



## Perception and impact towards dangerous affect of smoking on health

**Dr. Rukhsar Ahmed,**

Professor and Dean of Faculty of Management Sciences  
Preston University, Karachi. Pakistan

&

**Dr. Imam ud Din**

Assistant Professor  
University of Balochistan, Quetta. Pakistan

### Abstract

The Study was done to find out the perception and impact of Anti-Sheesha Smoking Messages. Sheesha Smoking is very prevalent in the young generation and is alarmingly causing hazards and prevalence of Cancers in young age. And unfortunately it is considered as fun practice inspite of knowing its health hazards especially among youngsters. This study was done to find out the way to do Anti-Sheesha Campaign and see the impact of best methods i.e. written messages, videos and pictures. Three undergraduate universities were visited and students were shown multimedia messages including pictures, videos and written messages and its perception and impact was seen via questionnaires.

### INTRODUCTION

Sheesha tobacco smoking is a centuries old practice and influenced by cultural tradition in Eastern Mediterranean countries, the Middle East, and parts of Asia. It was initially practiced by men but now this method has gained popularity among both genders and around the globe even in USA. The interest in this practice is seen after the advent of a flavoured tobacco, called maassel. The combination of flavouring agents and the paraphernalia itself used in the smoking process, its mystic appeal, novelty, affordability, the social atmosphere in which smoking often occurs, has made water-pipe smoking attractive to women as well as men, cigarette smokers and non-smokers alike, and particular groups, including persons of college age and younger adolescents.

Mathers C D (2006) has found that tobacco is a preventable cause of morbidity and mortality across the globe. Low and middle-income countries are most severely affected. Estimates show that tobacco related deaths are expected to rise from 5.4 million in 2005 to 6.4 million in 2015 and 8.3 million in 2030.

Similarly various surveys have provided evidence that tobacco use is widely prevalent amongst students and adolescents in the urban areas of Pakistan. Warren CW (2006) showed the results of the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) that tobacco use prevalence was 12.8% in males and 8.0% in females aged 13-15.

Moreover, Maziak W (2004) investigated that tobacco is used in different forms and among these shisha smoking is gaining immense popularity mainly because of youth appeal.

Rozi S, Butt ZA, Akhtar S (2007) in Karachi evaluated smoking in males and showed that prevalence increases to 19.2% in ages 15-17, 26.5% in ages 18-20 and reaches 65% in 21 years and above. Ganatra HA (2007) conducted a survey in Karachi targeting adolescent female smoking showed a prevalence of 16.3% in the above 15 age group.

Jawaid A, Zafar AM (2008) has found that sheesha use is becoming increasingly popular in the student age group.

### BACKGROUND

Water pipe smoking commonly known as sheesha, narghile, hookah, Hubble bubble in different countries and cultures, is a form of tobacco intake in which the smoke passes through water before



inhalation. Though this practice is centuries old, it has recently increased in popularity among many Arab countries and generally across the world.

Hookah (aka sheesha, argileh, nargile, hubble-bubble, water pipe, hooka, goza, meassel, sheesha) is an Arabic water-pipe in which fruit-scented tobacco is burnt using coal and becomes smoke, then passes through an ornate water vessel and is inhaled through a hose [9]. . Chattopadhyay A (2000) suggested that it was invented in India by a physician Hakim AbulFath during the reign of Emperor Akbar as a less harmful method of tobacco use.

According to Maziak W, et al (2004) and Rozi S, et al (2007) shisha is now commonly practiced in commercial cafés, restaurants and even at homes. The most common users are university and college students. Even though several health hazards have been associated with water pipe smoking; the general population has not yet fully understood the associated risks.

WHO report (2005) states that smoking using a waterpipe poses a serious potential health hazard and is not a safe alternative to cigarette smoking. Smoke from a waterpipe contains high levels of toxic chemicals, including high levels of carbon monoxide, metals and cancer-causing chemicals.

Since shisha smoking is increasing popular among youth, **According to the United Nations Statistics' Department, Youth** is the time of life between childhood and adulthood (maturity). Definitions of the specific age range that constitutes youth vary. An individual's actual maturity may not correspond to their chronological age, as immature individuals could exist at all ages.

## RATIONALE

We decided to conduct this research because of increase intake of sheesha amongst our youth. The perception of each individual varies so the impact of anti –sheesha smoking messages will generate a vast range of outlooks.

In recent times, there has been an increased focus on the campaigns aimed at promoting awareness about hazards of sheesha smoking.

The research in discussion has been planned to identify the type of strategy that appeals the target group the most. By showing different strategies to the students of three universities of Karachi, Pakistan, their perceptions about the affectivity of these messages will be checked via questionnaire.

The proper and most effective way can be ruled out to target the young population to change their hazardous habits and improve the cancer status which has been increasingly alarmingly high among young population also.

According to a survey, one in every five Pakistani males has consumed more than 100 cigarettes or used a water pipe in his life time. Furthermore a recently conducted study showed a high smoking index among male smokers in one of the cities in Pakistan. These alarming figures can be controlled with interventions targeting youth. One such study showed that graphic pictorial/multi-media health warnings that depict cosmetic and functional distortions were perceived as effective anti-smoking messages.

The increasing trend of water pipe smoking can be attributed to several misconceptions.

These include the popular beliefs that the nicotine content in water pipes is lower as compared to cigarettes and that the water used in this form of tobacco intake filters out all the hazardous chemicals such as carbon monoxide, nicotine and tar. These common misconceptions lead the public to believe that water pipe smoking is not a significant health hazard. Research however has proved otherwise, suggesting three additional risks of water pipe smoking over cigarette smoking.

- First of all water-pipe is smoked over coal adding additional harmful toxins to the smoke.
- Secondly, a water-pipe smoker's inhales up to 200 times more smoke in a single session as compared to cigarette smokers.
- Water pipe smoking, just as cigarette smoking has been associated with increased rates of pulmonary, gastrointestinal, cardiovascular and hematological disease.



A recent study done in Pakistan showed that curiosity followed by pleasure seeking and boredom were the most important factors in starting water pipe smoking

A study in Karachi evaluating smoking in males showed that prevalence increases to 19.2% in ages 15-17, 26.5% in ages 18-20 and reaches 65% in 21 years and above.

## OBJECTIVE

Primary Objective:

To see the impact of anti-sheesha smoking messages among University students of Karachi

Secondary Objective:

To find out the most impacting strategy of promoting anti-sheesha smoking messages among university students of Karachi.

## HYPOTHESIS

- **Null Hypothesis**

Anti-sheesha smoking messages do not have any impact on University students of Karachi.

- **Alternative Hypothesis**

Anti-sheesha smoking messages have some impact on University students of Karachi.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The drastic shift in consumption of sheesha among our youth in current age and time had become a point of concern, many researchers had proved the harmful effects of sheesha on health status of individuals and association of wide range of cancer prevalence in these smokers.

There is dire need at this point and age to raise awareness among youth, as this sheesha smoking fad is slowly and gradually deteriorating the health status of our society.

This study will help us in concluding which form of anti-sheesha message had the most significant effect on our youth and will generate some awareness and fear as to deviate them from this habit. We in turn can conclude or come to know which strategy is most influential and that strategy can be used to at least lower the rate of sheesha consumption.

Anti-sheesha messages will generate awareness regarding various forms of cancers, lung dysfunctions and other life threatening diseases and conditions associated with sheesha smoking.

The main purpose is to change the persona from sheesha smoking as a harmless trend or time pass to sheesha smoking as a threat to human health and a habit that lessens average life expectancy.

Government had taken few measures as to ban sheesha, such as the rule of serving sheesha to only adults above 18 in public places and only places with legal license can serve sheesha yet at personal level awareness is more important which can be achieved by finding out the way which is more influential.

## METHODOLOGY

### STUDY DESIGN

This is an Analytical, cross sectional study.

### STUDY SETTINGS

This research study was carried out in three different universities of Karachi, where students were randomly chosen. The three big and famous universities were selected where a pool of students from different class can be found. Following were the universities from where data was collected:

- Baqai Medical University, Karachi.
- SZABIST, Karachi.
- Jinnah Medical and Dental College



### **DURATION OF STUDY**

The duration of this study was two months.

### **SAMPLING METHODOLOGY**

Probability method of sampling is used. Every individual has the equal probability of randomly being selected for the study from three different universities in Karachi.

### **SAMPLE SIZE**

A standard sample size of 300 students is taken. Precision method was applied.

### **INCLUSION CRITERIA**

Every university going student below 18 , between 18- 25 and above 25 was taken as part of sample.

### **EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

Every non-university going person was not taken as part of sample.

### **DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

A sample of 300 students was selected from three different universities i.e. 100 from each including medical and non- medical universities.

A group of 50 students at a time in each university were shown a presentation consisting images and written messages regarding hazards of sheesha smoking, after which a questionnaire was distributed which consisted of open ended and close ended questions, their response showed which image had the most influence on their perception.

### **DATA COLLECTION TOOL**

CONSENT FORM

DISCLAIMER

QUESTIONNAIRE

A questionnaire based on images and written texts included in our presentation were used along with consent form and disclaimer to collect data.

### **STUDY VARIABLES**

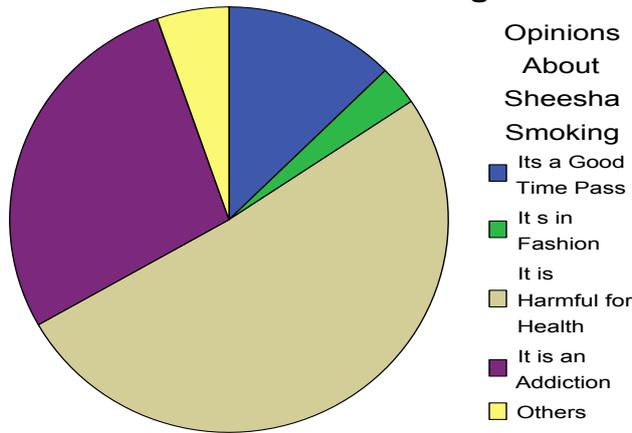
The independent variable in this study is Anti-Sheesha Smoking Messages and dependent variable is Students' perception and impact to the messages.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSSv15.0). To assess the knowledge of the sample, correlations were made and frequencies were measured. Also, opinions of the youth about Sheesha smoking were assessed using frequency table. In addition to this, the knowledge status, opinions and the affectivity of the messages were correlated with the age (independent variable)

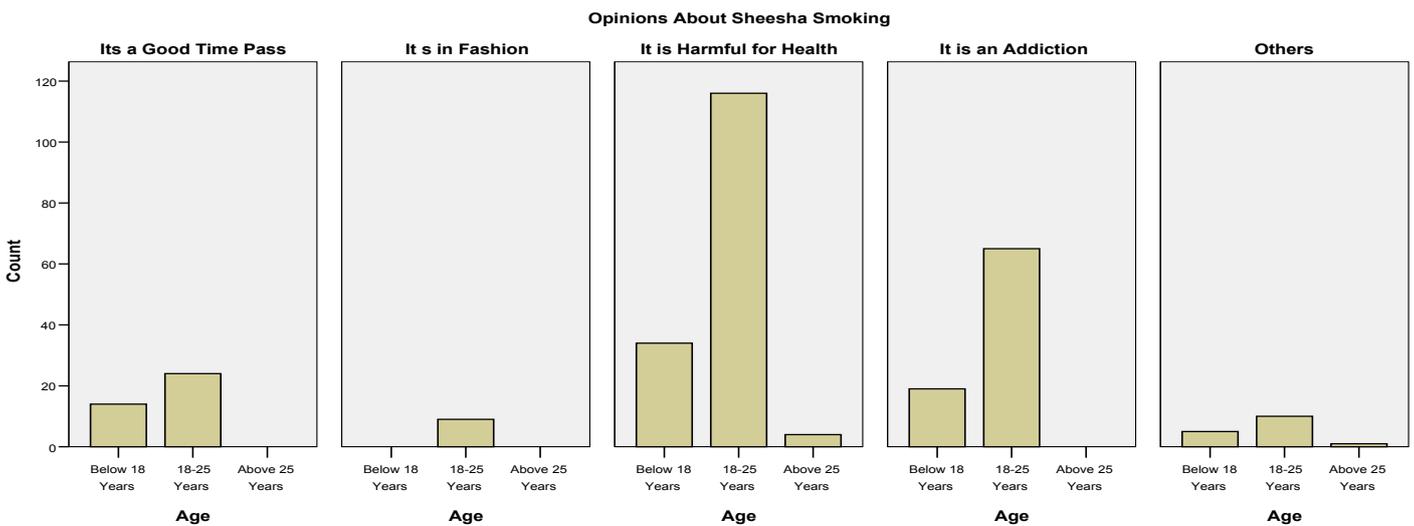


**Pie 1: Percentage Distribution of Opinions About Sheesha Smoking**



**Result:** The above bar chart represents that majority i.e. 98% of the sample population said they have seen anyone smoking Sheesha.

**Chart 3: Opinions About Sheesha Smoking Among the Sample**



**Result:** Above chart shows the comparison of age groups with the percentage distribution of the opinions of students about Sheesha smoking. 51.2% of the sample population thought Sheesha smoking was harmful for health while 3% of them thought it was in fashion. 27.9% were with a view that Sheesha smoking is an addiction while 12.6% thought it is a good time pass.

### CONCLUSION

We failed to reject the null hypothesis and anti-sheesha smoking messages had great impact on University Students.

In our study, university students were studied and most of them belong to 18-23 years age group and are considered as youngsters. This age group people usually have a habit of trying every new thing. Sheesha smoking because of flavored tobacco and beautiful instrument has attracted youngsters and mostly those who belong to high socio economic group. They consider Sheesha smoking as a fashion



style. In our study, 51% were the students who thinks that it is harmful but the reviews were taken after anti-sheesha smoking messages but inspite of the multimedia messages and videos, 27% thinks its addictive and 12.7% thinks that it's a good time pass. Mostly students try it first time for the fashion and slowly get addicted to it. Carbon particles within it don't get filtered and is inhaled and increases the chances of mouth, throat and lung cancers. Usually youngsters are aware of these facts but don't give importance to these facts and still keep on enjoying this practice as according to our study also 99% were aware of these facts. Impacting videos create a great impact over them to avavoidSheesha Smoking and reminding them the hazards. So some impacting multimedia videos needed to be shown to them repeatedly so that it leaves an impact over them and don't let them ignore the health hazards of these fun time activities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Policies should be made in Sindh also like Punjab and Sheesha smoking should be banned like Punjab.
- Policies which are already made should be implemented as serving Sheesha for Sheesha smoking under 18 is not allowed but under 18 are also served this in restaurants.
- Social marketing should be done to make the people aware of the harmful hazards of Sheesha Smoking in urban as well as rural areas.
- Public service messages billboards should be placed within Sindh.
- NGOs should arrange seminars for youngsters in their universities for reminding the Sheesha Smoking hazards along with the pictures and interviews of cancer patients who had the habit of Sheesha Smoking.
- Research on this issue should be facilitated by government as very limited literature is available on this problem of Pakistan.

## ANNEXURE CONSENT FORM DISCLAIMER Questionnaire

1. What is your age?  
 Below 18 years  
 18-25 years  
 Above 25 years
2. Have you ever tried Sheesha smoking?  
 Yes  No
3. Have you ever seen anyone smoking Sheesha?  
 Yes  No
4. In your opinion, which of these relate to Sheesha smoking? (You can mark more than one options)  
 It's a good time pass.  
 It is in fashion  
 It is harmful for health  
 It is an addiction  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_