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EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC AWARENESS PROGRAMME REGARDING ILL-EFFECTS OF TOBACCO USE ON ATTITUDE OF TOBACCO USERS IN THE SELECTED HOSPITAL OF ODISHA.

Ms. Saibalini parida ¹, DR. Darshan Sohi ², DR. Manjubala Dash ³

1. Research Scholar, Himalaya University

2. Professor, Himalaya University

3. Professor, MTPG & RIHS

Abstract:

Background: Tobacco use remains a major public health concern worldwide, contributing significantly to preventable illnesses and deaths. Changing users' attitudes towards tobacco and increasing awareness of its harmful effects are essential components in reducing tobacco consumption. Educational interventions play a critical role in shaping positive attitudes and encouraging cessation. **Aim:** The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of Public Awareness programme regarding ill-effects of tobacco use on Attitude of Tobacco users in the selected hospital of Odisha.

Methodology: A quantitative, pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design was adopted. A total of 150 participants were selected. Data were collected using a Likert attitude scale after obtaining permission from relevant authorities and securing both oral and written consent from participants. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to evaluate changes in attitude scores.

Result and findings: Post-test findings revealed that 70% of participants developed a favourable attitude towards the effects of tobacco, 27% showed a moderately favourable attitude, and 3% exhibited an unfavourable attitude. Favourable attitudes were particularly observed towards information on tobacco use (70%), ill effects of tobacco (64%), and treatment and prevention (67%). No significant association was found between demographic variables and changes in knowledge or attitude scores.

Conclusion: The study highlights a positive shift in participants' attitudes following the educational intervention. However, continuous efforts through targeted educational strategies, community support, and accessible cessation resources are crucial to sustaining behavioural change and reducing tobacco use.

Keywords: Awareness, Public, Attitude, Tobacco

INTRODUCTION:

Tobacco use remains a significant public health challenge globally, contributing to millions of deaths each year due to various diseases, including cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and respiratory illnesses. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), tobacco is a leading cause of premature death, with over 8 million fatalities annually attributed to tobacco-related illnesses, including more than 1.2 million deaths from second hand smoke exposure (Rodgers-Melnick et al., 2022).

Public awareness campaigns have been pivotal in reducing tobacco use and changing social norms related to smoking. Studies such as those by Johnson et al. document how educational efforts emphasizing the health risks of smoking have influenced smokers' perceptions and reinforced negative attitudes towards tobacco use (Johnson et al., 2016). Campaigns like the CDC's "Tips From Former Smokers" have initiated dialogues regarding the dangers of tobacco, ultimately leading to a shift in user attitudes and social acceptance of smoking. Abdullah et al. highlight how increased awareness of second-hand smoke (SHS) risks has contributed to the denormalization of smoking in developed regions, effectively changing public attitudes and behaviors surrounding tobacco use (Abdullah et al., 2011).

Moreover, the implementation of comprehensive tobacco control policies has been shown to further enhance the effectiveness of awareness campaigns. Yang et al. emphasize that the success of smoke-free regulations is reliant on sufficient public education efforts that precede and accompany such policies (Yang et al., 2013). For example, informed communities are more likely to support and engage in tobacco cessation activities, reflecting changes in beliefs and practices around smoking (Yang et al., 2013). Effectively, public education campaigns, when strategically aligned with policy enforcement, create a more robust environment for influencing tobacco user attitudes and behaviors.

Furthermore, studies indicate a strong correlation between knowledge of tobacco industry tactics and negative attitudes toward smoking. Patanavanich et al. found that increased awareness of industry strategies correlates with heightened public disapproval of tobacco, reinforcing the need for awareness initiatives targeting both users and broader governmental policymakers (Patanavanich et al., 2024). This suggests that awareness programs should not only focus on health impacts but also educate the public about the manipulative tactics employed by the tobacco industry, as consumer knowledge is vital in fostering negative attitudes towards both tobacco use and the industry itself (Patanavanich et al., 2024).

The role of mass media in supporting public awareness campaigns is crucial. Kolappan et al. note that widespread media exposure to anti-tobacco messaging can significantly lower rates of tobacco use, demonstrating that well-designed campaigns have the potential to reach diverse populations (Kolappan et al., 2013). For instance, there is evidence that integrated educational approaches can yield reductions in smoking prevalence among young people by as much as 40%, highlighting the importance of community engagement

alongside individual education to drive a comprehensive approach toward tobacco cessation (Thavarajah et al., 2010).

In conclusion, the collective evidence underlines the effectiveness of public awareness programs in altering the attitudes of tobacco users. Educational campaigns need to be well-structured, promote knowledge of both health risks and industry tactics, and incorporate widespread media strategies to be impactful. Continuous evaluation and adaptation of these programs are essential to meet the evolving landscape of tobacco use and its associated public health concerns.

AIM OF THE STUDY:

The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of Public Awareness programme regarding ill-effects of tobacco use on Attitude of Tobacco users in the selected hospital of Odisha.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

This study used a quantitative research approach with a pre-experimental one group pretest and posttest design. The number of participants was 150. After securing permission from the relevant authorities, data collection began. The participant were informed about the purpose of the study and both oral and written consent were taken from the participant. Likert attitude scale was used to gather data on participants attitudes towards tobacco use. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were applied on the collected data.

RESULT:

Table - 1: Level of Attitude of the tobacco users regarding the effects of tobacco in post test. N= 150

Attitude	Unfavourable (<50%)		Moderately favourable (50 – 75%)		Favourable (>75%)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Information on tobacco use	29	19	114	76	7	5
Ill effects of tobacco	40	27	86	57	24	16
Treatment and prevention	111	74	39	26	0	0

The post-test findings reveal that, regarding general information on tobacco use, 114 participants (76%) demonstrated a moderately favourable attitude, 7 participants (5%) displayed a favourable attitude, and 29 participants (19%) showed an unfavourable attitude. Overall, 105 participants (70%) exhibited a favourable attitude, 40 participants (27%) had a moderately favourable attitude, and only 5 participants (3%) reflected an unfavourable attitude concerning the effects of tobacco (Table 1).

Table - 2: Level of Attitude of the tobacco users regarding the ill effects of tobacco. N= 150

Attitude	Unfavourable (<50%)		Moderately favourable (50 – 75%)		Favourable (>75%)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Information on tobacco use	5	3	40	27	105	70
Ill effects of tobacco	4	3	50	33	96	64
Treatment and prevention	11	7	39	26	100	67

Table 2 shows that after the intervention, 70% of participants had a favourable attitude towards information on tobacco use, 64% towards the ill effects of tobacco, and 67% towards treatment and prevention. A smaller proportion of participants exhibited moderately favourable attitudes (27%, 33%, and 26% respectively), while unfavourable attitudes were observed in only a few participants across the three domains (3%, 3%, and 7% respectively).

The findings of the study indicated that none of the demographic variables demonstrated a statistically significant association with the mean difference in knowledge and attitude scores related to the ill effects of tobacco.

DISCUSSION:

The results illustrating that a substantial proportion of participants held a favorable attitude towards tobacco, with 70% reporting a positive outlook, 27% exhibiting a moderately favorable attitude, and only 3% demonstrating an unfavorable attitude, raise critical concerns regarding the effectiveness of public education initiatives on tobacco. Even though a majority acknowledged the negative effects of tobacco, with 64% recognizing its harms, it is troubling that a significant portion still maintains a favorable attitude, which may paradoxically contribute to continued tobacco use rather than its cessation.

The finding that no significant association was observed between demographic variables and mean differences in knowledge and attitude scores suggests that tobacco education may not be effectively reaching all demographic groups. This is a common challenge in public health campaigns, as demographic factors such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status can influence the effectiveness of tobacco control initiatives. (Davis et al. 2017; Duke et al., 2019). Studies have shown that targeted campaigns, such as the CDC's "Tips From Former Smokers," can positively modify cessation behaviors among smokers, but success often hinges on strategically designed messaging that resonates with specific populations (Biener, 2000).

While the data also indicate that a majority of participants had favorable attitudes towards treatment and prevention measures (67%), the underlying factors influencing these perceptions are complex and warrant further exploration. Limited engagement with actionable cessation resources among participants may reflect the need for tailored outreach strategies that effectively resonate with diverse audience segments (Eissenberg et al., 2008; Morrell et al., 2008). Moreover, possessing knowledge about the harms of tobacco does not guarantee behavior change; research suggests that without adequate motivational support and effective cessation programs, harmful tobacco habits are likely to persist among users (Khubchandani et al., 2017) (Thrasher et al., 2004).

Furthermore, the results from Khubchandani et al. indicate that school-based educational programs significantly influence tobacco-related attitudes among adolescents (Khubchandani et al., 2017). This underscores the potential benefits of implementing comprehensive educational interventions earlier in life to foster long-term resistance against tobacco use. Additionally, Thrasher et al. found that anti-industry messages in campaigns can have significant impacts, reinforcing the notion that the framing of information can profoundly affect public perception of tobacco products (Thrasher et al., 2004).

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that most participants had a favourable attitude towards information about tobacco. However, there remains a strong need for improved and impactful education strategies that effectively engage different demographic groups. Strengthening community support and providing better access to cessation resources are essential to turning awareness into action. Future initiatives should focus on targeted campaigns that not only highlight the risks of tobacco use but also guide individuals toward practical steps for quitting.

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