

Betel Nut Chewing Behavior among Adolescents in Papua Province, Indonesia

James J. Watopa
Universitas Klabat

Abstract

Chewing betel nuts is a Papuan tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation, and is widely accepted in Papuan community. However, betel nut contains a psychotropic substance called arecoline, which is a stimulant with a similar effect to that of nicotine. In this study, it was found that the group age of 17 to 29 is significant (0.0) in consuming betel nut compared to other group ages. This study used the descriptive cross-sectional method. The objective of this study is to find what dominant factors exist regarding the betel nut chewing behavior among adolescents in Papua province. Data were taken from 293 respondents from eight different high schools in Papua and were used as a sample for this study. One dominant factor influencing high school students in chewing betel nuts was the cultural factor (mean 2.81). This study also considered the habits of eating betel nuts based on level of education, religion, and tribe. In addition, there is a significant difference (0.0) between participants from SDA and non-SDA schools in terms of chewing betel nuts. This study will help young people in Papua province to be informed about the negative effects of chewing betel nuts on health and social life.

Keywords: *Areca nut, oral health, social networking*