

Smoking Behavior and Cessation Experiences among Current Smokers Living in Ankara, Turkey



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* Thank you for your interest in this presentation. Please note that analyses included herein are preliminary. More recent, finalized analyses may be available by contacting ISK for further information.

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Background

Smoking is a major contributor to morbidity and mortality in Turkey. 150,000 deaths per year are associated with smoking (1) and lung cancer is the leading cancer-related cause of death for both men and women.(2) Although smoking rates have decreased in high-income countries, rates in low- and middle-income countries seem to be resistant to declines.(2) This is especially true in Turkey, which is 6th in the world in smoking consumption (3) and is one of the top five producers of tobacco.(4) An estimated 51-63% of Turkish men and 24-26% of Turkish women 15 years of age and older are currently smokers.(5;6) Indeed, a current smoker is found in seven out of 10 households.(7) The implementation of effective smoking cessation programs in developing countries with high smoking prevalence rates such as Turkey is a major public health priority.(8;9) Nonetheless, few studies have been published documenting the demand for such programs.

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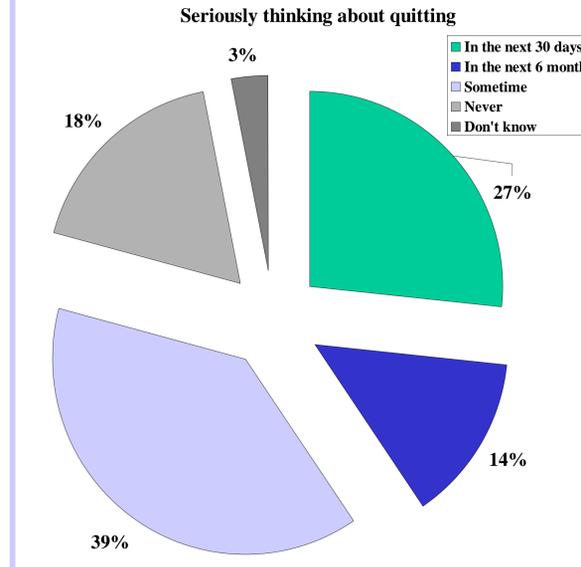
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Sample characteristics (n=148)

Characteristics	Quitters (n=79)	Non-quitters (n=69)	P-value
Age (Mean: SD)	35.5 (1.0)	40.6 (1.3)	0.002
Female	44% (35)	43% (30)	0.92
Married	58% (46)	70% (48)	0.15
Income: 1249 ytl or less	30% (24)	22% (15)	0.14
1 st cigarette within 30 mins	30% (24)	57% (39)	0.002
26 cigs + / day	5% (4)	16% (11)	0.03

Quitting experience (n=79)

Descriptors	% (n)
Used a quitting aid	23% (18)
Started smoking again because...	
Missed the taste	34% (27)
Stress	43% (34)
Cravings	56% (44)
Bored	25% (20)
Nervous	35% (28)
Felt depressed	24% (19)
Alcohol	9% (7)



Expectations for quitting (n=148)

	% (n)
I would be proud	68% (101)
I would be less social	13% (19)
I would eat more	55% (82)
I would miss the taste	58% (86)
I would get withdrawal sx's	55% (81)
I would be rid of the addiction	41% (61)
I would miss the relaxation	58% (86)
I would be bored more often	42% (62)

Learning Objectives

1. Quantify smoking cessation demand in a high prevalence sample.
2. Describe the quitting experience, particularly how many try quitting and why they start smoking again.
3. Articulate differences in the smoking experience for men and women, and how these differences inform public health smoking cessation efforts.

Eligibility Criteria

- Being over 18 years of age,
- Currently smoking daily,
- Owning a cell phone and having sent and received text messages in the past year,
- Informed consent.

Study Limitations

- Sample skewed towards technology users. Although the impact of the data was minimized because respondents were told that "we are designing a program to help adults quit smoking and we need your input".
- Small sample size
- Convenience sample

Survey Methodology

Data were collected between April 12 and July 23, 2008. The survey protocol was reviewed and approved by the Western IRB in the United States and Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey.

Respondents were recruited in Ankara, Turkey. Flyers were posted in the common areas at Hacettepe University and a research assistant went to government buildings and solicited those smoking outside to take part.

Among the 165 adults who were identified as eligible, 152 adults completed the self-report survey (response rate = 91%). Four respondents subsequently were deemed ineligible during data cleaning and were dropped, resulting in a sample size of 148.

Smoking experience by sex (n=148)

	Women % (n)	Men % (n)	Statistical comparison OR (95% CI)
Reasons to smoke			
Stress	92% (60)	94% (78)	0.8 (0.2, 2.8)
Cravings	85% (55)	81% (67)	1.3 (0.6, 3.1)
To feel comfortable in social situations	31% (20)	40% (33)	0.7 (0.3, 1.3)
It goes well with alcohol	52% (34)	64% (53)	0.6 (0.3, 1.2)
Family pressure	37% (24)	23% (19)	2.0 (1.0, 4.0)
Social pressure	42% (27)	27% (22)	1.9 (1.0, 3.7)
Perceptions of smoking (agree/strongly agree)			
Smoking is normal	29% (19)	28% (23)	1.0 (0.5, 2.1)
Smoking causes lung cancer	88% (57)	92% (76)	0.7 (0.2, 1.9)
Smoking is cool	12% (8)	12% (10)	1.0 (0.4, 2.8)
Smoking sets a bad example for my kids	88% (65)	92% (72)	0.7 (0.2, 1.9)

Conclusion

The desire to quit appears to be strong among current adult smokers in Ankara. Public health efforts should capitalize on health concerns related to smoking and increase their efforts to reach older smokers and those who are heavily addicted to cigarettes. Our data, although preliminary, serve as a call for targeted, tailored smoking cessation services for women.