

Quantitative survey of perceptions of electronic cigarette smoking and community college students.

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ABSTRACT

Electronic cigarettes have become increasingly popular over the past decade. This can be due to perceptions that e-cigs are a healthier alternative to traditional tobacco cigarettes. We as a class looked to determine the perceptions of community college student's views on electronic cigarettes verses traditional tobacco cigarettes. Using a quantitative descriptive survey on paper, respiratory therapy students randomly questioned other community college students on a downtown campus outside a health science building and library. We found of all survey participants combined, 47.45% felt that second hand smoke from e-cigs was as harmful as tobacco cigarettes. 52.55% agreed with the e-cig smokers that e-cig second hand smoke is not as harmful as tobacco smoke. 63.82% of community college students that participated in the survey do not consider E-Cigs a healthier alternative to traditional tobacco cigarettes. 34.89% do consider e-cigs a healthy alternative to tobacco smoking. From the results above 44.17% of the participants believe that e-Cigs are beneficial to quitting tobacco cigarettes, and 55.54% of the participants say that it is not beneficial..

RESULTS

Of the 115 participants, twelve stated that they smoked traditional tobacco cigarettes. Eleven of the participants smoke traditional electronic cigarettes. In the data obtained, all of the e-cig smokers were between the ages of 18 to 32. All eleven of the e-cig smokers disagreed with the fifth question, which states, that second hand smoke from e-cigs are not as harmful as tobacco cigarette smoke. Of all survey participants combined, 47.45% felt that second hand smoke from e-cigs was as harmful as tobacco cigarette smoke. 52.55% agreed with the e-cig smokers that e-cig second hand smoke is not as harmful as tobacco smoke. 63.82% of community college students that participated in the survey do not consider E-Cigs a healthier alternative to traditional tobacco cigarettes. 34.89% do consider e-cigs a healthy alternative to tobacco smoking. From the results above 44.17% of the participants believe that e-Cigs are beneficial to quitting tobacco cigarettes, and 55.54% of the participants say that it is not beneficial.

DISCUSSION

The recent data from the American College Health Association shows that 19% of college students are current smokers. These results closely mirror those obtained in the above study results. The percentage of community college students within an urban city in Kentucky who were current smokers of either e-cigs or traditional tobacco cigarettes totaled 15.23%. This validates the results of the study in correlation with national average results. Multiple innovative programs encourage people to quit smoking. However, according to Wechsler et al (2001) nearly 56% of college health directors report that their college health centers offer some sort of smoking cessation program.

Louisville, KY has also seen some progress in air quality and curbing smoking in public areas. Once the smoke-free policy took place and after some time past, indoor pollution and air quality saw remarkable progress (Hahn, Rayens, Ridner, et al, 2010). It is necessary to establish comprehensive public health initiatives tailored for this specific group to reduce the prevalence of tobacco use among future students. Efforts directed at students who smoke should include cessation training. Based on students' desire to receive training in cessation strategies, skills related to tobacco control should be added to the curriculum (DeBernado, Aldinger, Mawood, et al, 1999).

CONCLUSIONS

Further research suggestions include altering the means in which the survey was conducted. Participants surveyed may produce more straightforward answers if directed to an app on a mobile device, or website to complete the survey via computer, instead of face-to-face. Suggestions to further this survey include a more in-depth question pool by increasing the quantity of the questions and more focused questions regarding smoking habits. Probing questions to see what college students really know and understand about the consequences of long term smoking habits. There is a big difference in having heard of pulmonary disease, COPD, and lung cancer and understanding what life looks with them.

REFERENCES

- DeBernado, R. L., Aldinger, C. E., Dawood, Et al, (1999). An e-mail assessment of undergraduates' attitudes toward smoking. Journal of American College Health, 48, 61-66.
- Hahn, E., Rayens, M., Ridner, S., Et al, (2010). Smoke-free Laws and Smoking and Drinking Among College Students. Journal Of Community Health, 35(5), 503-511. doi:10.1007/s10900-010-9220-2
- Wechsler, H., Kelley, K., Seibring, M., Et al, (2001). College smoking policies and smoking cessation programs: Results of a survey of college health center directors. Journal of American College Health, 49, 205-212

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Permission: This project went through the human studies IRB process, and received written permission from system office and administration prior to gathering data from students. Students that participated in the survey were made aware that this project was voluntary and that they could choose not to participate if they desired.

Participants : The 160 (n=115) participants for this study came from large diverse public community college. The students were primarily between the ages of 18-24(n=83). There were 14 participants between the ages of 25-32(n=14). Between the ages 33-40 there were 12 participants (n=12).The lowest amount of participants were within the age range of 41-50(n=5). One participant did not disclose and were listed as 99.

Procedure: Three Respiratory Care students conducted the survey on a downtown campus. The students collected raw data from surveys that was then tabulated in an excel document and analyzed via Pivot Tables. This was done to assess disaggregated responses to each of the survey questions.

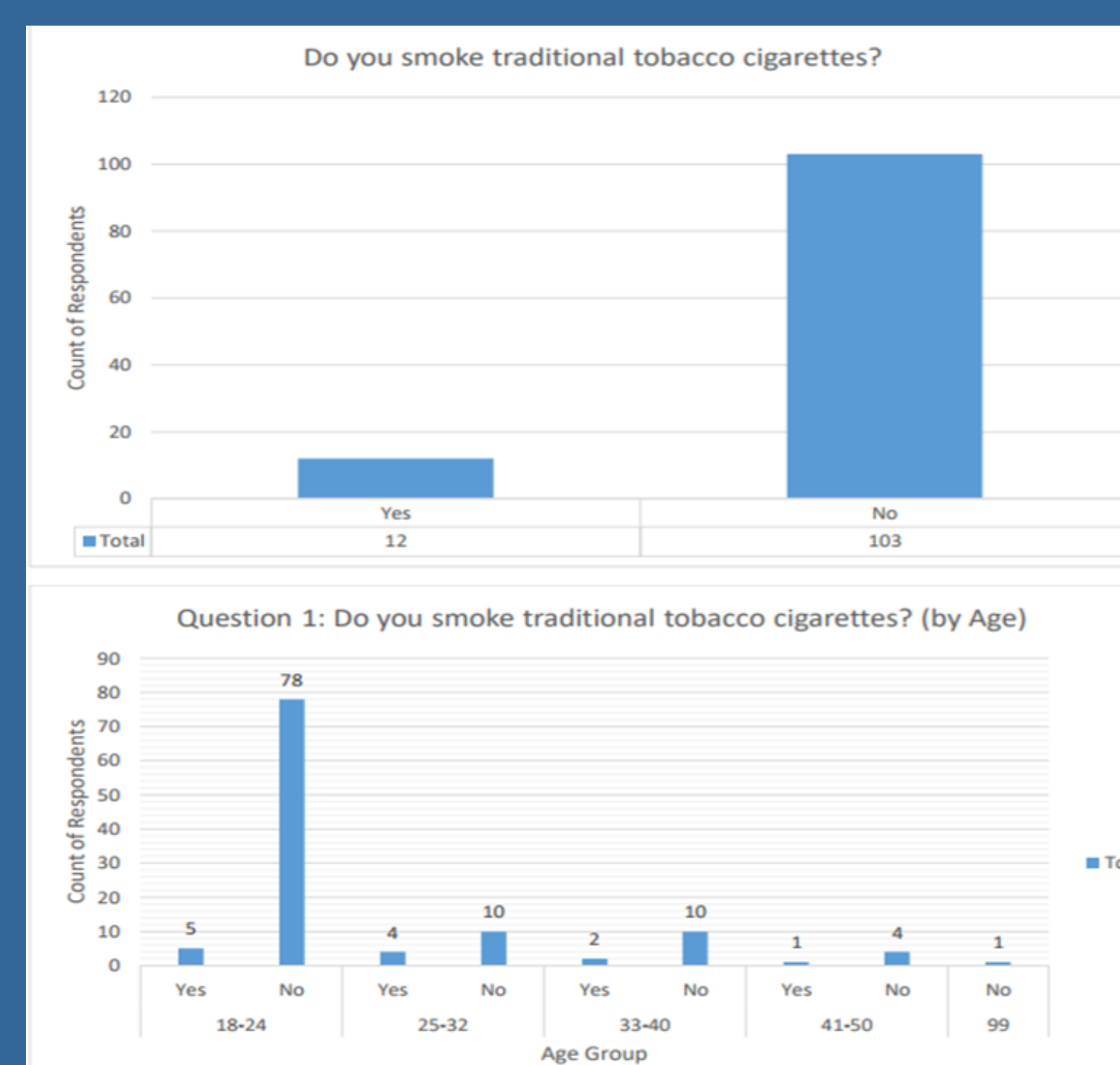
Row Labels	Count of ID	Sum of ID
Yes	12	7.93%
No	103	92.07%
Grand Total	115	100.00%

Row Labels	Count of ID	Sum of ID
Yes	11	7.30%
No	104	92.70%
Grand Total	115	100.00%

Row Labels	Count of ID	Sum of ID
Yes	43	34.89%
No	71	63.82%
99	1	1.29%
Grand Total	115	100.00%

Row Labels	Count of ID	Sum of ID
Yes	51	44.17%
No	63	54.54%
99	1	1.29%
Grand Total	115	100.00%

Row Labels	Count of ID	Sum of ID
Yes	52	47.45%
No	63	52.55%
Grand Total	115	100.00%



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