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A Study on Knowledge of Tobacco Users about Prohibition, Law, Motivating others and Effect on Others in Madurai East Block.

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Abstract

Smoking affects health of not only the smokers but also the second hand smokers such as their family members, neighbours and the public. In order to decrease the health risks due to tobacco usages, our Indian government has enacted various laws and violence of such laws are punishable under law. The present study deals with Knowledge, awareness and mindset of tobacco users in Madurai East Block. The study is a descriptive study which was conducted in 6 villages covering 841 tobacco users in Madurai East Block which is a suburban area of Madurai. The major findings indicate that about 61.6 % knew that smoking is prohibited in public places, one third of the tobacco users 37.2 % were quite aware of law of prohibition of sale of tobacco products in the vicinity of schools, A high majority (81.9 %) induced others to use tobacco products and did not know that people are getting affected by smoking (77.7 %), more than half of the respondents (58.3 %) were using tobacco products in public places and 54.3 % respondents were very often complaining about the habit of using tobacco products, About two thirds of respondents (67.1 %) did not have the feeling that their children or young members of the family would follow this because they thought that using tobacco might not occur simply by seeing others using tobacco products and 36.1 % of the respondents were addicted to smoke. Addiction to smoke is a state of dependence which is unhealthy that needs to be treated. Knowledge, awareness and mindset are the factors are to be modified to change the behaviour relating to tobacco use. Despite smoking ban, there is lack of public awareness about smoking and tobacco use offence and the fines. So the Act should be implemented in true spirit so as to dissuade the population from falling victims to the Tobacco epidemic.

Keywords: Knowledge, awareness, prohibition, tobacco users

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Introduction:

Tobacco use is one of the leading causes of preventable death in the world. Many studies have found that smoking can cause lung disease, heart disease, stroke and different kinds of cancer. Smokeless tobacco and cigars can also have deadly health problems such as cancer of the mouth, larynx and esophagus. Smoking affects health of not only the smokers but also the second hand smokers such as their family members, neighbours and the public. In order to decrease the health risks due to tobacco usages, our Indian government had enacted various laws and violence of such laws are punishable under law.

The "Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply, and Distribution) Act (COTPA)" has been formulated to control this epidemic. Information on knowledge, attitudes and practices of population regarding COTPA is necessary to effectively implement the legislation. The present study deals with the personal profile of tobacco users in Madurai East Block. The study is a descriptive study which was conducted in 6 villages covering 841 tobacco users in Madurai East Block which is a suburban area of Madurai. The major findings indicate that about (61.6 %) were knew that smoking is prohibited in public places, one third of the tobacco users (37.2 %) quite aware of law of prohibition of sale of tobacco products in the vicinity of schools, A vast majority (81.9 %) induced others to use tobacco products and did not know that people are getting affected by smoking (77.7 %), on half of the respondents (58.3 %) were using tobacco products in public places, (54.3 %) respondents were very often complaining about the habit of using tobacco products, About two thirds of respondents (67.1 %) did not have the feeling that their children or young members of the family would follow this because they thought that using tobacco might not occur simply by seeing others using tobacco products and 36.1 % of the respondents that they were addicted to smoke. Addiction to smoke is a state of dependence which is unhealthy that needs to be treated. Knowledge, awareness and mindset are the factors to modify the behaviour relating to tobacco use. Despite smoking ban, there is lack of public awareness about smoking and tobacco use offence and the fines. So the Act should be implemented in true spirit so as to dissuade the population from falling victims to the Tobacco epidemic. Hence the present study was undertaken to analyze the level of Knowledge, Awareness and Mindset of people in Madurai on laws related to tobacco usages.

Methodology:

Descriptive research design has been adopted for this study. Out of 39 villages in Madurai East Block , 6 villages were been selected randomly using lottery method. The primary data were collected from the adolescents, middle age and old age people who were available between 9am and 6 pm from the 6 villages by using interview schedule. Thus the study population comprised of 841 people (648 male and 193 female). Data were analyzed using simple percentage.

Results and Discussion:

Data of the present study are tabulated, described and discussed in the light of other studies.

Table No: 1. knowledge of respondents about prohibition of smoking in public places

S. No	Knowledge about prohibition of smoking in public places	Sex					Total	
		Male		Female				
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
1.	Know	446	53.0	72	8.6	518	61.6	
2.	Do not know	202	24.0	121	14.4	323	38.4	
	Total	648	77.0	193	23.0	840	100.	

From the above table it is found that 53 percent of male and 8.6 percent of female respondents knew that smoking is prohibited in public places whereas 24 percent of male and 14.4 percent of female did not know. Majority of the respondents knew that they should not smoke in public places. This was due to the fact that a law was enacted in this regard which was followed by mass propaganda and police action. Both visual and print media and internet repeatedly warned the public which made many aware of this. A study conducted in Osun state of Nigeria by **Olowoere A. et al (2014)**, revealed that there is poor awareness and attitude to the law of prohibition of smoking in public places (38%). The study also stated that radio (58%), bill boards (45%) and newspapers (44%) were the major sources of awareness of the law.

Table No: 2. Knowledge of respondents about law regarding sale of tobacco products

Sl.No	Knowledge about laws relating to sale of tobacco products	Sex				Total	
		Male		Female		N	%
		N	%	N	%		
1.	Knowing about distance for sale	274	32.6	39	4.6	313	37.2
2.	Knowing about sale of tobacco products to children	274	32.6	39	4.6	313	37.2
	Total	648	77.1	19	22.9	840	100.

The table makes it crystal clear that an identical 32.6% of male and 4.6% of female respondents are quite aware of law of prohibition of sale of tobacco products in the vicinity of schools and to persons less than 18 which clearly shows that those who are aware of one law are aware of the other too. Knowledge about exact distance to be maintained from educational institutions is known to 37.2% of the respondents. The general public does not maintain exact facts and statistical information in their mind and they have only approximate knowledge. Similarly knowledge about sale of tobacco products to children is prevalent among only 37.2% of the respondents. The study was conducted only in rural areas where sharing of knowledge and enforcement of law is very minimal.

A cross-sectional community based survey was carried out in Khammam town in Andhra Pradesh by Rao A.R. et al (2013). The study found out that the overall awareness about COTPA was 47.5%. Higher education, higher SES, and increasing age had positive influence on awareness. Awareness regarding any tobacco related health problem was very high at 97.5%, among which it was highest (49.4%) for cancer followed by respiratory disease (37.6%). About two thirds (68.9%) of the participants had a favourable attitude towards COTPA. The positive attitude was more (73.3%) towards display of health warnings on tobacco products. Older participants (OR 7.6), people from higher SES, and more years of education were more likely to have positive attitude towards COTPA (OR 4.5). Current use of any tobacco was reported by 56.2% of the participants. The study concluded that a concerted effort has to be made to increase the awareness of the Act amongst the vulnerable population.

Table No: 3. Respondents motivating others to use tobacco products

S. No	Motivating others to use tobacco products	Sex				Total	
		Male		Female		N	%
		N	%	N	%		
1.	Motivated	128	15.2	24	2.9	152	18.1
2.	Did not motivate	519	61.8	169	20.1	688	81.9
	Total	648	77.1	19	22.9	840	100.

From the above table it is found that 15.2 percent of male and 2.9 percent of female respondents induced others to use tobacco products whereas 61.8 percent of male and 20.1 percent of female respondents did not. Social interaction among people is natural because man is an animal fond of socialization and social interaction. People largely share their habits during their social interaction and get motivated and influenced. As much as 18.1% of the respondents motivated others to use tobacco and such occurrences usually prevail at a young age. But a high majority did not motivate others to use tobacco as it is not a good habit.

Table No: 4. Knowledge that smoking affects smokers as well as neighbours

S.No	Knowledge on people being affected	Sex				Total	
		Male		Female		N	%
		N	%	N	%		
1	Know	160	19.0	27	3.2	187	22.3
2	Do not know	487	58.0	166	19.8	653	77.7
	Total	647	77.0	193	23.0	840	100.0

The above table shows that 58 percent of male and 19.8 percent of female respondents did not know that people are getting affected by smoking. 19 percent of male and 3.2 percent of female respondents knew that people are getting affected by smoking. This result was because of the fact that among those who use tobacco products few suffer. Majority of the tobacco users are silent sufferers who have not reached the phase of explicit suffering and there is a need for long time for exhibition of their sufferings. This fact is known to the respondents based on their experience and sufferings.

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