

## Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of Dental Surgeons towards Tobacco Cessation In Kanpur City

Jayant Kumar\*, Devina Pradhan\*, Pranav Thakur \*, Antima Saxena\*,  
Deepika Singh\*, Gagan Gupta\*\*, Abhishek Awasthi\*

\*Department Of Public Health, \*\* Department Of Orthodontics & Dentofacial Orthopaedics, Rama Dental College, Kanpur, India

**Abstract:** Background & Objective: The prevention and control of tobacco use is an emerging issue of global significance and of central importance to oral health and dental care. The dental profession is in an excellent position to play a major role in several emerging issues, such as helping the public and policymakers understand the chronic nature of tobacco dependence and supporting cessation services for all people. Objective is to assess the knowledge, attitude and practices of dental surgeons in Kanpur city towards tobacco cessation. Methodology: A cross sectional descriptive study was conducted among dental surgeons by using self-administered questionnaire with 23 closed-ended questions. A total of 100 dental practitioners who fulfilled the eligibility criteria, participated in the study. Out of this 85 people returned the filled questionnaire form and the response rate was 85%. Descriptive statistics included computation of percentages. Results: Most of the respondents were male (80%) and had practiced dentistry for 5-10 years (91.8%). All the respondents (100%) had the knowledge of harmful effects of tobacco use. A less percentage (8.3%) used tobacco themselves. All the respondents (100%) did not maintain any records on tobacco use. Most of the respondents (82.4%) provided information on harmful effects of tobacco to less than thirty percent of the patients. Only 48.2% dental surgeons advised users to quit. Conclusion: The results of this study call for sensitizing health professionals on a larger scale on the issue of tobacco use and its treatment. [Thakur P NJIRM 2015; 7(1):88-92]

**Key Words:** Attitude, dental surgeons, knowledge, practices, tobacco cessation.

**Author for correspondence:** Pranav Thakur, R-2, G.S.V.M. Medical College Campus, Kanpur, U.P.-208002, India.

**Email:** pt1984pt@gmail.com

**Introduction:** The prevention and control of tobacco use is an emerging issue of global significance and of central importance to oral health and dental care. It could become one of the most important oral health issues of the twenty-first century. Tobacco prevention and control are important because reducing tobacco use is essential to preventing and treating many oral diseases. Involvement with global tobacco-free initiatives enables the dental profession to keep abreast of rapidly developing scientific advances in tobacco-related patient care and to remain in step with growing public antipathy toward the tobacco industry.<sup>1</sup>

Even after knowing health dangers, people make frequent use of tobacco either directly (chewing, smoking) or indirectly through passive smoking. As result of tobacco use a heavy expenditure is being occurred on society in general and individuals in particular.<sup>2</sup>

Recent studies of mortality associated with smoking in India (2008) estimate that at least 930,000 adult deaths in India could be attributed to smoking, and that this would rise to over one million annually from 2010.<sup>3</sup> In effect, one in every 10 adult deaths in India is smoking-related.

The Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) estimated that more than one-third (35% or 274.9 million) of adults in India use tobacco in some form or the other.<sup>4</sup>

Risks of tobacco use are documented well in oral health specially use of tobacco is major risk factor for periodontal diseases and oral pre-cancer and cancer.<sup>5</sup> It is well established that more than 90% cancers affecting the mouth, lips, tongue, throat, larynx, pharynx are due to use of tobacco and it is greatest preventable contributor.<sup>6</sup>

Report of studies clearly indicates that intervention by clinician who merely asked the patients about use of tobacco and suggesting them to quit, have positive results. Though use of tobacco and its eradication is not included in routine in dental care but dental professionals have the opportunity to play an important role to ask their patients about use of tobacco and suggesting them to quit it.<sup>7</sup>

All these elements clearly indicates that dentist's and dental educators can play an important roles in promoting tobacco cessation.<sup>6</sup> Foremost, it is important to assess the current scenario of the knowledge, attitude and practices of dentists regarding prevention and tobacco cessation. This could help us to plan

measures to be taken by dental academic institutions in training dental students in this regard, who may then counsel their patients in their clinics for tobacco cessation and thereby take a lead role in the society for curbing this menace.

The objective of this Study was to assess knowledge, Attitude and Practices of Dental Surgeons in Kanpur City towards Tobacco Cessation.

**Material and Methods:** Study design and Sample selection: A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India to assess the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of Dental Surgeons in Kanpur city towards Tobacco Cessation. A list of the dental practitioners with contact numbers was obtained from the Indian Dental Association, Kanpur Branch. Prior appointment was taken through telephone and a self-administered questionnaire was handed over to 100 dental practitioners who fulfilled the eligibility criteria, at their respective clinics. The method for answering the questionnaire was explained and the completed questionnaire was collected from the dentists after 3 days. Out of this 85 returned the filled questionnaire form and the response rate was 85%. Those who did not respond were contacted again after a period of 15 days but the response was same.

Ethical Approval and Informed Consent: The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Rama Dental College Hospital and Research Center, Kanpur. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants and informed consent was obtained.

Pre-testing of Questionnaire: Questionnaire were administered to a panel of three academicians and a convenience sample of 10 dentists twice on successive days who were interviewed to gain feedback on the overall acceptability of the questionnaire in terms of length, language clarity, time, and feasibility of dentists completing and returning it. Based on the opinions expressed a mean Content Validity Ratio (CVR) of 0.87 among academicians and Cronbach's coefficient of 0.76 in dentists was found. Face validity was also assessed and it was observed that 90% of the participants found the questionnaire to be easy.

Methodology: The structured questionnaire written in English validated through a pilot survey included 23 close ended questions. The questionnaire was divided into 3

sections. The first section included demographic questions regarding gender, age, work duration and acquired specialization and knowledge of dental surgeons towards tobacco cessation. The second section included questions related to attitude of dental surgeons towards tobacco cessation and the third section included questions related to the practice of dental surgeons towards tobacco cessation. Responding involved choosing the most appropriate response from each alternative though some questions allowed for multiple responses. Confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were assured.

Statistical analysis: The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 software. Chi square test was used for statistical analysis. Level of significance was set at  $p \leq 0.05$ .

**Results:** Tobacco use is one of the major risk factors for Oral disease. Dentists are constantly helping patients to decrease the burden of oral and overall health by implementing smoking cessation practices. The importance of tobacco interventions were perfectly known to all the Dental professionals.<sup>8</sup> The demographic table (Table 1) shows that around 80% respondents were males who had been practicing Dentistry since 5-10 years (91.8%) while on the other hand the ratio for females was just 20%.

**Table 1: Demographic Table**

<u>Gender</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Male	80%
Female	20%
<u>Age</u>	
21-30	44.7%
31-40	50.6%
41-50	4.7%
<u>No. of years in practice</u>	
<5	50.6%
6-10	41.2%
11-15	7.1%
>15	1.2%
<u>Field</u>	
General practice	41.2%
Practicing specialist	34.1%
Teaching	24.7%

Table 2 shows the contribution of Dentists in the prohibition of usage of tobacco. It was seen that 100%

dentists agreed to the fact that if by increasing the price of tobacco, putting a ban on the public use of tobacco, banning the advertisements of tobacco and prohibiting the sale of tobacco in Children can help in leading towards an effective Tobacco control. Around 72.9% Dentists believe that media and celebrities promote the use of tobacco and 89.4% Dentists also agree that if there is a no smoking sign in the waiting area then there can be some reduction in the use of tobacco.

**Table 2: Knowledge of Dental Professionals Surveyed**

Dentists contribution in tobacco use prohibition	Percentage
Increase in price of tobacco	100%
Ban on public use of tobacco	100%
Ban on advertisements of tobacco	100%
Sale of tobacco prohibition in children	100%
Media and celebrities promote tobacco	
Yes	72.9%
No	27.1%
Increase size of warning labels	
Yes	55.3%
No	44.7%
No smoking sign in waiting area	
Yes	89.4%
No	10.6%

**Graph 1: Knowledge of Dental Professionals Surveyed**

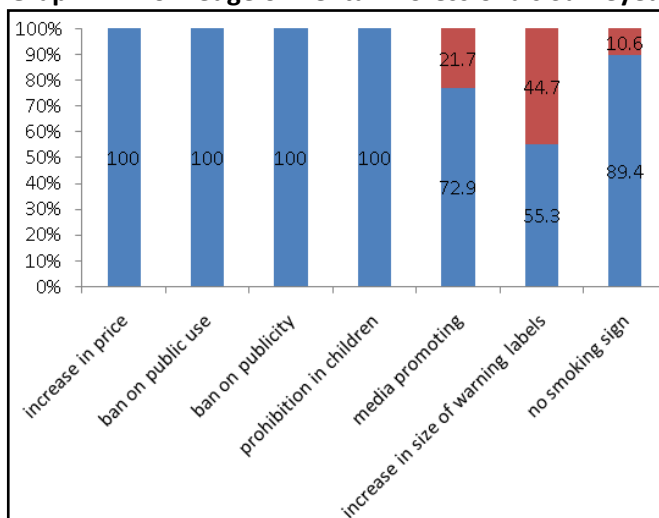


Table 3 depicted the efforts which were taken by the Dentists in their clinical practice. 100% Dentists were able to enforce them onto their patients and maintained records of it. When it came to the routine examination then the statistics showed that 96.5% dentists did not performed the same while on the other hand 88.2%

dentists advised their patients against tobacco control. A higher result of 89.4% was also seen in the case of Nicotine replacement therapy. Only 48.2% dental surgeons advised users to quit.

**Table 3: Attitudes and Practices of Dental Professional towards Tobacco Cessation**

Efforts taken by Dentist	Yes	No
Enforce it	100%	0%
Maintain record	100%	0%
Routine examination	3.5%	96.5%
Advise patient against tobacco	88.2%	11.8%
Advise patient to quit	48.2%	51.8%
Replacement therapy	89.4%	10.6%

**Discussion:** As we know that tobacco use is the only factor that can be modified for the prevention of the Oral disease<sup>8</sup>. Dentists are the only persons who can minimize the great burden of Oral disease by the influence of tobacco<sup>8</sup>. The need of the hour is to explore and to exchange various experiences from other health professionals regarding the interventions which can help in minimizing the use of tobacco<sup>9</sup>. Adolescents must be the foremost priority to be targeted<sup>9</sup>.

The findings of the study suggest that around 80% respondents were males who had been practicing Dentistry since 5- 10 years while there were only 20% females. According to a study in Himachal Pradesh, it was also seen that the maximum respondents were males as compared to the females<sup>12</sup>. There were other studies which also revealed that smoking was more prevalent in males than in females<sup>11, 13, 14</sup>. We can therefore see that the gender differences in these studies which could be due to the involvement of a particular geographic area, definitions, sample sizes or there may be social factors like parents who are involved in smoking, pressure from peers or consumption from alcohol<sup>11, 12, 13, 14</sup>. Apart from these factors, we have encountered lower rates in females because of the reason that in some states or places smoking is considered to be an unacceptable practice and an offendable custom as well<sup>12</sup>.

In the present study, we also came across the results where efforts were taken by the Dentist. 100% result was seen in the category of enforcement and maintaining records by the Dentist. 96.5% did not get involved in the routine examination and 51.8% Dentists did not advise their patients to quit smoking. While on the other hand, 88.2% Dentists had advised their

patients about the negative effects against tobacco and 89.4% Dentists were also involved in the Nicotine replacement therapies for their patients. Many studies reveal that around 83% of the Dentists had asked their patients regarding the habits of tobacco smoking<sup>15</sup>. The study also showed a higher percentage of about 98% for the maintenance of records of their patients regarding tobacco<sup>16, 17</sup>. This is important as it can help in further motivation of the patients to quit this adverse habit of smoking<sup>16, 17</sup>. It was also evident from these studies that higher rates of quitting were found on doctor's advice to be 60% and around 86.4% Dentists were involved in counseling their patients<sup>17</sup>.

As per the results we can say that smoking is a major public health issue which can lead to Oral cancer<sup>18</sup>. It was seen that 100% Dentists agreed to the fact that the process of tobacco must be raised, there must be a ban on tobacco and its products in the public places and advertisements regarding tobacco should also be banned. According to the studies it was seen that around 85% students also believed that a ban on all kinds of tobacco and its products in public places and ban on the advertisements on tobacco have proved to be very beneficial<sup>18, 19</sup>.

**Conclusion:** The results of this study call for sensitizing health professionals on a larger scale on the issue of tobacco use and its treatment. Amongst all the health professionals, Dentists have proved to be an ease of access to the tobacco users in the healthcare system<sup>10</sup>. Dentists are the only persons who can easily understand a patient's tobacco status<sup>10</sup>. It is also noted that various Dental institutions of India have no contributions towards tobacco cessation or its control due to the lack of time or systematic collection of the data regarding the patients<sup>10</sup>. Therefore we can conclude that problem of tobacco in India is an intricate problem and it requires lots and lots of efforts not only from Dentists and healthcare professionals but from everybody who can be a part in controlling the use of tobacco by following various cessation strategies and intervention programs

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