

Thesis Title	Knowledge, Attitude & Behavior of Adolescents in Phutthamonthon District, Nakhon Pathom Province Thailand Towards Smoking
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ABSTRACTS

The study of the knowledge, attitude and behavior of adolescents in Phutthamonthon district, Nakhon Phathom province, Thailand towards smoking was conducted in February - April, 1997.

The purposes of the study were to explore knowledge, attitude, and behavior towards smoking and also to

determine smoking prevalence among adolescents in Phutthamonthon district.

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted by using the standard interview questionnaire. By applying the random sampling method, 260 respondents of the ages of 15 - 24 were selected as the study sample. Of them, there were 20 females, with the ratio between male and female 12.1%.

For analysis, the descriptive statistical analysis was used to determine the frequency and percentage distribution of the variables. Regarding association, Chi-square test was used with the significant level set at 0.05.

The result of the study showed that the smoking prevalence of adolescents in Phutthamonthon district is 26.9%. Regarding knowledge of the respondents, 11.9% had a good knowledge on smoking & its consequences, 78.1% had a fair knowledge and 10% had a poor knowledge.

More than 90% of the respondents including non-smokers, ex-smokers, and current smokers expressed their positive opinion towards smoking control measures. With regards to important strategies to prevent smoking

in the community, health education programs and campaigns, parents's education & attention and Tobacco Product Control Act were fully supported and agreed by most of the respondents.

The study found that among 260 respondents, 70 were current-smokers (26.9%) 10 were ex-smokers (3.8%) and 180 were non-smokers (69.3%). The majority of non-smokers admitted that social and health factors were reasons for not smoking. 86.3% of ever-smokers (current smokers and ex-smokers) stated that pleasure was the reason for smoking, 68.8% of them smoked because of peer pressure. Regarding the reasons for not quitting smoking endorsed by current smokers, 96.8% had a misconception that cigarettes can be smoked within a safe level.

The study also found that there are statistically significant associations between smoking status and demographic factors (sex, age group, education, occupation) and social factors (family, social environment). The statistical test failed to show the association between smoking status and knowledge about smoking.

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the strengthening of education programs on the health consequences of smoking is of a great

importance. Health promotion should also include establishing a tobacco-free environment in the school and community in preventing students and children from trying on and taking up smoking.

It is known that smoking is a behavior which is difficult to give up. That is why apart from health education alone, other smoking cessation programs, Tobacco Control law which aims at individual behavior changes, must be approved and implemented strictly.