

Psychosocial risk factors for adolescent smoking: a school-based study¹ essay sam...

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Introduction

- Purpose

Smoking among adolescents is among the major concerns for the public at large and also to the public health systems in many developed countries. The familiarity and knowledge of social and individual risk factors are quite significant for the advancement of addiction of nicotine and it could greatly help to enhance all the procedures that are aimed at reducing the use of tobacco and to start efficient and efficacious prevention programs. The main purpose of this study is to detect all the psychosocial variables that relate to smoking among adolescents. In this study, participants were 2, 840 adolescents of 12 to 16 years of age. Gender, age, weekly income, perceived availability, perceived risk of harm, peer and family use and self esteem were the selected variables for this study. This study aims at determining precisely the association of various well known variables and adolescent smoking in Spain (Clin, 2011, p. 24).

- Key Concepts and Conceptual Definitions

Key Words: Smoking, adolescents and risk factors

- Research Questions/Hypothesis

- Tobacco smoking among adolescence of ages 12 to 16 and the ways in which they are influenced into the practice.

Method

- Participants

In this study, participants were 2, 840 adolescents (47. 8% females and 52. 2% males) who were from ten different high schools in Spain (Barcelona).

The age of these participants is 12-16 ($M = 14.01$; $SD = 1.34$). The rare of response at these high schools for the students registered was 83. 26%.

- Key Variables

- Manipulated Variables

Instruments and Variables – All participants were required to complete an ad-hoc appliance to assess the use of tobacco and all risk factors associated with traditional smoking in relation to weekly income, perceived availability, family and peer use and perceived risk of harm. To facilitate this assessment, substances were taken from the bank of assessment instruments of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Addiction (EMCDDA). Using a likert-scale ranging from 0, perceived availability was assessed from a low point to a very high availability. To measure weekly income, these participants were requested to give the amount of available Euros available for their weekly expenditure. Using a Likert-scale ranging from 0 to 4, perceived risk of harm was assessed with regard to smoking a pack of cigarettes. In addition, the participants were also to complete a scale in order to assess Rosenberg Self esteem Scale and Drive for thinness (DT from EDI-2) (Clin, 2012, p. 26).

The Drive for thinness subscale comprises of seven items measuring excessive concern with preoccupation with weight, dieting and also the fear of adding weight was to be assessed on a 6-point Likert-scale. Conclusively, tobacco was found to be the main independent variable. As a categorical variable, tobacco was created and recorded with four levels of frequency including; ‘ I smoke on a daily basis, I smoke sometimes, I smoke two to three times per week and I don’t smoke at all.’

Procedures

During school hours, data was collected by a trained teacher and participants and their parents were requested provide an informed consent through the office of the head teacher at each school.

Data Analysis

A three step analysis was carried out to determine psychological variables that are related to smoking amongst adolescents. To start with, K that means cluster analysis was performed for the purposes of making adolescent context latent variables that were admitted as predictors; social context (smoking context vs. non-smoking context) and family context (smoking context vs. Non-smoking context). Non-parametric tests were conducted to detect all variables that relate to smoking among adolescents after determining the smoking context. Finally, to sum up the assessment, the last step was quantifying the relationship between the use of tobacco and its significant variables.

Results

- Defining smoking context variables

In order to define the variables of the smoking context, cluster analysis gave two definitions of the context variables. The first was tobacco use in the context of the adolescent's family. This includes items that assess smoking (yes/no) by the mother or father of the adolescent. Using this variable, samples of adolescents were classified according to the use of tobacco in the participant's family context, the results were, adolescent's parents that are non-smokers were 69. 2% while adolescent parents that smoke were 30%

(Clin, 2012, p. 28).

The other result was for the use of tobacco in the social context. It includes items that assess smoking among peers and partners of the adolescents in the social context. These results were; the partner of the adolescent does not smoke at all and also his/her friends at 65. 7% vs. the smoking social context which indicated that the adolescent's partner smokes and also his/her friends smoke as well.

- Detecting the variables related to adolescent smoking

We used non-parametric tests to identify all variables that are related to adolescent smoking (91. 1%). From these tests, the following found; one was significant statistical relationships between the use of tobacco, gender and age where (boys were found to be non-smokers), weekly income, social context, perceived risk of harm and perceived availability. Other considered predictive variables include drive for thinness and self-esteem that were not relevant.

Discussion

The main purpose of this particular study was to determine ways in which adolescents are influenced into smoking using psychological variables which depict an association with studies previously done. From this study, the analysis of logistic regression indicated that the use of tobacco among the group of friends and also by his/her partner is seemingly the most extensively influential variable for adolescents who smoke. Just like other previous studies, this study shows that social disapproval is the main variable that affects the behaviour of smoking. As depicted in the section of

results, the family and social context of the adolescent could predict a likelihood of using tobacco.

- Limitation

These variables were discarded for various reasons; one of these reasons is that, regarding logistic analysis, these variables did not reach any statistical significance. Secondly, this study's implication for intervention are that various strategies that are aimed at reducing use and abuse of tobacco among adolescents ought also to focus on increasing protective factors not just ways of reducing the risk factors. Additionally, the geographical source of the sample was in some way restricted and this could be improved by replicating it with samples from other nations.

- Contribution

More specifically, smoking among adolescents is quite common and the probability that the adults who live in various smoking contexts will be smokers is above 15% a percentage higher than that of those who live in a non-smoking context. Variables such as drive for thinness, weekly income and self esteem were included in the study since there was some relation between all of them and smoking as previous studies suggest (Clin, 2012, p. 31).

- Applications or Implications

This study implies that there is much need for various initiatives to be started in order to deal with the issue of adolescence smoking. This study has been a success as it has achieved sufficient results indicating that smoking adolescents is a worrying and there is a lot to be done in order to curb this menace.

Critique

In my perspective, may adolescents tend to be much influenced by their peers and relatives pretty much because at this age, their behaviour is dependent on the thought that life is easy and fun. For this reason, many of these adolescents are finding themselves at the losing end after engaging in dangerous habits such as smoking. This study shows that parents, guardians and peer intervention could play part in solving this issue which is rampant among these youths. Subsequently, protective family and social contexts have great influence on not smoking, therefore it is up to these groups to decide on playing their roles correctly in a way to end this ill habit.

References

Clin, J. 2011. International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology Health Pyschol, Vol. 11. N 1, pp. 23-33.