

Study on Whether more Students Start Smoking after Joining College (At Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore)

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Abstract: The main aim of this Paper is to show that there has found to be a tendency for students to start smoking after they have joined. There may be several reasons for that may lead them to start smoking such as peer pressure, curiosity etc. but the most important reason was found to be stress. We conducted a survey via a Google Form to see whether there is any correlation between students joining college and students starting to smoke. We will then use R Software to test our data by using the Chi Square Test as it is the most appropriate test for checking whether our hypothesis stands true or not. This will give us an idea of the current trend on a very relevant topic.

Keywords: stress, smoking, college

1. Introduction

The reason we have chosen this topic is for its growing concern. Smoking is an extremely injurious act which when becomes a habit can only decrease the life span of an individual. Despite the ill effects of smoking being highlighted in newspapers, textbooks, health journals and even on the cigarette pack themselves, young people continually turn towards it for a variety of reasons. A person can start smoking in several circumstances and this Paper focuses on the influence of a college environment on whether a student takes up smoking.

2. Materials and Methods

Our study has been conducted at Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore where we circulated a Google Form among its students. The sample size of the study is 63. The data, once collected, was compiled into the form of a table and R Software was used to study the data collected.

3. Analysis

The Web Form that was circulated to the students included the following-

- Name
- Current Age
- Did you smoke before joining college?
- If yes, did you continue smoking?
- If you did not smoke before joining college, did you start after you joined?
- Have you tried quitting?
- What do you think will help smokers quit?

A. Data Collected

Table 1: Data collected from Survey

Smoking	Before Joining College	After Joining College*
Yes	19	47
No	44	16

*Includes the students who started smoking after joining and those who continued smoking from

B. Description

The data collected was divided into two parts – Before Joining College and After Joining College. The number of people who smoked before joining were 19 while the figure rises to 47 after joining college. The number of people who did not smoke before joining were 44 while the figure falls to 16 after joining college. The data clearly shows a spike in the number of people who have taken up smoking and we have tested whether the data collected is statistically significant by performing the Chi Square Test.

Null Hypothesis taken – There is no significant increase in the number of students who started smoking after joining college.

Alternate Hypothesis taken – There is a significant increase in the number of students who started smoking after joining college.

C. Graph

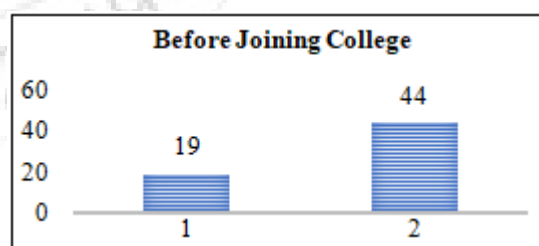


Figure 1: Ratio of students who smoked before joining college

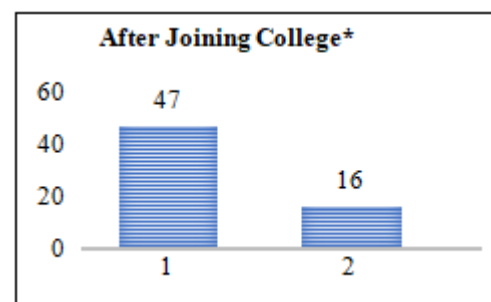


Figure 2: Ratio of students who smoked after joining college

4. Results

From the Chi Square Test conducted using R Software- Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data

X-squared = 23.195, df = 1, p-value = 1.463e-06

The p value for the tabulated data was found to be 1.463e-06. This is less than 0.05 which means that at 5% level of significance, the data was found to be statistically significant. The Null Hypothesis is rejected which means that There is a significant increase in the number of students who started smoking after joining college.

5. Discussion

The result of our study was that many students took up smoking after joining VIT, Vellore. The harmful effects of have been extensively studied and with the reach of social media today, people are aware of how injurious this habit can be. The reasons for which these students have started may vary but the worrying aspect is that this is a trend that does not seem like it will decline any time soon.

Mark Nichter, Mimi Nichter and Asli Carkoglu draw attention to the social utility of smoking in contexts associated with stress among college students in their Research Paper. Their study was conducted among college freshmen at a large midwestern university in the US. They delved in to the reasons as to why students smoke and concluded saying that due to the various benefits students feel smoking cigarettes offered them, many students take it up after joining college.

Ali Akbar Haghdoost and Mahmood Moosazadeh conducted a study on university students of Iran and found that prevalence of smoking in men aged 15-64 is 21.7% and in men aged 15-24 it is 7.1%; thus, prevalence of smoking among male students is 12.5% (2.8 times) more than that of their counterparts in the general population while the prevalence of smoking among female students is 1.3% (2.4 times) more than that in women aged 15-64 and 1.9% (7.3 times) more than that in women aged 15-24. This shows university students do not refrain from smoking during their college years.

Mark G. Myers, Neal M. Doran, Dennis R. Trinidad, Elizabeth A. Klonoff, and Tamara L. Wall conducted a Prospective Study of Cigarette Smoking Initiation During College focusing on Chinese and Korean-American Students. The results of their study were that over the course of the study 25% of baseline never-smokers tried their first cigarette and 9% became established smokers.

6. Conclusion

The conclusion we draw from our study is that many students, after joining college, for one reason or another have started smoking. From our sample size of 63 students, 28 out of the 44 non-smokers started smoking and the collected data was found to be of statistical significance by

the performance of the Chi Square Test using R Software. The number of students who start to smoke during their university days seems to be on the rise. Many believe it allows them to deal with the stress and while also helping them concentrate better. Some of these students may just be casual smokers but smoking is one of those habits which gets hard to get rid of later and hence must the effort to stop must be made during the early years of one's life.

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