

A Study on the Usage of Tobacco Products among people in selected villages of Madurai East Block

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Abstract:

There is a wide range of factors associated with tobacco use like type of tobacco products, age, the introducer, purpose of using tobacco and time interval between tobacco uses associated with tobacco use. The type of product very often depends on the socioeconomic status. Usually people pick up the habit of tobacco use at teen age and get introduced by peers and relatives. They often use tobacco for relaxation and fun. Time between the episodes of tobacco use varies among people. In order to understand the facts related to the usage of tobacco products, data pertaining to those aspects were collected from 841 people in rural areas of Madurai East Block and analyzed. The study is descriptive in nature. The major findings indicate that about one third of the tobacco users (48.1 %) were from 16 – 20 years age group and 45.7% of male respondents were smoking cigarette. A much as 63.7 % of the respondents got introduced to tobacco by their friends and 41.3 % of them were using tobacco products for fun. A high majority of the respondents (86.8 %) were using tobacco products once in every two hours. Tobacco usage is one of the main causes for many peoples’ death in the world. Medication with counselling can be more effective in helping tobacco users to quit these practices and save their lives.

Keywords: Tobacco product, Usage

1. Introduction

Tobacco is an addictive product which is used in many forms like raw tobacco, snuff, panparak, kutka, cigarette, bidi and others. Generally the habit of tobacco use is initiated at young age and continues till the end of life by most people. Tobacco users pick up the habit from their social environment. Tobacco use attributed to various purposes related to social, emotional, physical and occupational aspects at varying intervals. The present study tries to investigate the usage of tobacco products keeping the above said ideas in view.

2. Methodology:

Descriptive research design has been adopted for this study. Out of 39 villages in Madurai East Block, 6 villages were selected randomly using lottery method. The primary data was collected from the adolescents, middle age and old age people who were available between 9am and 6 pm in the 6 villages by using interview schedule. Thus the study population comprised of 841 people (648 male and 193 female). Data were analyzed using Frequency and simple percentage and the results were cross tabulated.

3. Results and Discussions:

Table No: 1: Distribution of respondents based on type of tobacco they use

S.No	Type of tobacco use	Sex				n=841	
		Male		Female			
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Raw Tobacco	150	17.8	125	14.9	275	32.7
2	Snuff	75	8.9	50	5.9	125	14.8
3	Paanparak / Kutka	178	21.2	20	2.4	198	23.6
4	Cigarette	384	45.7	0	0	384	45.7
5	Bidi	212	25.2	0	0	212	25.2
6	Others	116	13.8	13	1.5	129	15.3

As the respondents had the chance to give more than one answer the total varies.

From the above table it is crystal clear that 45.7 percent of male respondents and none of female respondents were smoking cigarette. About one fourth of (25.2 percent) of male respondents and none of female respondents were smoking bidi. As many as

17.8 percent of male and 14.9 percent of female respondents were using raw tobacco while snuff was used by 8.9 percent and 5.9 percent of male and female respondents respectively.

Smoking seems to be more in practice and hence it is chosen by large percentage of male respondents. Use of raw tobacco is traceable in aged males and females while the youngsters preferred packed tobacco. Similarly panparak and kutka are used by a considerable percentage of respondents because after dinner the practice of use of panparak is common. Snuff is used by old people usually and it is less prevalent among youngsters.

This study is supported by the results of the survey report of the **Tamil Nadu Factsheet of GATS India 2009-2010**. The survey was conducted among people aged 15 and above and the study found out that among most commonly used tobacco products were cigarettes (6%) followed by beedis at 5.3% and beetel quid tobacco at 4.7%. The cigarette smoker category was at 6% and beedi smoker at 5.3% of adults. Women were the largest consumers of smokeless tobacco, in chewable forms at 8.4%.

Table No: 2-Distribution of respondents based on the age of use of tobacco

S.No	Age at which tobacco was used	Sex				Total	
		Male		Female			
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Below - 15 years	165	19.6	39	4.6	204	24.2
2	16 - 20 years	335	39.8	70	8.3	405	48.1
3	21 - 25 years	73	8.7	26	3.1	99	11.8
4	26 - 30 years	20	2.3	19	2.3	39	4.6
5	27 - 35 years	17	2	8	1	25	3
6	36 - 40 years	12	1.4	14	1.7	26	3.1
7	41 - 50 years	11	1.3	8	1	19	2.3
8	Above - 50 years	15	1.8	9	1.1	24	2.9
	Total	648	76.9	193	23.1	841	100

From the above table it is ascertained that 39.8 percent of male and 8.3 percent of female respondents started tobacco use at the age between 16-20 while 19.6 percent of male and 4.6 percent of female respondents did so at 15 and below. Relatively less percent of male (8.7 percent) and female (3.1 percent) respondents started using tobacco at the age between 21-25 while in other age groups very less percent of male and female respondents did so.

People start using tobacco products while at teens mainly with an assumption that tobacco will help

them cope up with their emotional stress. Hence respondents in the age range of 16 to 20 years were more. About one fourth of the respondents were below 15 years when they began tasting the smell and flavor of tobacco. A considerable percent of the respondents start using tobacco at 21 to 25 years of age which might be due to peer influence, to cope with stress, attitude of learning new habit etc. Initiation of this habit is very less in the age groups starting from 26 years. With increasing age, the first use of the risk of tobacco is less because of factors such as maturity, low vulnerability, and more stability of emotions, awareness and the like.

According to **GATS, 2009-2010**, the prevalence of smoking was higher among the higher age adults, those living in the rural areas, the uneducated, and the poor as compared to the younger population, those living in the urban areas, the educated, and the rich. Smokeless tobacco use and dual use was highest in the age group 25-44 years.

Table No: 3- Sources of introduction of tobacco

S.No	Person who introduced tobacco	Sex				Total	
		Male		Female			
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Family Members	76	9	64	7.6	140	16.6
2	Friends	452	53.8	83	9.9	535	63.7
3	School Mates	31	3.8	2	0.2	33	4
4	College Friends	8	0.8	0	0	8	0.8
5	Co-Workers	52	6.2	25	3	77	9.2
6	Media	5	0.6	1	0.1	6	0.7
7	Others	26	3.1	16	1.9	42	5
	Total	648	77.1	193	22.7	841	100

From the above table it is known that 53.8 percent of male and 9.9 percent of female respondents were introduced to tobacco by their friends, while family members introduced 9 percent of male and 7.6 percent of female respondents. Co workers played a role for 6.2 percent of male and 3 percent of female respondents in initiating tobacco use. School mates, college friends, media and other sources played less role in introducing the respondents to use tobacco products.

Friends are usually closely associated with each other and their influence is more emphatic on behaviour. They share their views, habits and become the source of motivation for determining the behaviours. In the present study, majority of the

respondents were introduced by their friends to tobacco. Family members played a source of motivation in a considerable percentage of respondents. Respondents are physically close to family members for a long duration in a day and this togetherness opens chances for imitating the habits. Co-workers played a role in 9.2 % of the respondents as source of motivation because in the work environment co-workers are sharing the occupational hardships and this demands closer partnership. In this condition when people want to relieve the work stress, co-workers play the role as a source of motivation. School mates, college mates, media and other sources played very minor role in motivating the respondents for using tobacco because they were less in percentage having school and collegiate education and media played less role because their closeness to media was less.

The study conducted by **Chezhiyan C et al., (2015)** found out that more than half of the study participants had a strong urge to smoke cigarettes daily (65%). Majority of the study participants reported smoking with their friends (83%) and 10% reported smoking when alone. Surrounding influence (62%), fun (50%), stress (48%), and peer pressure (31%) were among the main reasons reported by the participants which could lead a person to initiate smoking. Study participants had initiated smoking due to surrounding influence (44%), during stress (42%) and for fun (40%).

Table No: 4- Purpose of using tobacco

S.No	Purpose	Sex				n=841	
		Male		Female			
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Fun	280	33.3	67	8	347	41.3
2	Relaxation	166	19.7	70	8.3	236	28.1
3	Stimulating Bowel Movement	71	8.4	9	1.1	80	9.5
4	Easing the Work Load	168	20	32	3.8	200	23.8
5	For Socialization	55	6.5	27	3.2	82	9.7

**As the respondents had the chance to give more than one answer the total varies.*

From the above table it is observed that 33.3 percent of male and 8.0 percent of female respondents were using tobacco products for fun while 19.7 percent of male and 8.3 percent of female respondents did so for relaxation. As many as 20 percent of male and 3.8 percent of female respondents were using tobacco to ease the work load while 6.5 percent of male and 3.2 percent of female respondents attributed socialization as a purpose. Stimulating bowel movement was

attributed as a purpose by 8.4 percent of male and 1.1 percent of female respondents for using tobacco products.

People pick up different habits for various reasons and purposes. Habits which are developed even without a proper and strong reason continue just because individuals are used to practice them. Among different purposes fun making is a predominant purpose attributed by the respondents for using tobacco. Idleness, company of friends, passing time and the like are the reasons generally related with fun making. The respondents wanted to kill their dry emotions and hence used tobacco. In order to relax and have a break from the routine ongoing work people resort to different methods one of which is the use of tobacco. Further those who are addicted to tobacco use need to use tobacco at a particular time to get away from discomfort and withdrawal symptoms. It is the habit of some people that their bowel movements are stimulated only after having a smoke or they imagine that it is difficult to pass the stools and suffer from constipation, which is nothing but a fallacy.

Occupational stress sometimes demands the workers to use tobacco. So, people use tobacco products to ease the work and for overcoming the stress. Sharing things usually help in getting closer and being socialized. So some are using tobacco in order to move with others and get socialized.

Singh et al., 1989 opined that children and adolescents with anxiety and depression mostly use tobacco and other drugs since they feel that it has got anxiety relieving and mood elevating properties. Besides, such children may socially be anxious and feel isolated in their peer groups. Thus, initiation of smoking helps them to identify with the group and hence reduces social anxiety (Beryslau et al., 1993).

Table No: 5- Interval gap of tobacco use

S.No	Interval	Sex				Total	
		Male		Female			
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	> 2hours	564	67.1	166	19.7	730	86.8
2	3-5 hours	83	9.9	27	3.2	110	13.1
3	< 5hours	1	0.1	0	0	1	0.1
	Total	648	77.1	193	22.9	841	100

The table above reveals that a vast majority (86.8 %) of the respondents were using tobacco products once in every two hours whereas 13.1 % of them were doing so in an interval of 3 – 5 hours and a negligible percentage of males (0.1) were using once after five hours gap.

Time gap between tobacco uses indicates the degree of addiction. A vast majority of the respondents maintained below 2 hours of time gap which indicates their excessive dependence on the tobacco products caused by prolonged use of tobacco. Usually people turn to tobacco as an addicting product. In due course the need of tobacco is increased and the time gap is reduced. Hence majority of the respondents were found to use tobacco within two hours gap. Those who used tobacco between 3-5 hours time gap were addicted to some extent and those using tobacco after 5 hours gap were least addicted.

Conclusion

Tobacco usages are high among youth than other age groups. There are many reasons for the initiation of tobacco usages among youth such as peer acceptance / pressure, promotion of tobacco use as a normal activity by mass media, parental smoking, personal perceptions like coping with stress and controlling body weight, low self image, etc. Tobacco usages may lead to lung cancer, chronic bronchitis, and emphysema. It also increases the risk of heart disease, which can lead to stroke or heart attack. Smoking can result in other diseases like cancers, leukemia, cataracts, and pneumonia and smokeless tobacco increases the risk of cancer, especially mouth cancers. Tobacco usage is one of the main causes for many peoples' death in the world. Medication with counselling can be more effective in helping tobacco users to quit these practices and save their lives.

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