

The cigarette is burning

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Why do adults within Australian society still smoke cigarettes?

Introduction

Smoking cigarettes has been a part of many cultures around the world. Smoking has generally been seen as a higher socioeconomic place marker or a status of popularity or fame. "A cigarette is an elegant form of a drug delivery device"¹. Smoking started off as the habit to have, to inhale, and exhale as many as possible. Now, science has proven that smoking is deadly, passive smoking is deadly.

I chose this topic to research because all of my life, my parents have smoked; I have seen very ill people still smoke, and I have always questioned myself, why. I also want to determine modern educational systems and environments compared to past systems. Coming across some things such as; why people started smoking, and with all the anti-smoking acts, why do they still smoke. My targeted age group is adults from twenty five years of age and older. I chose a relatively young adult bracket (25 – 35), to gain perspective on why younger adults choose to smoke, even with the dangers and effects of smoking being shown to the public through education and advertisement.

Australia having a very diverse range of cultures, brings many reasons as to why different people from different cultures smoke. Using this topic for my personal interest project will help me gain understanding to why people smoke cigarettes. This will help my understanding of some smokers and why

¹ Jeffrey Wigand, 2010, Smoking statistics, retrieved

20/6/2010 http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Smoking_statistics

they smoke, and the difficulty of trying to stop, as it may cause major mental stress, pressure, and in some cases a physical withdrawal.

To synthesise all the information for my personal interest project, the following methodologies are necessary to gather a sufficient amount of information to help answer my hypothesis. My methodologies are interviews, questionnaires, observations, statistical and content analysis.

The cross cultural comparison for my personal interest project is predominantly generation, because in the past there was cigarette advertisement, people had different views on smoking. Also, why is smoking different now? And is smoking still a socioeconomic status place marker. Another important cross – cultural component is gender. The statistics between men and women are very different, which makes it a good source for cross cultural comparison. Factors also affect smokers like sport, pregnancy and people who do not wish to have someone smoking near them. These factors affect in which how much people will smoke.

Another cross cultural comparison is the difference between smoking in the 1970's within Australian Societies, and Peruvian Societies (birth place of my mum). Are there similarities between the two. Does a drug delivery device have the same effect on all societies?

Log

First idea of a PIP – 6/11/09

Bringing together my ideas about smoking. Why people smoke, have they tried to stop, and why do younger generations continue to follow older generations bad habits.

Finalising my hypothesis “Why do adults within Australian society smoke cigarettes?”

Constructing the base of my introduction – 20/11/09

Using base questions such as:

What the topic is about, why I chose the topic, and how it contributes to my understanding of Society and Culture.

I found an interesting and informative statistical site, which gave calculations of deaths in the past related to smoking, smoking between women, and men within Australia.

Refining my hypothesis with - 8/3/10

Basic plan of my PIP.

Final Question: Why do adults within Australian society still smoke cigarettes?

Why do they?

Why don't they stop?

Have they tried to stop?

They = Men and women in the target age group, 25 – 60.

Differences in generations. Why do the younger generations insist on following old habits even after preventative measure to stop people from smoking?

Construction of my Questionnaire - 3/4/10

8 Close ended questions. Constructing this questionnaire with the intention of getting out the facts of why people smoked, why do they still do it and if they actually know it is bad for their personal health.

Visit to Fair - 25/4/10

I went to Fair to complete some questionnaires as well do some observing for my statistical analysis.

Interview - 5/5/10

Open ended questions aimed at fine details. When did they start, and what were educational systems like compared to current, in previous years. These questions were designed to allow the interviewee to provide knowledge of experiences in a time where smoking is embraced.

Completed a 12 question interview with Marisol. – 12/5/10

Provided knowledge of smoking at a young age (12 years old) why she started, what were the current attitudes of children on smoking, was it "cool" to smoke?

Completed the same interview with Society and Culture teacher – 14/5/10

Constructed the relationship between Marisol's early childhood smoking years with her's.

Completed the same interview with Carlos - 20/5/10

Provided just as useful as Marisol's interview however provided a male perspective to why he started smoking.

Began constructing my Central Material - 27/5/10

Synthesising my gathered information and my secondary research and given knowledge of smoking already.

Chapter 1 – Smoking cigarettes and how it has become an impact on today's Society.

What was smoking 40 years ago? It was the "cool" thing to do; if you didn't smoke you were never going to be as popular as some other people who do smoke. With the information gathered from Marisol, Carlos and my Society and Culture teacher through my interviews the cultural differences remained evident; however the continuity of almost everyone starting to smoke was evident.

Education is the major difference between 2010 and 1970. Through the information obtained my interviews, the difference between education systems is; in the 1970's smoking was not heard of as a bad thing, better yet, teenagers, children everyone were encouraged to start smoking. There was no scientific evidence of smoking proving harmful to the human body. After years passed the word got out and smoking was harmful to your body.

Smoking rates for Australians aged 18 and over have declined by over 40 per cent between 1980 and 2007. What does this mean to me? Educational systems have proven useful, students are learning more about what's harmful for you, smoking at the age of 12 has already shown that serious affects follow you, not just when you are 12 years old however, it depends on how many cigarettes are smoked and how often.

Relating back to my cross cultural comparison, in Peru, educational systems have also proven useful, there has a been a steep decline in public smokers, which comes to show that yes social trends have their affect on a lot of people and most people urge themselves to become a part of the bigger group.

However today youth is proving that education is more helpful to the body than cigarettes.

In reference to my teacher's interview she quit smoking at the age of 21, because she became pregnant. What does this mean? Intrinsic forces of an individual (by the sources gathered) have the ability to provide strength and will power for that person. This is shown as Marisol and my Society and Culture teacher had both been pregnant, and both had stopped smoking, one permanently, one until the child was no longer lactating.

Chapter 2 - So, what is actually in a cigarette?

What do you really inhale every time you bring a cigarette to your mouth, or when you pass by somebody who is smoking? There are over four thousand chemicals in a single cigarette; sixty nine of these are known to cause cancer.

Some of the ingredients that are needed to cook up a cigarette include:

Tar – which includes many poisonous chemicals such as: ammonia, toluene and Acetone

Nicotine

Carbon monoxide

Hydrogen Cyanide

Metals – which includes lead, nickel, arsenic and cadmium

Pesticides – which includes methoprene, benzene and naphthalene

All of which chemicals can severely harm the body, causing cancerous diseases, and increasing the chances of causing unrelated smoking cancers.

With the abuse of a cigarette to the human body, it very slowly lets down its defences, (immunity system) after years and years of heavy smoking noticeable factors of a smoking addiction are noticeable.

However smoking does more for short term damage than people realise; smoking reduces the amount of oxygen stored within the body, which requires the heart to pump out blood at a much higher rate, however with the decrease of oxygen within the body and blood, muscles begin to fatigue or lose energy due to the lack of oxygen. What is the end result of the higher beats per minute of your heart? An over worked heart, which can potentially lead to a stroke or coronary heart disease.

So why do people smoke? Addiction, nicotine is classified as the most addictive drug in the world. Nicotine causes smokers to be so heavily addicted, it changes the way the brain functions and the body functions, some people who have the genuine intention of wanting to quit smoking sometimes do not have the personal will power to control their own habits.

How do people counter nicotine? They cannot. Friends and family are the only people able to help people with ANY addiction. Success is not guaranteed, it will never be set in stone.

"The Environmental Protection Agency estimated that 3,000 nonsmokers died of lung cancer in 1999 because of second-hand smoke." Passive smokers die every day.

Chapter 3 – It all comes down to the individual.

Of the people which participated in my questionnaire 42% were in the ages of 35 and 44. Of that 42%, 66% chose relief to the question, "Why do you smoke cigarettes?" 3% of the participants said they do NOT want to stop smoking. With the 97% of the participants wanting to quit smoking, that same 3% had also never tried any promotional quitting methods, nor seek advice from friends or family.

Through my interviews it is evident that there are cravings however they vary for the individual

Last but no least, 85%of participants ticked "Everybody else was doing it" for "Why did you start smoking". This proves that social changes and trends have a major influence on the socialisation of a single human being. Acceptance and rejection play a major part what is the social norm.

My interviewees had all attempted to quit smoking, only 1 person had been able to quit smoking because of its addiction. All interviewees had seeked out help from friends, family and pharmaceutical products. And all participants have all experienced pressure or commitment to quit smoking. My Society and Culture teacher quit smoking because she was pregnant, the often social cigarette is accepted but she is not addicted. However my mum did also stop smoking when she fell pregnant, 4 times! Marisol had continued to smoke afterwards, because of stress

Conclusion

In conclusion through data collected proved informative through my perceptions of social and cultural literacy. This Personal Interest Project helped me understand the greater meaning of addiction and the impact cigarettes as a legal drug have on our society. Yes the government are banning things such as public display of cigarettes while purchasing, soon the individual cigarette package displays will be removed to fit a blank carton containing cigarettes.

The information gathered through my research proved useful in analysing the statistics and affects of cigarette smoking.

I enjoyed doing this Personal Interest Project and it has also shown me how one small trend can become a world crisis so easily and quickly.

Annotated Bibliography

<http://oxygen.org.au/hardfacts/how-many-people-smoke>

This web site helped me understand that people do try to quit, which is a question within my questionnaire.

15/3/10

<http://www.cancerCouncil.com.au/editorial.asp?pageid=371>

Statistics on the difference between men and women.

15/3/10

http://www.oztam.com.au/pdf/TV_ratings/generation_categories.pdf

This website was able to give me information on current generation age groups, to compare through my research.

8/3/10

<http://web4health.info/en/answers/add-smoking-effect.htm>

This site gave me useful information on how smoking affects the individual in regards to addiction. - 3/6/10

http://www.ehow.com/how-does_4574452_cigarettes-affect-body.html

The affects on unborn babies, passive smokers and addiction- 14/6/10

http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Smoking_statistics

Statistics of death through cigarettes. 20/6/10

1. Jeffry Wigand, PhD. Former tobacco executive.