

Review Article

# Qualitative Study on the Perception of Parents, Pan Shop Vendor's and Teachers about Tobacco Use Among School Going Students to Understand the Reason for Tobacco Use

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## A B S T R A C T

**Background:** Tobacco use among school children is a serious problem in India. This study aims to understand the perception of parents, pan shop vendor's and teachers about tobacco use among school going students in South Mumbai.

**Methods:** Qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted in South Mumbai among pan shop vendors, parents, teachers to understand the reason for tobacco use among school going children.

**Results:** Qualitative analysis revealed that students consume tobacco because of the family background, peer pressure, bad friendship, TV and media. Washroom and rooftop are the common place of tobacco consumption; they use tobacco to create identity that of an adult or mature person. Students force each other for having minimum one puff of cigarette and hookah.

**Conclusion:** Awareness programs through intervention should be implemented among students to educate about the health risks associated with tobacco consumption and alternative safe methods to create positive identity.

**Keywords:** Tobacco, Schools, Prevalence

## Introduction

Tobacco use is a major but preventable cause of premature death and disease. It causes over five million deaths each year worldwide which is expected to raise to over eight million deaths by 2030. (Jindal et al., 2004). Smoking and

smokeless are the most common forms of tobacco use. The smoking form includes cigars, cigarettes, beedi, etc. The smokeless forms include the use of raw tobacco and processed tobacco such as gutka, pan-masala, etc. (Rani et al., 2003)

Tobacco use among school children is a serious problem

in developing countries including India. Nearly 8–9 lakh people die every year in India due to diseases related to tobacco use. (Rani M et al.,) As a result of stringent tobacco control initiatives in developed countries, the tobacco industry has shifted its base to the developing countries like India. India is the world's second largest consumer and third largest producer of tobacco. (Azad, 2016)

Global Adults Tobacco Survey (GYTS) India revealed that more than one-third (35 percent) of adults in India use tobacco in some form or the other. Among them 21 percent adults use only smokeless tobacco, 9 percent only smoke and 5 percent smoke as well as use smokeless tobacco. (GATS survey report 2016-17)

The most susceptible period for tobacco uses in India is during adolescence and early adulthood (15-24 years). According to the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) in Maharashtra, 12.9 percent adolescents (13-15 years) are currently consuming tobacco products. (Narayan et al., 2011)

In Maharashtra, as per the WHO STEPs guideline, the smokers were categorized into three categories; current smokers, current daily smokers, past daily smokers besides, those who have never smoked in lifetime were classified as non-smokers. While eliciting the information on smoking it was observed that 16 percent of males in Maharashtra (14 percent in urban and 18 percent in rural) were current smokers. Non-Communicable Disease Risk Factors Survey, Maharashtra. (2007-08)

The School children are buying tobacco products from pan shops may be without the knowledge of their parents and teachers. Therefore, this study was planned to understand in-depth information about the reason for tobacco use with qualitative interviews among Parents, Teachers, Pan shop vendors.

## Material and Method

This qualitative study was conducted among the teachers, parents, pan shop vendors. Interviews were performed wherever convenient to the participants. Prior appointments and permissions were taken from the participants after identifying the participants who fulfilled the selection criteria of the study. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants before conducting the interview. Confidentiality was assured. Informed consent for data collection was taken after the start of general talks to bring the participants to ease. Then leading and probing questions were asked to the participants regarding the topic. The interviews were conducted in English, Hindi, Marathi language all the interviews were audio recorded. After getting all the relevant information, concluding questions were asked at to the end of the interview. Purposive Sampling was adopted as a sampling technique for qualitative interviews.

Analysis of the qualitative interviews Excel was used for coding and categorization of transcripts. Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the Institution Ethics Committee, Kasturba Medical College in Manipal (IEC 782/2016), Institution Ethics Committee, Prince Aly Khan Hospital, Mumbai. (IEC/03/PAKH-90/2016/NP)

## Result

### Profile of Respondents

We have conducted this research in South Mumbai to understand the reason of tobacco use among school going children with in-depth interviews with pan shop vendors, parents and teachers.

Most pan shop vendors were selling tobacco in south Mumbai for the past 60 years. Out of seven Pan shop vendors, five Pan shop vendors were selling smoked and smokeless forms of tobacco in south Mumbai. Most pan shop vendors were illiterate.

Children's profile, most of the respondents' children studying were in higher secondary school and they have an average of 3-4 friends in school. Out of seven parents, only three parents discussed with their children their friend circle and lifestyle. Four parents never asked their children about their friend's backgrounds or lifestyles. Most parents were not aware of their children friend's lifestyles and backgrounds.

Regarding the teaching experience of teachers were wonderful and good with children during school. Teachers' thoughts it was a challenging and learning experience to stay with children and teach them. About students' study profiles, some students are good at studies, some are good at sports, some are good at drama, some are all-rounders.

### Practices for Buying Tobacco

1. Pan shop vendors' view regarding the practices of buying tobacco among school children, four out of seven Pan shop vendors agreed that students were buying tobacco from their shops. In most cases parents were unaware of their children's habits such as whether they were using/ having the habit of smoking. One teacher stated that every time even if we call the parents to tell about their children's habits they are not ready to accept.
2. A common form of tobacco bought by the students was smoking form. Vendors said that most of the time, they come in groups. They are not coming alone for buying tobacco products from my shop.
3. From parents' point of view, most parents have assured that their children's friends do not consume tobacco, or they don't have any bad habits like tobacco consumption or alcohol consumption. Parents were confident about their children.

### **Respondents' Perception about Factors Influencing Tobacco Use among School Going Children**

Pan vendors reported that students get attracted to tobacco because of peer pressure; it is a style statement for them. They want to make an impression on the opposite sex. Student life is devoid of any stress and tension, so it is not the reason for starting tobacco use. Some students who are from deprived families observe parents consuming tobacco, which influences them to consume it. Addiction to tobacco supports them in working long hours. Parents also think the same. Apart from the factors mentioned above they perceive those children to imitate celebrities i.e., film stars as role models and so try to imitate their lifestyle. Smoking cigarette/hookah could be one of them. Teachers express that children try to create their own identities by smoking. Attraction and curiosity draw them towards tobacco use.

Six out of seven pan shop vendors' perception was that students use tobacco because of fashion and style and peer pressure. Because students want to show the style to others and girls as well. They want to show a level of maturity. According to pan shop vendors, students don't have any tension or stress. Sometimes students use tobacco because of culture and relationships. Family background also influences the use of tobacco products. Some family and their background were really poor, their parents were working in the nighttime and daytime as well. So, making their mind awake their parents and other family members were consuming tobacco products. After watching all those things in one room or family students also start using tobacco. According to pan shop vendors, TV, media, social crowds, relationships influence the use of tobacco among students. Students follow film actors and heroes and want to try that style or fashion.

Five out of seven parents think that students use tobacco because of peer pressure, style, social crowds, fashion, culture. Parents were thinking, students are very crazy about the use of tobacco products like hookah and cigarettes for style. Students follow TV actors and they are doing the same style. They want to show some style to others with cigarette smoking and hookah smoking. According to parents, TV, media, friends and surrounding crowds are influencing students to use tobacco products. According to a parent, "If someone is using tobacco product in home, after seeing that child wants to try once."

### **Awareness about Cotpa Effects of Tobacco Use Knowledge about Tobacco Related Rule and its Benefits to School Children**

Five out of seven pan shop vendors don't know any rules related to tobacco and its products, only two pan shop

vendors knew about COTPA rules and its section. According to pan shop vendors, if everyone will understand the COTPA act, it will be helpful for the youth who are the future of India, others as well. Pan shop vendors feel about the use of tobacco products among school children, it's very bad for the health of children and others as well. Some pan shop vendors said they had already seen cancer patients and the pain associated with it.

Three out of seven parents knew about the COTPA act, parents were thinking it will be helpful for children to control tobacco use in nearby schools and institutional areas. Parents feel about tobacco use among school children, of course, it is bad for the health of all. Most of the parents were discussing relatives' stories, about cancer due to tobacco use and how they got pain, financial loss, social loss, family loss, these things parents were discussing. One of the parents said that "No, I don't know any rule related to tobacco and its products, but if a such rule exists, it will help the children and others also.

### **Limitation of the Study**

There limited response from Pan shop vendors due to high volume of customers. Some school have exams schedules during interview time, so teachers have given limited time for interviews.

### **Conclusion**

Teachers express that children try to create their own identity by smoking, Teachers views are important. Attraction, curiosity draws them towards tobacco use. Parents' perception about tobacco uses among school going children, students using tobacco products because of peer pressure, style, social crowds, fashion, culture. Parents were thinking, students are very crazy about the use of tobacco products like hookah and cigarette for style. Students following TV actors and they are doing same style. Pan vendors reported that students get attracted to tobacco because of peer pressure; it is a style statement for them. They want to make impression upon opposite sex. Student life is devoid of any stress and tension, so it is not the reason for starting tobacco use.

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