



東海大學學生報告 ePaper

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Smoking among College Students

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中文摘要

上了大學後，發現身邊同學養成了高中沒有的習慣，例如熬夜、吃宵夜以及我們所要討論的抽菸。因此，出於好奇及對身邊朋友的關心，我們決定將研究並深入探討大學生抽菸族群、導致抽菸及影響的原因。我們利用紙本及網路問卷方式調查東海大學抽菸者的基本資料、抽菸習慣、抽菸原因、影響抽菸者的人為何等，我們甚至抽樣訪問，瞭解抽菸者的背景及詳細的原因，我們也利用網路資源，詳讀相關的專業網站、文章，也參考了相關的論文。經過我們研究的過程，我們發現同儕是影響抽菸者的最關鍵人物、女性抽菸者的比例不容小覷、抽菸者的原因大多是因為壓力及社交需要。

關鍵字：

社交抽菸者

抽菸

壓力

同儕壓力

Abstract

Smoking is very common now among college students. We observed the phenomena and decided to analyze it. We made a survey and read some online sources in order to get the results. Surprisingly, we found some unexpected facts.

Keyword :

Social Smoker

Smoking

Stereotype

Peer pressure

Pressure

The logo of Tungshai University is a circular seal with a scalloped edge. It features the university's name in Chinese characters '東海大學' at the top and 'TUNGSHAI UNIVERSITY' around the bottom. In the center, there are three interlocking rings and a cross. The year '1955' is at the bottom. The text '目次' (Table of Contents) is overlaid on the logo.

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Smoking among College Students

Introduction

Entering college is a turning point for each college student among various aspects. They build different habits such as staying up late, joining late night activities, having midnight snacks, etc. What's more, we found that comparing to high school, there are more students starting to smoke on campus. [3]A statistics of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that nearly 19 of every 100 adults aged 18–24 years smoke. It means almost 1 in 5 college students smoke. Thus, we are desperate to know the reasons why college students start to smoke. In order to make clear of this phenomenon, we decided to make this as our research topic. In addition, we collected online sources and made survey to go deeper. As for the investigation, we made a survey. There are several questions including the time they started to smoke, the reasons why they smoke, the possible factors, etc. After analyzing all the statistics from the questionnaire, there are some issues we want to bring up: pressure and social needs are the major reasons, the stereotype is deniable and friends have a lot to do with the smokers.

Body

Method

We made a questionnaire and there are 63 participants. All the participants are college students in Tunghai University. We asked 4 questions to know their smoking habits and twelve question to get to know why they start to smoke. We also read some online sources and interview some of our participants to have a better understanding.

Results

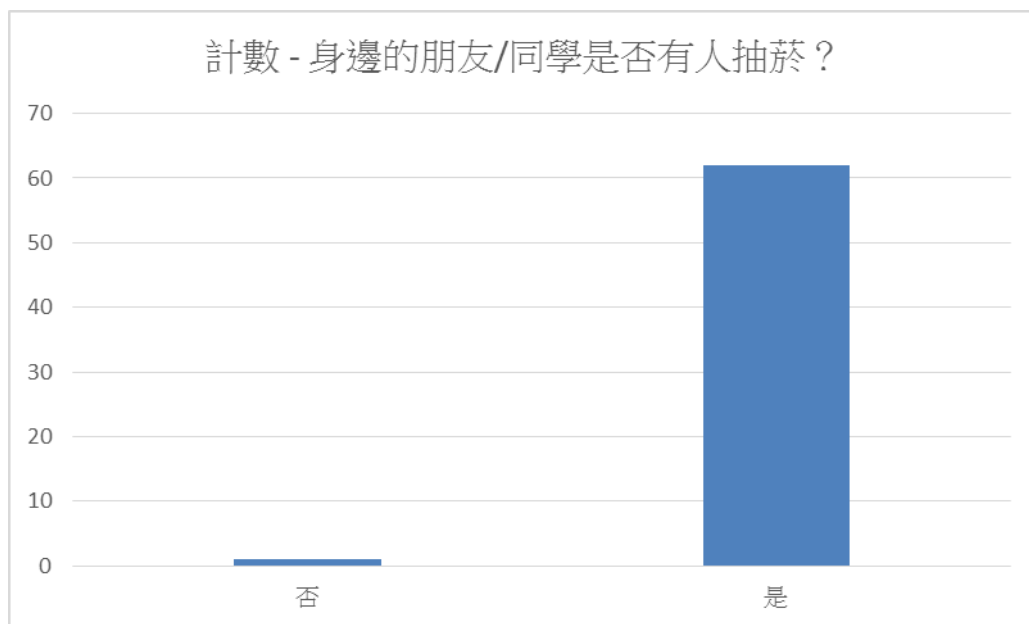


Figure1-smoking behavior of friends

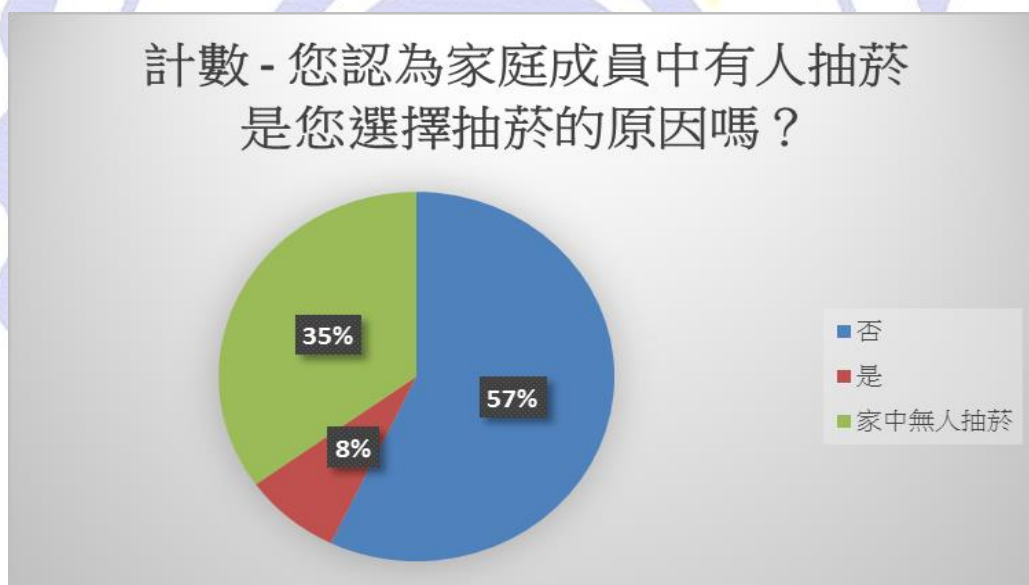


Figure2- smoking behavior of families

From figure 1, it shows that over 98 percent of students are surrounded with friends who also smoke. This can strongly prove that friends are one of the major cause affected them. In comparison, the survey shows that family members are not the main reason why college students smoke which is out of our expectation. To our surprise, family members play few influences on the college smoking. The normal thought is that if his/her family members such as Dad have the habit to

smoke their children are much easier to smoke than those family do not smoke. However, based on our statistics, the influences of family do not make really significance because according to our interviewee they said that they do not think the reasons why they get smoking is because of the influences of their family.

What's more, we found that the major reasons why they smoke are social needs (50%) and pressure (41%). Some of the smokers even mention that they smoke just because of happiness, relief and time killing. From the statistics we analyze, at least half of our participants smoke for social needs. They think that smoking is helpful for some social occasions; as the term of social smoking, the definition is that social smoking is smoking less than every day. According to Health Education Center from University of California, there are few reasons why people smoke socially: If you are around people who smoke, you may be tempted to smoke too. It may seem like smoking makes social situations easier. And some people just have a cigarette when they go out with friends and were drinking.

Social Smoker

Speaking of the reasons why college students want to smoke, we clearly find out that the two top reasons are due to and the social need the pressure. Hence, before we go into these two factors, we would like to introduce the term “social smoker.” [7]According to the Health Education Center from University of California Irvine, social smoking is smoking less than every day. A social smoker may smoke a few cigarettes one night, then not smoke for days or weeks afterwards. Also here come some characteristics of social smokers. First of all, they don't smoke alone and they smoke only on the social settings. In addition, according to our survey, the percentage of those who think that the reason why they want to smoke is because of their friends is 49%. That is, friends play a vital role in smoking especially for those who are smoking in the college. Some people

just have a cigarette when they go out with friends and were drinking. For example, sometimes you find someone that may have been up all night studying and wanted a break or something to help them stay awake, which resorts them to chain smoking through a cramming session. As we mentioned that social needs play a high percentage of the factors. However, there is one point that we would like to clarify is that although people often associate those who smoke on the social occasions with social smokers, it doesn't mean that every one of them smoke socially is social smoker, which means that some of them are addicted smokers who also smoke on the social settings. Moreover, every now and then people who smoke on those necessary occasions do not like to smoke but merely do not want to miss the chance to make new friends or they do not want to be outcast from groups. Namely, some college students smoke as the result of the "social pressure."

We know that here comes much more complicated when the term "social pressure" comes out. In fact, another main cause of leading college students to smoking is due to the pressure. Although as for the literary meaning social "pressure" is the same as "pressure," what we want to discuss about is the stress expect social pressure. As a college, he/she would not only cope with the stress from the studies but deal with something like interpersonal relationship, or the management of pocket money. Sometimes, the normal ways to reduce stress are such as listening to the music, exercising or hanging out with friends. However, more and more college students prefer to smoke as one of the ways to kill the stress. According to our interviewees, most of them say after smoking, their bodies would feel relaxed and calm so that if they are confronted with the stress from exams, it is a good way for them to calm down and take a test patiently. That is to say, the feeling comes out after smoking is the main reason why college students

cannot resist to it. And the time when people smoke does not cost them too much maybe 5 to 10 minutes.

Smoking due to Pressure

Based on our questionnaire, it is clear that most college students know that smoking harms their health, they have not decided to smoker until they find another good way to release the stress. Since people easily get addicted to nicotine, tobacco use seems to make the subjective effects of stress such as feelings of frustration, anger, or anxiety less severe. Although most people understand that smoking harms a person's health, many smokers believe it helps them cope with stress. Since nicotine is a psychoactive (mood altering) drug, tobacco use seems to make the subjective effects of stress (such as in fact, smoking would not change the fact at all but it still give those in need a moment to rest.

In addition to social needs, the survey indicated that the other main reason causes college students smoking is pressure. 35% of these students chose both social needs and pressure; 27% chose social needs; 21% chose pressure; and 17% chose three or more. This outcome not surprised us at all, but we are curious about why so many students want to relieve their pressure by smoking. Also, what do they mean by pressure? We have found many surveys on the Internet showing that the main pressure that causes them smoking is peer pressure. In this case, this kind of outcome also reflects the data that most chose both social needs and pressure in our questionnaire. [5] This study examined peer pressure and tobacco smoking among undergraduate students of the University of Calabar, Nigeria. Result indicated that 46 percent of tobacco use among undergraduate students was accounted for by peer pressure. Certainly, when college students face problems they cannot handle will also lead them to smoke because they feel

released from their anxiety. [2] Studies find that depressed college students are more likely to smoke and have a more difficult time quitting than non-depressed college students. 31.9% of college smokers attribute their smoking behavior as a means to alleviate their depression.

Smoking Area

The setting of smoking area on universities' campus has been a controversial issue since the government started to promote the Tobacco Hazard Prevention Act. According to [1] Even though universities set up outdoor smoking area, students' smoking in non-smoking area is still common. The phenomenon develops a so-called "invisible-smoking-area", which means that students will set up their "own" smoking area instead of going to the "legal" ones. Same situation happens in TungHai University as well. In 2014, the office of military instructor of THU announced that the university was going to reduce the original 13 smoking areas to 7 on campus in order to reach the target of "non-smoking campus". In 2015, as the rule started to practice, we can notice that you will not see many people smoking on the campus. The rule do reduce the number of students' smoking on campus, however, smoking students turn to set up their own smoking areas, such as parking lots, where many students will come and go. Moreover, it is obvious that we can see people started to smoke on the sidewalk outside the campus, which is the view that we seldom see before the practice of the rule. As a result, non-smokers begin to complain about the increased smokers smoking at the parking lots and sidewalk. According to the office of military instructor of THU, they are planning to remove all the smoking areas in 2016, to reach the end of their goal. However, depending on the situation that reducing smoking area does not seem effective, is it a good idea to remove all smoking area? According to [6]Peopo Citizen Journalism, under the strict law of

no-smoking on campus, a student of Tamkung University tried to avoid the crowd and smoke on the top of the building and fell off the building which caused tragedy. Whether to allow students smoke in a limited environment or to apply strict laws and how to strike a balance between smokers and non-smokers on campus are defiantly the important issues that every university should face.

Gender and Smoking Behavior

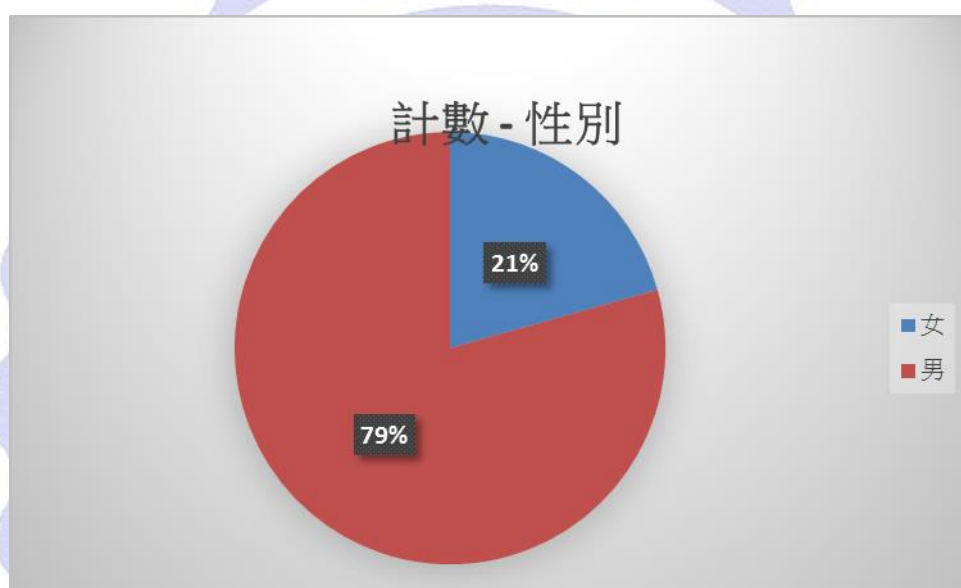
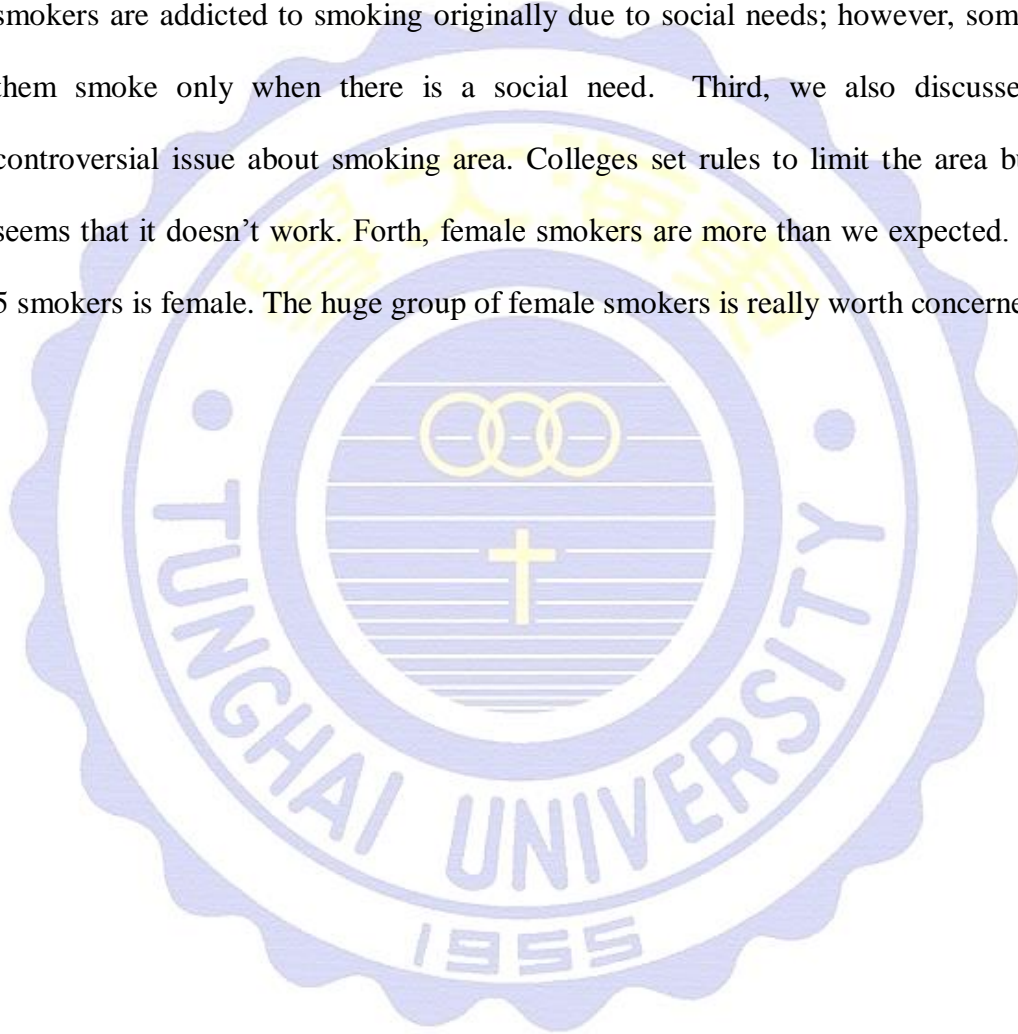


Figure3- the percentage of smokers gender

The other phenomenon we observed from figure 3 that surprised us is one in five smokers are female. People have a stereotype that all the smokers are men. However nowadays, we can see more and more female smokers while we walking on the street even in the campus.

Conclusion

Smoking is very common now among college students. We looked it deeper and analyzed the phenomenon. We found out some surprising facts. First, we found that friends influence more than families do. Almost 100% students who smoke have friends that smoke as well. Secondly, some smokers are called social smoker. Some smokers are addicted to smoking originally due to social needs; however, some of them smoke only when there is a social need. Third, we also discussed a controversial issue about smoking area. Colleges set rules to limit the area but it seems that it doesn't work. Forth, female smokers are more than we expected. 1 in 5 smokers is female. The huge group of female smokers is really worth concerned.



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