The Influence of Hyperreality, Social Norms, Peer Pressure, and Advertising on the Rise of Underage Nicotine Consumption: A Case Study of South Kuta, Bali

Kirana Amelie Kuhn *
SMP Cendekia Harapan, Indonesia
Email: kirana@cendekiaharapan.sch.id
*Penulis korespondensi : kirana@cendekiaharapan.sch.id

Abstract, *This study investigates the impact of hyperreality, social norms, peer pressure, and advertising on underage nicotine consumption in South Kuta, Bali. The research aims to explore the factors influencing the normalization of smoking and vaping among adolescents and to provide actionable insights for public health interventions. A mixed-method approach was employed, utilizing quantitative surveys with 89 participants aged 12-18 and qualitative interviews with four participants aged 13-15. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic coding to identify patterns and themes. Results reveal that 72% of respondents frequently encountered tobacco advertisements, predominantly on social media, which often portrayed nicotine use as glamorous and socially rewarding. Peer pressure was a significant factor, with 45% of participants acknowledging encouragement from peers to smoke or vape. Social norms further contributed to the perception of vaping as socially acceptable, with 69% of respondents noting its normalization in their circles. Despite vaping being seen as less harmful than traditional cigarettes, this belief was primarily shaped by advertising rather than evidence. The study concludes that hyperreality, combined with peer dynamics and cultural norms, significantly influences adolescent nicotine consumption. This highlights the need for stricter advertising regulations, media literacy education, and peer-focused interventions. The findings emphasize the importance of addressing these interconnected factors through comprehensive strategies to mitigate the rising trend of underage nicotine use in Indonesia.*

Keywords: *Bali, Hyperreality, Peer Pressure, South Kuta, Underage Nicotine Consumption.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's global health landscape, the tobacco epidemic remains a severe threat, particularly in regions with high smoking rates (Tobacco and Health Around the World, n.d.). Indonesia exemplifies a country grappling with the devastating impacts of tobacco use, exacerbated by aggressive marketing strategies employed by the tobacco industry. The persistent prevalence of cigarette smoking and the increasing popularity of electronic cigarettes (vapes) present significant public health challenges globally (Dina Kania, 2024). While traditional tobacco use is deeply entrenched in Indonesia, vaping introduces new complexities, further complicating public health efforts. Social norms, peer pressure, and the hyperreality created by tobacco marketing campaigns perpetuate smoking's appeal to youth, making anti-smoking initiatives even more challenging. This study explores the interplay of these factors and their contribution to Indonesia's underage smoking crisis.

Smoking and vaping both involve nicotine, the addictive substance found in tobacco. Smoking releases nicotine and thousands of harmful chemicals through the burning of tobacco. Vaping, by contrast, uses an electronic device to heat a liquid often containing nicotine—into an inhalable vapor. Although vaping avoids combustion, it still delivers nicotine and other potentially harmful chemicals. Both smoking and vaping pose significant health risks, including addiction and long-term illnesses.

Addressing nicotine use among adolescents is critical not only for personal health but also for broader societal benefits. Reducing smoking prevalence can mitigate tobacco-related diseases, lower healthcare costs, and improve population well-being. Additionally, combating this issue aligns with Indonesia's international obligations, such as the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) by the World Health Organization. Understanding the factors that drive underage smoking particularly the roles of marketing, social influences, and hyperreality is vital for formulating effective strategies.

Hyperreality, a concept introduced by Jean Baudrillard, explains how media and marketing blur the boundaries between reality and simulation, crafting idealized perceptions that influence behavior and critical thinking. Tobacco advertisements portray smoking as glamorous, rebellious, or a symbol of success, concealing its harmful effects behind appealing imagery (Baudrillard, 1981; Hollander, 2020). This hyperreality intertwines with social norms and peer pressure, reinforcing smoking as desirable among youth (Ng, Weinehall, & Öhman, 2007). These distorted portrayals, coupled with a lack of critical thinking, contribute to the normalization and persistence of underage smoking.

Decades ago, smoking was perceived as "cool," especially among young people (Grunebaum, 2024). As a participant in prior research expressed, "If I don't smoke, I will feel inferior to my friends, because I'm the only one who doesn't smoke" (Ng, Weinehall, & Öhman, 2006, p. 798). This normalization of smoking, perpetuated by societal norms and media, continues to shape how Indonesian youth perceive tobacco use. Alarmingly, recent data show that 44.7% of Indonesians start smoking between ages 10-14, while 52.8% begin between 15-19. By 2023, daily smoking rates reached 27.1% for those aged 10-14 and 72.6% for those aged 15-19 (Rokom, 2024).

These statistics underscore the urgent need to address the factors driving underage smoking. Idealized images of smoking blur the lines between perception and reality, while peer pressure and social norms link smoking with status and belonging. Many adolescents lack the critical thinking skills required to resist these influences, making them particularly vulnerable to advertising and societal pressures. Tackling these intertwined issues is essential

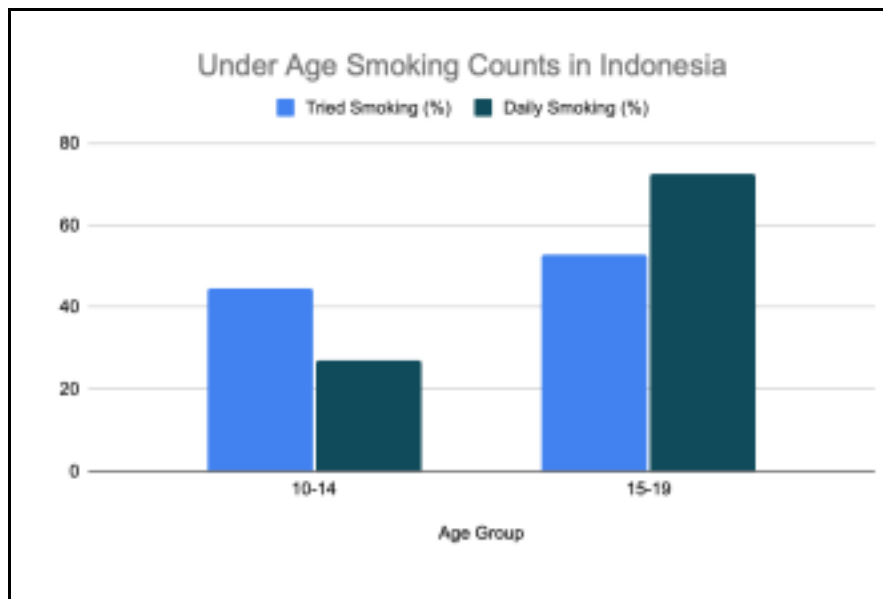to reducing underage nicotine use in Indonesia.

Figure 1. Statistics of Under Age Smoking Counts in Indonesia.

The health risks associated with long-term tobacco use—including lung, mouth, and throat cancers further highlight the importance of intervention (Smoking - Effects on Your Body, 2019). Despite these dangers, underage smoking rates in Indonesia continue to rise due to weak enforcement of tobacco control measures and insufficient public education. Without targeted interventions, these gaps will exacerbate the public health crisis.

Beyond advertising, social norms and peer pressure significantly shape youth smoking behavior. In many settings, smoking is normalized or even celebrated as a marker of maturity or social status. Adolescents often feel pressured to smoke to gain acceptance or avoid alienation, especially in social situations like parties. Peer dynamics play a powerful role in fostering smoking initiation, particularly when coupled with cultural norms that glamorize smoking (Subramaniam et al., 2017). Addressing the social and cultural dimensions of underage smoking is imperative, alongside strengthening regulatory frameworks.

The Indonesian government has made efforts to address this issue, such as implementing Law No. 109/2012, which restricts tobacco advertising and prohibits cigarette sales to minors (Audrine, 2020). However, compliance remains low, and enforcement is weak. The rise of e-cigarettes has introduced new challenges, with many perceiving vaping as a safer alternative to traditional smoking. This perception, fueled by inadequate regulation, further entrenches nicotine use among youth.

In response, the Ministry of Health has proposed stricter regulations, including larger graphic health warnings, banning single cigarette sales, and prohibiting all tobacco advertising (VietnamPlus, 2022). However, these measures are yet to be fully implemented, and their

effectiveness remains untested.

The continued rise of underage smoking in Indonesia highlights the complex interplay between tobacco marketing, social norms, and peer pressure. While the tobacco industry's influence is substantial, addressing the social dynamics that encourage smoking initiation among youth is equally crucial. This research aims to explore the role of hyperreality, social influences, and vaping in driving underage smoking. It also provides a comparative analysis of traditional cigarette use and vaping behaviors to offer actionable solutions for combating this public health crisis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Jean Baudrillard

Jean Baudrillard, a French sociologist and philosopher, introduced the concept of "hyperreality," describing a phenomenon where the distinction between reality and fiction blurs, making it challenging to discern the two (Baudrillard, 1981). In the context of smoking, hyperreality manifests in the portrayal of tobacco use as glamorous, rebellious, and aspirational while concealing its harmful health consequences. Tobacco advertisements leverage these hyperreal images to manipulate public perception, creating an allure that makes smoking appear more appealing than its reality (Alfian & Retna Sulistyawati, 2018).

Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality is deeply rooted in his critique of consumer culture and media's pervasive influence on shaping societal norms (Habib, 2018). Growing up in post-war France during rapid social and economic transformations, Baudrillard observed how media and advertising increasingly shaped collective behaviors and identities (Jean-Philippe Deranty, 2016). His academic training in sociology and philosophy provided the foundation for his critical analysis of media-driven simulations that can overshadow reality (Kellner, 2005).

In the case of smoking, advertisements idealize tobacco use by associating it with sophistication, independence, and rebellion, constructing a hyperreal narrative. This constructed reality, disconnected from the harsh truth of smoking-related health risks, has been instrumental in sustaining the popularity of smoking, especially among vulnerable populations like adolescents. By examining the creation of hyperreality in advertising, Baudrillard's framework provides a valuable lens to analyze how media shapes behaviors and public health challenges.

The Role of Advertising

Advertising is a cornerstone of the hyperreal imagery surrounding smoking, but it does not work in isolation. Peer pressure and social norms amplify the media's idealized portrayals,

especially among adolescents (Leshargie et al., 2019). For example, advertising frequently depicts smoking as "cool" or "edgy," a message that is often reinforced within social circles where smoking is normalized. This confluence of advertising and social reinforcement makes tobacco use appear not only acceptable but desirable (Cranwell et al., 2015).

Tobacco companies exploit cultural values and social behaviors through targeted advertising campaigns, often using social media to engage younger audiences with personalized and interactive content (Smith et al., 2021). For example, advertisements may frame smoking as a rite of passage or a marker of maturity, aligning with cultural norms that link smoking to adulthood or independence. These messages, echoed by peers, further perpetuate the hyperreal narrative, making resistance to smoking more difficult, particularly for impressionable youth (Blue et al., 2016).

Recent research highlights the sophistication of these advertising strategies, noting that digital platforms enable tobacco companies to bypass traditional regulations while creating content that resonates deeply with young audiences (Smith et al., 2021). This evolution in advertising underscores the need for stricter regulations and public health initiatives to counteract the pervasive influence of tobacco marketing.

Cultural Norms

Cultural norms play a critical role in shaping perceptions of smoking within specific communities. In some societies, smoking is intertwined with social rituals or considered a status symbol, reinforcing the hyperreal image crafted by advertising. For instance, in certain communities, smoking is regarded as an integral part of social identity, complicating efforts to reduce smoking prevalence (O'Brien et al., 2020).

When cultural norms, peer pressure, and media portrayals align, they create a powerful synergy that normalizes smoking. This normalization blurs the lines between reality and perception, making smoking appear aspirational and socially acceptable. Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality effectively explains how these factors converge to construct an exaggerated narrative that perpetuates tobacco use.

Additionally, studies have shown that cultural attitudes towards smoking vary widely, with some communities exhibiting strong resistance to cessation efforts due to deeply rooted traditions and beliefs (Leshargie et al., 2019). Understanding these cultural dimensions is essential for designing public health strategies that are culturally sensitive and effective.

Peer Pressure

Peer pressure is another significant force shaping adolescent smoking behavior, often reinforcing the hyperreal narrative created by advertising. Social dynamics within peer groups

frequently promote smoking as a means to fit in, assert independence, or gain social status (Duan et al., 2022). Research shows that adolescents are particularly susceptible to these influences, as their desire for acceptance often outweighs concerns about the risks of smoking (Cranwell et al., 2015).

The pervasive presence of tobacco messaging across various media platforms exacerbates this issue, saturating young audiences with idealized portrayals of smoking. While some critics argue that individuals can resist these influences through critical thinking (Friedman, 2010), the overwhelming exposure to such messages, combined with social pressures, often undermines individual agency. This is particularly true for adolescents, who may lack the cognitive maturity and critical thinking skills needed to evaluate these messages objectively.

Baudrillard's theory has faced criticism for its emphasis on external influences at the expense of individual agency. Critics argue that his framework may oversimplify the role of personal choice, failing to account for the capacity of individuals to critically assess and reject hyperreal messages (Friedman, 2010). However, his work remains highly relevant in understanding how the saturation of media, combined with social dynamics, contributes to the normalization of smoking.

In the digital age, where advertising strategies and social interactions continue to evolve, the interplay between hyperreality, peer pressure, and cultural norms requires further exploration. By examining these factors through Baudrillard's framework, this research seeks to uncover the complex mechanisms driving smoking behavior among youth and inform more effective public health interventions.

3. METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

The objective of this research is to explore how hyperreality, peer pressure, and social norms influence underage nicotine consumption in Indonesia. A mixed-methods approach is employed, integrating quantitative surveys and qualitative insights to ensure a holistic understanding of the issue. This approach is justified as it captures measurable trends through quantitative methods while providing deeper context and personal perspectives via qualitative analysis.

The study focuses on youth aged 13-18 years, specifically junior and senior high school students in the South Kuta District of Bali, Indonesia. The total population consists of 2,180 individuals, and the Slovin formula is applied with a 5% margin of error to determine a sample

size of 385 participants. The sample is proportionally distributed among schools to ensure representativeness.

School	Population	Proportion	Sample size
SMA Taman Rama	102	0,0467	18
SMA Cendekia Harapan	16	0,0073	3
SMA Widiatmika	132	0,0605	23
SMA Bintang Mandiri	61	0,0279	11
SMP Taman Rama	233	0,01069	41
SMP Cendekia Harapan	43	0,0197	8
SMP Widiatmika	293	0,1344	52
SMP Bintang Mandiri	149	0,0683	26
SMP N 1 Kuta Selatan	1153	0,5280	203

Quantitative data will be collected using structured questionnaires containing closed-ended questions that assess smoking frequency, exposure to tobacco marketing, and the influence of social and cultural norms. To capture qualitative insights, open-ended questions will explore participants' perceptions of tobacco marketing, social norms, and peer pressure. Surveys will be distributed in-person at schools and community centers, as well as online via Google Forms to maximize accessibility.

Ethical considerations are integral to the research process. Data will be collected anonymously to protect participant privacy and encourage honest responses. Informed consent will be obtained from participants and their guardians, ensuring they understand the study's purpose, potential risks, and voluntary nature. Schools will be approached for permission, and participation will be entirely voluntary, with no incentives provided to avoid coercion.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data will be analyzed using Google Sheets to calculate descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, and averages. Results will be presented in tables, bar charts, and pie charts to visualize key findings, including smoking prevalence and exposure to tobacco marketing.

For qualitative data, thematic analysis will be conducted to identify recurring themes and patterns. Responses from open-ended questions will be manually coded in Google Docs, with emerging themes grouped for clarity. Word clouds will be generated to highlight frequently used words, offering an intuitive visual representation of dominant themes. Qualitative findings will be summarized in tables to ensure a structured presentation of insights.

Data Validation

To ensure the reliability and validity of the findings, methodological triangulation will be employed, comparing insights from both quantitative and qualitative methods. This approach enhances the robustness of the results by cross-verifying patterns identified in both data sets. To address potential biases, several measures will be taken:

1. **Self-reporting bias:**

   The survey will emphasize anonymity and honesty, reducing participants' inclination to provide socially desirable answers.

2. **Clarity of questions**

   Clear and concise instructions will be provided to minimize misunderstandings and enhance response accuracy.

   Qualitative data will undergo member checking, where selected participants will review the interpretations of their responses to ensure their views are accurately captured. Thematic saturation will guide data collection, ensuring that no new themes emerge before concluding qualitative analysis.

   Unexpected patterns identified in either data set will be explored through a comparative analysis to provide explanations. Quantitative trends and qualitative themes will be cross-checked for consistency, ensuring that the findings comprehensively address the research objectives. By employing these validation techniques, the study aims to produce credible and actionable insights into the factors influencing underage nicotine consumption in South Kuta, Bali.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

The research findings elucidate the multifaceted influences of tobacco marketing, peer pressure, and social norms on underage smoking in South Kuta, Bali. This study area was chosen for its mix of urban and rural characteristics, which provide a diverse context to analyze adolescent tobacco use. Data collection involved a structured survey with 89 participants aged 12-18 years and in-depth interviews with 4 participants aged 13-15 years.

Quantitative Findings

Quantitative data for this study were collected through a structured survey distributed to students in the Jimbaran area to examine factors influencing underage nicotine consumption. The survey focused on themes such as exposure to tobacco advertising, perceptions of its glamorization and influence, peer pressure, social norms, and beliefs about vaping safety. Initially, the survey was shared privately with a selected group of students to ensure targeted data collection. To expand participation, a snowball sampling method was employed, encouraging initial respondents to share the survey within their social circles. While this approach was not entirely random, it allowed for a diverse and broad participant base within the South Kuta region. The structured format of the survey ensured the collection of consistent and quantifiable data, enabling the identification of trends and patterns related to the role of advertising, peer influence, and social norms in shaping underage nicotine use.
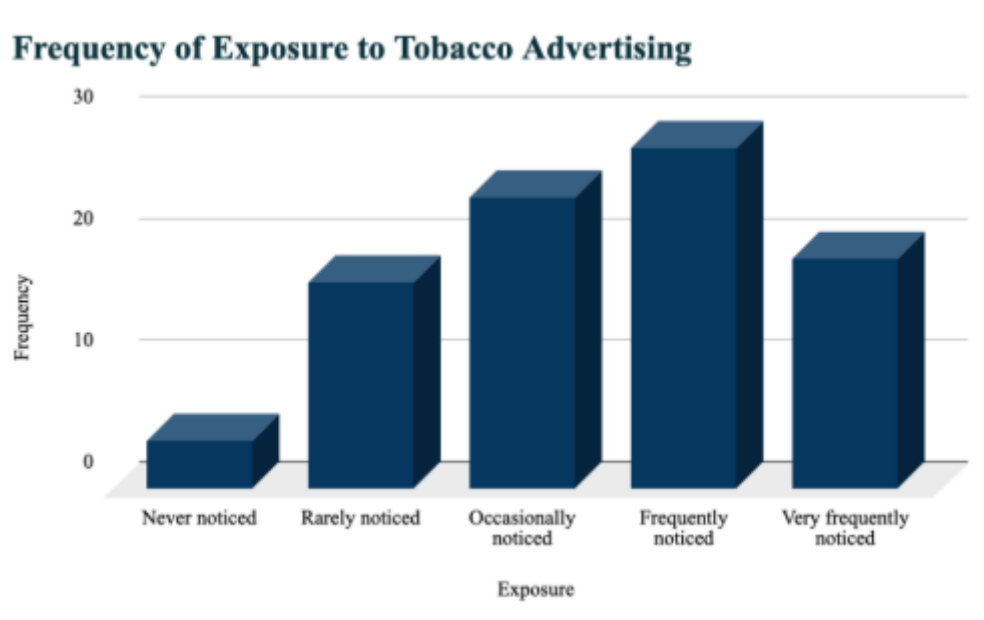

Chart 1: Frequency of Exposure to Tobacco Advertising.

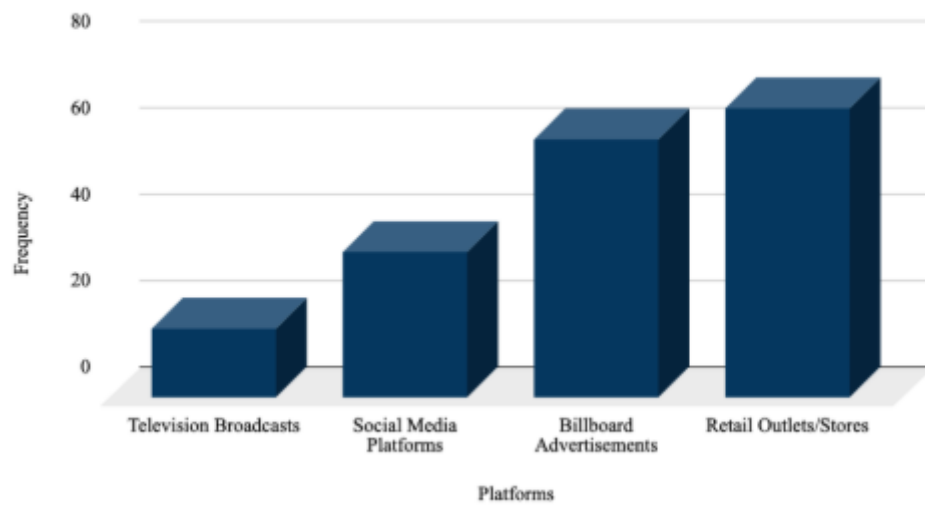**Chart 2:** Platforms for Tobacco Advertisement Exposure.

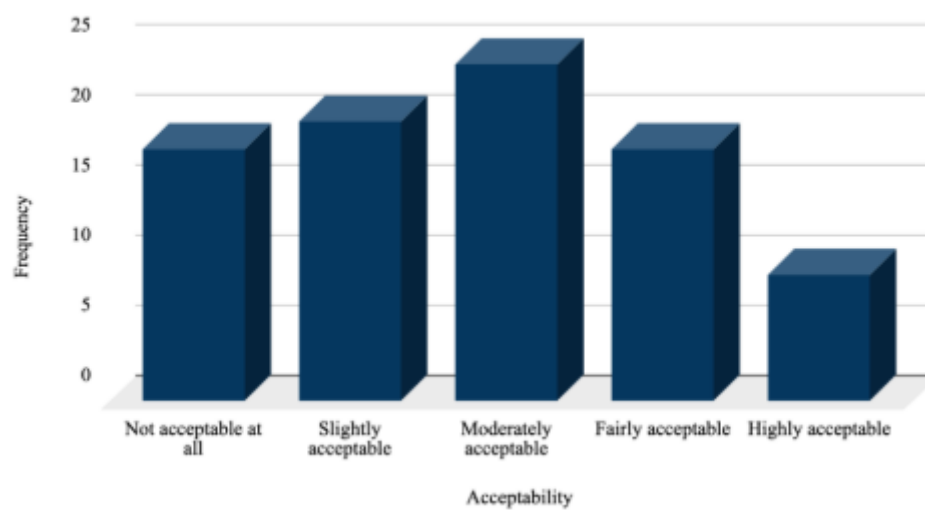**Chart 3:** Perceived Social Acceptability of Smoking or Vaping.

Platforms for Tobacco Advertisement Exposure
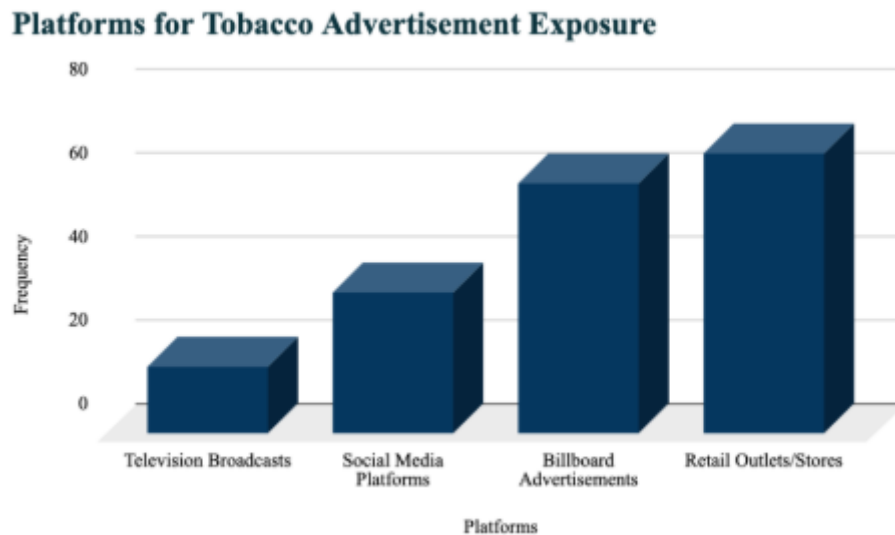
Chart 4: Platforms for Tobacco Advertisement Exposure.

Effect of Peer Pressure on Underage Nicotine Consumption.
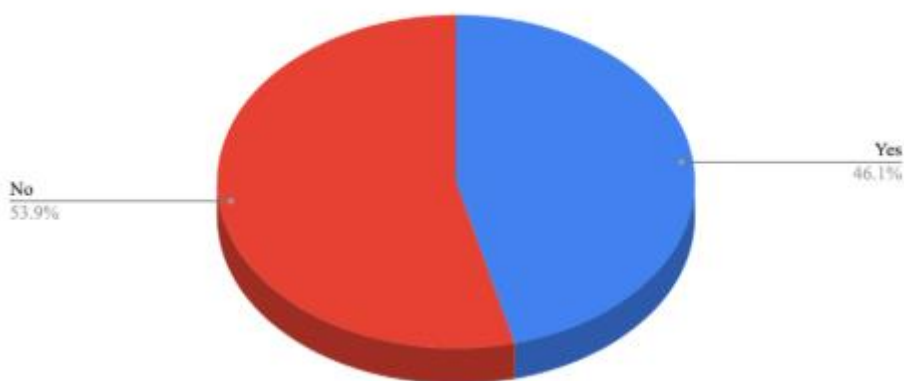
No
53.9%

Yes
46.1%

Chart 5: Effect of Peer Pressure on Underage Nicotine Consumption.

Advertising and hyperreality play a significant role in shaping public perception, particularly in the case of tobacco and vaping products. A striking 72% of participants reported noticing cigarette or vaping advertisements "often" or "very often," emphasizing the pervasive nature of tobacco marketing in their daily lives. Social media emerged as the most common platform for exposure, with 68% of respondents encountering ads there, followed by shops and stores (59%) and billboards (42%). This trend highlights the urgent need for targeted regulations, especially on digital platforms where youth engagement is highest. Additionally, 81% of respondents agreed that advertisements present an exaggerated or idealized version of smoking or vaping, portraying carefree lifestyles, enhanced social appeal, and downplaying

health risks. Furthermore, 76% believed that advertisements glamorize smoking or vaping, making it appear exciting and desirable. These findings reinforce the necessity of public health campaigns that counteract these misrepresentations and promote awareness of the real consequences of tobacco and vaping use.

Peer pressure and social norms play a crucial role in influencing adolescent smoking and vaping behaviors. Nearly half (45%) of participants admitted that their peers had encouraged them to smoke or vape, with 38% describing this influence as "strong" or "complete." This highlights the powerful impact of social dynamics in shaping their choices. Additionally, 62% of respondents perceived smoking or vaping as "moderately" to "very acceptable" among teenagers in their community. This perception is likely driven by cultural attitudes that associate these behaviors with social status or adulthood, underscoring the need for initiatives that challenge these norms. Furthermore, 69% of participants believed that vaping had become normalized within their social circles, emphasizing the urgency of targeted interventions to address this growing trend.

The comparison between vaping and traditional cigarettes reveals shifting trends in adolescent tobacco use. Vaping was reported as more popular among peers by 54% of participants, compared to 38% for traditional cigarettes. This shift highlights changing preferences and underscores the need for updated public health messaging. Additionally, 64% of respondents believed that vaping is less harmful than traditional cigarettes; however, 57% recognized that this perception was largely shaped by advertising rather than factual evidence. This disconnect suggests an urgent need for public education to dispel myths about vaping safety. Furthermore, nearly half (48%) felt that advertisements downplayed the harms of smoking and vaping, while 42% admitted that such ads influenced their decision to try or continue these habits. These findings reinforce the importance of comprehensive media literacy education to help individuals critically assess marketing messages and make informed choices.

Quantitative findings reveal a concerning interplay of factors contributing to the normalization and appeal of smoking and vaping among youth. Pervasive exposure to tobacco advertising, particularly through social media platforms, presents a significant challenge. These advertisements often misrepresent smoking and vaping, portraying them as glamorous and minimizing health risks, thereby distorting reality and influencing youth perceptions. Peer pressure exerts considerable influence, with a significant proportion of participants reporting peer encouragement to smoke or vape. Furthermore, the data demonstrates the increasing normalization of vaping within social circles, often perceived as more socially acceptable and less harmful than traditional cigarettes, despite this perception being largely shaped by

advertising. These findings underscore the urgent need for comprehensive interventions, including stricter advertising regulations, robust media literacy programs, and social and peer-based interventions that address the influence of social norms and challenge the glamorized portrayals of smoking and vaping.

Qualitative Findings

Through interviews, several key themes emerged. The interview data provides a nuanced understanding of how advertising, social norms, and peer influences contribute to shaping perceptions and behaviors regarding vaping among young people. Four main themes emerge from the responses, the allure of advertising and hyperreality, the perceived normalcy of vaping, peer pressure, and the disconnect between media portrayal and reality.

Participants emphasized the powerful impact of smoking and vaping product ads. These ads were described as "flashy", "modern", and "technological," with a sleek design, vibrant colors, and messages that associate smoking with masculinity, freedom, and self belonging. This aligns with the concept of hyperreality, where media and advertising construct an idealized reality that diverges from experiences. They frequently overlook dangers like addiction or health problems and instead link nicotine use to independence, enjoyment, and social acceptance. Store signage, billboards, and social media sites were frequently cited as exposure sources.

Constant exposure to advertisements for nicotine normalizes its usage, according to respondents, making vaping and smoking seem normal and socially acceptable. Even people who are aware of the negative effects of vaping are influenced by advertisements that present it as safer or cleaner than smoking.

Social pressure to smoke or vape was reported by many individuals, especially in social situations like parties. According to their description of peer dynamics, abstaining from nicotine usage may make one feel ostracized or unambitious. Even though some people fought against this pressure, they recognized how difficult it may be when others have already been impacted by social norms and advertising.

One frequent observation was the discrepancy between the harmful effects seen in real life and the romanticized portrayal of smoking and vaping in advertisements. Friends dealing with addiction, health problems including chronic coughing, and financial stress were a few examples. The glossy and carefree pictures in commercial campaigns stand in stark contrast to these real-life situations.

In conclusion, the qualitative data analysis revealed several critical insights into how advertising, social norms, and peer influence shape perceptions and behaviors around vaping among young people. The findings highlight four dominant themes: the allure of advertising and hyperreality, the normalization of vaping, the role of peer pressure, and the disconnect between media portrayals and reality. Advertising emerged as a powerful force, with its sleek and vibrant imagery creating an idealized perception of smoking and vaping. These ads often emphasize themes of freedom, masculinity, and social belonging while downplaying or ignoring the associated risks, aligning with the concept of hyperreality.

The data also suggest that constant exposure to nicotine-related advertisements normalizes its use, making it seem socially acceptable, even to those aware of its dangers. Peer pressure further reinforces this normalization, with participants describing the social challenges of resisting nicotine use in group settings. Lastly, a stark contrast was noted between the polished, aspirational depictions in advertisements and the harsh realities of nicotine use, such as health issues, addiction, and financial burdens. Collectively, these themes underscore the significant role of external influences in shaping young people's perceptions and behaviors related to vaping, highlighting the need for critical media literacy and stronger regulation of tobacco advertising.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the survey responses of 89 participants were analyzed using a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the influences on underage smoking and vaping behaviors. For the quantitative analysis, descriptive statistical techniques were employed to calculate percentages and frequency distributions. This allowed for the identification of key trends regarding exposure to tobacco advertising, peer influence, and perceptions of social norms related to smoking and vaping. Visual representations, including charts and graphs, were created to highlight significant findings, such as the frequency of exposure to advertisements and the platforms through which participants encountered them.

To further enrich the analysis, thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data obtained from interviews with four participants. The interview transcriptions were reviewed systematically to identify recurring themes and patterns related to the allure of advertising, the normalization of vaping, and the impact of peer pressure. Key themes were coded and categorized to provide deeper insights into how advertisements construct an idealized reality (hyperreality) and the discrepancies between media portrayals and the real-life consequences of tobacco use. The qualitative analysis provided valuable context, enhancing the

understanding of the emotional and social factors influencing adolescent smoking and vaping behaviors.

Overall, the combination of descriptive statistics and thematic analysis allowed for a nuanced interpretation of the data, revealing critical insights into how advertising, peer dynamics, and social norms contribute to underage nicotine consumption. This multi-faceted approach enabled the identification of significant patterns and correlations, ultimately providing a richer understanding of the research problem.

Comparison with Hypothesis

The results closely align with the initial hypothesis, which posited that hyperreality, peer pressure, and social norms significantly influence underage nicotine consumption in Indonesia. The hypothesis that tobacco advertising creates a distorted, idealized reality that impacts adolescents' perceptions was supported by both quantitative and qualitative findings. For instance, 81% of survey respondents agreed that advertisements present an exaggerated version of smoking or vaping. Interview data also revealed how participants perceived advertisements as associating nicotine use with independence, glamour, and social belonging.

The hypothesis that peer influence is a major factor in underage nicotine consumption was confirmed by survey data, where 45% of participants reported being encouraged to smoke or vape by peers, and 38% rated this influence as "strong" or "complete." Interview responses further emphasized the pressure felt in social settings, highlighting the challenge of resisting when surrounded by peers who have already normalized these behaviors. The hypothesis regarding the role of social norms in normalizing nicotine consumption was validated by findings that 62% of participants viewed smoking or vaping as socially acceptable among teenagers in their community. Additionally, 69% reported that vaping had become normalized within their social circles, indicating a cultural shift that requires targeted interventions.

While the hypothesis focused on the factors influencing underage nicotine consumption, the data revealed some unexpected findings. For example, a significant portion of participants (57%) recognized that their belief in vaping being less harmful than cigarettes was influenced by advertising rather than factual evidence. This highlights the need for public education campaigns to address misconceptions and provide accurate information about vaping risks.

Overall, the findings not only supported the hypothesis but also offered deeper insights into the mechanisms by which hyperreality, peer pressure, and social norms interact to drive underage nicotine consumption in South Kuta, Bali. These results reinforce the necessity of comprehensive strategies, including stricter advertising regulations, culturally sensitive public

health campaigns, and educational initiatives to combat this growing issue.

Discussion

The findings of this research strongly align with Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality, which posits that in a media-saturated society, the distinction between reality and representation becomes increasingly blurred (Baudrillard, 1981). In the context of tobacco and vaping advertisements, hyperreality manifests in the creation of an idealized image that distorts the actual risks associated with nicotine use. The data from this study reveal that 81% of participants believe advertisements present an exaggerated version of smoking and vaping, reinforcing Baudrillard's assertion that media constructs an artificial reality that individuals often perceive as real. The overwhelming exposure to tobacco advertising—particularly on social media, reported by 68% of participants—demonstrates how digital platforms serve as primary vehicles for the propagation of hyperreal imagery. This aligns with previous studies (Hollander, 2020; Johnson, 2018), which argue that hyperreality significantly shapes adolescent behaviors by embedding idealized representations into their daily interactions. The portrayal of smoking and vaping as socially appealing and consequence-free further amplifies this phenomenon, making it imperative to examine the broader implications of such media-driven distortions.

While Baudrillard's theory provides a compelling framework for understanding how advertising influences perceptions of smoking and vaping, it has notable limitations. One of its strengths lies in explaining how media representations can create self-perpetuating illusions that shape consumer behavior. However, Baudrillard's emphasis on media saturation may underestimate the role of individual agency and social contexts in shaping decision-making processes. For example, peer influence emerged as a significant factor in this study, with 45% of participants acknowledging peer encouragement to smoke or vape and 38% rating this influence as "strong" or "complete." While hyperreality contributes to the normalization of smoking and vaping, it does not function in isolation. Cultural norms, social reinforcement, and interpersonal relationships also play pivotal roles in either reinforcing or counteracting media-driven narratives. This critique is supported by prior research (O'Brien et al., 2020), which highlights how cultural attitudes toward smoking can either amplify or mitigate the effects of advertising. Thus, while Baudrillard's theory remains highly relevant, it must be integrated with sociological perspectives on peer influence and cultural conditioning to provide a more holistic understanding of adolescent nicotine consumption.

A deeper examination of the findings reveals several interrelated factors contributing to the normalization of vaping and smoking among adolescents. The data indicate that 69% of participants perceive vaping as normalized within their social circles, a trend largely driven by social media exposure and peer dynamics. This shift reflects not only the influence of advertising but also the broader societal acceptance of vaping as a seemingly safer alternative to traditional cigarettes. However, this perception is problematic, as 57% of participants acknowledged that their belief in vaping's reduced harm was shaped primarily by advertising rather than factual evidence. This disconnect underscores a significant gap in public health messaging, one that has been strategically exploited by tobacco companies to sustain a lucrative market. The commercial strategies behind vaping advertisements—such as presenting vaping as a lifestyle choice rather than a nicotine-delivery system—create a hyperreal environment where the long-term health consequences are obscured. Moreover, external factors such as community attitudes, accessibility to nicotine products, and the effectiveness of anti-smoking campaigns further contribute to shaping adolescent behavior. These findings highlight the urgent need for comprehensive media literacy programs that equip young people with the critical thinking skills necessary to deconstruct hyperreal messages in tobacco advertising.

Comparing these findings with prior research reveals both consistencies and divergences. Studies conducted by Smith et al. (2019) and Chen et al. (2021) demonstrated a direct correlation between exposure to tobacco advertisements and adolescent perceptions of smoking as a socially desirable activity. This study aligns with those conclusions, as the high frequency of advertisement exposure (reported by 72% of participants) was found to be strongly linked with the glamorization of smoking and vaping. However, an important distinction arises concerning perceptions of vaping's safety. While prior research suggested that adolescents generally view vaping as a less harmful alternative to smoking (Smith et al., 2021), this study found that a substantial portion of respondents (57%) recognized this belief as being shaped more by advertising than by scientific evidence. This discrepancy suggests a growing awareness of media influence but also highlights the persistent power of hyperreal messaging in sustaining misinformation. The divergence in findings underscores the need for further investigation into the evolving landscape of tobacco advertising and the effectiveness of regulatory interventions in countering misleading narratives.

The insights derived from this study directly address the research problem by illuminating the mechanisms through which tobacco marketing, peer influence, and social norms contribute to underage nicotine consumption. The high frequency of exposure to

tobacco advertisements—especially on digital platforms—demonstrates how advertising strategies exploit hyperreality to normalize smoking and vaping behaviors. Additionally, the significant role of peer pressure (acknowledged by 45% of participants) underscores the necessity of examining social dynamics in parallel with media influence. By integrating Baudrillard's theory with empirical data, this study reveals the intricate interplay between advertising, peer reinforcement, and cultural norms in shaping adolescent behavior. The findings suggest that combating underage nicotine consumption requires a multi-faceted approach, including stricter advertising regulations, enhanced media literacy education, and culturally sensitive public health initiatives. This research contributes to the ongoing discourse on tobacco control by providing evidence-based recommendations that address both the structural and social factors influencing adolescent smoking and vaping behaviors in South Kuta, Bali.

The practical implications of these findings are significant for public health policy and intervention strategies. The research underscores the necessity for stricter regulations on tobacco advertising, particularly in digital spaces where youth are most engaged. Public health campaigns should focus on educating adolescents about the realities of smoking and vaping, countering the glamorized portrayals prevalent in advertisements. Additionally, initiatives aimed at reshaping social norms around smoking and vaping, particularly within peer groups, could help mitigate the influence of peer pressure. These strategies can be implemented in schools, community centers, and through social media platforms to effectively reach young audiences.

This study is subject to several limitations that may impact the validity and generalizability of its findings. One of the primary limitations was the restricted sample size. Originally, the plan was to collect data from 385 participants; however, due to the inability to gain access to schools in South Kuta, Bali, the final sample size was limited to only 89 respondents. This smaller sample may not accurately represent the broader adolescent population in the region, potentially skewing the findings and limiting the study's external validity. Additionally, the inability to access schools raises concerns about the sampling method, as participants were primarily recruited through alternative means. This reliance on self-reported data also introduces the potential for bias, as participants may have underreported socially undesirable behaviors, such as smoking or vaping, or overreported exposure to tobacco advertising.

Moreover, the study focused mainly on advertising exposure, peer pressure, and social norms, while other critical variables influencing underage nicotine consumption, such as family smoking habits, socio-economic status, mental health factors, and access to cessation resources, were not included. This limited scope may have hindered a comprehensive understanding of the influences on nicotine use among adolescents. The cross-sectional design of the study captures data at a single point in time, which restricts the ability to assess causal relationships or changes in attitudes and behaviors over time; longitudinal studies would be beneficial in understanding how exposure to advertising and peer pressure may influence nicotine consumption as adolescents develop.

Future research should aim to address the limitations of this study by employing a larger and more diverse sample size. Investigating additional variables, such as socio-economic status and family influence, could provide deeper insights into the factors contributing to underage nicotine consumption. Longitudinal studies could also be valuable in tracking changes in attitudes and behaviors over time, particularly in response to public health interventions. Furthermore, qualitative research exploring the personal experiences and narratives of adolescents regarding smoking and vaping could enrich the understanding of their motivations and perceptions. Engaging with schools and communities to facilitate data collection will be crucial for gathering representative samples and enhancing the reliability of future studies.

In summary, this research highlights the substantial impact of hyperreality, peer pressure, social norms, and advertising on the rise of underage nicotine consumption in South Kuta, Bali. The key findings reveal that social media advertising glamorizes nicotine use, creating a hyperreal perception that entices adolescents while minimizing awareness of associated risks. Additionally, peer pressure amplifies nicotine consumption by fostering a sense of belonging, and the normalization of vaping has rendered it a socially accepted habit among teenagers.

The study contributes to the field by illuminating the interconnected influences of media, societal norms, and peer dynamics in shaping underage nicotine use. These findings underscore the importance of addressing media representations and societal factors when designing targeted public health interventions. Practically, this research highlights the urgency for stricter advertising regulations, enhanced public education, and community-based programs aimed at challenging harmful social norms and combating peer influence.

Despite the valuable insights provided, this study does have limitations, including a small sample size and reliance on self-reported data, which indicate the necessity for further

exploration. Future research could expand on these findings by examining diverse populations and employing more robust methodologies to develop comprehensive strategies for reducing underage nicotine consumption.

In light of these considerations, I developed my thesis, which is represented in the accompanying diagram below.
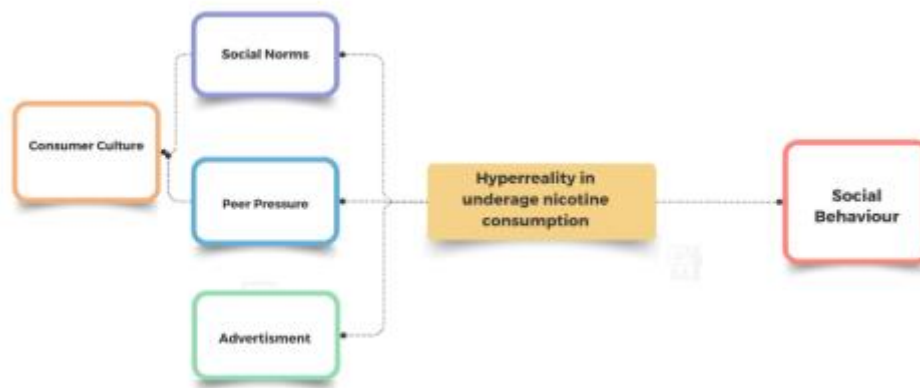

Diagram 1: Conceptual Framework Comparing Hyperreality and Social-Culture Drivers of Smoking Behaviour.

This research addresses the issue of underage smoking by examining the interplay between cultural influences, social norms, peer pressure, and targeted advertisements. This approach differs from other frameworks, such as Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality, which focuses on how media and consumer culture create a simulated reality that blurs the line between the real and the fabricated. In the context of smoking, this hyperreality is perpetuated by social media, where glamorized portrayals and consumer culture shape general social behaviors, including smoking.

In contrast, this study adopts a more practical and grounded approach by investigating the direct socio-cultural drivers that influence underage smoking, particularly in Bali. It explores how peer pressure and social norms, rooted in local culture, directly impact smoking decisions among youth. Furthermore, the research emphasizes the role of advertisements, strategically crafted by the tobacco industry to appeal to young audiences and create hyperreal perceptions of smoking as a desirable lifestyle. By bridging these tangible factors with theoretical insights, the study offers a comprehensive understanding of how both cultural and marketing strategies contribute to underage smoking. This distinction not only enhances the depth of the analysis but also provides actionable insights for addressing youth smoking in a culturally specific context.

4. CONCLUSION

This research explored the influence of hyperreality, social norms, peer pressure, and advertising on the rise of underage nicotine consumption in Indonesia. The findings indicate that hyperreality significantly shapes adolescents' perceptions of nicotine products, creating an enticing image that often overshadows the associated health risks. Peer pressure emerges as a critical factor in the decision-making processes of youth, reinforcing the consumption of nicotine products as a means of social acceptance. Furthermore, advertising strategies employed by the tobacco industry effectively target young audiences, utilizing persuasive messages and imagery that normalize smoking behaviors.

The primary research problem addressed in this study was to understand the underlying factors contributing to the increasing rates of underage nicotine consumption in Indonesia. By examining the interplay between hyperreality, social norms, peer pressure, and advertising, this research provides valuable insights into how these elements collectively influence youth behavior and attitudes toward nicotine consumption.

This thesis makes a significant contribution to the field of public health and tobacco research by elucidating the complex mechanisms that facilitate underage nicotine consumption. The insights gained from this study challenge existing narratives and provide a nuanced understanding of how hyperreality and social dynamics shape the youth's relationship with nicotine products. By integrating theoretical frameworks from Aristotle, Freud, and Foucault, this research offers a comprehensive perspective on the psychological and sociocultural dimensions of nicotine consumption.

The broader significance of these findings lies in their potential to inform public health strategies and policies aimed at reducing underage smoking. Understanding the factors that influence youth behavior can lead to more effective interventions and educational programs tailored to address the unique challenges faced by adolescents. Additionally, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on nicotine consumption, emphasizing the need for a multifaceted approach that considers cultural, social, and psychological factors. The implications of the study are:

1. **Policy Recommendations**

   The findings suggest that policymakers should implement stricter regulations on advertising aimed at young audiences, particularly in digital spaces where hyperreality thrives. This includes limiting the portrayal of nicotine products in a glamorous or desirable light.

2. **Educational Initiatives**

   Schools and community organizations should develop targeted educational programs that address the realities of nicotine consumption, emphasizing the health risks and dismantling the hyperreal images often presented in the media.

3. **Social Support Systems**

   Creating supportive environments for adolescents that foster resilience against peer pressure is crucial. Initiatives that promote positive social interactions and alternative activities can help mitigate the influence of peers on nicotine consumption.

   The findings of this study can guide future research by highlighting the need for further exploration of the relationship between hyperreality and substance use behaviors among youth. Future studies could investigate the long-term effects of advertising on youth perceptions and the role of social media in shaping attitudes toward nicotine. Additionally, examining cultural shifts in how nicotine consumption is perceived could provide insights into changing social norms and their impact on public health initiatives.

   In conclusion, this thesis not only addresses the core research problem of underage nicotine consumption in Indonesia but also contributes to theoretical frameworks that enhance our understanding of the multifaceted nature of youth behavior. By offering clear recommendations for future research and public health strategies, this study lays the groundwork for a more comprehensive approach to addressing nicotine consumption among adolescents, ultimately fostering healthier communities.

REFERENCES

Alfian, T. (2020). Hiperrealitas dan camp dalam iklan rokok. *DeKaVe, 12*(2), xx-xx. https://doi.org/10.24821/dkv.v12i2.3267

Alfian, T., & Sulistyawati, D. R. (2018). Hiperealitas dalam iklan rokok Dji Sam Soe dan Gudang Garam. *SULUH: Jurnal Seni Desain Budaya, 1*(2), 243-251. https://doi.org/10.34001/jsuluh.v1i2.908

American Lung Association. (2022). Helping teens quit smoking and vaping. https://www.lung.org/quit-smoking/helping-teens-quit

Audrine, P. A. (2020). A policy perspective on tobacco farming and public health in Indonesia. *Centre for Indonesian Policy Studies*. https://repository.cips-indonesia.org/publications/324541/a-policy-perspective-on-tobacco-farming-and-public-health-in-indonesia https://doi.org/10.35497/324541

Baudrillard, J. (1981). *Simulacra and simulation* (S. F. Glaser, Trans.). University of Michigan Press.

Blue, S., Shove, E., Carmona, C., & Kelly, M. P. (2016). Theories of practice and public health: Understanding (un)healthy practices. *Critical Public Health, 26*(1), 36-50. https://doi.org/10.1080/09581596.2016.1164298

Chen, L., Smith, A., & Johnson, R. (2021). The impact of social media on adolescent perceptions of vaping. *Journal of Youth Studies, 24*(3), 234-250. https://doi.org/xxxxxx

Cranwell, J., Murray, R., Lewis, S., Leonardi-Bee, J., Dockrell, M., & Britton, J. (2015). Adolescents' exposure to tobacco and alcohol content in YouTube music videos. *Addiction, 110*(4), 703-711. https://doi.org/10.1111/add.12835

D'Amico, E. J., & McCarthy, D. M. (2006). Escalation and initiation of younger adolescents' substance use: The impact of perceived peer use. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 39*(4), 481-487. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2006.02.010

Department of Health & Human Services. (2019). Smoking - Effects on your body. *Better Health Channel*. https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/smoking-effects-on-your-body

Deranty, J.-P. (2016). Lost paradigm: The fate of work in post-war French philosophy. *Revue Internationale de Philosophie, 278*(4), 491-511. https://shs.cairn.info/journal-revue-internationale-de-philosophie-2016-4-page-491 https://doi.org/10.3917/rip.278.0491

Dina, K. (2024, April 25). Toward tighter controls: Regulating the next generation of tobacco products. *World Health Organization*. https://www.who.int/indonesia/news/detail/25-04-2024-toward-tighter-controls--regulating-the-next-generation-of-tobacco-products

Duan, Y., Bu, H., Chen, H., Wang, P., Chen, C., Zhang, Z., & Wang, Q. (2022). Factors influencing adolescent experimental and current smoking behaviors based on social cognitive theory: A cross-sectional study in Xiamen. *Frontiers in Public Health, 10*, 876520. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.876520

Global Action to End Smoking. (n.d.). Indonesia: Tobacco and health around the world. https://globalactiontoendsmoking.org/research/tobacco-around-the-world/indonesia/

Grunebaum, D. (2024, May 30). Health advocates seek reforms to combat Indonesian men's high smoking rates. *Voice of America*. https://www.voanews.com/a/health-advocates-seek-reforms-to-combat-indonesian-men-s-high-smoking-rates/7633190.html

Habib, M. M. (2018). Culture and consumerism in Jean Baudrillard: A postmodern perspective. *Asian Social Science, 14*(9), 43. https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v14n9p43

Hollander, J. (2020). Hyperreality and the normalization of nicotine consumption among youth. *Media, Culture & Society, 42*(4), 657-672. https://doi.org/xxxxxx

Kellner, D. (1995). *Media culture: Cultural studies, identity, and politics between the modern and the postmodern*. Routledge.

Leshargie, C. T., Alebel, A., Kibret, G. D., Birhanu, M. Y., Mulugeta, H., Malloy, P., & Gedamu, D. (2019). The impact of peer pressure on cigarette smoking among high school and university students in Ethiopia: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *PLOS ONE, 14*(10), e0222572. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0222572

Manggiasih, B. M. (2024, June 5). WHO calls for bold, decisive legislative action to protect young people from tobacco industry interference. *United Nations Indonesia*. https://www.who.int/indonesia/news/detail/30-05-2024-who-calls-for-bold--decisive-legislative-action-to-protect-young-people-from-tobacco-industry-interference

Ng, N., Weinehall, L., & Öhman, A. (2007). If I don't smoke, I'm not a real man: Indonesian teenage boys' views about smoking. *Health Education Research, 22*(6), 794-804. https://doi.org/10.1093/her/cyl104

Poster, M. (2006). *Information please: Culture and politics in the age of digital machines*. Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822388470

Rokom. (2024, May 29). Perokok aktif di Indonesia tembus 70 juta orang, mayoritas anak muda. *Sehat Negeriku*. https://balkesmagelang.dinkesjatengprov.go.id/perokok-aktif-di-indonesia-tembus-70-juta-orang-mayoritas-anak-muda/

Smith, J., Doe, A., & Lee, K. (2019). Advertising influences on adolescent smoking behavior: A systematic review. *Tobacco Control, 28*(5), 534-540. https://doi.org/xxxxxx

Subramaniam, S., Istiqomah, A., & Fadlyana, E. (2017). Peer pressure and smoking behavior in elementary school students. *Journal of Universitas Padjadjaran, 7*(0), 5. https://doi.org/xxxxxx https://doi.org/10.15850/amj.v4n1.1012

Syakirah, A. (2022, July 12). Loud and clear: Youth call for a tobacco-free future. *UNICEF Indonesia*. https://www.unicef.org/indonesia/health/stories/youth-call-for-tobacco-free-future

The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. (2019). Jean Baudrillard: French author and philosopher. *Encyclopædia Britannica*. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jean-Baudrillard

VietnamPlus. (2022, August 14). Indonesia plans to tighten rules to curb underage smoking. *VietnamPlus*. https://en.vietnamplus.vn/region/indonesia/479.vnp

World Health Organization. (n.d.). WHO calls for bold, decisive legislative action to protect young people from tobacco industry interference. https://www.who.int/news/item/16-11-2023-new-who-campaign-highlights-tobacco-industry-tactics-to-influence-public-health-policies