



Effects of Passive Smoking: A Public Health Concern

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ABSTRACT:

Passive smoking, also referred to as secondhand smoke, has emerged as a pressing public health concern globally, with far-reaching consequences for individuals and societies. This article explores passive smoking, its causes and effects on public health. By Integrating current research and factual evidence, the article identifies various sources of secondhand smoke exposure, including indoor environments, workplaces, and public spaces, shedding light on the pervasive nature of this environmental hazard. Additionally, it also talks about the health effects associated with passive smoking, which range from respiratory conditions such as asthma and bronchitis to more severe conditions such as lung cancer and cardiovascular diseases.

The article explores the excessive impact of passive smoking on vulnerable populations, including children, pregnant women, and individuals with pre-existing health conditions, reinforcing the urgency of targeted intervention strategies.

This article seeks to get a detailed study of the effect of passive smoking and its impact on population health and well-being. This paper mainly concentrates upon the effects of passive smoking and it solely relies on the secondary data previous researchers have found.

Key words Passive smoking; Secondhand smoke; Public health

Introduction

The effect of passive smoking is world wide yet not much light is thrown on it, the study from WHO (World health organization) states that around 600 000 premature deaths a year are estimated due to second-hand smoke. According to NIH (National library of medicine) states that nearly 30% of the people are exposed to secondhand smoke and even though the government has banned smoking in public places there are 1.9 million deaths and 24 million disability adjusted life annually.

The threat of smoking extends far beyond the individual smoker, and reaches to the air we breathe. While the direct health consequences of active smoking have long been known and extensively studied, while secondhand smoking has always been hidden in the shadows of active smoking which is also known as secondhand smoke, remains a silent menace that affects millions across the world. Passive smoking refers to the involuntary inhalation of tobacco smoke by nonsmokers in proximity to smokers, presenting a complex web of health hazards that transcend geographic, socioeconomic, and cultural boundaries.

There are various experiments done to check the prevalence of secondhand smoking and experiments have proved that 50% of people have been exposed to passive smoking and another thing to be observed is the increase in the rate of people being exposed to secondhand smoke.

Passive smoking increases the risk of respiratory illnesses in children, including asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, coronary heart disease, stroke, lung cancer, and other diseases

This study extensively concentrates on the causes and adverse effects that's caused due to passive smoking.

Research methodology

The aim is to analyze the effects of passive smoking.

The objectives of this study:

- To study the earlier research on the effects of passive smoking.
- To learn the effects of passive smoking
- To understand the various health issues caused due to passive smoking

The data collected was in a qualitative research design that is the secondary data was collected and then through the secondary data the article was reviewed from articles, journals and various other websites.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Who are passive smokers?

Passive smoking or secondhand smoking is inhaling other people's tobacco.

"Passive smoking, also known as secondhand smoke exposure, is the inhalation of smoke emitted from burning tobacco products by individuals who are not actively smoking. This exposure occurs in various settings, including homes, workplaces, and public spaces, where tobacco smoke is present due to the smoking behavior of others nearby. Passive smoking poses significant health risks, as it exposes nonsmokers to a complex mixture of harmful chemicals and carcinogens present in tobacco smoke. The adverse health effects of passive smoking include increased risks of respiratory infections, cardiovascular diseases, and various types of cancer. Efforts to reduce passive smoking exposure through smoke-free policies, public education campaigns, and tobacco control measures are essential for protecting the health of nonsmokers and promoting a smoke-free environment for all." by Dr. Stanton A. Glantz

The above is a definition given by Dr. Stanton A. Glantz means to say that the tobacco smoke exposed to non-smokers is called second smoking and it has many health effects such as lung infections, heart diseases and also different types of cancer.

What are the effects of passive smoking ?

1. Respiratory Effects:

Passive smoking is interconnected with an increased risk of respiratory symptoms such as coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath, especially in children. Exposure to secondhand smoke can increase existing respiratory conditions such as asthma.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2006).

The health consequences of involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke.

2. Cardiovascular Effects:

Passive smoking could increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases, including coronary artery disease, stroke, and heart attacks. Nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke have an increased likelihood of experiencing rapid cardiovascular events. Barnoya, J., & Glantz, S. A. (2005).

3. Cancer Risk:

Passive smoking could increase the risk of lung cancer, particularly in nonsmoking adults. It is also linked to other cancers such as breast cancer and childhood leukemia. International Agency for Research on Cancer. (2004).

4. Impacts on Children:

Children exposed to secondhand smoking are at higher risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), low birth weight, respiratory infections, and impaired lung function. Prenatal exposure to secondhand smoke can also have adverse effects on fetal development. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2006).

There was a study done with a sample of 60 people with the samples being between the age range of 18 and 45. The sampling technique that they chose was non-probability purposive sampling.

The three things that had taken into consideration were:-

Pre-test level of awareness regarding effects of passive smoking

Education program on effects of passive smoking

Post-test level of awareness regarding effects of passive smoking

Where they had a structured questionnaire with relevant questions to measure the awareness and effects, where most of the participants had no awareness about passive smoking that was around 70%. The programs refer to educating the samples selected about effects of passive smoking. It has also given us the rate of improvement after the awareness.

Limitations

- The study may be susceptible to publication bias, as it relies on published literature, which may overrepresent studies with significant findings.

- The findings of the study may have limited generalizability beyond the specified age range of young adults, as the effect of passive smoking may vary across different age groups and developmental stages.
- The data used are from various different sources; there might be mistakes and outdated information.

Conclusion

This reviewed article gives an in-depth look at the effects of passive or secondhand smoking. Smoking not only affects the person who smokes but also the people and the environment around them, passive smoking causes a lot of health hazards and conditions which are at times incurable as well.

The examination of passive smoking as a crucial public health concern that has far-reaching impacts of secondhand smoke exposure on individuals, families, and communities worldwide which contributes to a wide range of different outcomes, from respiratory illnesses to cardiovascular diseases.

Despite progress in tobacco control efforts, there are challenges in addressing passive smoking, particularly in vulnerable and marginalized communities where there are disparities in exposure and access to resources.

Passive smoking is not a voluntary choice in most of the scenarios and which in return becomes difficult to control and address them. There has to be continuous effort taken to create awareness about passive smoking as it affects the most vulnerable community the Children and women. There has to be continuous effort to create a smoke-free environments and safeguard the health and well-being of nonsmokers, particularly vulnerable populations such as children and pregnant women.

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