**YOUTH SMOKING PREVENTION PROGRAM INFLUENCE ON SMOKING PREVALENCE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PARANAQUE CITY**

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1. **OBJECTIVES:** Smoking is one of the major risk behaviours and the tobacco control policy in the Philippines has put very strong emphasis on the youth smoking prevention programme at the school level. This study examined how the school smoking prevention programme affects the smoking behaviour among its public secondary school students through their knowledge and attitude.
2. **METHODS:** The study was cross-sectional and conducted during 2nd-3rd November 2010 in Paranaque city, the Philippines. The Paranaque city has nine public secondary schools with the total students of 28,502. The survey was conducted by administering the pre-constructed questionnaire to students. In addition, the checklist was used to evaluate the implementation of smoking prevention programme through on-site observation and an interview with the school principals. Four schools in Paranaque city were selected intentionally to represent equally the economic depressed and non-depressed areas. In the second stage, one class (section) from each level were randomly selected. There was the total of 814 validated respondents.
3. **RESULTS:** Active smokers (current smokers) were 7.4% of students (95% CI: 5.6%-9.3%) and another 10.8% of students (95% CI: 8.7%-12.9%) were non-active smokers (irregular or ex-smokers). It was lower than the national average of 21.7% (2007). Boy students were more actively smoke than girl students (Boys: 11.9% and Girls: 3.6%). Moreover, 43.3% of active smokers and 40% of non-active smokers admitted that they tried to quit smoking because of the school lesson. In addition, the implementation of school smoking prevention programme were generally satisfactory in which ranged from 74% to 96%. Moreover, it was found that the students’ knowledge on health risk associated with smoking was increased with the increase of the school performance on smoking prevention (R2 = 0.826; p=0.032). However, the students’ attitude toward tobacco uses was reduced with the increase of the school performance on smoking prevention but not at significant level (p = 0.079). Furthermore, the prevalence of active smoking was declined with the increase of the school performance on smoking prevention but significant only at one-tailed correlation testing (Pearson Correlation = -0.854 and p=0.033 1-tailed). No significant differences for the prevalence of active smoking in depressed and non-depressed economic areas was found (p=0.624).
4. **CONCLUSIONS:** The prevalence of tobacco smoking was at 7.4% (Boys: 11.9% and Girls: 3.6%). The prevalence of smoking was associated with individual knowledge and attitude toward tobacco uses. It was found that there is association between the school smoking prevention programme and their students’ knowledge but no association between the programme and students’ attitude. School programme was very effective to improve the students’ knowledge on health risks associated with smoking, but limited extend to the attitude modification.

**KEY WORDS:**

**Smoking, tobacco, youth, prevention programme, Paranaque city, the Philippines**