



PRACTICE OF SMOKING; AWARENESS AMONG ADOLESCENTS OF ABASIA HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL AND UMMUL QURA BAHAWALPUR

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ABSTRACT: Introduction: Tobacco kills nearly 6 million people each year. More than five million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use while more than 600 000 are the result of non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke. Unless urgent action is taken, the annual death toll could rise to more than eight million by 2030¹. To reduce this heavy morbidity and mortality due to tobacco use, can only be reduced by educating the masses regarding harmful effects of tobacco use. This cross sectional study was conducted with the objective, to assess the awareness and factors responsible for smoking among adolescents in Abbasia Higher secondary school and Umm ul Qura High School, Bahawalpur. **Settings:** The study was carried out in Abbasia Higher secondary school and Umm ul Qura High School. **Duration:** From 1 May 2011 to 15 June 2011. **Subject/Methods:** A preformed questionnaire was used to collect data from 150 subjects included in this study. **Results:** Of all the subjects, 74% were aware of smoking, 22.67% were smokers. According to this study, 76.47% of smokers said that they smoked to enjoy some occasion, 17.65% smoked due to stress and 5% for exam preparation. **Conclusions:** Students were well aware of smoking hazards; prevalence of smoking was higher in Umm ul Qura High School students.

Key words: Smoking, stress, tobacco related diseases.

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INTRODUCTION

A strong association exists between tobacco use and several diseases namely, cancer of the lung, bronchitis and emphysema, cancer of the larynx, oral cavity and oesophagus, gastric and duodenal ulcers, Crohn's disease, cancer of the bladder, coronary artery disease, macrocytosis, polycythaemia, leukaemia etc. Smokers not only harm themselves but also those around. Foetal malformations, abortions, stillbirths, prematurity and low birth weight are common in smoker mothers. These are the effects of passive smoking. Mass education about the hazards of smoking with emphasis on complete stoppage of smoking is the only way to prevent its rising incidence².

A study conducted at Singapore and Scotland showed that awareness about the smoking related diseases such as lung cancer, mouth and throat cancer, heart disease and stroke was greater than 85%³. While an Indian inquiry of dental patients revealed that 18.1% of smokers and 9.5% of

non-smoking tobacco users were aware of the injurious nature of tobacco use. In comparison, 63.3% of non-smokers thought that tobacco is harmful for health⁴.

In Ziauddin Medical University Karachi, awareness regarding harmfulness of tobacco was found to be less than 75%. Interestingly, level of awareness was better in females as compared to male students⁵. This study was conducted to determine the awareness level among adolescents of two different schools regarding smoking, so as to plan to educate them about the injurious effects of tobacco use.

METHODOLOGY

Settings

Study was conducted in two institutions of Bahawalpur, Abbasia Higher secondary school and Umm ul Qura High School.

Duration

The study was done from 01 May to 15 June 2011

Study design

It was an observational, descriptive cross-sectional study

Sample Size

Keeping in view the time limitation, it was decided to take the sample of 150 students; 75 from Abbasia and 75 from Umm ul Qura

Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling

Data Collection

Data was collected on a preformed questionnaire by the research team, there were total 200 male students in Abbasia and 100 in Ummul Qura; from which, 80 and 70 were randomly selected respectively by picking up slips containing roll numbers of students from boxes

Data Analyses

Manually. Frequencies were calculated and presented as tables and figures

RESULTS

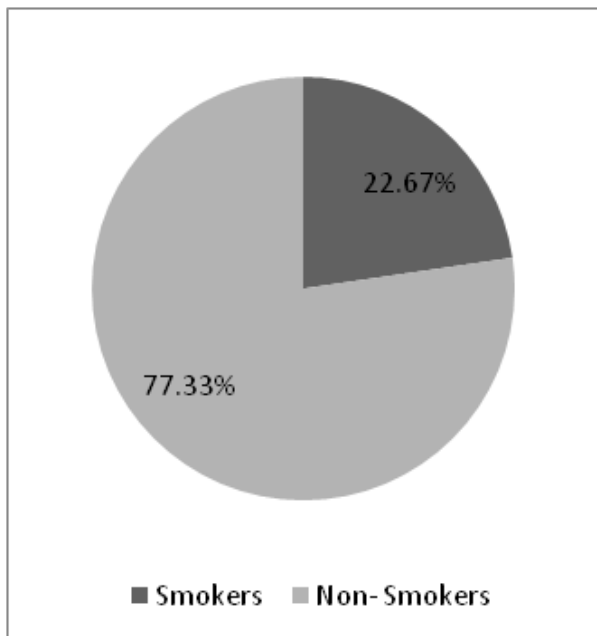


Fig-1. Smokers and non-smokers

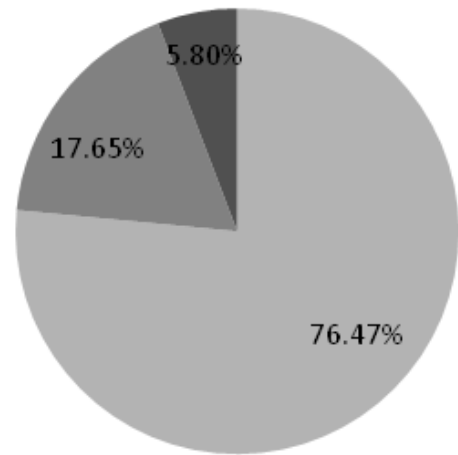


Fig-2. Reasons for smoking

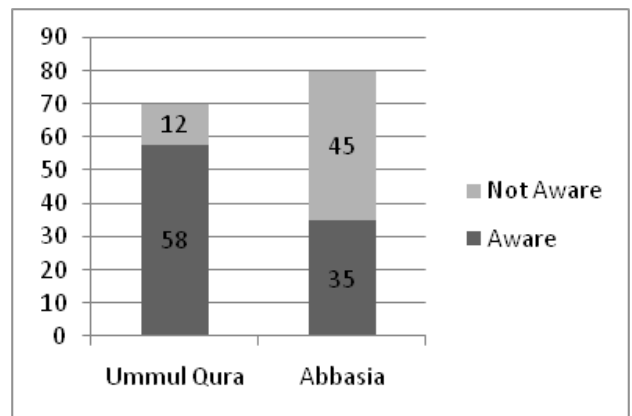


Fig-3. Awareness about smoking

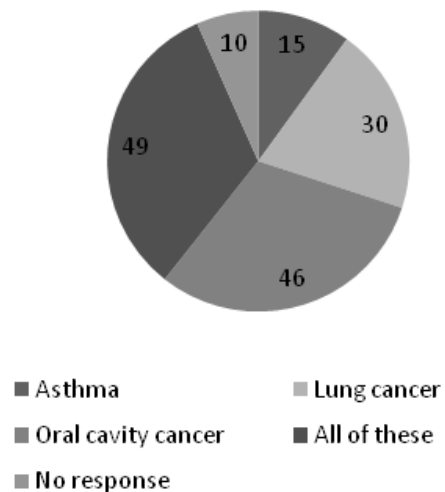
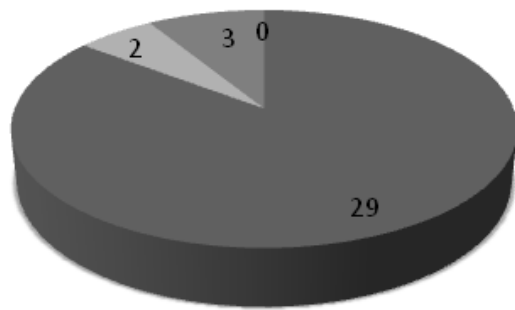
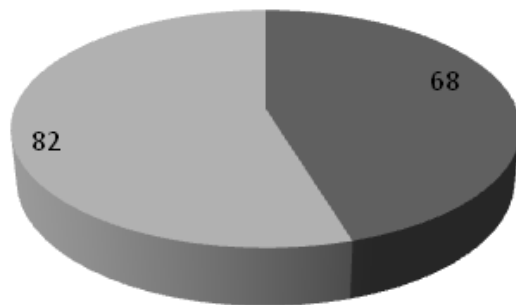


Fig-4. Awareness about diseases caused by smoking



■ Friends ■ Family ■ Media ■ Curiosity

Fig-5. Factors responsible for initiation of smoking



■ Knowledge ■ No Knowledge

Fig-6. Knowledge about active and passive smoking

RESULTS

Of a total of 150 subjects, 34 (22.67 %) were smokers. Number of smokers was significantly higher in Umm ul Qura school than in Abbasia (37.14 % vs 11.11 %). 62 % of the subjects were aware of the harmful effects of smoking.

Majority of the cases, i.e, 26 (76.47 %) smoked for the purpose of enjoyment, followed by those who smoked in order to reduce stress, i.e, 6 (17.65 %). Only 2 (5.8 %) of the students smoked with an excuse of preparation for examination.

In Abbasia, all 8 smokers (100 %) used cigarette for smoking tobacco while in Umm ul Qura, only 6 out of 26 (23 %) smoked cigarette while 20 (77

%) used sheesha for smoking.

Out of the 150 subjects, 46 (30 %) thought that smoking causes oral cavity cancer, 30 (20 %) knew that it could cause lung cancer, 15 (10 %) thought that it could only cause asthma, 49 (32.7 %) knew that smoking could cause all of these diseases while 10 (6.7 %) gave no response.

When asked about the reason for starting smoking, 29 (85.2 %) cases told that they started smoking due to the influence of friends, 2 (5.9 %) started smoking due to family and 3 (8.8 %) started smoking due to the influence of media.

When asked about the situations which caused an increase in smoking, 26 (76%) told that enjoyment at certain occasion to be the cause, 6 (18%) told exam preparation to be the cause and 2 (6%) told that their smoking increased due to stress.

About the knowledge of difference between active and passive smoking, only 68 (45%) knew about it.

DISCUSSION

This study showed awareness about harmful effects of smoking to be 58 % and 35% for Ummul Qura and Abbasia schools respectively which was lower than a study conducted in Scotland and Singapore which showed the awareness to be more than 85%³. The reason for this difference could be due to higher educational and thus awareness level in first world countries. This was also indicated in another web based study which compared the awareness of harmful effects of tobacco among non-medical university students in 23 countries and the awareness was lowest in Asian, South American and developing country samples⁶. Interestingly, an Indian inquiry showed vastly different results for tobacco users and non-users as only 18.1% of smokers and 9.5% of non-smoking tobacco users knew that tobacco was harmful. However, 63.3% of non-tobacco users knew that tobacco is harmful⁴. This indicates that most of tobacco users in India use tobacco because they do not know it is harmful and vice versa. Another similar study in Ziauddin Medical University Karachi showed this awareness to be

less than 75%5, which is higher compared to our study, owing perhaps to higher education and awareness in Medical Students compared to school children.

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All truth passes through three stages.
First, it is ridiculed. Second,
it is violently opposed.
Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860)

