

Perceptions of Adolescents Regarding Tobacco Usage: A Cross Sectional Study

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ABSTRACT

Background: According to a data by WHO, in India there are around 194 million men and 45 million women who consume tobacco either in smoked or smokeless forms. Indians ranks as second biggest consumers of tobacco in different forms like bidi, khaini, paan-masala, cigarettes etc. The present study was conducted with the aim to determine the awareness of adolescents regarding tobacco consumption.

Materials and Methods: This cross sectional study was conducted by the Department of Community Medicine, Rajshree Medical Research Institute & Hospital, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh (India). In this study adolescents of nearby villages were questioned about tobacco consumption and awareness. All the demographic details were recorded including age, gender, residential area and level of education. The data was obtained in a tabulated version and analysed using SPSS software. The data was arranged as percentage of total value. Chi square test was used for analysis. Probability value of less than 0.05 was considered significant.

Results: In this present study a total of 300 adolescents were enrolled. Out of these there were 47% (n=141) who were aged between 10-15 years and 53% (n=159) were aged between 15-20 years. There were 168 males (n=56%) in the study and 132 females (n=44%) in the study. There were 86.3% males who knew that tobacco was harmful for health and there were 84.1% females who knew that tobacco had harmful effects.

Approximately 84.5% males and only 78.7% females knew that tobacco consumption can lead to oral cancer.

Conclusion: From the above study we came to the conclusion that there are still quite a lot of tobacco consumers in India. A majority of the adolescents are unaware of the health hazard of tobacco consumption. There were 86.3% males who knew that tobacco was harmful for health and there were 84.1% females who knew that tobacco had harmful effects.

Keywords: Adolescents, Harmful, Hazard, Tobacco.

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INTRODUCTION

Tobacco has been in use in human life since 600 AD. Going back to history there were three contemporary rulers, King James I, Shah Abbas and the Mughal emperor Jahangir of India who noticed the harmful effects of tobacco and tried to reduce its use and ban it.¹ According to a data by WHO, in India there are around 194 million men and 45 million women who consume tobacco either in smoked or smokeless forms.² Indians ranks as second biggest consumers of tobacco in different forms like bidi, khaini, paan-masala, cigarettes etc.^{3,4} Tobacco use is one of the chief and prime preventable cause of disease, disability and death in the world. It is estimated that 4.9 million deaths worldwide occur annually can be due to tobacco use. By 2020, this number is expected to rise to 10 million by the year 2020 and if the current scenario continues than more than 70% of these deaths can occur in developing nations.⁵

There is increased prevalence of adolescents who consume tobacco across different Indian states. Various studies conducted in India have been reported regarding this issue.⁶⁻⁹ These studies have also indicated that more than 25% of adolescents who are aged between 13 to 15 years in India have consumed tobacco in any form, and amongst them 17% are current consumers.^{10,11} therefore use of tobacco is increasing at alarming rate amongst adolescents and college students till adulthood.¹² Since tobacco is a part of the socio-cultural traditions amongst various societies, especially in northern, eastern and north-eastern parts of the country, the use of tobacco is drastically increasing. Various norms have been set up by the Indian government regarding the selling and purchase of tobacco products. Selling of tobacco or tobacco containing products within 100 yards radius of an educational premise is a punishable offense.¹³ The present study

was conducted with the aim to determine the awareness of adolescents regarding tobacco consumption.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This cross sectional study was conducted by the Department of Community Medicine, Rajshree Medical Research Institute & Hospital, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh (India). In this study adolescents of nearby villages were questioned about tobacco consumption and awareness. The study was approved by the institute's ethical board and all the subjects were informed about the study and a written consent was obtained in their vernacular language. All the subjects aged between 10-20 years whether or not tobacco

consumers were included in the study. A predesigned performa that was pretested was used for the collection of data regarding awareness of tobacco.

A sample size of 300 was selected based on the prevalence of tobacco consumers at the place. Tobacco consumption was defined as habitual use of tobacco product in any form over a period of time. All the demographic details were recorded including age, gender, residential area and level of education. The data was obtained in a tabulated version and analysed using SPSS software. The data was arranged as percentage of total value. Chi square test was used for analysis. Probability value of less than 0.05 was considered significant.

Table 1: Demographic details

VARIABLES	n	PERCENTAGE
Age (years)		
10-15	141	47
15-20	159	53
Gender		
Male	168	56
Female	132	44
Education		
Illiterate	180	60
Literate	120	40

Table 2: Awareness regarding harmful effects

VARIABLE	MALES (N/%)	FEMALES (N/%)	P VALUE
Harmful for health	145/86.3	111/84.1	>0.05
Oral cancer	142/84.5	104/78.7	<0.05
Lung cancer	145/86.3	105/79.5	<0.05
Oral hygiene effect	140/83.3	101/76.5	<0.05

Table 3: Source of information

SOURCE	MALES (N/%)	FEMALES (N/%)
Television	77/45.8	74/56.1
Radio	7/4.1	2/1.5
Friends	63/37.5	48/36.3
Newspaper	4/2.3	2/1.5
Others	17/10.1	6/4.5

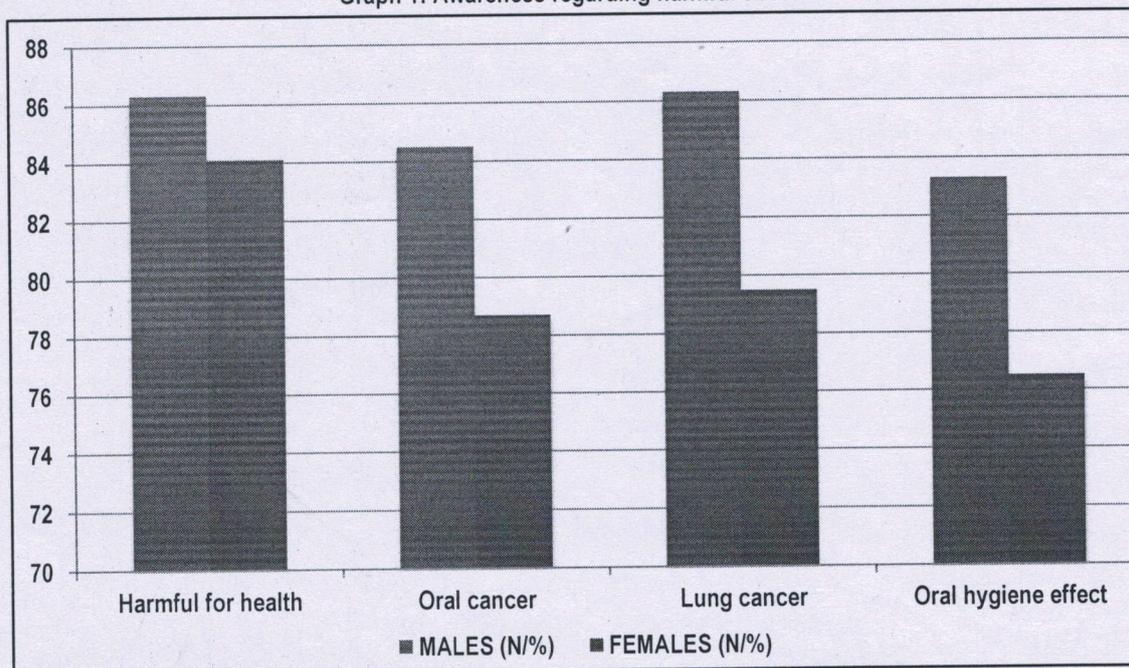
RESULTS

In this present study a total of 300 adolescents were enrolled. Out of these there were 47% (n=141) who were aged between 10-15 years and 53% (n=159) were aged between 15-20 years. There were 168 males (n=56%) in the study and 132 females (n=44%) in the study. Out of the total subjects there were 60% (n=180) who were illiterate and 40% (n=120) who were literate. (Table 1) There were 86.3% males who knew that tobacco was harmful for health and there were 84.1% females who knew that tobacco had harmful effects. Approximately 84.5% males and only 78.7% females knew that tobacco consumption can lead to oral cancer. There were 145 males and 105 females who had an idea as

tobacco could be an etiologic agent for lung cancer. Tobacco consumption is harmful for oral health was known by only 83.3% males and 76.5% females. There was a significant difference in the awareness amongst males and females. (Table 2)

Table 3 shows the source of information regarding these adolescents. For 45.8% of males and 56.1% of females the source of information was television. Radio was the source of information for 4.1% males and 1.5% females. Peer influence is great during this age. There were 37.5% males and 36.3% females who got information from friends. Newspaper was a source of information for 2.3% males and 1.5% females.

Graph 1: Awareness regarding harmful effects



DISCUSSION

In our study, there were 86.3% males who knew that tobacco was harmful for health and there were 84.1% females who knew that tobacco had harmful effects. Approximately 84.5% males and only 78.7% females knew that tobacco consumption can lead to oral cancer. There were 145 males and 105 females who had an idea as tobacco could be an etiologic agent for lung cancer. Tobacco consumption is harmful for oral health was known by only 83.3% males and 76.5% females. There was a significant difference in the awareness amongst males and females. In study conducted by Bhojani et al amongst pre university students of banglore showed that there 81.3% current consumers of tobacco who were aware about the harmful effects of tobacco.¹⁴ in a study conducted by V Singh et al¹⁵ in Jaipur, there were 80% subjects who were aware about the harmful effects of tobacco. In another study conducted by V Singh et al in the capital of the nation, Delhi, there were 99.2% of the students who were aware of the harmful effects of tobacco consumption.

In a study conducted by Rani et al⁴, the prevalence of tobacco consumption was 33% amongst uttar pradesh's residents. In a study conducted by Thankappan KR & Thresia CU in Kerala India also showed that tobacco use was significantly more amongst people of the lower Socio-Economic (SE) groups compared to the high group.¹⁷ In a study conducted by Imtiaz D et al¹⁸ amongst rural population of Dehradun found that 87.4% were aware about the harmful effects of tobacco. They concluded that even though tobacco consumers are well versed by tobacco's harmful effects on health they still cannot quit the habit of tobacco consumption. In our study, there were 47% who were aged between 10-15 years and 53% were aged between 15-20 years. There were 168 males in the study and 132 females in the study. The demographic details of our study were similar to the studies conducted by Awasthi S et al¹⁹ and Sanjeev Davey et al.²⁰

In a study conducted by Sanjeev Davey et al²⁰, majority of the population had no information regarding harmful effects of consumption of tobacco. There were 50% of the adolescents who

were unaware about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption. In our study, for 45.8% of males and 56.1% of females the source of information was television. Radio was the source of information for 4.1% males and 1.5% females. Peer influence is great during this age. There were 37.5% males and 36.3% females who got information from friends. Newspaper was a source of information for 2.3% males and 1.5% females. In a study conducted by Imtiaz D et al¹⁸ television (46.2%) was the prime source of the information regarding harmful effects of tobacco.

CONCLUSION

From the above study we came to the conclusion that there are still quite a lot of tobacco consumers in India. A majority of the adolescents are unaware of the health hazard of tobacco consumption. There were 86.3% males who knew that tobacco was harmful for health and there were 84.1% females who knew that tobacco had harmful effects.

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