

ABSTRACT

Despite intense campaigns to minimize cigarette smoking owing to the socio-economic risks associated with it, cigarette smoking worldwide has continued to rise. This is a major concern to both public health authorities and medical practitioners. This paper examines the Kenyan status on cigarette smoking through measurement of various parameters including mass media campaigns, taxation, level of education, nature of employment, and government legislation. Descriptive research design was employed because of its robust capability to give an in depth analysis of state of affairs as it exists in relation to cigarette smoking patterns in three Kenyan counties (Nakuru, Kisii and Migori). The study involved respondents above 18 years of age and was carried out between March and April 2018. Chi-square statistics was used to assess the association between various variables. It is clear from this study that most cigarette smokers had acquired high school education and above; representing 70% of the respondents. At 95% confidence limit, the p-value = 0.39 and confidence interval, $CI = -1.965 - 4.156$. Therefore, cigarette smoking is dependent on the level of education. The odd ratio (OR) of 3.10 indicates a strong association between smoking and the level of education. This study also revealed that majority of the respondents smoked between 6 and 10 cigarettes per day (36%). Besides, 50% of the target population admitted to being aware of the health hazards caused by cigarette smoking despite their continued smoking habits. This survey has demonstrated that most cigarette smokers are not only well educated but are aware of the dangers of cigarette smoking. Moreover, most respondents are addicted to cigarette smoking despite taxes imposed on tobacco products including cigarettes. This characteristic behaviour may be attributed to high unemployment rates in Kenya which this study has established as one of the major reasons for cigarette smoking.