

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE, PERCEPTION OF PATIENTS USING SMOKELESS TOBACCO TOWARDS ORAL CANCER RISK – A SURVEY

Dr. Sunita Pathak¹, Dr. Rajeev Pathak², Dr. Sherin N³, Dr. Ravi Kumar Seth⁴

Author

Dr. Sunita Pathak

Reader, Department of Oral Pathology and Microbiology, Rama Dental College Hospital and Research Centre, Rama University, Kanpur, (U.P)

Dr. Rajeev Pathak

Professor, Department of Periodontology, Teerthankar Mahaveer Dental College Hospital and Research Centre, Moradabad, (U.P),

Dr. Sherin N

Professor, Department of Oral Pathology and Microbiology, Rama Dental College Hospital and Research Centre, Rama University, Kanpur, (U.P)

Dr. Ravi Kumar Seth

Reader, Department of Oral Pathology and Microbiology, Rama Dental College Hospital and Research Centre, Rama University, Kanpur, (U.P)

Address for correspondence:

Dr Sunita Pathak,

E-mail: drsunita74@gmail.com

Abstract

Objectives: The objective of this study is to evaluate the knowledge of patients regarding the consequences of tobacco chewing on the oral health, to analyse the attitude of the patients for the health counselling given by the dentist and to analyse the perception of the patients in following the instructions and stopping tobacco usage.

Materials and Method: A descriptive study was conducted in a sample of 100 dental patients in a private dental clinic using self-administered questionnaire. Descriptive statistics was performed to analyse the data.

Results: Patients who have knowledge on smoking effects are about 65%, 22% are not aware of the effects of smoking. Nearly 52% of the patients gave a positive attitude towards the anti-tobacco counselling, 34% of patients have negative attitude and 14% patients are not sure of their attitude towards anti-tobacco counselling. Patients who have positive perception of about the role of dentists in tobacco cessation activities are about 72%. 18% of the patients still wanted to continue after

knowing the ill effects of the tobacco usage and 10% of the patients are not sure whether they can follow the instructions given by the dentist.

Conclusion: The study highlights the necessity of educational initiatives to acquire more knowledge, attitude, and perception of tobacco and its ill effects by removing all the barriers. Awareness needs to be increased among the people and that the dentist can play a major role in improving the general and oral health of the public to a large extent.

Keywords: Tobacco, Knowledge, Attitude, Perceptions

INTRODUCTION

Tobacco have been used by the humans for many years in his routine life and its use is responsible for around six million fatalities globally each year. Medical experts have proved clearly that usage of tobacco in any forms is harmful to health. Almost every organ in the body, including the lungs, head and neck, bladder, kidney, liver, stomach, pancreas, colon, and rectum, might develop cancer as a result of tobacco smoking. Tobacco usage is a significant public health problem all over the world and it is one of the preventable risk to human health.¹ Tobacco use in India is a serious public health challenge. The major forms of tobacco that are available are pan masala, tobacco quid, bidi, cigarette, hookah etc. Smoking is responsible for 100 million deaths worldwide.² According to World Health Organization, the prevalence of tobacco habits in India is high with, 19% chewing tobacco, 9% hookah and 7% other forms respectively.³ The cancer patients in association of India revealed prevalence of chewable tobacco is 40%.⁴ Nicotine is the major carcinogen in tobacco, creates strong physical and psychological dependence. Tobacco products in lower-income countries tend to have higher nicotine levels and less filtration, increasing health risks.⁵ Nondaily smokers often don't consider themselves smokers, making difficult for detection and intervention.⁶ Smoking alters the immunity, inflammation and body's response to foreign agents.^{7,8} Families of smokers spend 3 times more on treatment of illness episodes compared with non-smokers on average. These families also reported 8 times increase in work days loss.⁹

MATERIALS AND METHOD

A descriptive study has been done in Private Dental Clinic, Kanpur for 100 patients. The subjects targeted for this study were tobacco using patients of age group of 18-70 years and they were assessed using a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of total 10 questions. It consisted of 2 questions on knowledge, 5 questions on attitude, 3 questions on perception of patients towards the anti-tobacco usage with response of Yes, No and Not Sure. Only after being properly informed of the purpose of the study and providing their informed

consent were all participants added to the study.

RESULTS

Based on knowledge of the patients

Based on the number of questions answered by 100 subjects, 65% had some knowledge on ill effects of the tobacco usage. 22% were not aware and 13% were not sure of the harmful effects of tobacco usage

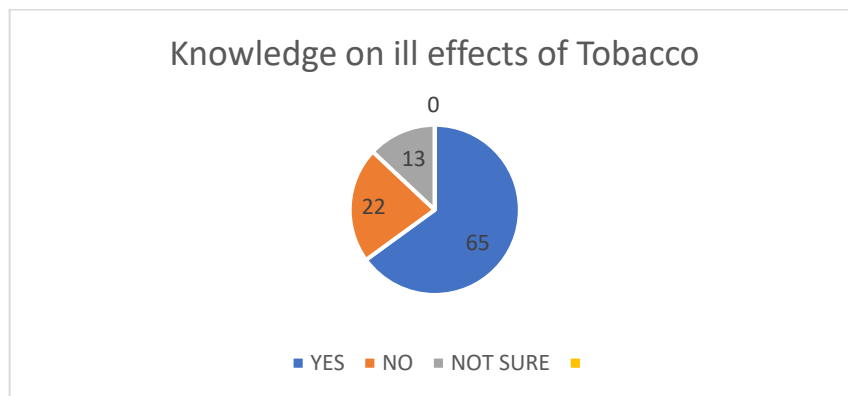


Figure 1: Based on Knowledge of patients

Based on attitude of the patients

Based on the attitude of patients, 52% had positive attitude towards the anti-tobacco counselling given by the dentist. 34% of the patients had a negative attitude and 14% were not sure of their attitude towards the anti-tobacco counselling.

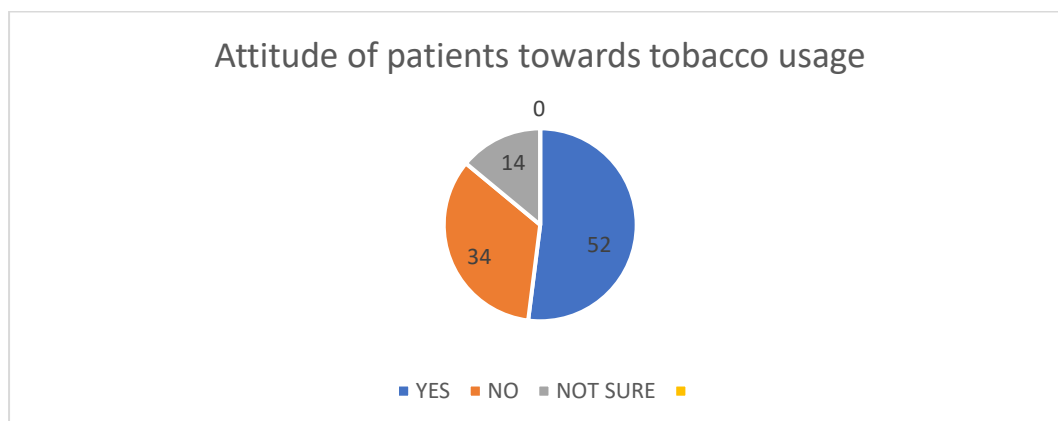


Figure 2: Based on attitude of the patients

Based on perception of the patients

Based on perception of patients, 72% had positive perception of role of dentist in tobacco cessation activities. 18% had a negative perception and they still wanted to continue even after knowing the ill effects of the tobacco usage. 10% of patients were not sure that they could stop the tobacco usage after the anti-tobacco counselling.

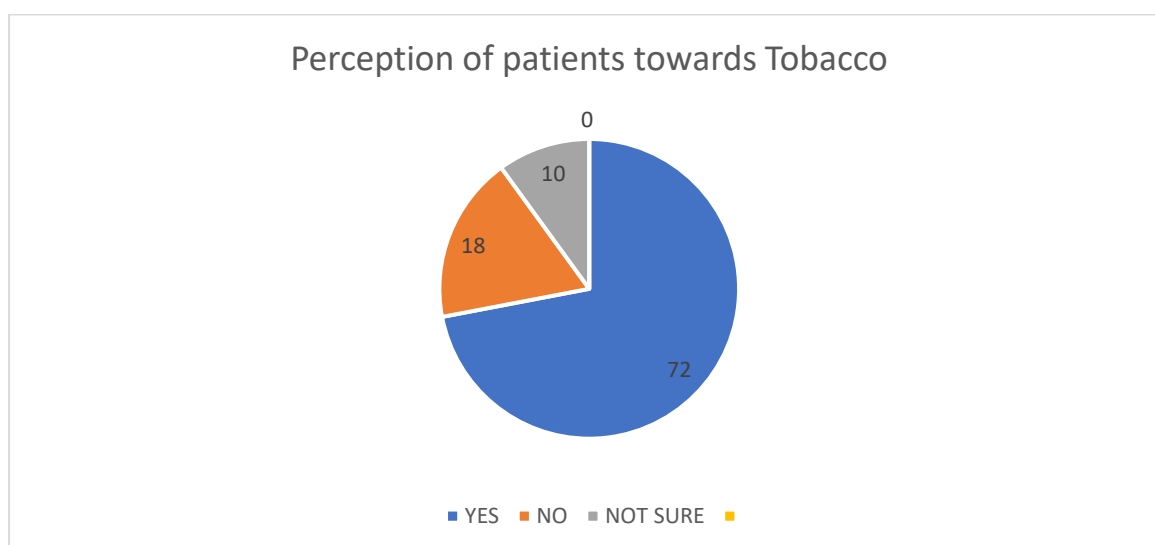


Figure 3: Based on perception of the patients

DISCUSSION

The above study assessed patients knowledge about the effects of tobacco use, attitude of the patients towards the tobacco usage and the perception about the role of dentist and willingness of tobacco

users to quit after the anti-tobacco counselling. From the above response, it has been concluded that subjects with knowledge of tobacco usage are more than subjects who don't know. The response rate of knowledge on the ill effects of tobacco use is more, 65% of the patients are aware of it. 22% of the patients don't have much knowledge on effects of tobacco usage. 72% of the patients agreed that usage of tobacco will lead to cancer. This can be due to campaigns and advertisements on the effects of tobacco leads to cancer. 22% of the patients do have any knowledge on effects of tobacco and remaining 13% of the patients are not sure that the tobacco usage can lead to cancer. Studies done by John RM, Sung H, Max W¹⁰ states that 90% of patients agree that tobacco usage will lead to cancer. 45.8% of patients after knowing the ill effects of tobacco usage have the positive attitude of stopping the usage of tobacco. The patients who have negative attitude are 34.2% and 20% of patients are not sure of their attitude. Hence their perception towards quitting the habit is slightly higher than the patients who do not perceive the counselling (60% > 24.6%).

The percentage of patients who have a less knowledge about tobacco and its effects also show neutral response (not sure), when compared to the positive and negative responses. Hence these patients who don't have a stable mindset have to be given counselling, until they perceive the knowledge accurately which helps them to quit the habit.

CONCLUSION

It has been concluded from the study that the patients who gave positive response are ready to quit the habit after giving the anti-counseling. The patients who gave negative responses don't want to quit their habit even after knowing about the ill effects of tobacco. The patients who gave neutral response must be counseled better to help them to quit the habit and lead a safe life. Usage of tobacco has high risk for oral cancer. Ongoing research on tobacco's prevalence and health impacts among people is essential. Multi-level strategies, combining education and Policies like the Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products Act and creating smoke-free environments can significantly reduce tobacco use among people and promote a tobacco-free future. Dentists are the first person to screen the oral cavity and it is their duty to give anti-tobacco counselling for their patients who report to them with history of tobacco usage.

REFERENCE

1. WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2008. At : www.int/tobacco/mpower_report_full_2008.pdf
2. Gallagher JE, Alajbeg I, Bachler S, Carassi A, Hovius M, Jacobs A, et al. Public health aspects of tobacco control revisited. *Int Dent J* 2010; 60: 31-49.
3. WHO. Tobacco or health: A Global status report. Geneva: WHO publication;1997.

4. Shimkhada R, Peabody JW. Tobacco control in India. *Bull World Health Organ* 2003; 81:48-52.
5. Sagar, Sandra and Gupta Y, Knowledge, attitude, and awareness of tobacco among tobacco users in South Indian population-A questionnaire-based study. 2020 Oct. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344851055_Knowledge_attitude_and_awareness_of_tobacco_among_tobacco_users_in_South_Indian_population_A_questionnaire-based_study
6. Szymański J, Ostrowska A, Pinkas J, Giermaziak W, Krzych-Fałta E, Jankowski M. Awareness of Tobacco-Related Diseases among Adults in Poland: A 2022 Nationwide Cross-Sectional Survey. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2022; 19(9):5702.
7. Nagarajappa R, Daryani H, Sharda AJ, Asawa K, Batra M, Sanadhya S, Ramesh G. Knowledge and attitude towards smoking among Indian students of dentistry. *Int Dent J*. 2013; 63(5):244-8.
8. Dawood OT, Rashan MA, Hassali MA, Saleem F. Knowledge and perception about health risks of cigarette smoking among Iraqi smokers. *J Pharm Bio Allied Sci*. 2016; 8(2):146.
9. Jha P, Jacob B, Gajalakshmi V, Gupta PC, Dhingra N, Kumar R, et al. A nationally representative case-control study of smoking and death in India. *N Engl J Med* 2008; 358: 1137-47.
10. John RM, Sung HY, Max W. Economic cost of tobacco used in India, 2004. *Tob control* 2009; 18:138-43.