

Access to Pocket Money and Low Educational Performance Predict Tobacco Use Among Adolescent Boys in Kerala, India

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BACKGROUND:

Tobacco use is increasing among adolescents. We conducted this study to find prevalence and correlates of tobacco use among adolescent boys in Trivandrum city, Kerala

METHODS:

Using a two-stage cluster sampling technique, 1323 boys (12-19 years) were selected from 14 schools. Information on tobacco use, academic performance, pocket money, and other variables was collected using a questionnaire. Multivariate analyses were done to find associations between current use of tobacco and other variables

RESULTS:

Prevalence of current tobacco use was 11.3% (95% CI 9.6-13.0). Current tobacco use was 2.9 times higher among older boys compared to younger boys (OR 2.9, CI 1.6-5.3), 2 times higher among boys whose fathers used tobacco (OR 2.0, CI 1.3-3.1), 2.9 times higher among boys whose friends used tobacco (OR 2.9, CI 1.6-5.1) compared to their counterparts, 3 times higher among boys securing poor (<40% marks) grade compared to those securing excellent (>80% marks) grade (OR 3.0, CI 1.4-6.6), and 4 times higher among those who received pocket money compared to those who did not (OR 4.0, CI 2.2-7.4).

CONCLUSIONS:

Health programs to quit tobacco are suggested in schools with special emphasis on poor performers, those receiving pocket money, and those whose fathers and friends use tobacco