



Research Article

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How to Stop Before It Starts: The Case of an Anti-Smoking Campaign for High Schools in the Philippines

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Abstract

One of the most common problems in the education system in northern Iloilo is students are escaping from classes to smoke with friends and classmates. This act resulted to slow performances in all subject areas. This research aims to find out the influence of anti-smoking campaigns such as symposiums, posters, lectures and video clips to the Junior High School students in northern Iloilo, Philippines. All the students were classified into three categories; non-smokers, second-hand smokers, and smokers. Two from each category were purposively selected. Interview and observation were utilized. The study revealed that non-smokers assured that they will not get involved in this kind of vices, second-hand smokers vowed to encourage their parents, relatives, friends, and classmates to stop cigarette smoking, and smokers to stop smoking because of the results to our organ systems. Health is very important to all the informants. Also, many of these participants belong to below-average learners. In this study, anti-smoking campaigns are effective methods to discourage students to smoke. No e-cigarettes smokers in the group because of its values. Parents and guardians play a vital role in the implementation of this advocacy. Also, the local government units should regulate the implementation of policies and ordinances regarding the smoking of minors. Thus, anti-smoking campaigns and messages could be excellent avenues to educate students about ordinances and laws, and the effects of smoking on our health.

Keywords: *Junior High School, Type of Smokers, E-cigarettes, Campaign Materials*

1. Introduction

In the fast-changing world, smoking is still one of humans' recreations. You can see people everywhere from the streets, coffee shops, bus stations, and even in schools smoking cigarettes. The garbage bin is always filled with cigarette butts and even the sidewalk. Every country created intervention as well as laws to prevent citizens to engage in smoking but the number of smokers

increases rapidly. They also concentrated on negative sides of smoking to health and well-being but still, people continue to smoke. They are not afraid and chose to continue smoking.

American Lung Association (2019) reported around 87 percent of 18 years old tried their first smoking, 2,500 of them smoke every day, 400 becomes regular smokers, and 200 of them die due to habitual acts. In 2014, they stated that around 62 percent of current smokers are both middle and high school. While in 2015, 9.3 percent in high school, and 2.3 percent in middle school in the last 30 days. They usually using electronic cigarettes or using 2 or more tobacco products. Also, in 2017, 90% of smokers began smoking before the age of 19, and around 3.6 million American middle and high school students reported being smokers (Matthews, 2019). Department of Health and Human Services (2011) reported around 14% of people aged 18 years and over smoked in Victoria, Australia as 2016 from 20% in 2001. About one in five clouds of smoke worldwide from ages 13 to 15, and 80, 000 to 100,000 children start to smoke every day and around 50% of whom live in Asia (Martin, 2012).

Today, the latest trend is about e-cigarettes. Young adults and even teenagers are gaga to have one. Report of Glantz (2015) exposed never-smoking adolescents specifically middle school are now using e-cigarettes and increasing rapidly in the US. Hu et al (2016) (cited by Cooper et al, 2017), in 2013-2014 almost one-quarter of ages 18-24 are e-cigarettes users. The e-cigarettes users are twice as intentional smokers. This is very alarming despite no harmful effect recorded.

1.1 Status of Smoking in the Philippines

In the Philippines, according to Digal (2008), there were girls between 13-15 around 30% smoke regularly. Also, 90% of women are aware of the effect but have no interest in stopping. Furthermore, Sarmiento (2009) revealed out of 3,046 girls' respondents taken from an urban and rural area, 37% had ever smoked, and 67.3% smoked 1-10 cigarettes. Besides, 18.7% were still currently smoking, and 62% wanted a specific brand, and 43.9% buy cigarettes. But boys from very young ages are commonly affected by this addicted habitual act. About 30% of an adolescent who smokes are in urban areas. The younger they start the great chance of becoming regular smokers in the future (Santos, 2010).

One of the most common problems in Northern Iloilo faced by students is cigarette smoking. Students' from all grade levels in K12 Basic Education Program are already attracted to this habitual act which causes deterioration among interest in their studies. They escape from classes together with peers and friends, and smoke around school premises. Teachers are very vigilant in encouraging these students to stop smoking but it does not affect them and the number of smokers increases rapidly. Even though one of the rules and regulations of the school is prohibiting smoking among students anywhere in the school premises or one hundred meters away from the institution but still learners are into smoking.

Reports were showing that even elementary pupils are cigarette smokers. You can always see them walking in the streets, sitting in a nearby cafeteria or even standing in a plaza holding cigarettes with classmates and friends. Due to these statistics, the Department of Education (DepEd) in 2003 implemented the Youth Smoking Prevention (YSP) Program. The objectives of this order are to prohibit smoking and the sale of tobacco products inside public and private school campuses and premises. The topic of smoking will be integrated into Health Education (DepEd ORDER, No. 33, s. 2003). Schools together with their stakeholders are also campaigning to help stop smoking tobacco among young children. However, school smoking bans have poorly complied, so enforcement is highly important with the help of all agencies' concerns. DepED must organize a committee to evaluate the implementation of various orders related to smoking. But the sustainability of the projects and programs is always a problem with DepED.

Zoleta (2018) revealed about Executive Order (EO) 26 signed by the President Rodrigo R. Duterte is about banning of public smoking in the Philippines. One of the contents of this law is prohibiting selling cigarettes to a minor. The fines are between 5,000 pesos or 30 days in prisons. The price of one cigarette pack is almost 200.00 pesos. Also, the ban will help our environment. But before that, the Philippines have already different smoking laws like Smoke-Free Places, Tobacco

Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship, Tobacco Packaging and Labelling, Cigarettes Content and Disclosure, Sales Restrictions, E-Cigarettes, and Road Tobacco Control Legislation. This was presented to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on September 4, 2005 (Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 2019). But still, many teenagers are into smoking even in public places. The laws are not executed properly.

Another research revealed that teenagers are heavily influenced by tobacco advertising. Even though, companies promote with precaution, such as it's dangerous to our health and the age level of consumers allowed but there are still a lot who wanted to continue to smoke. Parents play a significant role to ban smoking at home; even they smoke because exposure to environmental tobacco smoke during childhood can increase tolerance for tobacco smoke (Lynch and Bonnie, 1994; Cancer, Prevention Unit and WHO, 2018). Also, the government must regulate all tobacco advertisements. And increase the tax to prevent young minds to continue in this habitual act.

1.2 Theoretical and Conceptualize Framework

This study was anchored on symposium, campaign, lecture and film showing. Recently, there were no documents published which focused on the anti-smoking campaign; thus, the researchers were motivated. Today, with the advent of technology, media messages are endemic in our society. We can see them everywhere such as exposure to television and radio, movies, outdoor and point of sale advertising, via newspapers and magazines, on the internet and through books, brochures, and posters. It can arouse curiosity among children. The number of basic education students engaged in smoking is increasing exponentially.

Novac (2013) and Parkinson *et al* (2009) support that anti-smoking messages are effective because the majority of the youths can notice this kind of campaign. It also influences attitudes because students are aware of the effect of smoking on their health. After all, it was evident in all the campaigns. And also revealed that anti-smoking messages relied overwhelmingly on appeal to attitudes. Anti-smoking messages and campaigns were an effective way to educate students on smoking as revealed in this study especially if we focused on health issues.

But Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education (2019) engaged in research designed to inform and improve the effectiveness of public health and clinical interventions to reduce tobacco use both nationally and internationally. Some of these endeavors focused on tobacco industry's marketing tactics for selling cigarettes, and effective counter-marking public health campaigns, develop and implement smoke-free and tobacco control policies, health effects of secondhand smoke, showing how the tobacco industry markets their product to specific groups, and short and long term effects of cigarette smoking to our health. But these are all conducted abroad, this study will be important because one of the reasons for the decline of Filipino performances in National Achievement Test (NAT) as well as Trends in Mathematics and Science Survey (TIMSS) is escaping from classes to engage in cigarettes smoking. They go to the nearby beaches as well as mountains to smoke with peers.

The main thrust of this study is to determine the influence and effect of anti-smoking messages and campaigns among students who are non-smokers, second-hand smokers, and smokers in northern Iloilo. Thus, behavioral perspective was utilized in this study because basically, students are aware of the effects of cigarettes smoking on our health. Pioneered by John B. Watson and B. F. Skinner, behavioral perspective explains human behaviors causes to respond to stimuli (Watson, 1913; Skinner, 1971). Also, human behavior causes by environmental factors. Thus, behaviorism emphasizes the role of the environment in influencing behaviors (Mcloed, 2017). According to Nursing Theory (2015), the major theory is divided into three subtypes; health belief model states that the negative effect of smoking to our health triggered individual to finally act; reasoned action and planned behavior theory emphasized that human act rationally the intentions to induce behaviors toward smoking, and social cognitive theory of learning theories or classical conditioning believes that individual observation affects behavior.

Furthermore, the contents of the innovations are more on the consequence get, such as lung and throat cancers, skin diseases, and abnormalities among users and non-users. The main objective of this study is to help students stay away from cigarette smoking. Hence, the Empathy-Altruism Hypothesis was employed. Empathy towards a person who needs helps; likely help will be given without any selfish thoughts (Batson, 2019). The reward will be the relief from the distress of seeing these children from suffering caused by cigarette smoking.

The lack of researches about smoking in public schools in northern Iloilo, Philippines motivated the researchers to engage in this study. Thus, this study aimed to find out the effect of anti-smoking campaigns to Junior High School students in northern Iloilo, Philippines.

2. Methods

2.1 Sample selection

To help various schools in northern Iloilo about students engaging in cigarette smoking, this study employs purposive sampling. One school was selected to participate in this study based on a preliminary survey conducted by the researchers. This is based on the number of students reported involving in cigarette smoking. Before the implementation of the study, the researchers surveyed students' status in terms of experience in smoking. The survey consists of "yes" or "no", just to identify them as a non-smoker, 2nd hand smoker, and smoker, or the level of students in term of smoking.

2.2 Study area and context

Northern Iloilo or the 5th District is located on the island of Panay in Western Visayas. There were 11 municipalities located in the 5th District of Iloilo. These are Ajuy, Balasan, Barotac Viejo, Batad, Carles, Concepcion, Estancia, Lemery, San Dionisio, San Rafael, and Sara. Secondary schools are divided into big and small schools.

This study specifically focused on the Municipality of Ajuy because of the drive of the school head to increase the performance of the learners in the various assessments. The principal believed that one of the causes of the poor results in the National Achievement Test (NAT) is because many students escaped from classes to smoke.

2.3 Participants

The purposively selected students are classified as non-smoker, second-hand smoker, and smokers. The non-smoker is defined as a person who never smokes, or asked by some to light a cigarette and never smell smoke of cigarettes in their entire life. Second-hand smoker is a person who has inhale smoke from cigarettes. They were asked by a family member to light cigarettes and go with friends who smoke. A smoker is a person who smokes often. Three students per grade level were selected as informants of this study.

Also, teachers from science and health were selected as participants of this study.

2.4 Data collection tools

The symposium was divided into two parts; first is about the laws and ordinance of anti-smoking and the second is about the effects of smoking on our health. The researchers invited LGU doctors, police officers and SB members to talk about smoking. The students were also informed about the ordinances and fine if caught smoking in public places. The doctor focused on health issues. The symposium was conducted during the nutrition month. After the symposium informants were interviewed which lasted for 30 minutes each.

Also, tarpaulins were used for the advertisement of the different laws and ordinances, and the crusade for the consequence of smoking to our health. Also, instructional materials about laws and ordinance, and the effects of smoking on our health were created. The researchers also asked the informants to watch a video taken from YouTube about smoking. They were asked to watch the video during their vacant periods. Follow-up interviews were conducted after every intervention.

All the responses of the informants were transcribed, analyzed, triangulated and themed for almost 6 months. All the informants were given codenames to ensure their identities.

Open-Ended guide questions were used in this study. This allows the participants to openly express their thoughts and feelings about the intervention. The tape recorders, as well as journals, were used to capture all the responses of the informants

2.5 Ethical issues

All the informants were given code names to hide their identities. Parent consent was utilized since majority of the participants are minors. The parents were called for a meeting to inform them about the purpose of the study, and they agreed to destroy the collected data after the research will be completed.

2.6 Data analyses

The recorded conversations were transcribed, coded, themed, triangulated and analyzed.

3. Results

3.1 Immersion with students.

Table 1 revealed the different reasons for junior high school students about their smoking experiences.

Table 1: Summary of the Responses of the Informants about their Status Towards Smoking

<i>Type of Smoker</i>	<i>Responses</i>
<i>Non-Smoker</i>	Family Background Circle of Friend Family Status Academic Achievements School Activities Health Awareness Program
<i>2nd Hand Smoker</i>	Part of the Curriculum Family and Friends are smokers
<i>Smoker</i>	Family Background Problems Peers Acceptance Peer Pressure Wanted to be Famous
<i>Smoker</i>	Friends, relatives, and family Acceptance among the group Problems and issues in all aspects Peer pressure Acceptance in the society

3.2 Effect of Anti-Smoking Campaigns

3.2.1 Symposium

Table 2 summarizes the response of the informants after the activity. Many of them state the negative points about smoking.

Table 2: Effect of Symposium to Different Type of Smokers

Type of Smokers	Grade Level	Responses
<i>Non-Smoker</i>	7	"After the message of the chief of police, I was scared to try smoking. I have already an idea that it can give effect to my body."
	8	"I will never try to smoke, my parents always telling me about its effect on our health."
	9	"I heard that many already died because of cigarettes smoking, I will never try."
	10	"I even told my classmates not to try smoking even once because it can be addictive."
<i>2nd Hand Smoker</i>	7	"I will never go with people who smoke."
	8	"My parents are smoking, father always asked me to light his cigarettes. But I will never do it again."
	9	"Many of my relatives are smokers, but then on, I will not go with them. I am scared of its effect."
	10	"My uncle died of smoking, I am staying with him for many years. He suffered a lot, I am so scared."
<i>Smoker</i>	7	"I will stop smoking at an early age, I will be affected a lot."
	8	"I will now stop going with my friends. They influence me a lot."
	9	"I am scared, I started at a very young age."
	10	"I have already problems breathing. I often experience shortness of breathing."

3.2.2 Anti-Smoking Advertisement.

Table 3 summarizes the effect of anti-smoking advertisements on different types of smokers.

Table 3: Effect of Anti-Smoking Advertisement to Different Type of Smokers

Type of Smokers	Grade Level	Responses
<i>Non-Smoker</i>	7	"With all the pictures I saw, I never tried to smoke."
	8	"There are many ways on how to engage in cigarette smoking, I will rather continue my sports activities."
	9	"I will never smoke."
<i>2nd Hand Smoker</i>	10	"I don't want to die early."
	7	"I will tell my parents not to smoke, or tell my father not to ask me to light his cigarettes."
	8	"I will stay away from my family and friends who smoke."
	9	"I will not go to places for smoking."
<i>Smoker</i>	10	"I am now decided not to follow anyone to light their cigarettes or to stay with places for smoking."
	7	"I will start to stop smoking."
	8	"With all those diseases that we can get from smoking, I am afraid now of its effect on my health. I will try not to engage in this habitual act."
	9	"I will not smoke anymore."
	10	"I will find ways to stay away from my vices."

3.2.3 *Film Showing about the Effect of Smoking on Human Health.*

Table 4 summarizes the responses of the informants about the film on smoking.

Table 4: Responses of the Informants after the Film Showing

Type of Smokers	Responses
Non-Smokers	"I will never, never smoke." "Those diseases are scary."
2 nd Hand Smokers	"It's very alarming, I love my health. I will tell my family and friends to stop smoking."
Smokers	"I am scared to die. From now on I will stop smoking."

3.2.4 *Lecture on Various Topics about Smoking.*

Table 5 shows the lecture to focus on the effect of Cigarette Smoking.

Table 5: Topics in Junior High School to focus on cigarette smoking

Grade Level	Topic
Grade 8	"Prevention of Substance Use and Abuse" "The Danger of Cigarettes Smoking"
Grade 9	Respiratory
Grade 10	Health Tobacco Regulations Act of 2003

3.3 *Projects and Programs of the School*

Table 6 shows the proposed projects and programs of the selected secondary schools in northern Iloilo to eliminate students engaging in cigarette smoking.

Table 6: Projects and Programs of Selected Secondary Teachers on Cigarette Smoking

Proposed Activities	Concerned Stakeholder/s
Create a School Policy	School Administrators Parent-Teachers Association (PTA) Officers Student Supreme Government Organization (SSG) Officers Private/Public Stakeholders
Enhance Curriculum	Master Teachers Head Teachers Teachers Education Experts
Conduct Home Visitation	Class Advisers
Improve School Activities	School Administrator Cultural and Sports Coordinators
More Advocacy Program	Teachers School Guidance SSG Officers
Quarterly School Symposium	Guidance Officer Teachers Various School Organizations

3.4 E-cigarettes in Smoking

Nobody is using e-cigarettes from smokers. They all exposed that they only have a small amount of money every day; thus, they cannot afford to buy the tools.

One informant stated:

"The e-cigarette is very expensive but I have tried from my friend. I don't like the taste."

Added by one smoker;

"I've watched in the news that e-cigarette is not good for us. It has a higher effect compared to regular cigarettes."

4. Discussions

The results showed that students in Northern Iloilo already started smoking at a very young age; some of them started at around 6 years. They learned to smoke during their elementary days from parents, relatives, and friends and continued to smoke until they reach their adulthood. Also, Backhaus et al (2017) revealed that school is an environment that shows significant effects on learners' choices in life as well as their school performances. The majority of students engaged in smoking belong to below-average learners. The results of the National Achievement Test or NAT in the district is always below the national standard of 75%.

Smoking can be addictive. Some of them said peer pressure is the main factor that pushed them to try smoking due to curiosity. They wanted to be accepted in a certain group to cope with the current trends and social lives. However, the study of Backhaus et al (2017) showed that students ages 19 or older begin to smoke compared to younger ones because they see their friends smoking.

Peer pressure starts in school; children often pay attention to what others think about them. Specifically, boys are the most affected in this situation because they tend to stay with groups. They always wanted to fit in the crowd. The report says that students burned out of school engagement tend to have less interest in school, without parents advise, they become affected by peer pressure (Laursen, 2019).

Based on the observation collected, there were students both female and male smoked within 50 meters away from the school. You can see these students in the cafeteria, sari-sari stores, or even in the houses of their friends and classmates. When they were asked who encouraged them to smoke, the majority of them said that it was their peers. Students escaped from classes and smoked in a nearby cafeteria or sari-sari stores. They even went to the mountains or beaches with peers to smoke. But nobody from the respondents uses e-cigarettes or even tried because they said it's very expensive.

Vanel et al (2011) revealed that symposium is a valuable experience for students to realize positive decisions in life.

Cornell College (2020) said that symposium serves as avenue for students' learning in all aspects both academic and co-curricular activities. While Montana State University (2019) wrote that a symposium is an event crafted to allow participants to interact such as discussion, gain knowledge and collaboration in various topics.

The program reinforces the negative effect of smoking on students' health. That also, there are legal penalties to those caught smoking in public places as well as being young. The LGU is very vigilant to eradicate cigarettes smoking activities among students.

With this intervention, many students were already aware of the programs and projects of the government on smoking. They also learned that all agencies both private and public were joining in this advocacy. Specifically, they learned that DepEd is giving penalties to those learners who are found engaging in this kind of activity. Sanctions will be given to students caught smoking on school premises. Also, the integration of cigarette smoking is part of the curriculum.

The results of the study of Chauhan and Sharma (2017) on the anti-smoking campaign revealed long term benefits among students. This results to lessen intention smokers to engage in smoking.

Durkin et al (2009), the results showed that *antismoking ads containing* passionately personalized stories about the effect of smoking lessen the interest of the individual to continue the habitual activities.

Liu and Tan (2009) exposed that the anti-smoking campaign cuts the occurrence of smoking of adults and adolescents. Also, long term benefits of smoking reductions and future attempt to quit smoking are the significant factors that anti-smoking campaign is effective.

Media play a big factor to influence young people to involve in smoking. In the report of Surgeon General in 2014, the movie industry encourages around 37 % to start to smoke. Also, peer pressure is the most powerful factor for teens to go for smoking habits. Furthermore, parents and bad family situations can also affect teens' interest in smoking. Parents who smoke can touch an adolescent's mind to begin accepting smoking is good. Cigarettes are a way to cope with unhappy or unfunctional family (Matthews, 2019). Also, they are curious and want to discover the world of those who smoke. Being young, they are always curious about their surroundings. By nature, they adventurous to try new things.

Smoking harms every organ of the body (Medline, 2019); reduces the health of smokers in general (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018), nearly one in five deaths in the United State. Smoking is one of the most dangerous widespread phenomena that threatens the lives of a huge number of people worldwide. Smoking causes cancer. Another effect is the development of respiratory problems. So, asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema are always a lingering threat. One more important effect of smoking is that it causes a lot of anger for the addict. Whenever they lack cigarettes, they start reacting angrily and strangely. To quit smoking has health benefits and reduces the risk of smoking-related diseases such as lessens your risk of lung cancer by 90%, threat of stroke and heart attack (Department of Health and Human Service, 2011).

The projects and programs that will be initiated by the secondary school upon the completion of the study are very important. The help of various stakeholders also plays a significant role in advocacy. DepEd must strengthen curriculum related to cigarette smoking.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2020), the e-cigarette is not good for the youth even young adults. The ingredient aerosol is harmful to the lung.

5. Conclusions

The three types of smokers have different experiences and reasons why they engaged in cigarette smoking. But it was found out that family, relatives, and friends are common factors which are involved in this habitual act. Also, personal problems caused by family, peer pressure, and acceptance in society drive them to smoke.

Educating the informants about cigarette smoking in various interventions, such as symposiums, posters, and tarpaulins, lectures and film showing make them realized the effect on our health. Non-smokers were scared to try smoking because of the knowledge learned about the effect. Second-hand smokers promised not to go with friends and classmates who are smoking because they already understand that they are the most affected. Smokers will try hard not to smoke again and they also stop escaping from classes. They must also try to tell their family members and friends who smoked to stop because people around them will also be affected.

The anti-smoking campaign influenced informants because of the effect of smoking on their health. Almost all of them were scared of health problems specifically cancers. The shortness of breathing among long-time users were the common effect encountered by smokers. During strenuous activities or sports activities, they experienced tiredness. But none of them engaged or tried e-cigarettes because they don't have enough money to buy the gadget as well as it's not available in the district. It can also harm the lung.

Also, the DepED must enhance the curriculum in Health and Science that focused on the effect

of smoking on human health. Teachers must be trained properly on how to implement the new curriculum related to smoking. Organizations and clubs, activities and programs must also be strengthened to divert the attention of students from smoking.

The results encouraged the school to work with various stakeholders. Teachers are also considered as second parents. It is their responsibility to take good care of the students. They must encourage them to stay away from various vices like smoking. Moreover the DepEd must make a strong move to create policy and encouraged LGU to strengthen ordinances. The laws must be implemented properly. Police and barangay officials' visibility within school premises is also recommended.

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