)	Remaja dan dadah	This study found that the causative factors of drug abuse were easily available drugs, drug nutrition, individual personality, and social environment such as family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No explanation of the methodology used in the study.</li> <li>• No respondent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on adolescent involvement with drugs.</li> </ul>
Noor & bin Ghazali (2010)	Penyalahgunaan dadah dan kewajaran peruntukan hukuman mati ke atas pengedar dadah di Malaysia	This study found that Islamic law punishes illegal traffickers and tree growers who produce drugs. Thus, drug dealers are branded as murderers for distributing substances that cause death.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No study data (concept study-based study).</li> <li>• Methodology not specified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concept paper.</li> </ul>

## **DISCUSSION**

Based on the findings of this study, most of the studies that have been conducted focused on the root causes of drug abuse. In addition, the discussion was also based on the limit of respondents. However, the studies conducted can be used as a guide to help towards the solution to drug addiction in the community. To further detail the discussion of drug addiction based on studies in Malaysia, the following are the aspects of the discussion:

### **The link between the lack of knowledge related to drug abuse and the increase in the number of new addicts**

There are a number of reasons for the increase in new addictions. The information in the article obtained from Amir Awang (1979) found that the cause of drug abuse was that parents paid less attention to their children. So, parents need to give their children enough focus and time to pay attention and ensure their welfare is protected. Children are an important asset to parents and the hope of religion and the country in the future. Children are human beings who need attention and education. As the Malay proverb says, "Bend the bamboo, let it be from the shoot".

From a different point of view, drug addiction is an emotional handling offence for individuals. Those who are not skilled in controlling their emotions take the wrong solution by taking drugs. This aligns with the findings of Suppiah Nachiappan et al. (2014), which highlighted the curiosity and pursuit of self-indulgence can lead individuals to experiment with drugs, ultimately resulting in addiction. In this context, individuals may seek to satisfy their curiosity and gain a sense of experience through drug use, unaware of the potential consequences that lie ahead. Nevertheless, it is crucial to extend the focus of drug rehabilitation to encompass heads of households and adult individuals as well. A study by Sundus, Tan & Sellappans (2021) showed that the amount of drug addiction also occurred in the elderly. Although their study was limited to addicts in certain areas, it could serve as a sign to the authorities to identify a specific target group in the issue of rehabilitation. Adults can cause drug rehabilitation complications due to their repeated involvement. Subsequently, adults, including some of the guardian parents, serve as poor role models for their children.

Therefore, the lack of knowledge related to drug abuse is not the primary cause of the increase in drug abuse. It relates to the identity that exists in a person. As we know, young people nowadays have been given drug-related education since primary school. So, it is not impossible for them to have knowledge related to the dangers of

drug abuse. For example, highly educated people also use drugs in the wrong way to satisfy their cravings. With this, lack of knowledge is not a major factor in drug abuse. It depends on their attitude and personality.

### **How to combat the drug abuse crisis in Malaysia?**

The eradication of drug abuse in Malaysia requires high costs. The study by Jamal Ali et al. (2014) proposed an increase in allocation to rehabilitation centres to help with rehabilitation and treatment work. Therefore, it is crucial for the authorities at the local level up to the national level to prioritize the implementation of a comprehensive state-wide program to combat drug abuse. This is necessary to promptly halt the cycle of drug addiction (Jamal Ali et al. 2014). Amir Awang's research in 1979 also endorsed the idea of preventing drug abuse among adolescent students on campus by implementing random, periodic urine testing. This is because there are many cases of drug abuse happening in universities. Implementing urine tests can serve as an effective method for identifying drug addiction among university students, thereby catching teenagers off guard and encouraging them to exercise self-control and abstain from drug use without medical supervision. This approach aligned with the findings of Cheah, Unnithan, and Raran (2019), which emphasized the importance of considering individual drug use histories when developing strategies to address addiction. Recognizing the diverse backgrounds and circumstances of drug users is essential in formulating targeted interventions and tailored support systems. By taking these factors into account, a more comprehensive approach to combating drug addiction can be implemented, ensuring effective and appropriate solutions for each individual (Jamil et al. 2021).

Hence, it is crucial to implement proactive measures at multiple levels simultaneously in order to effectively control the cycle of drug addiction. By adopting these measures, we can rescue a larger number of individuals from the grip of drug dependency. Furthermore, organizing awareness campaigns becomes imperative to curb the rise in the number of new drug addicts in Malaysia. Through these initiatives, we can educate and inform the public about the dangers and consequences of drug abuse, encourage preventive actions and foster a supportive environment that discourages drug addiction. By taking proactive steps and promoting awareness, we can work towards breaking the chain of drug addiction and safeguarding the well-being of individuals and society as a whole. All parties, such as the authorities and the local community, must work together in the prevention and rehabilitation of drug addiction to make sure that the efforts made are more effective and not in vain.

### **The importance of religion in the drug addiction crisis in Malaysia**

To effectively combat drug addiction, it is crucial to nurture and fortify one's spirituality. A resilient and unwavering spirituality empowers individuals to confront the challenges of drug addiction even after completing a rehabilitation program. Adam bin Mohamed's (2010) study provided supporting evidence, revealed that a significant number of drug addicts have successfully abstained from relapsing into drug addiction by engaging in activities associated with the Tabligh congregation. By embracing and actively participating in spiritual practices, individuals find the strength and conviction needed to resist the temptations of drug abuse, paving the way for a healthier and more fulfilling life. This is because the former drug addict has deepened his knowledge of religion and been able to practice halal and haram laws about something in life. In addition, the former drug addict has distanced himself from befriending a group of drug addicts and started befriending the Tabligh congregation. This matter is also in line with the words of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH:

*“The parable of the person who befriends the righteous and the person who befriends the bad-tempered like the perfumer and the blacksmith. Surely you will get a fragrant scent from a perfume seller, whether you buy it or not. While from the blacksmith you will feel the heat or your cloth or you will get an unpleasant smell”.*

(Hadith Narrated by al-Bukhari)

Therefore, it is clear that religion is very important in tackling the drug crisis in Malaysia. Every religion teaches its followers to act morally. All religions forbid all accursed acts that can harm oneself as well as society. The act of drug abuse does not provide any help to oneself but can cause bad things that can be fatal. In addition, making friends with people who are strong in their religion can also bring benefits. A good (religious) friend will certainly reprimand his friend for not doing something contrary to religious law.

### **CONCLUSION**

Along with corruption and gambling, drug addiction qualifies as the nation's principal enemy, with the potential to cause serious societal problems. Unlike the dangers of other national enemies, which involve a lot of loss to oneself and the country, drug addiction even causes greater harm to oneself with mental damage. The risk of damaging the home and disrupting the family, while also potentially leading to various problems including theft, muggings, burglary, homicide, sexual assault, and drug addiction. Potential damage can also happen to the country if

drug addiction is not curbed. Indeed, various efforts to curb drug addiction that the government and NGOs have planned need the cooperation of all parties, regardless of social status. So, drug prevention and management strategies need to be thought of simultaneously and synergistically. Therefore, community awareness, along with the improvement of the drug prevention control system are very important to control any potential threats related to drug addiction in Malaysia in particular and in different countries in general.

Hence, the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should strengthen their efforts to boost the awareness campaign targeting young people. This is because youth are often easy targets for drug traffickers. In addition, parents also need to monitor their children's interactions and give them early exposure about the dangers of drugs. It is important to find the best solution for people who can be trusted. Avoid drugs as a friend when facing any problems. Therefore, a strong sense of identity through the practice of religion can help control own self from being influenced by the culture of drug abuse. The success of the fight against drugs needs the cooperation of all parties.

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