



## **IS SMOKING IN THE MOVIES ASSOCIATED WITH INITIATION OF SMOKING IN ADOLESCENTS? A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Today smoking among adolescents is an economic, social and public health concern in the world. As of 2013, tobacco kills nearly 6 million people each year and approximately 900,000 people die every year in India due to smoking and WHO (2013) also estimate that 30% of smokers are adult males and 80% of the world's one billion smokers live in low and middle income countries. This study used the systematic review method to determine the association between smoking scene in movies and initiation of smoking habits among adolescents. A comprehensive review of past studies was carried out in this connection that included more than 25 studies. The result of the study concluded that exposure to smoking in movies influence the attitudes and beliefs of children about smoking and most of the children initiate smoking first time after watching their favourite stars smoking on screen. Most of the studies recommended that parental restrictions on R-rated films significantly diminish adolescents' exposure to films smoking and subsequent smoking acceptance. Most of the studies also argued that watching antismoking announcements before watching movie smoking appears to blunt the encouraging effects of movie smoking on children smoking. It can be supposed that stringent implementation of regulations pertaining to cigarette filming in form on any media and community interferences concentrating on parents are required for effective control of tobacco and smoking problem among youth in India and world.

**KEYWORDS** : economic, social and public health.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Smoking habits in children is a serious economic, social and public health issue in the world. As of 2014, tobacco kills nearly 6 million people each year and approximately 900,000 people die every year in India due to tobacco use and it is also estimated that 30% of smokers are adult males (WHO, 2013). Amongst the most prime causes of initiating smoking amongst

children, portrayal of smoking in the movies is the main factor. It is said that exposure to depictions of smoking in films is an important factor that excites adolescent smoking initiation (Charlesworth A and Glantz SA, 2005). In India, Bollywood too plays a major part in the glamorisation of smoking, which is sponsored by a 30,000 crore tobacco industry. A study of WHO revealed that almost 320 movies of the over 400 films studied had used some kind of tobacco. In the future, in the world, India and China will have the maximum tobacco-related deaths.

Several researches confirm that stars shown smoking cigarettes in movies stimulate the emotions and feeling of non-smokers and increase the possibility that they will associate smoking with prestige and liveliness. While the tobacco industry has long recognized the value of smoking in movies to promote cigarettes and developed extensive programs to promote smoking in the movies. (Mekemson C and Glantz SA, 2002). In recent years, the images of good guys in movies using tobacco or smoking have increased despite the fact that displaying stars in films and television shows have been banned. But experts argue that all it is occurring due to the flexible policy of the Govt. which says if filmmaker wished to display a character smoking, the scene would have to be supplemented by a message saying that smoking/tobacco is injurious to health. When the use of tobacco and smoking are banned in public places, why these products are shown in movies and television shows.

According to the WHO “smoking habits among children lead to other health problems such as respiratory and non-respiratory effects, nicotine addiction, and risk of other drug use” Smoking reduces the rate of lung growth, causes heart disease and stroke, hurts young people's physical fitness, and develops emotional or psychological disorder, among the children who smoke regularly throughout adulthood.

Several current observational researches propose that the apparent product placement of smoking and tobacco in film might inspire teenagers to start smoking (Dalton MA, Sargent JD, Mott LA, et al, 2002). Evidently, children smoking are moderately attributable to forceful tobacco and cigarette marketing policies aimed at adolescents via popular culture.

After discussing the viewpoint, it can be summed up the “a new systematic review is more useful than a new primary study (Mark Petticrew and Helen Roberts, 2006).

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study was aimed to find out the answers of the following two questions:

1. Is the exposure to smoking in movies associated with smoking initiation or behaviour in adolescents?
2. If yes, then what effective ways may be followed to eliminate the problem?

### **SEARCH STRATEGY & ARTICLE SELECTION**

For systematic review study, published papers, and published and unpublished studies reports will probably be included. The latter literature may be found through examinations of conference proceedings, abstracts of thesis and other available “gray” literature. Searches also

must to include book chapters because these report the results of studies never published in research journals. (Sheldon, T. 1998).

All the primary and secondary data was found out with the help of internet. Terms such as smoking, tobacco, film and movies, were searched for research article, reports, conference abstracts and theses. In the study all the researches were included whether it was from Health, Psychology, Sociology, Mass Communication and social science disciplines. For articles location, Social Science Citation Index was also utilised and articles also searched in "Find Academic Journal Articles", "Science and Medical Journal Articles" "Library Gateways for Academic Research" etc. websites.

A supplemental Internet search method was also used to locate unpublished research articles related smoking in the films, resulting in reports written by different international organisation such as ALA, WHO, CTC etc. The study included all the researches or studies whether it was done in India or outside the India. This study included more than 30 best studies.

**RESEARCH TOOL :** A systematic review tool is used to answer the question.

### **THE QUANTITY AND CONTEXT OF SMOKING IN MOVIES**

Indian film industry has a long history of portraying actors and actresses as smokers on the screen. A study conducted by WHO says that tobacco and cigarettes are portrayed in 76% of Bollywood movies, with cigarettes making up 72% of all the depictions. Every year thousand millions rupees are spent on surrogate advertisements of tobacco related products in India. Around 15 years ago the Indian Tobacco Company funded \$16 million to rename the Cricket World Cup to the Wills World Cup and placed its cigarette logo on uniforms of all of the players (Jenny Barraclough, 1998). Not startlingly, smoking by favourite film stars of youth has been associated with smoking among adolescents.

Some producers and actors in Bollywood take large payments from the tobacco companies, just to place tobacco and cigarette brands in their movies. This culture particularly came from Hollywood. It is said that the producers of License to Kill movie took a \$350,000 payment to have James Bond smoke Larks in the movie and James Bond was a role model for young boys. Sylvester Stallone was paid a \$500,000 payment by a Tobacco Company to smoke their brand in his three movies.

Moreover, depictions of cigarette and tobacco use in positive or negative context connect to changes in opinions that incline adolescents to smoking. In an era in which the tobacco industry is finding traditional advertising media increasingly restricted, the appearance of tobacco use in motion pictures is an important mechanism to promote and reinforce tobacco use, particularly among young people. In India, the south superstar Rajnikanth flicks his cigarette and tosses it into his mouth. That's glamorous. Most of the adolescents try to do. Gladstone D'Costa pointed out that film producers often cited such glamour scenes to attract the audiences but do not note its side effects.

As a result of this, smoking in movies is growing, in contrast to real smoking proportions. According to a new study conducted by a tobacco researcher from the University of California the occurrence of smoking in budgeted films has increased during the 1990s, and theatrically surpasses actual smoking rates, Leading Hollywood and Bollywood actors John Travolta, Amitabh Bachhan, Aishwarya Rai, Leonardo DiCaprio, Shahrukh Khan, Sharon Stone and Julia Roberts etc. have been accused of encouraging adolescents to take up smoking by lighting up on and off screen. A research published in the British Tobacco Control journal discovered that American children aged 10 to 19 whose beloved stars smoked on screen were more likely to smoke than those whose favorite stars never smoked in movies.

For some years the rates of smoking have been reduced in the US population over a period of time. This happened because in the 24 states and commonwealths laws currently in effect for at least one of the three categories of workplace, restaurants and bars. About 41% of the US population is covered with 100% smoke-free workplaces law. However, South Asia countries could not show such commitment honestly and responsible way. We make laws but do not implement them effectively.

### **THE EFFECTS OF SMOKING SCENES ON NON-SMOKER YOUTH**

Smoking and the films have a long interesting history. For years, the cigarette and tobacco companies funded to place their cigarette and tobacco products in movie. From the starting, health experts were criticising this practice because it gratified to sensitive teenagers, who were stimulated to initiate smoking because of its positive portrayal on the screen. A study conducted by William Bailey (1996) confirmed that from 1960 to 1990 smoking in films was three times more prevalent in movies than it was in the general population, leading young people to conclude that everyone smokes.

A research from Dartmouth Medical School (2008) supports the fact that children's exposure to depictions of smoking in movies stimulated their decision to begin smoking. Study further suggests that smoking in movies seen in early age has an equally substantial effect on that decision as film tobacco exposure closer to youth. The study was the first of its kind to concentration on children of elementary school and the first to update the exposure of children to film smoking/tobacco over time.

According to a study by Janet M. Distefan et al. (2004) found that smoking by characters in films influenced the attitude of adolescents and significantly increased the threat of future smoking in girls who had never smoked. The researchers interviewed adolescent in California who had never smoke and nominated their favorite movie stars. It was observed that one third of never smokers' adolescents chosen a film star who had smoked on-screen, which autonomously projected later smoking risk. The effect was maximum in girls. There was no independent influence. This study also recommended that public health determinations to decrease children smoking must oppose smoking in movies as a tobacco promoting strategy.

Payal B Shah et al. (2008) noted no significant relation between watching film stars smoking in movies and persuading the youth to smoke. Further the study did not find any negative influence on the behaviour of boys and girls. The results of their study challenge the

results of all past studies. Their results are in contradiction to all previous studies, which generally show a strong correlation. In past researches, the association between watching smoking in movies and starting smoking was significant for adolescents. The implications of this are unclear, and further studies should investigate the relationship between smoking in the movies and smoking.

Results of the Madeline A Dalton, (2003) study provide solid evidence that watching smoking in movies helps smoking initiation in adolescents. Overall, most of the participants started smoking or tobacco during the follow-up period. In the maximum quartile of exposure to film smoking, 17% of adolescents had begun smoking, compared with only 3% in the lowermost quartile. The consequence of exposure to film smoking was greater in students with parents of non-smoking parents than in those whose parents smoked. In this cohort study, 52.2% of smoking starting can be recognized to exposure to smoking in films.

James D Sargent et al., (2001) found a direct, straight, independent relationship between higher exposure to smoking and tobacco use in movies and smoking among adolescents. The study also argued that effect from movie is as high as other types of social influence, such as smoking by parents or siblings. The results of the study also support the outcomes of cross sectional researches confirming that children whose favourite characters smoke are more possible to smoke themselves and those of a study that showed that viewing smoking in just one movie may influence attitudes to smoking.

Jennifer J Tickle et al. (2001) finding backs the proposition that the depiction of smoking and tobacco use in movies, specifically by character that are admired by children, contributes to smoking and tobacco use among children. It was observed that among the 43 film stars, 65% used smoking at least once, and 42% stars had shown smoking as an important character quality in films. It is argued that stars who smoked more than two times in a movie were considered a smoker. Further, the results also explained that stars who smoked in one film, the index showed the odds of higher. Those who selected stars who were in smoking zone in more movies were much more possible to have favourable attitudes and behaviour toward smoking.

Monika Arora et al. (2011) surveyed nearly 4,000 adolescents in New Delhi ages between 12 to 16 years to know about smoking experience and finding which Bollywood films they had seen during the past two years. They named 59 popular movies. The investigators identified 412 times of tobacco usage in the movies scenes. The researchers claimed that viewing smoking in Bollywood films and accessibility to tobacco persuasive activities were both individually associated with smoking among youth in India. Altogether, the 59 films comprised 412 smoking montages. The frequency of ever smoking among youths was 5.3%. Comparatively low-exposure youths, the ever tobacco use amongst high-exposure participants was 2.3.

Maruska K and Hanewinkel R. (2010) discovered a strong association between smoking exposure to depictions in films and smoking among children. They found that interpretation of this association is causal. In the recommendation they said that there was a need to enhance parental competence by media education and provide a media literacy in children and adolescents. The Times of India (2010, Goa edition) quoted a study conducted by two NGOs in its

news story that around 54% of youth and 30 % of general public take up to smoking due to the influence of regional cinema and Bollywood.

Shmueli D1, Prochaska JJ, and Glantz SA. (2010) investigated to find out whether exposure of adolescents smokers to images of smoking in movies encouraged smoking behavior. They took a random sample of 100 cigarette smokers aged 18-25 years and assigned them to watch a film clip composed with or without smoking scenes and equipment followed by a 10-minute break. Smokers who seen the smoking scenes were more expected to smoke during the recess. In addition to this, critical effect of exposure, smokers who had watched more smoking in films before the day of the experimentation were more likely to burn tobacco during the break. Level of tobacco addiction and impulsivity were also linked with smoking during the break. Respondents who seen the montage with smoking scenes and those with a greater level of tobacco addiction were also more likely to have burn cigarettes within 30 minutes after the research. In the end of survey, they argued that there is a direct connection between watching smoking scenes and instant subsequent smoking habit and behavior. The finding suggests that people attempting to quit or limit smoking should be recommended to abstain from or decrease their exposure to films that comprise smoking scenes.

D.N. Sinha (2005) has done a study to investigate tobacco use prevalence and related issues among 13-15 years students in Sikkim, India. The study comprised grade 8-10 students and data was collected by self-administered questionnaire. It was found that there was an equal exposure to gutka advertisements to boys and girls. Current smokeless tobacco users than never tobacco users were significantly more likely to watch gutka advertisements in all media; to have something with gutka brand names; and to have positive attitude towards tobacco use. The researcher concluded that there was a strong association between exposure to gutka advertisement and current smokeless tobacco use among boys and girls in Sikkim is shown. Stronger restriction by the government is recommended.

Jennifer J Ticklea et al. (2001) conducted a study to assess the relation between adolescents' favourite movie stars, the portrayal of tobacco use by those stars in contemporary motion pictures, and adolescent smoking. They selected 632 students from sixth to 12th grade, ages 10–19 years from five rural New England public schools. The survey evaluated tobacco use, other factors associated with youth smoking, and favourite film star. In addition, smoking by 43 selected film stars was investigated in movies between 1994 and 1996. The results of the study shows that the 43 stars, 65% used tobacco at least once and 42% portrayed smoking as an important star in one or more films. Whose beloved stars, for children, has smoked in only one, the odds of being higher on the smoking index. For adolescents whose favourite stars smoked in two films, the odds of being higher on the smoking index. For adolescents whose favourite stars smoked in three or more films the odds of being higher on the smoking index. Among never smokers those who chose stars who were smokers in three or more films were much more likely to have favourable attitudes toward smoking. Adolescents who choose movie stars who use tobacco on-screen are significantly more likely to have an advanced smoking status and more favourable attitudes toward smoking than adolescents who choose non-smoking stars. This finding supports the proposition that the portrayal of tobacco use in

contemporary motion pictures, particularly by stars that are admired by adolescents, contributes to adolescent smoking.

Janet M. Distefan et al. (2004) conducted a research to determine whether youth whose favorite films stars smoke on-screen is at risk of smoking. Researchers interviewed never smoker's adolescents in California and reviewed popular movies released between 1994 and 1996 to find out whether film stars smoked on-screen in at least two films. They discovered that one third of never smoker students chosen a star who smoked on-screen, which individually projected later smoking. The impact was strong amongst girls. They also discovered that smoking by film stars can play a significant part in motivating female adolescents to initiate smoking. But on gender they suggested to conduct more research to identify whether the impact on adolescent starting is connected to how smoking is shown in films. They also recommended that interventions to discourage stars to smoking in films and to minimise students' exposure to tobacco use in films should have a great public health primacy.

In 2012 James D. Sargent et al. studied a sample of 6522 US adolescents to observe the relationship between movie smoking exposure and adolescent smoking. They said that average movie smoking exposure PG-13-rated films was three times higher than moderate film smoking exposure from R-rated film, but their connection with tobacco use was basically the same. The researchers also concluded that it is the films tobacco use that encourages teenagers to smoke, not other features of R-rated flicks or youngsters drawn to them. An R rating for film smoking could substantively decrease teens smoking by removing smoking from PG-13 pictures.

In a study conducted by Susanne E. Tanski et al. (2008) a survey of 6522 US adolescents revealed by the 24 months follow-up study, 15.9% of standard never-smokers had attempted tobacco use. Investigation of the basic relationship displayed that episodes of adverse stars smoking publicity had the strongest effect on smoking beginning. However, because maximum characters were described as optimistic, exposure to this classification was highest. They also argued that bad character depictions of smoking have stronger influence on low risk-taking teenagers, weakening the fact that bigger exposure is a marker for teenage risk-taking conduct. Recently Kirsten Lochbuehler et al. (2012) did a study to explore the association in short exposure to film smoking influences beliefs about smoking in teenagers. They took a sample 105 children ages 8–11 years. In two trials, participants were exposed to cartoon or a family-movie and assigned to 20-minute clips of smoking characters. The researchers assessed the beliefs about smoking by a questionnaire and measured the associations after watching the movie. A major part of the population watched smoking unfavourably. Introduction to film smoking had no influence on implicit relations toward smoking when trials were examined individually. In the end of the research they concluded that short-term exposure to smoking in cartoon programmes and family films had a little instant influence on belief about smoking in teenagers.

K Viswanath, LK Ackerson, G Sorensen, PC Gupta (2010), tested the relationship of self-reported tobacco smoking and chewing with frequency of usage of four types of mass media. They surveyed a sample of 123,768 women and 74,068 men in India. They found that wealth, caste, occupation, education, urbanity, marital status, religion age and cinema

attending are associated with increased smoking among women and increased tobacco eating among men. In the research they also found that daily television and radio usage is connected with greater likelihood of tobacco eating among men and women, while everyday newspaper reading is linked to lower likelihood of tobacco munching amongst women.

In order to measure effect, Anna V Wilkinson, Margaret R. Spitz, and James D Sargent (2009) examined the association between exposure to smoking images in the movies and experimenting with cigarettes among Mexican origin youth. For this purpose they selected a sample of 1,328 Mexican origin adolescents aged 11–13. They found that among Mexican origin youth living in the America, country of birth restrains the relationship among exposure to smoking in the films and the beginning of testing with cigarettes.

Matthis Morgenstern et al. (2011) did a research to investigate the relationship between exposure to smoking in movies and smoking among youth is liberated of cultural term. They conducted a survey of 16,551 pupils recruited in Germany, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and Scotland aged 10-13 years and found 29% of the participants had tried smoking. The researchers also revealed that the relationship among ever smoking and greater film smoking exposure stages was important in all countries with a non-linear connection in Italy and Poland. The relation between smoking in films and teenage smoking is healthy and exceeds different cultural terms. The researchers recommended that minimising teenagers' exposure to film smoking could have significant public health inferences.

Judith P McCool, Linda D Cameron, Keith J Petrie (2001) collected data through focus groups from 12-13-year-old students at their schools. The researchers found that students supposed that smoking in movie was both highly prevailing and familiar, and they regarded on-screen-smoking images as an exact image of reality. According to the authors smoking images in movies may play a serious role in highlighting cultural explanations of smoking. It can play an independent role to reduce stress, making a self-image and adult independence.

Stacey J Anderson, Christopher Millett, Jonathan R Polansky, and Stanton A Glantz (2010) found that majority of films comprised smoking and delivered around 1.10 billion tobacco impressions to British adolescences through theatrical release. The researchers found that there was a dose-response relation between the amount of on-screen exposure to smoking and the likelihood that children will start smoking, the fact that there is significantly higher exposure to smoking in youth-rated films in the Britain than in the America advocates that the fraction of all children smoking because of films in the UK is possibly greater than in the America.

Hanewinkel R and Sargent JD. (2007) conducted a randomly survey of 5586 school children aged 10-17 years from a secondary schools in Germany, to found the connection between exposure to movies and its association with ever and current smoking. The study supported the previous results that film smoking exposure was connected with the incidence of smoking start. Result also revealed that overall, 40.7% of the participants had tried smoking, and 12.3% were existing smokers. This study suggested framing countrywide policies that would limit exposure of teenagers to film smoking.

JD. Sargent et al. (2001) took a sample of 3766 middle school students and asked them to select a movie from a list of 50 movies they had watched earlier. Then researchers made a



list of movies viewed by children, then movie containing tobacco-use were summed to decide exposure. The results provide realistic evidence that watching film of smoking is associated with greater accessibility to smoking earlier in the behaviour.

Anna V. Song, Pamela M. Ling, MPH, Torsten B. Neilands, Stanton A. Glantz, (2007) did a study with an objective to assess whether smoking in the film was linked with smoking in adolescents. They performed a survey of 1528 adolescents aged 18–25 in 2005. They found that there was a straight relationship between smoking in the films and adolescents smoking behaviour. They also found that the more a young adult was uncovered to smoking in the films, the more likely they would have smoked in the past days or have developed a smoking habit.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Approximately every person knows that smoking and tobacco use are a leading cause of death in the India and world. Yet every day in the India and other countries nearly 1000 to 2,000 children try their first cigarette, and several of them will go on to smoke habitually, which might finally contribute to an early death. The description of tobacco and cigarette in Indian films by characters, like in Hollywood, is on the growth and these images are prevailing motivation for adolescents to copy their favourite stars. The result of review study shows that children are influenced by the smoking scenes in movies and particularly when smoking is conducted by their favourite cine stars. It is a contrast between the health experts and filmmakers that smoking should be considered a medical issue or a cultural issue. Both organisations define it as according to their professional experience.

But it is true that tobacco and cigarette mass marketing and film pop culture has grown together. For years, the cigarette companies have addicted thousands of millions of men and women with the assistance of Bollywood and Hollywood films and now, television is depicting smoking as glamour. (Stanton Glantz, 2001). Already we have seen that these tobacco companies use ambiguous messages that appeal to young people and stimulate them to take up a behaviour injurious to their health. Globally, the tobacco companies spend billions of dollars every year on campaign and movie stars.

Recently, it is found that the cigarette and tobacco industry carefully study the habits, tastes and desires of their consumers and then use that research to develop products and marketing campaigns. As almost every country has imposed a ban on tobacco and cigarette advertising, the industry has been practicing at finding creative new ways to publicize their brands, especially with young people. So, it is needed to educate the children about the negative effects of smoking scenes in movies and its effect on their attitude. And secondly, it is the responsibility of the parents to keep an eye on the content of film their children are watching.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The study recommended that tobacco and cigarette education programs can be helpful to reduce smoking and tobacco consumption, among children. There is a need to create awareness in parents about what their children are watching on television and also a requirement to increase media literacy among children and adolescents. Film industry is also

motivated and encouraged to reduce smoking scenes in their movies. Film censor board should censor the movie with scene of smoking.

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