

WHY PEOPLE SMOKE? - AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN BANGALORE

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ABSTRACT

We see and hear about cigarettes warning everywhere. But seldom people follow this and continue to smoke. The study is an analysis of what causes people to smoke and the number of factors that influence smoking. It also analyses the smoking behaviour of people. For this project the sample size taken was 113 respondents representing various strata of Bangalore city. The study uses chi square and ANOVA test for data analysis using SPSS.

The major findings of the study are

- *Smoking has become a status symbol among the youth.*
- *Smoking has become the way to build confidence in people.*
- *Employed people rather than youth are more prone to smoking.*
- *Smoking is influenced by the peer pressure.*

KEYWORDS: *Factors that Influence Smoking, Smoke Despite of Smoking Hazards*

INTRODUCTION

Today when you see everywhere either on TV, magazines, social media or even on cigarette packets there are warnings about harmful effects on smoking. Therefore it is important to know why people still smoke.

Mostly people smoke in their teens. This can be because of peer pressure, status symbol or due to stress. There is a need to understand what made people to smoke despite of smoking hazards. In this report we are trying to understand the smoking patterns of the people. This also includes reasons behind smoking.

Cigarette Industry

Around 1887 the oldest cigarette manufacturing firm was established. The first private company in India to set up was Imperial Tobacco which is now called as Indian Tobacco Company (ITC). Tobacco is an essential commercial crop in India which generates enormous socio-economic benefits through agricultural employment, revenue generation and foreign exchange earnings.

Exports and Key Markets

- In 2017-18 the total exports of manufactured and unmanufactured tobacco stood at US\$ 934.23 million in and US\$ 564.28 million between Apr-Oct 2018.

- The main exportable tobacco produced in India is Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco. 70% of it is exported to other countries. The exports alone gather foreign exchange earnings of more than Rs.3, 000 crores annually.
- The unmanufactured tobacco is mainly exported to Belgium, Korea, Nigeria, Egypt and Nepal whereas Western Europe is the key market for Indian tobacco exports.

Tobacco Control Legislation in India

India is in continuous effort to exercise tobacco control. With the growing evidence of harmful and hazardous effects of tobacco, the Government of India enacted various legislations and comprehensive tobacco control measures. The Government enacted the Cigarettes Act (Regulation of Production, Supply, and Distribution) in 1975. The statutory warning “cigarette smoking is injurious to health” was mandatorily displayed on all cigarette packages, cartons and advertisements of cigarettes. Some states like Maharashtra and Karnataka restricted smoking in public places.

The Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Act 2000 prohibited tobacco advertising in state-controlled electronic media and publications including cable television.

The Government enacted the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply, and Distribution) Act (COTPA), in 2003. The provisions under the act included:

- prohibition of smoking in public places,
- prohibition of advertisements of tobacco products,
- prohibition on the sale of tobacco products to and by minors (persons below 18 years),
- ban on the sale of tobacco products within 100 yards of all educational institutions,
- mandatory display of pictorial health warnings on tobacco products packages,
- mandatory testing all tobacco products for their tar and nicotine content.

In 2004, the Government gave consent to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), which enlists key strategies for reduction in demand and reduction in the supply of tobacco.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Why do people smoke? A large number of smokers start when they get into their teenage. Some give reasons that they “just wanted to give it a shot,” or they thought it was “really cool and stylish” to smoke. The tobacco industry’s advertisements especially celebrity endorsements and them (celebrities) smoking a puff of cigarette in their movies has a big influence on the youngsters and on the society as a whole. Other major factors which influence smoking habits include income, peer pressure, work related stress and many more. Research has also promoted these facts. A research study conducted (by M S Anjum, M K Srikanth, P P Reddy, M Monica- 2016) to find out the reasons of teenagers smoking between the age fourteen to seventeen years in Vikarabad town of Telangana showed majority of respondents agreeing that they started smoking in their teenage their curiosity, many said that they smoked to become confident i.e., they thought it as a means to strengthen their personality, many got influenced by their favourite celebrities to give it a try for the first time.

Many of them agreed that they started because of their smoker friends.

Another study conducted by Pradeep P Gidwani, et al (in 2002) to determine the dependency of smoking initiation in youth on exposure to television viewing showed that a strong relationship existed between the two. The researchers concluded that a significant rise in adolescent smoking was caused by their heroes appearing on TV shows, music videos, advertisements, reality shows with cigarettes, blowing out smoke rings in the air. All these movies, videos and other reality shows with people smoking in them, made youngsters viewing these programs, associate positive attributes like success and popularity with a smoker, thus making them buy their first packet.

One of our beliefs related to smoking is that smoking reduces stress level. The study conducted by Andy C Parrott (1999) on "Does smoking cause stress?" proves that our belief is flawed. He found out that compared to their non-smoking counterparts, adult as well as adolescent smokers have a higher stress level. Parrot, in his research study, cited Ikard, Green, and Horn (1969), who found out that "80% of smokers agreed with statements indicating that smoking was "relaxing" or "pleasurable." Most of the smokers in the questionnaire surveys responded positively to statements like "Smoking relaxes me when I am upset or nervous," "Smoking calms me down," and "I am not contented for long unless I am smoking a cigarette". Apart from this, at the same time, they also found out that smokers felt more anxious, stressed out and angry. Therefore, a hypothesis was developed that explained the fact that smokers felt even more worse off, emotionally when they smoked on the days encountering stress. Smoking just helps the smokers to get relieved from the stress of not smoking, provide them with the soothing effect and help them get rid of the anxiousness and irritation triggered by the absence nicotine dose in their system, they got habituated to.

Inconsistency has been observed while studying the relation between change in consumer's income and demand for cigarettes. In most of the studies cigarettes were found out to be "normal goods" implying that the increase in consumer's income increases the demand for cigarettes. However, studies done by several researchers like Wasserman et al., 1991, Keeler et al., 1993, Yurekli and Zhang in 2000 doesn't show the same. These researchers found out that income of a consumer has either a negative or an insignificant effect on demand for cigarettes. Their studies have also found out that smoking restrictions reduces average daily consumption of cigarettes. Yurekli and Zhang (2000) found out that smoking restrictions reduced cigarette consumption per capita by 4.5 percent in the United States in 1995.

NEED FOR STUDY

Understanding why people smoke is very vital today if quit smoking programmes are to be more successful. Unless we go through and understand all those factors that deeply influences smoking, we won't be able to take proper corrective measures in this direction.

Smoking in India has been known since at least 2000 BC when cannabis was smoked and is first mentioned in the Atharvaveda, which dates back a few hundred years BC. There are approximately 120 million smokers in India. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), India is home to 12% of the world's smokers. According to a 2002 WHO estimate, 70% of adult males in India smoke. Among adult females, the figure is much lower at between 13–15%. About 90% of children under the age of 16 years (10th class) have used some form of tobacco in the past, and 70% are still using tobacco products. Through this research study we would be able to find the answer to the Big Question "Why People Smoke?" This paper would explore the behavioural aspects of smoking.

How much of it is peer pressure, how much of it is related to fashion and more of the other factors.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of our research was to understand the smoking behaviour in people. The research helps in understanding the various reasons due to which people smoke: Is it because of stress or there are some other factors which encourage people to smoke. Also, it gives insights on whether people have reduced smoking after increase in costs of cigarettes or is the reduction of cigarette usage due to effects on health.

LIMITATIONS

Every research will have some limitations. But it is importantly critical to strive for minimizing the limitations throughout the research process

- Limited sample size and geographical coverage
- Time and resource constraints
- Possible sampling error and respondent bias. However, best efforts have been put to elicit data for target respondents and draw inferences and offer suggestions in an unbiased manner.

SCOPE

Our scope of the research consists of collection of individual responses. The responses have been collected through questionnaire and surveys with a sample size of 113. Digital mode was undertaken to test the hypothesis and get genuine responses. The geographical correspondents undertaken were age, preference, gender, occupation, family income. Corresponding it to a total number of 28 variables to test the certainty, accuracy have been tried to achieve.

DATA SOURCES AND TOOLS

There are many methods to collect data. Some data can be collected using the past journals while some can be very recent surveys. Due to limitation of this research study, sources of data collection was done using only

- Online Questionnaire Survey
- Offline Questionnaire Survey

For online survey, mainly web link of the survey was send to different people through WhatsApp, mails and some online portals like LinkedIn.

For offline survey, print-outs are being filled by people from different backgrounds.

Reliability Test of Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.845	.827	28

Figure 1

With the value of Cronbach's Alpha of 0.845, the questionnaire is proven to be reliable having variables which are necessary for doing this research.

SAMPLING

Sampling Frame

The sampling frame for the research is the general public consisting of students, working men and women, families and daily commuters in the vicinity of Electronic City, Bangalore.

Sample Size

With the large population size, we have collected a sample size of 113 through our online and offline surveys.

Sampling Techniques

The main sampling technique used is the non-probability sampling technique under which we have used convenience sampling technique and snowball sampling technique.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Respondent Profile

The demographic factors which were considered for the research were: Age Group, Gender, Education, Occupation and Family Income.

- Majority (75%) of the respondents fall in 20-45years age bracket, few (8% aged below 20 years) while the rest (17%) are aged above 45 years.
- The education level of majority of respondents is UG (40%) and PG (47%).
- While 45% of the respondents are students, 30% are employed and the remaining (25%) are self-employed.
- Distribution of respondents according to family / personal income shows 35 % getting annual income up to Rs 5 lakhs, 25% getting from Rs 5-10 lakhs, 25% getting Rs 10-20 lakhs and 15% getting more than 20 lakhs.

Major Findings of the Study

- Over 80 percent of respondents answered that they got cigarette offered by their friend/ got it free when they first smoked. Only 5 percent bought cigarette to smoke it.
- Over 70 percent stated that “Brand” is an important factor for them, while only 25 percent of respondents considered it to be less significant.
- About 26 percent of respondents have been smoking for last 6 months, 31 percent since last one year, while 43 percent of respondents have been smoking cigarettes since more than an year.
- A majority of 53 percent smoke upto 5 cigarettes per day, 25 percent smoke 5-10 per day, while others smoke more than 10 per day, which shows dangerous trend among youths particularly.
- A vast majority of 55 percent spends about Rs 2000 per month for cigarettes, a significant 30 percent spend Rs 2000-3000 per month and the rest spend over Rs 3000 every month for cigarettes, which results in burning of pockets and lungs.
- When the researchers asked what you would do if cigarettes are not available, 43 percent marked they would take other forms of tobacco, while another 43 percent indicated that they use e-cigarettes or nicotex.
- Respondents were evenly divided when the researchers asked them whether smoking cigarettes helps in coping with stress better; only 16 percent strongly agreed and 20 percent agreed to the statement. The results indicate that coping with stress is not a significant factor to prompt people to smoke.
- About 30 percent of respondents either agree or strongly agree to the statement that “smoking gives fun” and “smoking with friends gives fun”. But interestingly, a vast majority of 73 percent of respondents indicated that smoking “speaks of their personality”. And nearly 70 percent of respondents mentioned that “smoking makes them look cool”. A staggering 85 percent revealed that smoking gives them a “sense of pride”. The study further finds that over 60 percent who smoke felt that they get energized after smoking.
- About 79 percent of respondents revealed that they “associate smoking to their role model”, who could be a popular celebrity or even one’s teacher or mentor.
- Nearly half of the respondents indicated that availability of cigarettes across nook and corner of market prompts them to smoke more.
- Only 26 percent felt that the rule of prohibition of public smoking to be strictly implemented, and the same number also stated they they smoke less often if the rule is strictly implemented.
- Only one fourths of respondents mentioned that they prefer to avoid smoking in front of spouse, parents or other family members, which reflects a significant change in value system of society.
- About 44 percent mentioned that price is an important factor while buying cigarettes, 28 percent were neutral 27 percent do not consider price to be an important factor.

- The study found that location of vendor and packaging are considered to be more important factors compared to quality and price
- The researchers were keen to find if there s any correlation between time span since the respondents have been smoking and daily consumption of cigarettes, and it showed a positive correlation of.395 which is statistically significant at 99 percent. Also, a significant correlation was (.316, significant at 99 percent confidence level) found between “availability of cigarettes prompt people to smoke more and their perception regarding the impact of effective “implementation of rule of prohibition of public smoking”. The results of correlations are presented below:

Table 1

Correlations			
		How Long	How Many
How long	Pearson Correlation	1	.395**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	113	113
How many	Pearson Correlation	.395**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	113	113

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2

Correlations			
		Avail	Prohibit
avail	Pearson Correlation	1	.316**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	113	113
prohibit	Pearson Correlation	.316**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	113	113

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result from different test showed that our hypothesis of people smoking to relieve stress didn't have any significance and there is no relationship between them. In the past people have been smoking to relieve stress but now smoking has become a status symbol, a mean to have fun or to show the coolness among friends and peers.

Smoking has now even become a way to get energy or boost in confidence to do some task for some people. This is related to the occupation of people as the test showed that employed people are more prone to smoking than students and people with other occupation.

When it comes to brand of cigarettes people smoke, many young age people preferred a particular brand to smoke and not any cigarette. This was also significant with gender who preferred to smoke particular brand of cigarettes.

Social smoking is a major trend which started to spend time with friends but this prompted non-smokers to start smoking so that they can also be a part of the group of they came under pressure from their peers to start smoking. This was shown by the test that it has a significance with the age of people to smoke among friends and peers.

CONCLUSIONS

Cigarette smoking is injurious to health. This warning is given everywhere and its true also as smoking of cigarette can cause several diseases like cancer or asthma. But people still smoke cigarettes as it gives them a mental relief or a sense of pride. Sometimes this relief can turn into a stress which encourages them to smoke more. It's an endless loop in which people tend to get tangled and it's very difficult for them to move out of the situation. As we saw through the research that people of young age are more prone to smoke cigarettes as it became their personality and energizes them several task they need to perform but on the other hand also causing harm. The research showed us that the habit of smoking is generally found in the students pursuing graduation or higher degree. This also showed us that they may do it under the peer pressure or the mental stress.

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