

Policy making in the uk



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POLICY MAKING IN THE UK One can see that the physical and mental activities of humans from time immemorial have not only resulted in development, but also damages to the human lives. That is, as the humans indulged in many negative things, the same physical and mental part of their body got damaged. So, this paper will discuss one of those threatening habits of addictive tobacco usage by discussing to what extent United Kingdom government has tried to control the tobacco policy for the welfare of the people.

In United Kingdom, even though opiate addiction, other drug problems and its prevention were recognized a hundred years ago, political concern and legal steps to stop this problem started from the 1950s (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000). It has become an acute problem nowadays because Smoking remains the main cause of preventable disease and premature death in the UK. In England alone, over 80, 000 deaths per year are due to smoking and about 8. 5 million people still smoke in England today. (dh. gov. uk). In the case of UK, the anti-tobacco strategy is carried as a cross-government initiative involving a variety of departments and agencies. The Health Department has the overall responsibility for the delivery of anti-tobacco strategy through formulation of strict laws. UK government formulated its anti-tobacco policy to the extent that it did not want young people to be exposed to tobacco promotions and advertisements and importantly wanted to make it difficult for the young people to get hold of tobacco and tobacco related product of cigarette. As far as the promotions and advertisements are concerned, the UK government believes that if children or young people are not exposed to it, it will not create an urge among them to smoke. Tobacco policy currently rests on claims: tobacco

advertising and promotion are the major reasons why young people begin to smoke; so all forms of tobacco advertising and promotion, including tobacco displays, should be banned. (Basham).

As part of the anti-tobacco policy, the government came up with the Health Bill 2009. The key proposals in the bill are the need for the commercial shops to remove tobacco displays and importantly restrict the sale of cigarettes from vending machines. Removing tobacco displays will in a way prevent prospective children and young people from being exposed to the promotions and will also support smokers who want to quit as displays prompt impulse purchases undermining efforts to give up. (dh. gov. uk).

Also, the proposal to restrict or even ban the sale of cigarettes from the vending machines is a major policy which the government believes will make it difficult for the target group to get the product. Because, recent test purchasing showed that buying from vending machines was the most successful way for children to get hold of cigarettes. It was almost twice as successful compared to ways tested such as purchasing from newsagents, off licences or petrol station kiosks (smokefreeaction. org. uk).

The extent of the government policy can also be viewed from the positive results it generated. Since 1998 adult smoking rates in England have fallen from 28 percent in 1998 to 21 percent in 2007 - a fall of nearly 2. 5 million. These are the lowest smoking rates in England on record. (dh. gov. uk).

These constructive anti-tobacco policies and on the basis of some personal choices of the smoker like past behavior, personal characteristics, perceived self efficacy, perceived benefits and health risks, environment and expectation of others as well as competing demand and positive emotions, tobacco's misuse can be minimized optimally. (Fitzpatrick and Wallace).

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