Attitude and Knowledge of Undergraduate Students towards Smoking at Sukkur IBA University
Javed Ali*, Khalil Ahmed Channa† and Niaz Ahmed Bhutto‡

Abstract
This qualitative study aims to explore the knowledge and attitude of undergraduate students towards smoking. This study was conducted at Sukkur IBA University Pakistan. In-depth interviews were used to collect the in-depth data. Ten students were approached to participate, out of which seven participated. Participants were asked with open ended questions to let them express their opinions regarding their attitudes and knowledge of smoking tobacco at campus. Findings suggest that there should be effective social marketing strategy to change the behavior of students who smoke at the campus. It also suggests that there should be smoking zone in university to avoid passive smoking and target the smokers effectively.

Keywords: Social Marketing, Smoking, Attitude, Behavior, Passive Smoking

Introduction
Smoking is one of the major public health issues. As per recent trends, it is estimated that, by the year 2020, tobacco is more likely to be the world’s foremost cause of diseases, deaths and disability by killing more than ten million people annually (Christophi CA et al., 2008). It is smoking that is considered as most common mode of tobacco use. Daily sales of cigarettes is about 15 billion that means 10 million per minute and one cigarette smoked can reduce the life for 5 minutes on average (Pampel FC, 2000). There are approximately 1.1 billion people who smoke in the world whose age bracket is 15 and above (Christophi CA et al., 2008). Besides Cancer that is the leading of death because of smoking(Christophi CA et al., 2008), smoking causes more deaths than HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria when combined (Mackay et al., 2006).

Students who start smoking are 16 years old on average and those who start two years before are more likely to die of lung cancer than those who start later (Winstanley et al, 1995). There are several

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factors which contribute to the initiating behavior of students have been identified. These are influence of peers (Kobus, 2003), family (Avenevoli and Merikangas, 2003), socio-economic status (Siahpush and Borland, 2001) and endorsement in media (USNCI, 2008).

There is 40% probability of non-smoker students who do not start smoking while entering in university which is smoke-free. But recent studies suggest that the prevalence of smoking increases from first to last year among the university students. It emphasizes that the initial years are more critical for promoting anti-smoking campaigns (Asian D et al, 2006 & Yegenoglu S et al, 2006).

While current campaigns only highlight the health risks which are associated with active and passive smoking, they do not suggest counter social marketing tactics which would be effective (Farrelly et al, 2005) and even other social branding campaigns (Ling et al, 2014) like anti-smoking messages and affected person’s pictures on packet has not changed the behavior of students who smoke. Overall here is scarcity of counter social marketing campaigns (Dibb and Carrigan, 2011) in the institutions of Pakistan. This study aimed to address these gaps by exploring the ways that how students who smoke can change their behavior from undesired to desired ones.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the knowledge and attitude of students who smoke at campus. Further it addresses the questions that why undergraduate students smoke at campus, where do they smoke and what does it make them stop smoking at campus? This study also aims to suggest an effective social marketing campaign to stop students to smoke at campus. Significance of this study is that academicians and management of institution need to know the attitudes, opinions and behaviors of students who smoke and need to cater this problem of grave concern strategically.

**Literature Review**

In order to change the behavior, knowledge and attitude of public many successful tobacco control campaigns have been launched in western world (Wakefield et al, 2010). Several studies have investigated the relationships between antismoking campaigns and knowledge, attitude and behavior of public towards smoking quantitatively (Wakefield et al, 2003; Strasser et al., 2009; Shen, 2010; Hanewinkel et al, 2010; Cater et al, 2011) and qualitatively (Wolburg, 2006, Gagné, 2008 and Durkin et al, 2010).
According to Hossain et al. (2015), people can’t stop the addicted behavior of smoking, started from their student life when curiosity and emotions were dominant factors over others, because of lack of awareness and the level of seriousness about warning. Study examined that sufferings from disease by the smoker or someone from his or her family have the ability to make them quit smoking. It also inferred that internal will of smoker proves strong reason to stop smoking. Further author suggested that Ps of social marketing especially social promotion proved effective in changing the social attitude and behavior. In order to change the behavior of students who smoke, promotion of anti-smoking campaigns can be fruitful.

Formative research was conducted to change the attitudes of youth towards smoking by using the counter marketing approach. Study also informed the development of tobacco counter marketing materials and engagement activities for youth to generate the insight on the influences of counter marketing programs (Lance R. Barrie et al. 2015). Tactics have been adopted by government of Pakistan such that threatening message written on the packet of cigarettes and cancer affected person’s picture is there. These tactics have been implemented to combat the habit of smoking. But increasing sales of cigarettes is an alarming situation for the policy makers.

XiziCai (2012) explored the different antismoking campaigns with the help of Taylor’s Six-segment Message Strategy Wheel and their influence on Chinese adult smokers who have quitting experience. Study suggested that social, routine and rational message strategies are quite influential to change the behavior and opinion of people.

Nazemi (2012) identified that influence of friends who smoke, stress, severance from family and fun were the most important factors that make students to start smoking. So if these factors are included in the social marketing campaigns, they can be effective in changing the undesired behavior of students.

According to Morvan et al, (2011), visual messages are more effective than text warnings in changing the behavior of smokers. Study also identified that if fear appeals are used along with the self-efficacy and termination support messages they can provoke reactions in the target audience effectively. Campaigns which include fear of penalties, family, social pressure can help in combating smoking habits of students at large.
Halperin (2009) identified that college students and other youngsters who smoke remain at tobacco dependency risk, and face other adverse effects like association with alcohol use, relational abuse, risky driving, less physical activity, and depression. They are more prone to poor performance in their academic life.

**Methodology**

Purposive sampling method was used to collect the qualitative data. To identify the individuals who smoke, different places were visited. Many students were identified and ten of them were approached to participate in the research. Out of ten students three denied to be the part of the research. Seven students gave written consent and were assured of their confidentiality of data they would provide. They were named as Interviewee A, Interviewee B and so on. In-depth interviews were conducted from seven students. These interviews were conducted in the month of February, 2017 at campus of Sukkur IBA University. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and analyzed thematically using NVivo software.

For the purpose of this study is to explore the opinions, attitudes and knowledge of students towards smoking, in-depth interviews are more appropriate to serve the purpose. In-depth interviews have the abilities to dig into the information which can explain how ideas, stories, attitudes and experiences work within a specific cultural setting (Ma et al., 2008). Furthermore, in order to see that how opinions are constructed and how they are expressed, in-depth interview method is a useful tool to do so (Kitzinger, 1999).

Interview guide was developed by going through the past literature which includes five dimensions of questions along with the probes. It contains questions as the personal background of participant, thoughts and ideas regarding smoking, smoking behavior, smoking experience, smoking attitude and recommendations of promotional ways to quit smoking. All interviews were face to face and lasted for 40 to 50 minutes each.

**Results**

Participants were asked about their thoughts, attitudes, behavior and knowledge in the interview guide. Their smoking behavior is mentioned in the Table 1. They were not sure about their smoking behavior. They did not know the exact number of cigarettes they smoke in a day. Two of...
them are medium to heavy smokers who smoke up to 15 cigarettes a day. Remaining were light smokers and smoke 5 to 7 cigarettes a day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Smoking Behavior</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1 to 2 in an hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>10 to 15 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>5 to 6 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>10 to 15 per day</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>5 to 6 per day</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
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<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>4 to 5 per day</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 1: Smoking behavior among the participants

Almost all participants were aware of the harmfulness of smoking. They described that smoking may cause severe deceases like lung cancer or mouth cancer. They also consider that smoking cost them very much in their student life. One participant mentioned, "Yeah, it may cause lung cancer or mouth cancer because its tobacco" Another participant commented, "There is not any benefit of smoking cigarettes, but smoking costs very much.

One participant also mentioned, "Sometimes when I am out of money totally and I have something very important to do then I realized that I wasted my money in smoking cigarettes."

Participants were also asked about the passive smoking. Two of them did not know the meaning of passive smoking. They were defined first and then they described it. Most of the participants considered passive smoking bad. One of the participant commented that smokers should not smoke in front of those who don't. One participant's response against the knowledge of passive smoking was, "Passive smoking I don't know."

Another described, "My opinion regarding passive smoking is that people who smoke should stay away from those who don’t."

When they were asked about the perceived benefits of smoking, they described some benefits of smoking. Many of them said that smoking caused them to relax and ease the burden of studies. Smoking was satisfying their mind and themselves as well.
One participant described the benefit of smoking as,

"As per my knowledge smoking is best for satisfying yourself and satisfying your mind"

Another participant commented,
"There is one benefit of smoking at campus that we can get free cigarettes from our fellows."

Participants were asked about the suggestion for which smoking behavior among the students should be reduced or eliminated and how they can quit it. They were also asked about decreasing the danger of passive smoking. Most of the participants suggested that there should be a specific smoking zone at the campus. Students should go to the zone only. In that way smoking habits among the students at campus can be controlled and passive smoking can be avoided.

One of the participants suggested,
"Campus management should establish a smoking zone."

Another participant commented,
"There should be a smoking zone in campus so whoever wants to smoke he would go there and smoke because it is the only way."

One of the participants mentioned,
"There should be a smoking zone where students should go and smoke otherwise when they smoke in washroom there is a passive smoking."

**Discussions**

It was apparent from the results that were derived from the discussions of participants that they know the harmful consequences of active smoking as well as passive smoking. They also identified the benefits of smoking at campus that trigger them to smoke more. They also mentioned that they used to be frightened of being caught red handed by the competing authorities. They were also frightened of penalties which were imposed on students who smoke at campus. They were realizing that smoking at campus was risky but even though they were doing it to release their pressure and tensions during the studies and long-hour classes. This was unswerving with the past literature but interesting point was that the most of the discussions was short and participants were hesitating to discuss more.

Furthermore, they felt that there should be a specific smoking zone at the campus. Students should go there and smoke. They mentioned that smoking zone would eliminate the threat of passive smoking and smokers would be able to quit smoking. In addition to that they also realized that if they were exposed to their parents as smokers they would
quit it. So the influence of their parents or guardians could play the major role in decreasing or changing the behavior of students who smoke at campus.

The current study can be helpful to the management of Sukkur IBA University or any other educational institute. Educational institutions can develop the social marketing strategy to combat the smoking behavior of students by creating fear of influential that are parents or guardians. Smoking zones can be established where students can be targeted effectively and messages of smoking cessation behaviors can be communicated in those smoking zones.

More in depth results can be analyzed if sample size is increased. Study can be conducted across different institutions to gather more insight of students who smoke. For marketing researchers, they can include some smoking cessation ads to know the attitude of students who smoke towards those advertisements.
References
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