

KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE REGARDING TOBACCO USE AMONG THE COLLEGE STUDENTS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

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Abstract

The study is conducted to assess the knowledge and attitude of tobacco use among college students at Agartala. Objectives of the study include to assess the knowledge and attitude of students regarding tobacco use, to find out relationship between knowledge and attitude of the students regarding tobacco use, to find out the association between the knowledge of students regarding tobacco use and their selected socio-demographic variables and to find out association between the attitude of students regarding tobacco use and their selected socio-demographic variables. The design selected was non-experimental descriptive research design. The study was conducted on 120 students at Agartala. Systematic random sampling technique was used to select the sample. The tool included baseline proforma on knowledge, attitude, questionnaire about use of tobacco, ill effects and de-addiction. The data was analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics. Major findings revealed that 52% of students had knowledge regarding tobacco whereas only 40% had the knowledge of ill effects of tobacco on human being, 42% had the knowledge about the de-addiction of tobacco use. Calculated χ^2 shows there is highly significant association between knowledge and attitude of student towards tobacco use. Regarding attitude towards tobacco use the 77% had healthy positive attitude and only 16.5% had negative attitude towards it. The χ^2 test showed that there was statistically significant relationship ($p < .005$) between knowledge and attitude of student towards tobacco use. Calculated χ^2 test showed that there was significant relationship knowledge and tobacco use. Hence there is an urgent need for the health care providers for developing programs for prevention and eradication of tobacco use among the students.

Keywords: Tobacco, effectiveness, attitude, selected setting etc

INTRODUCTION

Tobacco use in adolescent is reaching pandemic levels. The World Bank has reported that nearly 82,000 to 99,000 children and adolescents all over the world begin smoking every day. Tobacco uses usually begins in early adolescence; typically, by age 16. Tobacco use in India is more than what it is in most of the other countries. Only 20% of total tobacco consumption is in the form of cigarettes. In India an estimated 65% of all men and 33% of all women use some form of tobacco, snuff (inhaled powdered tobacco), Khaini (mixture of tobacco and slaked lime) and Creamy snuff and Mishri (burnt tobacco for cleaning teeth). The prevention of tobacco use in young people appears to be the single greatest opportunity for preventing non-communicable diseases in the world today. If current trends continue tobacco will kill nearly 250 million of today's children.

There are 25 tobacco related diseases known today. These include cancers of the lung, oral cavity, pharynx, oesophagus, pancreas, bladder, cervix and leukaemia. Nicotine increases blood pressure, exacerbates asthma, causes impotence, infertility, heart attack and stroke. As health care providers in primary care, school-based clinics and diverse care environments, the discipline of nursing has the professional and ethical obligation to play pivotal role in tobacco use interventions. Given the alarming statistics and the increasing prediction of death and disability the investigator carried out a baseline survey study on tobacco use, its initiating factors and knowledge of adverse effects and attitude towards tobacco use amongst college students. This will help to plan and arrange various methods of awareness programmes in the colleges to save the young boys from the clutches of this evil addiction.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the knowledge and attitude of tobacco use among students
2. To find out relationship between knowledge and attitude of the students regarding tobacco use.
3. To find out the association between the knowledge of students regarding tobacco use and their selected socio-demographic variables.
4. To find out the association between the attitude of students regarding tobacco use and their selected socio-demographic variables.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research approach: The research approach was a descriptive survey approach

Research design: Non-experimental descriptive design.

Variables: ☐

Research Variable: Knowledge and attitude regarding tobacco use among the college students

Research Setting: The setting was Joynagar Agartala

Population: The target population for the study was students of degree college.

Sample and Sampling Technique: Systematic random sampling was adopted for the study. The sample for the present study was 120 college students, both male and female students.

Description of the tool: Structured questionnaire was prepared after an extensive review of literature, observations in the field, discussion with the experts.

The final tool was organised in three sections as follows

Section – I: Socio-demographic variables.

Section – II: It has been divided into three subsections

- a) The knowledge of students regarding tobacco.
- b) The knowledge regarding ill effects of tobacco use.
- c) The knowledge regarding de-addiction of tobacco use. This section had 15 items of multiple-choice questions.

Section – III: It was developed to find out the attitude of students towards tobacco use; there were 15 items in this section which were arranged in three-point Likert scale such as – agreed, uncertain and disagreed.

Knowledge score: The knowledge was categorized and arranged using the formula, mean \pm standard deviation

Score < 5 = Poor

Score between 5 to 9 = Average

Score > 10 = Good.

Attitude score:

Score < 23 = Negative Attitude

Score between 23-36 = Uncertain

Score 36 = Positive Attitude

Reliability: The split half technique was used in the test for internal consistency. Spearman's Co-efficient of Correlation for reliability were used. The reliability of the tool was ($r=0.99$).

PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

After obtaining formal permission the subjects were explained about the purpose of the study. Written consent was obtained from each student after giving assurance of confidentiality. The tool was administered to subjects allowing them 30 minutes to complete it in and the data were collected. The data obtained was analysed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study was undertaken to find out the knowledge and attitude of students towards tobacco use, and the findings indicate that 52% of students had knowledge regarding tobacco use whereas only 40% had knowledge of ill effects of tobacco use. 42% of students had knowledge about the de-addiction from tobacco use. Hence H1 is accepted since calculated value of χ^2 shows that there is significant association between knowledge and attitude of students towards tobacco use at $P < .005$ between knowledge and attitude of students regarding tobacco use. Calculated χ^2 (12.26) showed that there was statistically significant relationship at ($p < .005$) level between knowledge and tobacco use. Findings related to the knowledge about tobacco, its ill-effects and de-addiction indicate that most of the subjects (52%) had knowledge about tobacco. As regards ill-effects and de-addiction, the knowledge appeared below average. 35% knew the type of cancer caused by tobacco chewing and only 42% said passive smoking is harmful and 14% had availed help for de-addiction. However, the results showed the youngsters are unaware about consequences of tobacco addiction. Majority (77%) of subjects had positive attitude towards tobacco use. 80% of subjects admitted that they need more detailed information about ill-effects and 71% accepted that mass media plays an important role in habit formation among youngsters.

There was statistically significant association between knowledge and attitude at 0.05 level of significance. 23.5% of subjects having poor knowledge had positive attitude compared to 6.9% of subjects having good knowledge about tobacco use. 35.4% subjects having average knowledge exhibits negative attitude as against 3.4% subjects with good knowledge. There is a relationship between knowledge and habit formation. 94.1% subjects with poor knowledge were tobacco users as against 65.5% of subjects with good knowledge and 42.4% with average knowledge showing highly significant relationship calculated at $p=0.05$.

CONCLUSION

The study showed that after assessing knowledge and attitude of college students regarding tobacco use, there is an urgent need for the healthcare providers for developing programmes for prevention and eradication of tobacco use amongst the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A similar study may be conducted in larger scale in order to draw generalisation.
2. A comparative study can be done between urban colleges and rural colleges.
3. A similar study can be conducted between life science colleges and medical colleges.

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