

CAUSES OF SMOKING HABIT AMONG THE TEENAGERS

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Abstract

Present research intended to find out the causes of smoking among the teenagers. Population of the research was comprised of all male and female students studying at O and A level of public and private schools of Islamabad. Sample of the study comprised of 50 male and female respondent, their age ranged from 16 to 20 years. The results showed various psychological factors and social factors are attached with smoking, it is a kind of an escape for the to deal with teens psychological problems or the situations like stress, domestic problems and other issues lead them start smoking when they are unable to cope up properly or finding an appropriate way out for themselves.

Keywords: Teenagers, Smoking habit, Causes of Smoking.

Introduction

Each year a great amount of money are being wasted in smoking, although it is quite obvious that smoking habit is dangerous and injurious to health but still a large number of people especially teenagers are attracting and getting involved in smoking habit day by day. Some reasons of this addiction are obvious such as influence of friends or community member as teenage is an enjoyable period of life span which offers all delights, it can be positive and negative as well. Some Teens do experimental smoking just for taste in friends gathering but this experience enters in their life as a regular experiment.

A lot of research has been done adolescent smoking and teen behavior. Majority of the research is focused measuring volumes of smokers in schools, the parental control and negligence, quitting smoking among teens.

Extensive research has been produced by over parental influence and smoking status over initiation of smoking habits. The results turn out to be 27.8% prevalence among the offsprings of smoking parents, and it varied from 7.2% among the children at the age of 12 to 61% in adolescents of 17 years. Results surprisingly showed that those children of smokers showed stronger negative reactions towards their first exposures to cigarettes compared to that of non-smoking parents (Austoni, 2001-2002).

Smith-Simone (2008) researched on smoking in perspective of social relationships. And found that effects of smoking are drastic and related with specific problems especially for young smokers. For example brain hemorrhage (sub-arachnoid hemorrhage) is six times

higher in teen smokers than non-smokers. Asthma, is often attributed to environmental causes, and greatly worsened by cigarette smoking, either active or passive and smoke is a huge pollutant of home and social environments. Persistent health problems are reported by 25% of adolescent smokers, mostly asthma or allergic symptoms, as compared to 16% of non-smokers; this is particularly noticeable in girls.

According to report of US health Department (2006), Harms of Tobacco smoke fatal to smokers as well as to nonsmokers because smoking can causes many types of cancers, including cancers of the kidney, larynx lung, mouth, throat, bladder and stomach. Moreover smoke contain harmful almost 7,000 chemicals in it, at least 250 are known to be harmful, including cyanide, carbon monoxide, ammonia and hydrogen. These known harmful chemicals of smoke, almost 69 can cause cancer. These cancer-causing chemicals such as Benzene, Beryllium, Butadiene and Cadmium Formaldehyde and Toluene.

Between the age group of 14 to 18 years a person is most likely to attract towards the smoking habit and become an addict for the rest of his or her life. This age represents the growth of maturity where teens make choices for their life style and plan where they want to see themselves in the future. This is the age where the inspiration is at the maximum level and adolescents are more conscious of their personality, styles and making up their role models. On the other hand, this is the age where factors like stress, attention disorder, psychological pressures and conflicts from parents play an important role in impacting the individual personality and most of the teens are seen fighting with these kind of problems due to lack of parental interest, or sometime over protectiveness of parents.

In a conservative environment like Pakistan, it is nearly impossible to collect a public opinion over a subject like Smoking. Parents are mostly ignorant in this case and the teens are not willing to disclose their true feelings about it. Or even admitting they are into in this habit. Moreover this is a common trend in our society or activity in teens that while having a hang-out with friends, posing some personality impact or just to kill their depression they may start smoking. The intend of present research is to discover the perceived causes of smoking among the teenagers in the Pakistani context.

Methodology

Statement of the Problem

The problem under consideration was to explore the causes and reasons of smoking among the teenagers studying at O and A level students in the private and public sectors schools of Islamabad.

Objectives of study

1. To judge the acceptance and analyze the factors those attract and make acceptance of smoking within teenagers.
2. To unleash the factors that imply the psychological influence or creating an urge in teenagers to adopt smoking habits
3. To measure the effects of social networking influence and inspiration in smoking.

4. To compare the basic influencing factors like stress or social activities against the knowledge of hazards of smoking as all our subjects are high school students and they are well aware of the impacts

Research Questions

1. What are the causes of smoking in adolescents?
2. Is adolescents smoke to overcome psychological stress?
3. Are adolescents adopting smoking as inspiration, for outlook and personality?
4. Is smoking used as a tool for socialization?

Population

The population of the study includes all teenagers' male and female students, studying at O and A level in the private and public sectors schools of Islamabad.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Sample of the study was consisted of 50, O and A levels students of public and private sector schools of Islamabad. The sample was collected through convenient sampling technique. The respondents' age ranged from 16 to 20 years.

Construction of Instrument

The survey is an anonymous collection of opinion with no direct question involved relating to the consumption of tobacco or count of cigarettes etc. Instrument of the study was developing through standardized procedure to give a comfortable environment so that the subject feels free casting the opinion about the sensitive factors that we are studying. Research questionnaire was carefully drafted by making the questions indirectly, because mostly teenagers are involved into smoking habits secretly and they certainly cannot admit it with the fear of parents and school etc. Therefore no direct question was asked in this study.

Research instrument was consisted of 23 questions covering the major aspects of psychological issues, concentration, personality impacts and socializing activities. It was designed to judge the orientation of respondents towards smoking and trying to reach the root causes of attraction towards smoking that despite of this fact is known to them that they are playing with their health; still they indulge themselves in this habit.

The response choices could be recorded on a scale of -2 to +2 being strongly disagree (SD=-2), disagree (D=-1), being neutral (N=0), agree (A=+1) or strongly Agree (SD=+2).

The negative values for disagreement and positive for agreement are taken for a clear snapshot for derived variables as the feedback from the subject can be varied from two extremes and the best way is to plot it across a neutral (zero) valued center point of the scale.

Table 1
Nature and Structure of Research Question

FACTORS	Questions
Personality	Q1, Q2
Social Networking	Q3,Q4,Q5
Taste and Feel	Q6,Q7,Q8
Psychological (Stress, Anger Management etc.)	Q9,Q10,Q11,Q12
Weight Control	Q13,Q14
Concentration / Stimulant affect	Q15,Q16
Rejection (Including health, Social and Feel)	Q17,Q18,Q19,Q20
Inspiration	Q21,Q22

Procedure

In order to explore the causes of smoking among the teenagers a research questionnaire was circulated through their friends to keep the pressure level minimum and to collect open minded views of respondents. Respondents include both smokers and non-smoker adolescent.

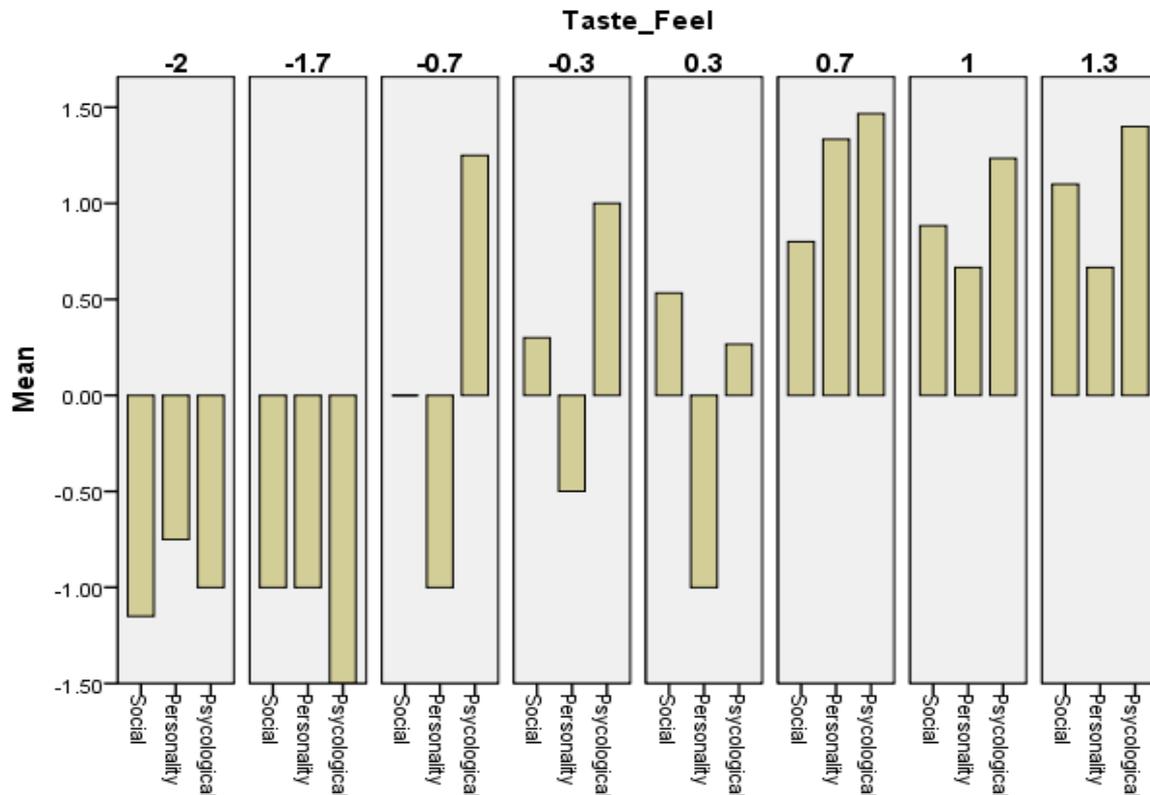
Results

After data collection it was transferred to the computer and with the help of various statistical procedures were performed. The table below shows the mean results of the core factors collected from our samples, the standard deviation to display the difference of sample from the mean value and the acceptance and rejection percentages calculated on the scale of results recorded above and below zero against each core factor.

Table 2
Mean and Standard Deviation and percentages of respondents Acceptance and rejections of Respondents score on Research Questionnaire

Factors of smoking	Mean	Standard Deviation	% Acceptance (> 0)	% Rejection (< 0)
Personality	0.17	1.26	46%	50%
Social	0.54	0.76	79%	13%
Taste and Feel	0.39	1.07	75%	25%
Psychological Distress	0.88	0.92	83%	13%
Weight Control	-0.46	0.49	0%	54%
Stimulant	-0.52	1.12	13%	75%
Inspiration	-0.27	0.81	54%	25%
Rejection	-0.7	0.86	25%	50%

Table 2 describe the mean, SD and percentages of acceptance and reaction of different factors of smoking. From this table it can be seen that psychological distress is the major cause of smoking, next strong cause of smoking is social factor, 75% of the respondent believe that teenagers smoke for taste and feel while 54% respondents believe that inspiration is the cause of smoking they smoke for while weight control is viewed as least cause of smoking.



Graphs represents the mean of core values and their mapping showing acceptance and rejections of smoking. The measure of the core factors plotted against rejection, taste and feel and ages of participant. And the display of awareness of participants regarding health hazards. As we plot our variables against the measure of rejection level for smoking, we explore that between neutral to a higher level (displayed in red box), subjects are well aware of consequences and health impacts of habit, yet it is preferred for social and psychological reasons; which turns into only psychological at the higher ends.

The taste and feel develops with the acceptance, ones who do not consider smoking to helpful for any reason, find no taste or an irritating feel with smokes; likewise, the subjects who prefer smoking for any reason, grade taste and feel higher and they do enjoy this habit. In the above graph, the higher rankings for taste and feel (.7 to 1.3) show high acceptance in all psychological, social and personality aspects.

Discussion

More and more adolescents are getting into smoking habits in these days. No matter how much government and parents try to stop underage use of tobacco. So intend of the present study was to explore the factors that drive teenagers to engage into smoking. The answers remain unclear to the families but yet for ages the tobacco companies know the secrets and they design their campaigns accordingly. For years the tobacco advertisements are banned on media in our country. Underage sale of tobacco is strictly prohibited. Yet we have some deep rooted causes and driving factors that attract a large number people to play with their health. The subjects we are talking about are perfectly literate to a level where they understand the

risks of damaging health and worthless expenditure doing that; yet motivated enough to get engaged.

Present study explore various causes of smoking such as for psychological reasons, for the sake of personality impact, inspirations, peer group acceptance, weight consciousness and killing appetite etc. As we have seen many cases where teens smoke for either style, causally doing the party or hang-out with friends or sometimes it becomes an important tool for them to cope up with stress, traumas of life or attention disorders. So there are so many factors that motivate adolescents become smoker.

Conclusions

In most cases, the multiple factors are playing combined impacts over the subjects creating the high chances of acceptance of smoking habit. The rejections seem very low which quite a serious indicator is.

Mean values of transformed variables show that highest ranking comes to the psychological reasons. Our subjects agree that smoking helps them remain controlled in dealing with anger, domestic issues and other stress and psychological situations. That leads to our primary conclusion that smoking is kind of an escape for the adolescents to deal with their psychological problems or the situations like stress, domestic problems and other issues lead them start smoking when they are unable to cope up properly or finding an appropriate way out for themselves.

The second as expected is the social factor for peer acceptance and company of friends and other activities lead teens towards smoking and it is just kind of a fun activity for them.

The third major cause is personality as styles and looks are one of the prime concerns in this age and personality inspiration is mostly liked with inspiration from celebrities or role models among friends and family.

Taste and Feel is totally related to the acceptance, they subjects once involved gets used to the taste, and the respondents have strong rejection for smoking, has a for taste and feel.

Significance of the study

The research is based on the discovery of motivating factors that lead teenagers to adopt smoking habits. This is an indirect approach analyzing the psychological factors that influence or inspire the adolescents to get used to smoking.

Much of the research has been done the topic of teenage smoking. Here we are not counting the consumption of tobacco or direct ratio of smokers and nonsmokers in the subject population. The research is very much focused on the various psychological factors behind smoking. If we are able to find the roots, we can handle the situation better. So this is a pure root cause analysis of the reasons different adolescents have in their mind to be a smoker, to think starting smoking or just being inspired of people they see doing the smokes.

Findings of this study increases the understanding of parents, teachers and school administration regarding one of the important issue of teenage, now they can help their teenagers more effectively of overcome this bad habit. School can arrange some workshop or seminar regarding the effectives of smoking on physical health. Effects of smoking can also be added in the curriculum and teachers can deliver lectures on this sensitive topic so teens can rethink about this habit.

Suggestions and Recommendations

Serious measures are required from the parents and guardians to take care of teenage problems, the study and the other matters they are dealing with. Close consultancy is required from elders, parents and teachers to keep the adolescents in their comfort zone. Habits like smoking is no more than an escape or hiding out from the different problems they face and being unable to handle at their own. And this gives a long term hazard as once in, quitting becomes difficult and people start playing with their health.

Suggestions for Further Research

Research is needed to further explore the expectancies and outcomes of smoking and a complete dedicated research is required for its impact on the behavior, psychology social interactions of the adolescents. Another research could be conducted on the practices and the procedures of quitting smoking habits.

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