

## Rising Trends of Smoking in Elementary Students

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Smoking is emerging problem in Azad Jammu Kashmir and causing serious health problem in our population and is still the leading cause of premature deaths. The prohibition of the smoking at public places and in the schools should be strictly monitored. Teacher should not be allowed to smoke in the presence of their students. Parents should also take care of the habits of their children inside as well as outside the residence.

**Aim:** To evaluate the incidence and prevalence of the smoking in the school going children in public and private sector schools of Muzaffarabad.

**Methods:** It is the cross sectional study conducted in Muzaffarabad at three different schools. The students of the ninth class were included in the study. The female students were not included. Between the ages of fifteen to eighteen years 150 student were participated in the study voluntarily. A Questionnaire was given to the volunteers with different questions including the no of cigarettes smoke daily, since how long the incumbent is smoking and how he started smoking.

**Results:** 150 students participated in the study. The age limit was 15 to 18 years. The mean age was 16.5 year. Two public and one private school was included in the study. The incidence of cigarette smoking was increased in private school as compared to the public sector school. Among 150 students 124 declared them self to be smokers to some extent. 66.93% were light smokers while 12.09% were severe smokers. The incidence of smoking was calculated to be 83%. The prevalence of the smoking was increased between the ages of 12 to 16 years.

**Conclusion:** There was a growing trend of smoking toward in our younger population school students in both males and females, which is alarming and hazardous.

**Keywords:** Smoking, carcinogens, tobacco, community hazards, students, COPD.

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### INTRODUCTION

While any amount of Smoking is harmful and risk increases with the Numbers of cigarette smoke increases<sup>1</sup>. Smoking is the single most cause of illness and premature death in UK. Many Smoking related ailments are not leading to quick death. If you develop COPD, you may live many years of illness and expect to have distressing Symptoms before you die. Most lung Cancer patients are current or former smoker and smoking is the leading cause of death<sup>2</sup>.

Cigarette smoke contains nicotine that stimulates your brain. When the blood level of nicotine fell, you usually develop withdrawal symptoms like craving, anxiety, headaches and difficulty with concentration. These symptoms are relieved by the next cigarette smoke. There is list of diseases associated with smoking including coronary artery disease, lung cancers, COPD, oral, facial cancers, thromboembolism, ageing, sexual problem, earlier menopause, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Smoking can enhance asthmatic attacks, chest tuberculosis, diabetic neuropathy and hyperthyroidism. Smoking can develop the increased risk of dementia, optic neuropathy, cataracts, and macular degeneration<sup>3</sup>.

Pulmonary fibrosis and Reynaud's phenomenon. 21% of the death in the past decade is due to smoking. 27% of the lung Cancer death due to Smoking in Canada in year 2011. To start smoking is related to several key factors including individual characteristic such as age and sex, friend and family and the boarding. Social Environment such as school and community<sup>4,5</sup>.

Research studies emphasis the fact that the younger a person start smoking was difficult it will be to quit later in life<sup>6,7</sup>.

A short survey was carried out to see the rising trends of smoking in elementary students of smoking in our young students.

### MATERIAL AND METHODS

This is the cross sectional study conducted in three different high schools of the Muzaffarabad city. The students of the 9th Class were included in the study. Total 150 Student participated in the Study. The Age

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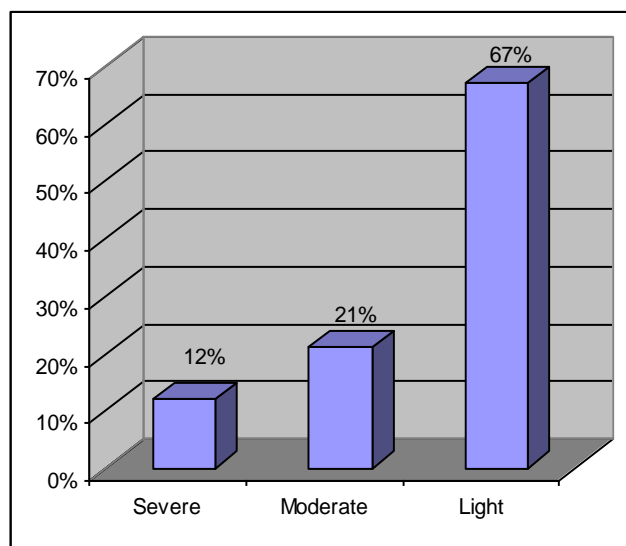
limits of the students were between 15 to 18 Years. The female Student was not included in the study. Two of the schools were Public and one school was private sector. A Questionnaire was given to the volunteers with different questions.

Depending upon the number of cigarettes, smokers have been divided into heavy, moderate and light smokers. Smoking is the root Cause of various Malignancies including the lung Cancer. Death due to lung Cancers outnumbers the other Causes. Smoking trends are alarmingly increasing among the adolescents, Youngster and school going children because of the various social and cultural Reasons. The rising Current trend of smoking in the younger age group can be controlled by the effective legislation, tobacco control programme, and the health administration authorities.

## RESULTS

Total 150 students were included in the study. Among them 124(82.66%) proclaimed to be the smokers. 15(12.09%) students were severe while 26(20.96%) and 83(66.93%) students were moderate and light smokers respectively. 16(10.66%) turned up to be the nonsmokers. 106(85.48%) were occasional and 18(14.51%) are habitual smokers. The growth of smokers was higher in the private school than public sector (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Graph showing distribution of smoking among students.



## DISCUSSION

In the modern era of advanced development, smoking has become a symbol of fashion. The rising current trends of Smoking emerged alarmingly in the

younger population of the community. The current smoking rate of the younger population 12 years and old was 19% in 2011 and the rate for the both sexes was 22.3% for men and 23.8% for women respectively<sup>8</sup>. According to the rate of smoking, smokers have been classified into three distinct groups such as heavy, moderate and light smokers respectively. It is evident from the different studies that the numerical ratio of the light Smokers are increasing as compared to the heavy smokers and both sexes dropped to the level of 6%<sup>8</sup>.

The teenagers are the more vulnerable group to indulge in smoking either due to individual character or as part of schooling, boarding and community affairs. The indulgence of Smoking is presumably larger in the youngsters. Smoking is potentially dangerous and the cause of various lethal diseases. Smoking is associated with the chance of coronary artery disease drops to half in person who avoids smoking<sup>9</sup>.

Smoking is considered as a single most modifiable behavior in terms of impact on health and longevity. The earlier the person in life quits smoking, the greater the health benefits he/she enjoys<sup>9,10</sup>. The life expectancy ones get by 10% by earlier quitting him of smoking.10 ICES study concentrated upon smoking, heavy consumption of alcohol, poor diet, physical inactivity, and stress to better understand how these five indicators impact life expectancy.

In our study the Mean age group involved in smoking was younger age group. However no child seemingly alleged to be involved in the alcoholic beverages. Nutrition deficiency is also prevalent due to poverty and special reason of the region.

During the study it was achieved that time smoking habits in the younger age groups is probably the occasional one but not habitual. Time is also attributable to their culture in the social environment. The Communal chances to indulge in smoking are noticed more in time than individual character. It is mainly the friends in the school and boarding or the family members at their homes who increasingly use cigarettes among their children which badly inculcate this habit in the youngsters. Social and electronic Media do play the role to expand Smoking as a symbol of pride and honor to the individuals.

## CONCLUSION

Smoking in the younger age group is not less common. Smoking is not an icon but a bad omen to their health. Smokers usually became socially unacceptable in the community earlier or later. Health and law enforcement authorities should implement the promulgated regulations regarding smoking

inhibition in schools public areas , transport , offices and workplaces so that children could not get access to the cigarette smoke environment . During the school and the period of elementary education the young students are not capable to differentiate deleterious effects of the smoking therefore teacher should strictly avoid smoking in the presence of children to reduce the morbidity of this social evil.

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