

## **Causes of Smoking in College Students**

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This study was aimed at investigating smoking and causes of cigarette smoking among college students of Warsak Road Peshawar. The sample consisted of forty (N=40) students of Warsak Model School and College and Peshawar Public School and College. Average age of the students was 18.7. Among the 100 students, 40 were smokers while 60 were non-smokers. Convenient sampling technique was used for selection of the sample. Structured survey questionnaire was used for data collection. The objectives of the study were To provide an initial estimate on the frequency of cigarette smoking among students of college level on Warsak road Peshawar and explore causes of smoking in these students. Cross-sectional study design was used. The study was a small scale one due to limited financial resources and a short time frame. Students were busy in their annual exams and thus could not fully co-operate. The results revealed the main reasons for smoking were fashion and style, tension due to studies and family problems. Twenty-five (n=25) out of forty (n=40) students smoke more than 2 cigarettes per day. Out of forty (N=40) smoker students twenty-four (n=24) were introduced to smoking by their friends, 10 students by class-fellows, three (n=3) by relatives, one(n=1) by parents, two

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(n=2) by other people. 54 out of 60 non-smokers agreed that smoking is a bad habit. Cigarette smoking is very common among college students. Further in depth research is recommended to assess the frequency of smoking on a larger scale. Health education and awareness should be promoted in young adults in order to decrease the frequency of smoking.

Keywords. Smoking, students, Frequency, causes of smoking

Smoking can be defined as inhalation of the smoke of burning tobacco wrapped in cigarettes, cigars, and pipes. Some smoke for fun or due to pressure of friends casually. Occasionally smoking is casual smoking, that is usually done in a social situation, fun, or to relieve stress. Habitual smoking is a physical addiction to products of tobacco. Number of health experts believes that habitual smoking is a psychological addiction with life threatening consequences.

Smoking is regarded as among the leading causes of preventable death. According to report of World Health Organization (WHO) use of tobacco responsible for the death of one in ten adults all over the world that is about five million people die due to smoking related health issues in the world every year. If the use of tobacco continues worldwide it is estimated that the annual death toll due to smoking related health problems will double within twenty-five (25) years. It is also estimated that millions of people will develop prematurely chronic and debilitating tobacco related illnesses. Regular cigarettes smokers are twice to four times at higher risk to develop heart disease, twelve (12) times more likely to die from lung cancer, ten (10) times more likely to die from severe obstructive lung disease, and twice or more likely to have a stroke.

According to survey in Pakistan, it is projected that 36 % males and 9% females smoke tobacco. About 15 % of young adults mostly included males are particularly the university students in Pakistan. About twelve-hundred (1200) children start smoking everyday. This represents a huge impact on economic costs and more specifically it is gradually depriving the country of a healthy human resource thus causing the

burden of diseases caused due to smoking in the already overburdened health sector of Pakistan.

Mortality due to tobacco related health problems reached up to four (4) millions worldwide per year in 1998 and in year 2030 it is expected to rise up to ten (10) million per year. This death toll is higher than the present deaths from malaria, maternal and major childhood conditions. And tuberculosis. Trends of smoking are changing in developed and developing countries. However, smoking is trends are same or decreasing in most of the developed countries due to deep public health measures, whereas it is on rise in the developing countries due to considerable promotional activities of cigarette companies.

### **Objectives**

- To ascertain the cigarette smoking among college students.
- To explore the causes of cigarette smoking among college students.

### **Method**

Study Design: - This study was a cross-sectional survey

### **Sample**

The sample consisted of (N=40) smoker adolescents selected from two private college on Warsak Road Peshawar. They included Warsak Model School and College, and Peshawar Public School and College Peshawar. Convenience sampling technique was employed.

### **Instrument**

A structured questionnaire was developed for the purpose of data collection. The questionnaire was distributed among the students of the schools. Only students of F.Sc were considered for data collection. The students of the above two schools and colleges were included in the study.

### Procedure

Before initiating a formal data collection, a formal permission was sought from the administration of the boys colleges on Warsak Road Peshawar. After receiving formal permission from the competent authority one hundred boys were asked about smoking cigarette. Forty out of (N=100) admitted smoking cigarette and agreed to participate the study. A disclaimer was written at the start of the questionnaire and informed consent was obtained. The students were assured that the information they provided would be kept confidential. The data collected was not disclosed to a third party or person. After the completion of the data collection in groups, the students were thanked for their participation as without their cooperation this study could not be materialized.

Figure1

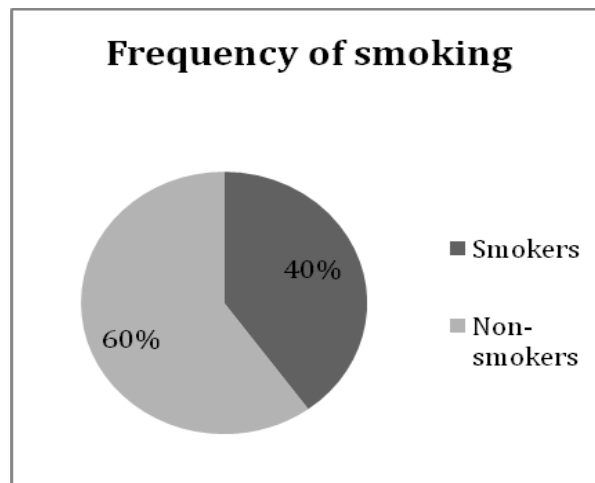


Figure 1 shows percentage of smokers and non-smokers among college students. Forty percent (40%) reported to be smokers whereas sixty (60%) reported to be nonsmokers among the college students.

### Results

The students included in the study were all students of F.Sc. All the students were male. The mean age of the students was 18.7 years. Seventy (n=70) students were selected from Peshawar Public School and College, while thirty (n=30) of them were selected from Warsak Model School and College. Most of the students were non-residents of areas and belonged to outside Peshawar and lived in hostels, while some of them were residents of Peshawar (day-scholars).

Among the (N=100) students included in the study, 40 were smokers while 60 were non-smokers.

Figure 2

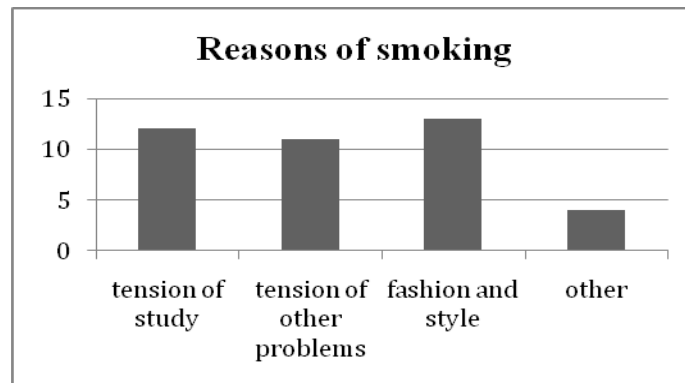


Figure 2 illustrates reasons of smoking; fashion is the top reason where as study related stress and other stressors are the second biggest reasons for smoking cigarette. The result shows other reasons as number fourth in driving the students towards smoking.

Figure 3

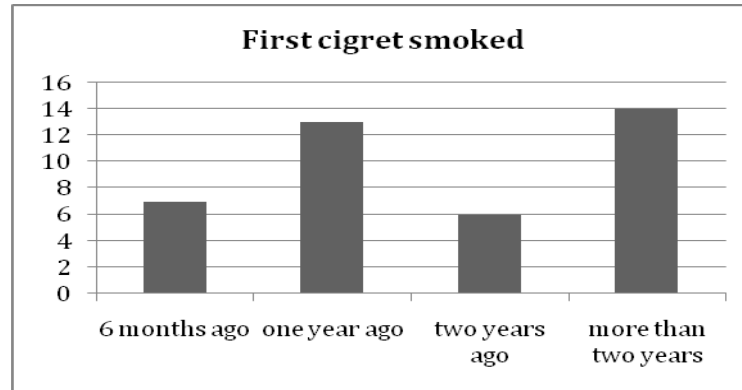


Figure 3 shows responses of the students who smoked cigarettes to the question about onset of smoking, seven (n=7) students replied that they started smoking six (n=6) months ago. Thirteen (n=13) students started a year ago, six (n=6) students started two (2) years ago, fourteen (n=14) students had been smoking for more than two (2) years.

Figure 4

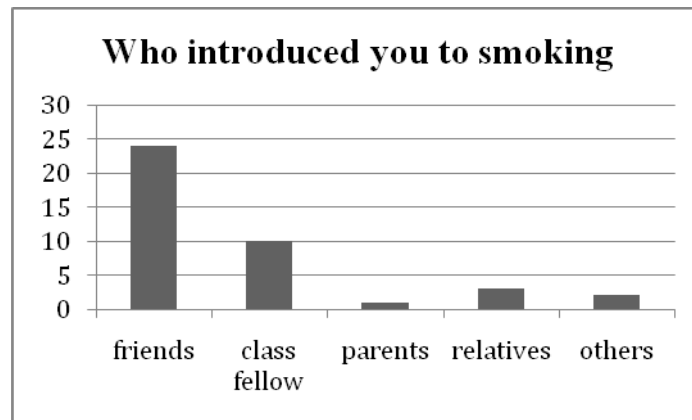


Figure 4 shows the result of the question about who introduced you to smoking? Twenty-four (n=24) students replied that friends introduced them to smoking. Ten (n=10) students started due to class-fellows, three (n=3) due to relatives, one (n=1) due to his parents, two (n=2) due to other people.

Figure 5

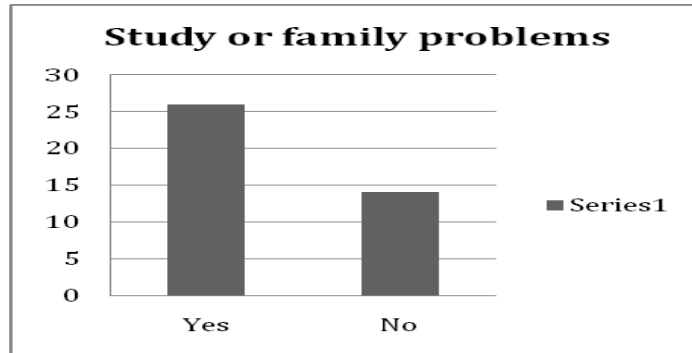


Figure 5 shows twenty six (n=26) students out of forty (n=40) had study or family related problems, while fourteen (n=14) students reported that they are not faced with any such problems.

Figure 6

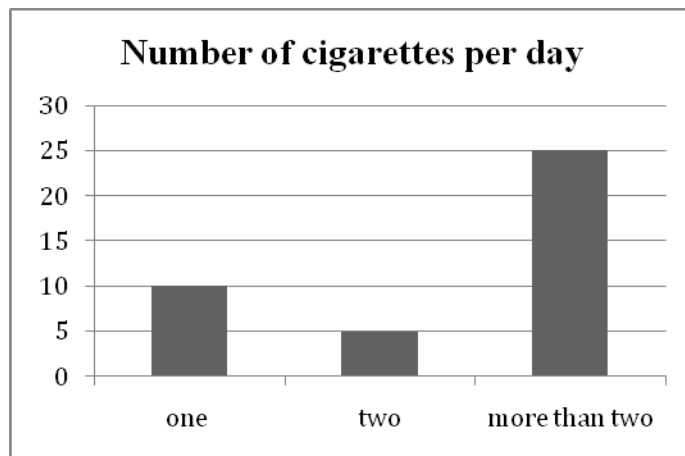


Figure 6 shows number of cigarettes smoked per day by the college students. About twenty-five (n=25) out of forty (n=40) smokers reported more that two cigarettes a day, while ten (n=10) students reported smoking one cigarette a day and five (n=5) students reported smoking two cigarettes a day.

Figure 7

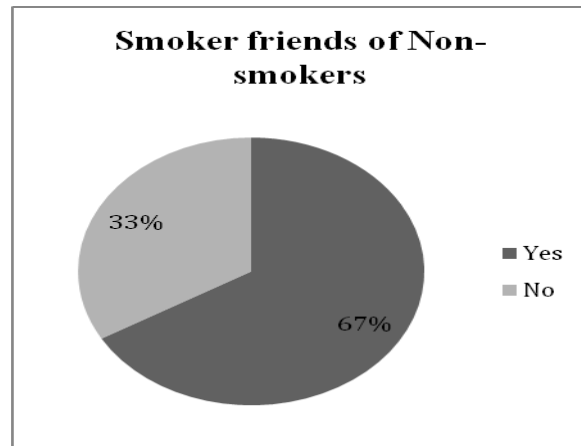


Figure 7 shows the percentage of close friends of smokers. The result reveals that 33 percent of friends of the smokers are non smokers whereas 67 percent of smoker students reported their friends being smokers too. We can conclude from the finding of this study that peers play a significant role in adapting smoking as a habit and later develop into addiction.

### Discussion

According to the literature review that we carried out, the prevalence of smoking among adult males in Pakistan is 36%. However, in young adults of Universities and colleges, the prevalence of smoking was found to be 15%. Our results are significantly different from this because 40% of the students in the two schools in which we carried out the study were smokers. This is a big and alarming difference. The reasons for this difference need to be investigated further. In our study, we attempted to assess these reasons.

One of the main reasons of smoking was for the purpose of "fashion and style". This means that the students smoke so that they can look more fashionable and stylish. The reason for this could be that their friends and other apparently respectable people in the society smoke and hence directly or indirectly encourage them to smoke. Another reason



could be the attractive advertisements of cigarette companies in which they portray Movie stars and Models as smokers, and show it to be the modern fashion trend.

Main reason that provoked students to start smoking was pressure from friends and class fellows in other words peer pressure. However, the peer pressure for smoking, despite the fact that they had smoker friends, did not influence many of the non-smokers.

Many of the students suffered from some kind of problems, mostly related to studies or family problems. The students started to smoke in order to relieve their stress. Although the short-term effects of smoking can potentially reduce their stress, but it cannot solve their problems, and in fact causes many other long-term health problems.

### **Limitations**

The sample size of the study was very small. During data collection, the students were busy in giving annual exams so they could not co-operate properly with us. We had limited financial resources and the time-frame of the study was too short.

### **Conclusion**

It is concluded from the findings of the present study that cigarette smoking is very common among college students. The main reason for their smoking is for fashion and style. Further research is required to assess the frequency of smoking on a larger scale. Studies should be carried out to include students of all universities and colleges and find the frequency and causes of smoking in male as well as female students. Community awareness campaigns should be carried out in order to increase awareness about the hazards of smoking. Health education should be promoted in young adults in order to decrease the frequency of smoking.

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