



Knowledge and attitude towards ban on sale of loose cigarettes / bidis among smokers and vendors in Pune Maharashtra

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Abstract

With the increasing consumption of tobacco and cigarettes there has always been a need for strict implementation of laws pertaining to limit the sale of tobacco and other tobacco products in India. Recently Government of Maharashtra has proposed COPTA (Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act) Amendment Bill, 2020, that seeks to disallow retail sale of loose sticks of cigarettes with effect from September 24, 2020 with provisions for penalty to producer, manufacturer and seller or distributor in case of violations. Study aims to assess awareness, perception and practices about ban of sale of loose cigarettes among tobacco vendors and smokers. Cross sectional survey was carried out using pre-tested questionnaire to collect information regarding awareness about ban among 450 smokers and 100 vendors in Pune, Maharashtra. Statistical analysis was done using IBM SPSS software. 42% of smokers and 65% of vendors were aware about the law regarding ban on sale of loose cigarettes. 70% people respondent that they prefer to buy loose cigarettes. 89% of vendors opined that they are ready to stop the sale of loose cigarettes and 62% smoker expressed their readiness to quit if the laws regarding the same are strictly enforced. This law seems to provide a positive response but it is of utmost necessity that there is a strict enforcement of this law by the government. Awareness has to be created among youths and adults through social media, advertisements and newspapers. Public health officials should keep a keen watch on singles being sold and penalty for the sellers.

Keywords: Awareness, Ban, Loose cigarettes, Smokers, Tobacco, vendors

INTRODUCTION

Cigarettes are most commonly used form of tobacco accounting for 96% of total worldwide sales; rapid growth of tobacco industries has made cigarettes availability easy. As per National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) in 1995-1996 threshold prevalence of smoked form of tobacco consumption was 14% of the population. On an average, Indians smoked about 6.2 cigarettes per day. Cigarettes are sold in tins, cartons, packs, "kiddie" packs and as loose sticks^[1]. The sales and use of loose cigarettes is widely common among the people from low and middle –income countries including India. About three fourth of cigarettes are sold individually on smoker's demand in India^[2]. Sale of loose cigarettes is often associated with increased price per unit (beyond the Maximum Retail Price marked on the packs) which is pocketed by the vendor and thus may result in loss of revenue to the government^[3]. Raising retail tax is one of the most effective means to reduce tobacco use and encourage smoker to quit, whereas sale of loose cigarettes may prevent effective implementation of such taxation^[4]. A 2013 report by an equity research firm states that pictorial health warnings and plain packaging pose no risk to India's cigarette companies since it is primarily a single stick market^[5]. Singles also help cigarette companies to absorb taxes and cushion any tax rise on price which is paid by smokers^[6]. Article 6 of World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) recommends comprehensive policies and effective enforcement strategies to eliminate loose cigarette sale^[7]. India being a signatory is still facing challenges in implementing regulation of ban on sale of loose cigarettes and related legal implications. However loose cigarettes sale has been banned in couple of states from North India^[8]. In line with this, the Government of Maharashtra also introduced

law banning sale of loose cigarettes with effect from September 24, 2020 with provisions for penalty to producer, manufacturer and seller or distributor (in accordance to COTPA 2003) in case of violations.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Cross sectional survey was carried out using pre-tested questionnaire to collect information regarding awareness about ban among 450 smokers and 100 vendors in Pune, Maharashtra. Statistical analysis was done using IBM SPSS.

A descriptive and cross-sectional study was conducted between 26 July 2021 to 9 August 2021 among 450 smokers and 100 vendors in Pune district of Maharashtra after obtaining the permission from ethics committee of the institution. A 13 item and 6 item closed ended, validated questionnaire was prepared for assessing the awareness about the ban on sell of loose cigarettes among the smokers and vendors of Maharashtra respectively.

Pilot study- A pilot study was conducted among 20 smokers and 10 vendors to check the feasibility of the questionnaire.

Sampling method-The Random sampling method was used for data collection. The Pune city was divided into 5 blocks and from each block, shops selling cigarettes and bidis were considered as sampling frame. The first vendor shop was chosen at random and successive shops were visited by moving in particular direction in the locality till adequate numbers of vendors were included. At each outlet besides a vendor 3-4 smokers were requested to fill the questionnaire.

Data- A predesigned and pretested questionnaire.

Data Collection- After obtaining written informed consent from participants, a pre-designed and pre-tested questionnaire was administered by trained interviewer to collect required information. The questionnaire tool was framed in such way that it included assessment of knowledge and attitudes of smokers and vendors regarding ban on sale of loose cigarettes. Additionally, socio-demographic details such as age, gender, locality and level of education were recorded.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis was done with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistic for window, version 21.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.) at 95% CI and 80% power to the study. Descriptive statistics was performed in terms of mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage. Chi Square test was applied to check for statistical significance. Statistical Significance was calculated at $p < 0.05$ level.

DISTRIBUTION OF SMOKERS AS PER AGE

AGE GROUP	MALES		FEMALES		OVERALL	
	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
18-20	17	4.80%	6	11%	23	5.67%
21-25	88	25%	31	57%	119	29.38%
26-30	84	23%	9	16%	93	22.96%
>30	163	46%	7	13%	170	41.97%

DISTRIBUTION OF SMOKERS AS PER LEVEL OF EDUCATION

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	MALES		FEMALES		OVERALL	
	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
ILLITERATE	5	1.42%	0	0%	5	1.23%
PRIMARY SCHOOL	40	11.36%	0	0%	40	9.80%
HIGH SCHOOL	85	24%	8	15%	93	22.92%
GRADUATE	222	63%	45	84%	267	65.90%

KNOWLEDGE BASED RESPONSES

SR.NO	QUESTIONS	YES/NO	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	P value
01.	ARE YOU AWARE ABOUT THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF TOBACCO ON HEALTH?	YES	302 (85.50%)	51 (96.2%)	353 (87.16%)	<0.001
		NO	50 (4.20%)	2 (3.7%)	52 (12.8%)	
02.	DO YOU KNOW A RECENT LAW REGARDING BAN ON SALE OF LOOSE CIGARETTES?	YES	144 (40.90%)	30 (56.60%)	174 (42.96%)	
		NO	208 (59.60%)	23 (43.39%)	231 (57.03%)	
03.	DO YOU KNOW THAT MAHARASHTRA HAS IMPLEMENTED THE LAW REGARDING BAN ON LOOSE CIGARETTES?	YES	144 (40.90%)	30 (56.60%)	174 (42.96%)	
		NO	208 (59.60%)	23 (43.39%)	231 (57.03%)	
04.	HAVE YOU FOUND DIFFICULTY IN BUYING LOOSE CIGARETTES DUE TO THE BAN ON SALE OF LOOSE CIGARETTES /BIDIS?	YES	69 (19.60%)	10 (18.86%)	79 (19.50%)	
		NO	284 (80.68%)	42 (79.24%)	326 (80.49%)	
05.	HAVE YOU TRIED TO PAY EXTRA MONEY TO BUY LOOSE CIGARETTES/BIDIS SINCE OCTOBER 2020?	YES	85 (24.17%)	22 (41.50%)	107 (26.41%)	
		NO	268 (76.13%)	31 (58.49%)	299 (73.82%)	
06.	IF THIS LAW IS STRICTLY ENFORCED, DOES IT HELP YOU TO QUIT SMOKING?	YES	216 (61.36%)	36 (67.90%)	252 (62.22%)	
		NO	138 (39.21%)	15 (28.30%)	153 (37.77%)	

ATTITUDE BASED RESPONSES

SR.NO	QUESTION	NO. OF CIGARETTES	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	P value
1	ARE YOU A SMOKER? IF YES, HOW MANY CIGARETTES/ BIDIS DO YOU SMOKE PER WEEK?	2 TO 5	80 (22.72%)	23 (43.39%)	103 (25.43%)	<0.001
		>10	47(13.35%)	9(16.98%)	56(13.82%)	
		10 TO 20	74 (21.02%)	9 (16.98%)	83 (20.49%)	
		>20	151 (42.89%)	12 (22.64%)	163 (40.24%)	
2	SINCE HOW MANY YEARS, YOU ARE SMOKING CIGARETTES /BIDIS?	YEARS	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	
		1 YEAR	56 (15.90%)	28 (52.83%)	84 (20.74%)	
		1-5 YEAR	161 (45.73%)	16 (30.18%)	177 (43.70%)	
		>5 YEAR	135 (38.35%)	10 (18.86%)	145 (35.80%)	
3	THE LAST TIME YOU BOUGHT CIGARETTES, HOW MANY DID YOU BUY?	NO. OF CIGARETTES	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	
		1 TO 9	243 (69.03%)	32 (60.37%)	275 (67.90%)	
		ONE PACK	108 (30.68%)	20 (37.73%)	128 (31.6%)	
		CARTON	1 (0.23%)	1 (1.90%)	2 (0.49%)	
4	YOU PREFER BUYING	TYPE	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	
		LOOSE	245	40	285	

	CIGARETTES AS?		(69.60%)	(75.47%)	(70.37%)	<0.001
		PACKS	112	13	125	
			(13.81%)	(24.52%)	(30.86%)	
5	QUESTION	REASONS	MALE	FEMALES	TOTAL	
	IF YOU PREFER TO BUY LOOSE CIGARETTES /BIDIS WHAT ARE YOUR REASONS?	MORE AFFORDABLE	43	6	49	
			(12.21%)	(11.32%)	(12.09%)	
		MORE CONVIENIENT	67	12	79	
			(19.03%)	(22.64%)	(19.50%)	
		EASILY ACCESSSIBLE	46	6	52	
			(13.06%)	(11.32%)	(12.83%)	
		MORE SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE	32	6	38	
			(9.09%)	(11.32%)	(9.38%)	
		HELPS TO REDUCE FREQUENCY	179	23	202	
			(50.85%)	(43.39%)	(49.87%)	
6	QUESTION	FREQUENCY	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	
	HOW MANY TIMES A WEEK YOU BUY PACK OF CIGARETTES/BIDIS?	0	194	27	221	
			(55.11%)	(50.94%)	(54.56%)	
		ONCE A WEEK	76	12	88	
			(21.59%)	(22.64%)	(21.72%)	
		2	43	10	53	
		(12.21%)	(18.86%)	(13.08%)		
		>2	45	4	49	
			(12.78%)	(7.54%)	(12.09%)	
7	QUESTION	EFFECT ON SMOKING	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	
	IF SINGES ARE NOT AVAILABLE IN YOUR LOCALITY, HOW DID IT AFFECT YOU?	REDUCED FREQUENCY	52	17	69	
			(14.77%)	(32.07%)	(17.03%)	
		PREFERRED BUYING PACKS	163	22	185	
			(46.30%)	(41.50%)	(45.67%)	
		NOT AFFORDABLE SO TRIED QUITTING	140	14	154	
			(39.77%)	(26.41%)	(38.02%)	

DISTRIBUTION OF VENDORS AS PER AGE AND LEVELS OF EDUCATION

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
1)AGE GROUP		
18-20	05	5%
21-25	23	23%
25-30	14	14%
>30	58	58%
2)LEVEL OF EDUCATION		
ILLITERATE	6	6%
PRIMARY SCHOOL	42	42%
HIGH SCHOOL	32	32%
GRADUATE	20	20%

SR.NO.	KNOWLEDGE BASED RESPONSES	YES	NO	P value
1)	ARE YOU AWARE OF A RECENT LAW ON BAN IN SELLING LOOSE CIGARETTES?	65 (65%)	35 (35%)	<0.001
2)	ARE YOU AWARE OF THE PENALTIES IF YOU SELL LOOSE	27	73	

	CIGARETTES?	(27%)	(73%)
3)	DOES BANNING THE SALE OF LOOSE CIGARETTES AFFECTS YOUR BUSINESS & FINANCES?	77 (77%)	23 (23%)
4)	ARE YOU READY TO STOP SELLING LOOSE CIGARETTES IF THIS LAW IS STRICTLY ENFORCED?	89 (89%)	11 (11%)

SR.NO.	ATTITUDE BASED RESPONSES				P value
		SINCE A YEAR	2-5 YEARS	>5 YEARS	
1)	FOR HOW LONG ARE YOU SELLING CIGARETTES?	18 (18%)	29 (29%)	53 (53%)	<0.001
2)	IF YES, WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR CONTINUED SALE OF LOOSE CIGARETTES BY YOU?	CONSUMERS DEMAND	BENEFIT OF SELLING MORE	ABSENCE OF HEALTH WARNING	
		90 (90%)	10 (10%)	1 (1%)	

RESULTS

Among 405 current smokers, 352(86.91%) were males and 53(13.08%) were females; of which maximum 170 (41.97%) were aged above 30 adults. Living in a metropolitan area 267(65.90%) were significantly associated with higher education. In these 177 (43.70%) subjects were current smokers since 1- 5 years. 163(40.20%) individuals were that, who smoked more than 20 cigarettes per week and 353(87.16%) individuals were knowing about the harmful effects of smoking on health. Of the 405 smokers, 174(42.96%) individuals were aware about the recent law of ban on sale of loose cigarettes and bidis while 231(57.03%) were unaware. 285(70.37%) subjects had reported of preferring individual cigarettes and remaining 125 (30.86%) reported of preferring packs and 275(67.90%) people reported that the last time they bought was loose (1-9). Also 107(26.41%) people reported of paying extra money since October 2020 and 79(19.50%) people faced difficulty in buying loose cigarettes due to the law and 326(80.49%) people didn't face any. 163(40.24%) people preferred buying loose cigarettes to reduce frequency of smoking. If the law is enforced strictly 252(62.22%) people confirm of quitting the habit and 69(17.03%) people confirm of reducing frequency. Among 100 vendors, 58% are above 30 adults and 42% are individuals have primary school as the level of education. 53% of vendors were selling cigarettes for more than 5 years. Of this 65% were aware about the law while 73% were unaware about the penalties for the same. 90% of vendors conveyed of the most common reason for the continued sale of the loose cigarettes were on consumer's demand. 77% vendors reported about probability of experiencing much serious impact on their business due to the law. But still 89% of individuals agreed to follow the law and completely stop selling loose cigarettes.

DISCUSSION

A major public health concern is discouraging consumption of tobacco among people. In regards to this government has been raising taxes on tobacco and its products .The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) has established that sale of loose cigarettes increases the affordability and accessibility of tobacco for minors. Acknowledging this threat, the government of Maharashtra has also imposed a complete ban on the sale of single stick loose cigarettes and bidis, with immediate effect on the State of Maharashtra from September 24, 2020. Our study is based on knowledge and attitude towards ban on sale of loose cigarettes among smokers and vendors in Pune, Maharashtra.

In our study, majority of males (46%) were of the age >30 and Males (30%) and females (69%) were of the age group 18-25 age. In males particularly of this age group, smoking could be probably due to work stress, financial issues, mental triggers. In females, smoking may be due peer pressure, social influence, curiosity. Also, in younger aged individuals smoking could be because adolescence is the period for experimenting with tobacco use. Advertisements of various tobacco products are very common in all forms of media and they encourage children or young adults to experiment with tobacco products and initiate regular use and reduce motivation to quit. Similar to a study by Smith et al in 2004, 25.6% males and 21.5% females of the age group 18-24 were current smokers^[5].

In our study maximum males and females were graduate. (65.9%). Contradictory to it, a study by Smith et al^[5]. Smoking has declined disproportionately for people who are more educated, have skilled jobs, better health and higher household income than for people who are not already advantaged by these factors such that prevalence is higher for those whose are living in poverty(29%). In the U.S. as in other western countries smoking is now associated with low socioeconomic status with higher rates among those with the fewest resources. A higher percentage of smokers were aware about health hazards. (85.5% males and 96% females). This might be due to display of pictorial warnings, health warnings, advertisement, media, literacy, government measures. Similarly, As per findings from secondary analysis of

GATS survey^[7], about 60.2% smokers were about adverse effects of tobacco. Likewise a study in Moradabad city, India by T.L. Ravishankar et al^[4] around 85.83% of participants were aware of some adverse health problems associated due to tobacco consumption. This was in contrast to a study by Shetty et al^[9] where the percentage of awareness of health hazards was less. 40% males and 56% females were aware about the recent law on ban on sale of loose cigarette. Lack of awareness may be due to lack of publicity by government through print and electronic media, sub-optimal law enforcement which may be due to covid crisis and lockdown period. Awareness about the law was seen more in higher educated as this law of imposing ban on loose cigarettes was recently enforced and people being well educated get the latest knowledge and news from the various media like newspaper and television making them well versed with the latest laws imposed by the government. Similar to a study in Moradabad city, India by T.L. Ravishankar et al^[4] around 49% of the participants were aware of the laws in relation to loose cigarettes not to be sold. 80% males and females found no difficulty in buying loose cigarettes. This could be because of easy access to singles in vicinity, continued sale of loose cigarettes by vendors, lack of implementation of law and penalties by government. 76% males and 58% females said that they never tried to pay any extra money for buying singles. As singles were easily available because of sale by vendors, they didn't find any need to pay extra. 61.3% males and 67.9% females said that they will try quitting if the law is strictly enforced. Study as per Guillory et al 2015^[10] found that smokers who intend to quit or had made quit attempts were more likely to purchase and smoke single cigarette.

As per 2008 ITC Mexico survey^[11] 40% smokers reported cravings to smoke after seeing loose cigarettes. Greater neighborhood access to single cigarette may be associated with lower probability of making quit attempt. Contradictory to this, as per a study in Karnataka^[12]. 16% of smokers will think of quitting if law is strictly enforced.

In males 42% smokes more than 20 cigarettes per week and in females 43% smokes 2-5 cigarettes per week. The reasons for heavy smoking among males may be because of smoking habit since many years, addiction, stress, family issues. In females light smoking may be because of younger age, recently started smoking, social restrictions. 45% of males were smoking since, 1-5 years and 52% females smokes since a year. Since majority of females are of the younger age group 21-25 years. 69% males and 60% females bought 1-9 cigarettes as their last purchase. Total 78% smokers reported their last purchase as 1-9 cigarettes.

According to secondary data analysis from GATS^[7], India 2009-10, 85% people bought loose cigarettes. Contradictory to this, In a study of young adult bar patrons in New York City^[13] about 15% of nondaily and 4% daily smokers reported that their last purchase was loose. 70% males and 75% females preferred buying loose cigarettes over packs. This may be due to they think singles will help to limit consumption and this reduce frequency and it is also more convenient to them.

In study by Stillman et al, 2014^[5], 77% smokers prefer loose.

In study in Karnataka^[12], 94% smokers prefer buying loose cigarettes.

Contradictory to this, Thrasher et al^[13] have documented much lesser proportion 38% of smokers choosing loose cigarettes. Reasons for observed lower prevalence could be because singles are relatively less common in developed countries.

According to secondary data analysis from GATS^[7], India 2009-10, the practice of buying of loose cigarettes was more common among males as compared to females, which was contradictory to our study where percentage of loose purchase was more in females as compared to males.

In our study both younger and adults prefer loose (70%).

Contradictory to the study in Mexico by Thrasher et al^[13] buying loose cigarettes was more concentrated in younger smokers.

The major reason for buying loose was 50% males and 43% females think that buying loose will help them to reduce frequency of smoking. Secondly 19% males and 22% females feel buying loose as more convenient.

Other reasons being more affordable, easily accessible & socially acceptable. In a study in Karnataka^[12], 94% preferred buying loose, reason being poor implementation of law.

According a data from 2008 ITC Mexico survey^[11] 24% of adult smokers reported using single cigarette as a strategy for reducing cigarette consumption.

According to Smith et al^[5] a normalized practice of buying and selling singles within the community with the participants describing buying singles as a preferred acquisition practice.

A study in Moradabad city, India by T.L. Ravishankar et al^[4] loosies allow for those with fewer resources especially who are underage to buy cigarettes without having to purchase a whole pack. A study in Mexico by Thrasher et al^[13] described reasons for buying loose cigarettes as non-daily smoking, greater intentions to quit, to reduce intensity of smoking.

In our study 21% males and 20% females purchase pack once a week. They might be buying pack during travelling, party, weekends and single cigarettes have lower upfront cost than packs, per unit cost of single is double the cost when buying packs.

And 46% males and 41% females said they will buy pack if singles are not available. Also, some think that they will try quitting. As most of the males are heavy smokers and graduate, affordability is not an issue they can easily buy packs. Findings from WHO report states that 31% of smokers would still choose a packet of cigarette if there is non-availability of loose cigarettes which is similar to our result.

Among vendors 42% has completed primary schooling. Being a developing country most of the vendors are from lower socio-economic status, therefore they sell their products for their livelihood. Increase in unemployment and least requirement of education could also be a reason for them to open such shops. 58% of vendors were age group of above 30 years. Majority of the vendors selling cigarettes since more than 5 years (53%) due to increase in demand due to stressful lifestyle. As per the COPTA act^[3], it is illegal to open a cigarette pack and sell individual cigarette. In spite of that they continued selling loose cigarettes citing demand by the customers as the most common reason of 90% vendors. Also 10% vendors stated that profit would be more in selling of loose cigarette. Also Euro monitor international tobacco report^[14] estimated that nearly 70% of all cigarettes are sold as single cigarette in India. Similar responses have been documented in Karnataka studies^[12] 74.2% vendors stated that demand by the customers as the most common reason. This is in contrast –to a population based study from Mexico^[11] which reported that the prevalence of buying single cigarette at last cigarette purchase was only 10%.

Among 100 vendors 65% vendors were aware of existence of a law regarding banning sale of loose cigarettes and only 27% knew that it was a punishable offence. Awareness about the law was unsatisfactory among the vendors; this could be due to suboptimal law enforcement and less advertisements along with the current pandemic crisis.

Similar responses have been documented in Karnataka studies^[12] 95.5% vendors reported sale of loose cigarettes and only half 49.7% aware of the existence of law. And 53.5% vendors knew it was a punishable offence. According to study in Moradabad city in India, 2016 only 51% awareness was seen in relation to loose cigarettes not to be sold^[4]. In Mexico City 58% stores sell^[13] large proportions of vendors 89% admitted that they will stop selling loose cigarettes if these laws are strictly enforced and 11% vendors stated that they will not stop selling loose cigarettes even though laws are strictly enforced.

And similar responses are documented in Karnataka^[12] studies 84.5% vendors admitted that they will stop selling those cigarettes if law are strictly enforced in the district.

Loose cigarettes are semi-legitimate means by which sellers are able to meet their economic needs. Among 100 vendors 77% vendors stated that banning of loose cigarettes affect their business and finances. Many people who cannot afford buying packets can lead to decrease in their profits.

In our study, 70% young and adult smokers prefer buying loose cigarettes. Majority of them think buying singles help them to reduce the frequency of smoking and keep consumption down. Because when they buy pack, they don't take a break between cigarettes and smokes one after other. Thus, buying singles helps them maintain smoking frequency to minimal. Also, those who have quit intentions also tend to buy singles. Whether such quit intentions and accompany use of single cigarettes translates into actual quit behavior will require longitudinal analysis.

Single cigarettes may help facilitate early stages of nicotine addiction among young people and keep disadvantaged group (poor) smoking. Single cigarettes act as a gateway for youth smoking. Also, for those who are trying to quit, they experienced an urge and craving for smoking on seeing loose cigarettes being sold. Thus, single cigarettes are cue to smoking. Also, sale of singles prevents exposure of smokers to health warning. It promotes smoking among poor for whom buying packs is not affordable. Also, greater price and extra effort to find singles may contribute to lower levels of consumption.

Our results provide evidence of harm reduction benefits of the recent law on ban of loose cigarettes. However, whether this law actually helps requires a longitudinal follow up.

Street vendors involved in sale of loose cigarettes in India comes under informal economic sectors, which are unrecognized and unregulated by legal system posing major challenge to tobacco control. Also, vendors find it as an opportunity to extract more tolls with singles and for tobacco companies, sale of singles have been encouragement towards newer brands at point of sale. Article 6 of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) recommends comprehensive policies and effective enforcement strategies to eliminate loose cigarettes sale. There is a need of strict enforcement of this law by the government. Public health officials should keep a watch on single cigarettes being sold and penalty for the sellers. And award the seller for completely implementing this law. Also, awareness has to be created about loose cigarettes ban among youths and adults through use of social media, advertisements, and public health officials. The upcoming generation should be educated and made aware about health hazards of tobacco and prevent them from any kind of nicotine addiction.

CONCLUSION

When loose cigarettes are not available in the vicinity, affordability, accessibility, convenience being an issue, will help people reduce frequency and trying to quit. Although vendors are selling loose cigarettes upon consumers demand, they should be made aware about the penalties and vendors selling loose cigarettes should be punished. Only then will the public be stay away from loose cigarettes. With the combined efforts of government, public health officials and vendors, the ultimate goal of tobacco free India and overall reduction of tobacco related diseases be achieved. However, our study is conducted only in Pune, Maharashtra. Further studies need to be conducted to see the impact of this law and see whether it actually helps people quit smoking and implementing this all over country.

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