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Title: To determine the prevalence and predictors of smoking and smokeless tobacco use amongst women in Karachi, Pakistan

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Body: STUDY DESIGN Cross sectional study. STUDY SAMPLE A Convenient sample of 485 female attendants was taken for the study. A standard questionnaire for tobacco use, developed by WHO, was used. Results: Prevalence of tobacco Overall, 96(19.6%) admitted to using tobacco in one form or another. 13(2.7%) of the total respondents were smokers and 83(17.1%) were smokeless tobacco users. The use of tobacco was found to increase with age and was highest among the age group of 66 years and above (P<0.01, C.I 95%). A higher prevalence of tobacco use was found in women who had never gone to school and the prevalence of tobacco use decreased with increasing education(P<0.001,O.R 4.6 with CI 95%). When the association between marital status and tobacco use was assessed it was found that tobacco use was more prevalent amongst married women (P<0.001, O.R 6.13 with CI 95%). It was found that tobacco use was more prevalent amongst the working/employed women as compared to the non working women/house wives (P<0.05,O.R=1.90 with C.I=95%). When the participants were asked about the extent of harm tobacco can cause, 69.5% participants were of the view that it was very harmful while 6.8% thought that it was harmless. The remaining participants thought that it caused little harm. Being hospital based, our study may have the shortcomings of a hospital based study. Another limitation could be due to the fact that it was done in Karachi and the results may not be generalisable across the whole country. Investment in epidemiological studies of tobacco use and its predictors in different areas of the country among different population groups would be very beneficial in our fight against tobacco.