

Attitudes Around Smoking Initiation in Kathmandu, Nepal



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Introduction

Smoking and tobacco use is an epidemic causing major morbidity and mortality in Nepal. This research seeks to understand the Nepalese peoples' attitudes towards smoking, in order to develop sustainable, culturally appropriate smoking cessation programs in Nepal. The aims of this study were to investigate:

- 1) Participants' desire to quit smoking
- 2) Reasons for smoking initiation
- 3) Reasons for smoking cessation

This poster focuses on the second aim.

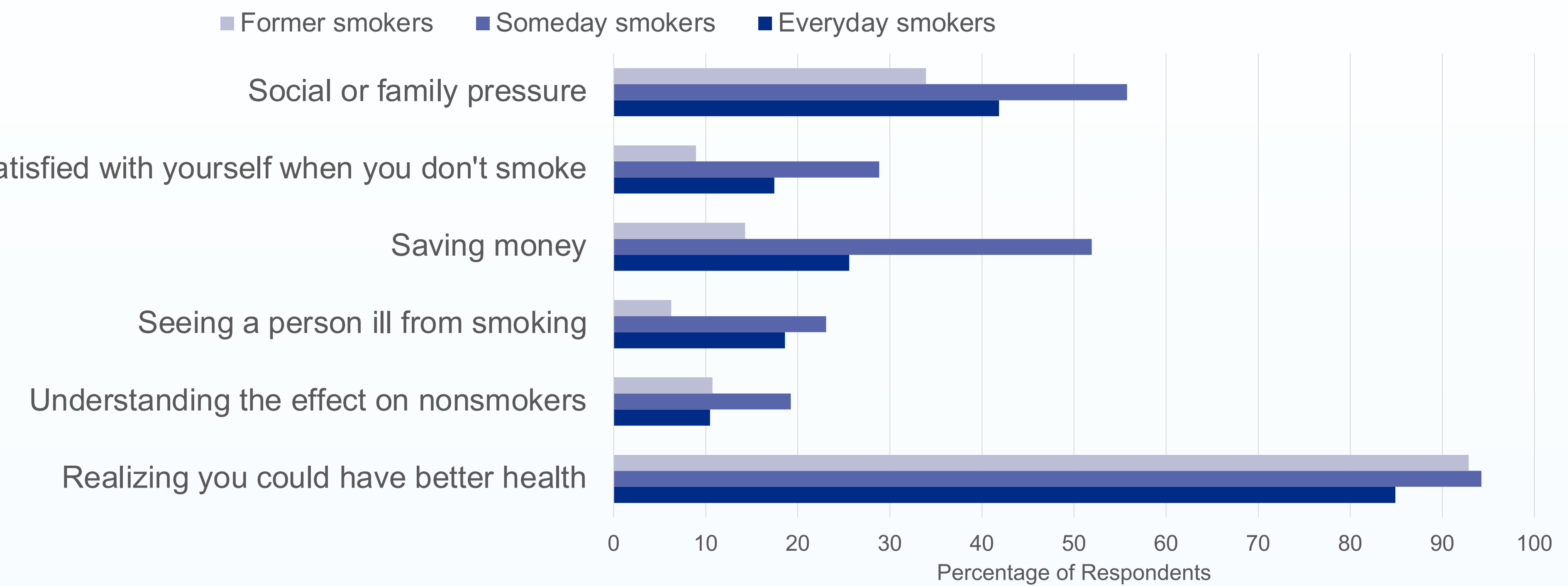
Methodology

Participants were recruited from the outpatient multispeciality clinics at the Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital in July 2023. Participants (n=250) met eligibility requirements if they were 18+ years of age and had used a tobacco product in the last 15 years. Participation was voluntary and both verbal and written consent was obtained. The 46-question survey was administered verbally using interpreters and answers were entered into Qualtrics. Data analysis was conducted using R.

Results

Baseline characteristic	Everyday smoker n (%)	Someday smoker n (%)	Former smoker n (%)
Gender			
Male	78 (90.7)	50 (96.2)	103 (92.0)
Female	7 (8.1)	2 (3.8)	9 (8.0)
Other	1 (1.2)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Age			
18-24 years	12 (14.0)	14 (26.9)	10 (8.9)
25-39 years	27 (31.4)	26 (50.0)	29 (25.9)
40-54 years	24 (27.9)	6 (11.5)	34 (30.4)
55-89 years	23 (26.7)	6 (11.5)	39 (34.8)
Ethnic Origin			
Chhetri	13 (15.1)	14 (26.9)	21 (18.8)
Bahun	33 (38.4)	12 (23.1)	41 (36.6)
Magar	6 (7.0)	4 (7.7)	6 (5.4)
Tharu	2 (2.3)	0 (0)	3 (2.7)
Other	32 (37.2)	22 (42.3)	41 (36.6)
Marital status			
Single	21 (24.4)	23 (44.2)	20 (17.9)
Married	61 (70.9)	27 (51.9)	84 (75.0)
Widowed	4 (4.7)	2 (3.8)	8 (7.1)
Divorced	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Education level			
No school education	14 (16.3)	3 (5.8)	27 (24.1)
Elementary school (5 th grade)	15 (17.4)	2 (3.8)	18 (16.1)
Middle school (8 th grade)	11 (12.8)	2 (3.8)	13 (11.6)
High school (12 th grade)	29 (33.7)	23 (44.2)	36 (32.1)
Undergraduate school (bachelor's degree or below)	14 (16.3)	19 (36.5)	10 (8.9)
Graduate school (masters and above)	3 (3.5)	3 (5.8)	8 (7.1)
Occupational status			
Retired	4 (4.7)	2 (3.8)	7 (6.3)
Worker	15 (17.4)	2 (3.8)	14 (12.5)
Farmer	19 (22.1)	5 (9.6)	20 (17.9)
Civil servant	0 (0)	2 (3.8)	3 (2.7)
Teacher	1 (1.2)	0 (0)	2 (1.8)
Professional	1 (1.2)	3 (5.8)	6 (5.4)
Freelancer	3 (3.5)	0 (0)	3 (2.7)
Student	7 (8.1)	19 (36.5)	8 (7.1)
Personal business	10 (11.6)	7 (13.5)	14 (12.5)
Other	25 (29.1)	12 (23.1)	33 (29.5)

Which reasons would convince you not to smoke (before you started smoking) or to stop smoking (after you started smoking)?



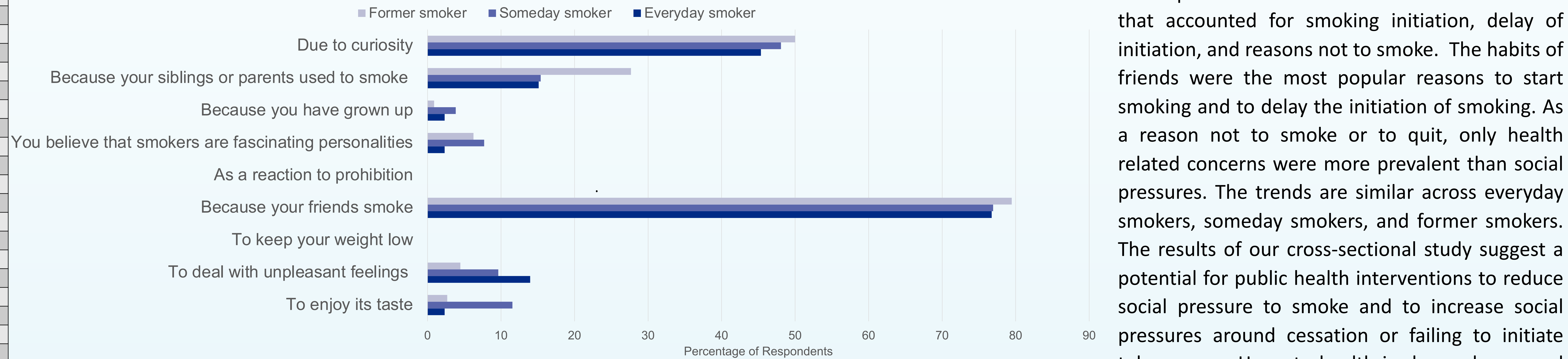
Discussion

Social pressures were the most dominant factors that accounted for smoking initiation, delay of initiation, and reasons not to smoke. The habits of friends were the most popular reasons to start smoking and to delay the initiation of smoking. As a reason not to smoke or to quit, only health related concerns were more prevalent than social pressures. The trends are similar across everyday smokers, someday smokers, and former smokers. The results of our cross-sectional study suggest a potential for public health interventions to reduce social pressure to smoke and to increase social pressures around cessation or failing to initiate tobacco use. Harm to health is chosen by around 15% of participants as a reason to delay smoking, and about 90% of participants as a reason to not smoke or to stop smoking. The disparity implies that improving health is associated with stopping smoking rather than a major factor contributing to the initiation of tobacco use.

Funding

Global Chest Initiatives
Denver Rotary Club

Why did you start smoking?



What reasons stopped or delayed you from starting smoking?

