

Smoking Frequency among College Student: Distinctive Characteristics and Factors Related to Smoking

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ABSTRACT

Background: Smoking remains one of the leading causes of preventable disease worldwide with increase of trend of continue to smoke and reduction of daily smoke. The non-daily smoking (smoking on some days but not every day) is increasing.

Aims: To find out the frequency of smoking in medical college student and factors related with smoking.

Methods: Fifty consented students of medical sciences were included in the study. Duration of study was one month (Sep 2019-Oct 2019). Questionnaires based on factors related with smoking were filled from students. Results: it is observed that most of the student start smoking in their youth, just for fun but with time they are habitual. Some students are social smokers, smoke occasionally and almost always in groups. Some percentage of students only smoke when they have usually stress of their tests.

Conclusion: Most of the students are found to be non-daily smokers. They may start smoking in very young age as peer smokers due to their friends and also due to good financial status. Their reason of smoking is fun, stress of examination, relaxation and home sickness, which is reduced with time.

Keywords: Smoking, Students, factors

INTRODUCTION

Smoking is one of the most important reason of preventable problem worldwide with increase incidence of both daily and non-daily smoking¹. According to surveys the prevalence of smoking is 28.6% among students².

Smoking may be comprised as daily and daily smoking. Non-daily based smoking may be a fleeting state between regular use of cigarette and use casually³, while some survey thought that this type of smoking may persist indefinitely⁴.

The incidence of non-daily smoking is less as compare to daily cigarette smoking. However some researchers showed daily smoking is rapidly decreased^{5,6}. Non-daily smoking is related with increase susceptibility to number of diseases like cardiovascular disease, infection of respiratory tract, problems of GIT and reproductive problems, though the rate of getting disease is less than of daily smokers⁷.

The definition of non-daily smokers is different in different studies. Non-daily smokers may be defined as occasional, social, irregular or use cigarette for recreation^{2,4}. It is found that social smokers do not considered themselves as smoker, they thought that they are enthusiastic, and believe they can quit cigarette, when they desire⁸.

Cigarette smoking was believed as the form of dependence. Usage of nicotinic material results in tolerance, adaptation and dependence. A survey showed that 40-42 % of occasional smokers in their adult hood

maintained the habit of cigarette smoking for a span 2 years⁷. Another study stated that 60% of irregular smoker were remain use cigarette use and not quit. Overall it is found that non-daily smokers may be might to moderate and ever highly stable for many years². Non-daily smokers as compared to daily smokers are younger, highly educated with good financial status and these are more susceptible to respiratory and other problems⁹.

Current study was planned to find out the frequency of smoking in medical college student and factors related with smoking.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Fifty consented students of medical sciences were included in the study. Duration of study was one month (Sep 2019-Oct 2019). Questionnaires based on factors related with smoking were filled from students. Smoking status and level were communal smoking i.e., social smoking was evaluated that smoking is alone or with other and how many friend have a habit of smoking. Reason of smoking is based on the motives¹⁰ including (smoking may help to become active, may help to become confident, calm down, boredom free and cheer up.

Statistical Analysis: Data was enter and analyzed by using SPSS 20.0. Variables were expressed in percentages.

RESULTS

Incidence of student smoking by their traits is tabulated as table 1. It is observed that 30% students were smokers with age range 16-17 years and 40% with age range 18-20

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years. About 90% of students were financially strong as they have pocket money in the range of 5000 to 10,000. The parents of majority of student were highly educated. However, smoking is not common in parents and in friends (Only 30%). Duration of smoking of student was in a range of 25-30%.

Table 2 shows personal and environmental factors of students smoking. It is observed that 40% were peer smokers due to their parents and were continue smoke. 50% start smoking due to friend, and 45% have a habit of continue smoking. To relieve from stress and depression, 55% start smoking and among these 50% continue to smoke. It is observed that 60% of student start smoking for enjoyment and relaxation, however with time the percentage of continue smoking is reduced to 50-52%. About 50% student refused to give reason of start and continue smoking.

Table 1: Incidence of student smoking by their traits:

Characteristics	Smokers (30 %)	Non-smokers(70%)	P-value
Age(years) 16-17 years 18-20 years	30 % 40 %	70% 60 %	0.001
Pocket money / month < 3000 Pak rupees > 3000 Pak rupees	10% 90%	10% 90%	0.000
Father education (School) (College / higher education)	10% 90%	10% 90%	0.000
Mother education (School) (College / higher education)	10% 90%	10% 90%	0.000
Parental smoking	30 %	15 %	0.001
Friends smoking None Some, or all	70% 30%	80% 20 %	0.049
Duration of smoking < 6 Months 6 Months-1 year 2 Years	25 % 35 % 33%	-	-

Table 2: Personal and environmental factors of students smoking

Reasons	Start smoking	Continue smoking
Parents	40 %	40 %
Friends	50 %	45 %
Stress and Depression	55 %	50%
Enjoyment and Fun	60 %	50 %
Relaxation	60 %	52 %
Personal Life Problems	50 %	40 %
Residence Day scholer Hostilities	30 % 70%	- -

DISCUSSION

Smoking is usually begins in the age of adolescence of students and rapidly lead to addiction. For proper prevention of smoking there is a need to find out the risk factors associated with smoking and the means of their prevention¹¹.

Incidence of student smoking by their traits showed most of students start smoking in the age 18-20 years. We

agree with a study who observed that most of the college students with age of 18-20 used cigarette more frequently than the school going students. It is suggested that smoking is in progress in such a way that initially student just trying to smoke and then become habitual¹².

Majority of the students have strong financial status and their parents are educated. The finding that most of the parents of both smokers and non smokers are highly educated and having good socioeconomic class, suggested that these class of parents have a good understanding of hazards of smoking and therefore it is easy for them to prevent their children from smoking. We agreed with the findings of some researcher speculated that students from educated and well established families are more involve in situations of social smoking as compare to less educated and established families^{13,14}. However, smoking is not common in parents and in friends. A study found that smoking of friend may be a factor to start smoking¹¹.

Personal and environmental factors of students smoking showed that many students were peer smokers due to their parents and were continue smoke. We agreed with study who found that peer smoking is more common in young adults especially in those whose family members are smoker^{15,16}.

We also surveyed the reasons of start smoking. It is observed 50% start smoking due to friend, and 45 % have a habit of continue smoking. A study stated that smoking due to friends may reveal that friends symbolize the social environment of children and therefore this class is more at risk to start smoking as compared to the effect of parental smoking. It is also seen that these children / adolescents feel excitement by smoking and later they addict^{17,18}.

It is observed that 60% of student start smoking for enjoyment and relaxation, however with time the percentage of continue smoking is reduced to 50-52 %. On the other hand for relieving stress and depression (may be due to examination or due to some family problems), 55 % start smoking and among these 50 % continue to smoke. According to a study the commonly known reason of smoking of student is to enjoy their free time, other used smoking for release of depression or stress². Recently, a study reported that some percentages of students tried to quit smoking but these are failed and these students showed high level of stress¹⁹.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that most of the students are found to be non-daily smokers. They may start smoking in very young age as peer smokers due to their friends and also due to good financial status. However with time the percentages of these students were decreased. Their reason of smoking is fun, stress of examination, relaxation and home sickness. It is therefore a need of health care sources, including health center doctors who screen the non-daily smokers and convince them for quitting smoking.

Study limitations: Small number of students was surveyed. Study is therefore not definite that non-daily smokers are more than heavy smokers. Other limitation is that cigarette smoking is restricted in some colleges, and that's why there is high incidence of non-daily smokers.

There is a need to use social media, mobile apps for combat cigarette smoking.

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