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Research Article

**FREQUENCY OF SMOKING IN FEMALE STUDENTS IN
GENERAL HOSPITAL, LAHORE**¹Alia Aslam, ²Dr. Shaharyar Ahmed, ³Dr. Zahra Rafi, ⁴Zuhair Zubair¹WMO DHQ Hospital Narowal²Punjab Medical College, Faisalabad³House Officer, DHQ Teaching Hospital Gujranwala⁴Faisalabad Medical University, Faisalabad**Abstract:****OBJECTIVE:** To find out the incidences and types of smoking among female students of various Universities of Capital City.**STUDY DESIGN:** The design of the study was cross-sectional.**PLACE AND DURATION:** The study was conducted from August 2017 to January 2018 for 06 months in General Hospital, Lahore. Female students from four universities were included in the study.**METHODOLOGY:** The sample comprised of 380 females on the basis of two phase sampling. Four HEC recognized universities were initially selected by from a total of 16 universities based on random sampling. In 2nd phase the consecutive sampling techniques were used for the selection of candidates. A pre-designed questionnaire was formulated and filled for each student according to study protocol.**RESULTS:** The university females' addiction to smoking was calculated to be 17.6%. The smokers' average age was 21 years. The use of sheesha as a smoke was most popular among the female students (62%, 42 cases). Most of the female smokers were doing Bachelors (fashion designing - 24.2% and business administration - 22.6%). Majority of the students (smokers) became addicted between 15 - 19 years of age.**CONCLUSION:** Smoking among students is increasing rapidly. Females are no exception. The need is to formulate strict policies that must have the potential to control all types of smoking in general and particularly among students.**KEY WORDS:** Addiction, Smoking, Cigarette, University and Sheesha.**Corresponding author:**

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INTRODUCTION:

The mortality rate for smoke addiction is higher than the total mortality rate due to accidents, injuries, alcohol consumption, suicide and murders. The number of deaths caused by lungs cancer (closely related to tobacco addiction) is 90% for males and 80% for females. The other forms of non-smoked tobacco (snuff and chewable tobacco) are also among leading risk factors of other forms of cancers [1].

The use of tobacco among women is getting more popular due to globalization and behavioral changes in the societies. The drugs' addiction especially smoking is intense in females as compared to males and it is more difficult for the women to give up. World Health Organization (WHO) highlighted the cause "Gender and tobacco with an emphasis on marketing to women" in 2011. The theme was to focus the accelerated use of smoking among the female population of the world in last few years [2]. Women often face breast cancer but the number of deaths due to smoking has crossed the number of deaths caused by breast cancer and the chances of deaths by lungs cancer are even brighter after the age of 55 years. In addition, many studies have reported a strong relationship between the smoking and the outcomes of pregnancy in female smokers. Smoking can cause miscarriages in pregnant smokers and is dangerous for the health of the embryo. Indirect or passive smoking is equally dangerous for pregnancy. Some studies have reported the loss of pregnancy in cases of passive smoking by the mothers [3]. Gravid smokers are at a high risk of producing premature and underweight babies and often suffer from miscarriages. Children might face difficulty in learning and may develop mental problems in cases of smoking mothers. Water pipe smoking is considered safer than cigarettes but experiments have yielded opposite results. The amount of tar produced by water pipe was many times greater than that produced by a pack of cigarettes [4]. Sheesha smoking is preferred by women and is easily available in restaurants, sheesha bars and hotels. However, the prevalence of nicotine in sheesha is (2% – 4%) as compared to cigarettes (1% – 3%) [9, 10]. Sheesha smoking is becoming popular and most of the parents allow their children to smoke sheesha. The purpose of this study was to explore the incidences of

smoking in female students of Islamabad universities.

METHODOLOGY:

The study was conducted from August 2016 to January 2017 for 06 months in General Hospital Lahore. Female students from four universities were included in the study. The sample was selected by two stage sampling. Four universities were selected from a total of 16 HEC recognized universities. A total of 380 students from four universities between the ages of (16 – 29) years participated in the research. World Health Organization Sample size calculator was used for sampling. The subjects were filtered through the inclusion criteria. The females from four universities were included in the study irrespective of the classes or batches. The unwilling females, males and the student of other institutions were dropped from the study.

The students were informed about the purpose of the study and permission from ethical board was obtained for the conduct of this study. A questionnaire was filled for each student regarding the basic details about the student and smoking history. The data was kept confidential. SPSS was utilized for data analysis. The data was presented in form of charts and tables for understanding.

RESULTS:

The sample consisted of 380 females with a mean age of 21 years. The age range of sample was between (16 – 29) years. Most of the females were unmarried, a few were married and very few were divorced.

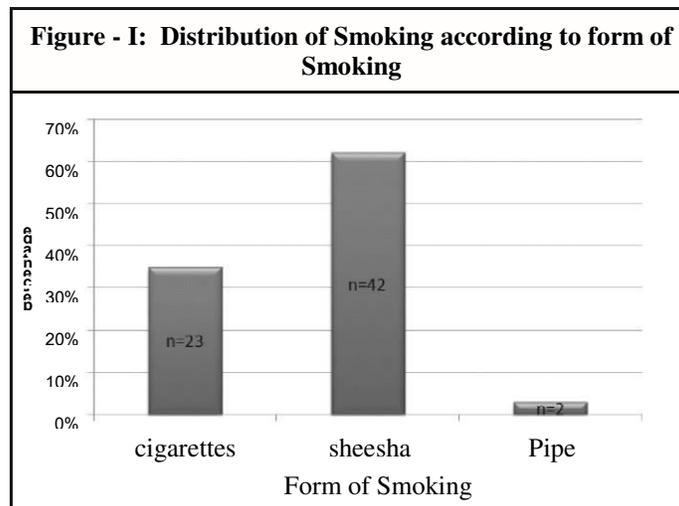
Almost 17.6 % of the sample was addict to smoking. Only 2.4% students claimed that they have quit smoking. Smoking included all types of tobacco inhaled through different means (sheesha, pipe etc). The incidences of smoking were the highest at Iqra University (28%). Other universities smoking prevalence were noted as SZABIST University (20%), Air & Bahria University (11.1%).

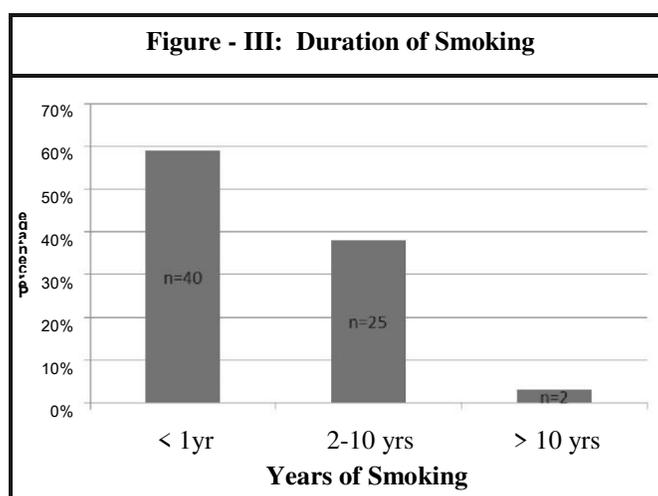
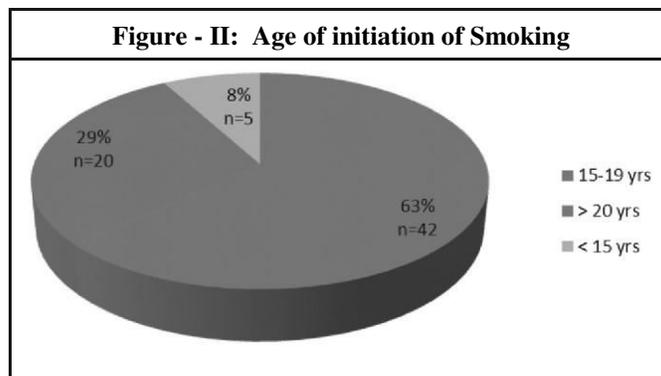
The bachelor's level students from Fashion Designing and Business Administration departments were actively involved in smoking (24.2% and 22.6% respectively). The overall picture of smoking incidences in all the classes is summarized in Table – I.

Table – I: Distribution of Smoking according to Study Groups

Description	Course						Total
	BBA/ *MBA n=181	BFD* n=37	BTD* n=17	ENGG* n=51	Social Sciences n=49	Others n=45	
Smokers (n=67)	41 (60.3%)	9 (12.7%)	1 (1.6%)	4 (6.3%)	5 (7.9%)	7 (11.1%)	67 100 %
% Within the course	41 (22.6%)	9 (24.2%)	1 (5.9%)	4 (7.8%)	5 (10.2%)	7 (15.5%)	17.6%
Ex-smokers	4 (44.4%)	2 (22.2%)	1 (11.1%)	0 (0 %)	2 (22.2%)	0 (0 %)	9 (100.0%)
% Within the course	4 (2.2%)	2 (5.40%)	1 (5.9%)	0 (0%)	2 (4.1%)	0 (0 %)	2.4%

Sheesha is the most famous smoking type used by female students in the universities as compared to other form of smoked tobacco. Majority of the students (63%, 42 cases) started smoking when they were (15 – 19) year-old. Some started after their teen ages and a few (8%, 5 cases) started smoking when they were below 15 years of age. Most of the female students disclosed that they are smoking since a year. Very rare cases of 10 years or more continuous smoking were observed 2 (3%).





DISCUSSION:

The study delivered an overall occurrence of 17.6% female smokers in four universities of Islamabad. The smoking among women, especially female students, is on a rise in Pakistan and is a serious public health problem. Among different types of smoking, Sheesha is the most popular among female smoker and is somewhat socially acceptable. A number of national and international studies have been conducted on this topic [5]. A study done in China and Mongolia in 2011 showed the incidence of female smoker as 1.7% which was lower than the finding of our study. A national level study at Armed Force Hospital Rawalpindi in 2006 showed that no females were involved in smoking except 3 nurses. Another study conducted in Jordan on female students revealed that 10.7% students were used to smoke. According to another study, six percent female college students in Riyadh were smokers [6].

A study was conducted in Saudi Arabia in 2007 to explore the frequency of smoking. The results showed

that Saudi female students were also involved in different use of tobacco; current smokers (11%), Cigarette smokers (5%), Sheesha & Pipe Smokers (8.7%) [7].

The findings of our study regarding sheesha smoking were confirmed by another study conducted in female students of Karachi, which argued that 16.8 % of the students were addicted to sheesha smoking [8]. Many international and national studies have confirmed that teenage female students are using more tobacco than any other age group. In Saudi Arabia, most of the students started smoking when they were below seventeen years [9]. A study conducted in Sind delivered that 44% female smokers were between the ages of 18 to 24 years. Our study also proved that the upper teenage is the most defenseless age group for the smoke addiction [10].

The trend of smoking is rising in the world. Muslim countries' females were not previously seen with such numbers of smoking. The changes in values, fashion

industry and globalization have a strong impact on the life styles of the women. Most of the female students join smoking in the age of (15 – 19) years, hence the need is to make strict policies which particularly target this group [11]. Underage sale and use of tobacco should be banned. Likewise, students should be banned to use the tobacco in the institutions etc. People should be given general awareness about the adverse effects of tobacco smoking including sheesha.

CONCLUSION:

Smoking among students is increasing rapidly. Females are no exception. The need is to formulate strict policies that must have the potential to control all types of smoking in general and particularly among students.

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