Studying Tobacco Users Of Pakistan (STOP) RURAL SURVEY Fact Sheet 2022

Vison

Pakistan is a low-resource, high-tobacco burden country. According to the 2014 Global Adult Tobacco Survey, 19.1% (23.9 million) adults (31.8% males, 5.8% females) were current tobacco users; smokeless tobacco prevalence was 13.5% (males: 21.9% males, 5.1% females).1 Tobacco use was unequally distributed across socioeconomic status; the tobacco prevalence was more than twice in those with education up to primary school or below than those up to high school and above.2 In addition to 160,000 tobacco-related deaths every year, Pakistan suffers an annual/yearly economic loss of 198 billion rupees (1.3 billion USD) due to tobacco-related mortality and morbidity.3 In recent years, Pakistan has taken some positive steps towards tobacco control e.g. introducing bans on tobacco advertisement, promotion and sponsorship (TAPS) as well as bans on display of products at points-of-sale, yet many other evidence-based tobacco control policies such as tobacco taxes have not been implemented in a comprehensive manner.

Aims and Objectives

The STOP-R survey aimed to provide objective, regular and timely information on tobacco users (smokeless and smoked forms) living in rural areas of Pakistan to help key policy decisions.

The specific objective of the study were to assess, in rural areas, the:
- Proportion of tobacco users who use illicit cigarettes
- Nicotine dependence and motivation to quit among tobacco users
- Triggers to, methods used, and success of quit attempts
- Attitude of tobacco users towards tobacco control policies and cessation aids e.g., counselling, and medication.

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METHODS

STOP survey is a cross-sectional face-to-face household survey. It was conducted in five of the most populous districts (85 villages) in Pakistan with a target population of 18,349,917 smokers and 10,825,131 smokeless tobacco users. Our participants were people aged 15+ who use tobacco on a regular basis i.e., at least 25 out of the last 30 days for at least six months. We recruited one participant per household. We estimated the required sample size using statistical methods. Using a conventional average intake of 30 households per primary sampling unit (PSU), a sample size of 2,550 households and 85 PSUs was estimated.

During the survey, smokers were asked to show their cigarette packs. The cigarette packs (photographs) were analyzed and identified as illicit if they carried a minimum of one of the following:
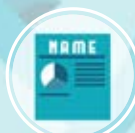
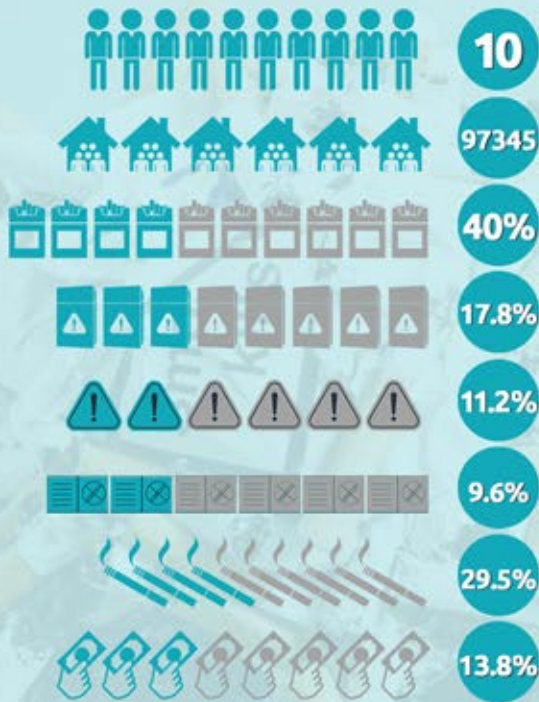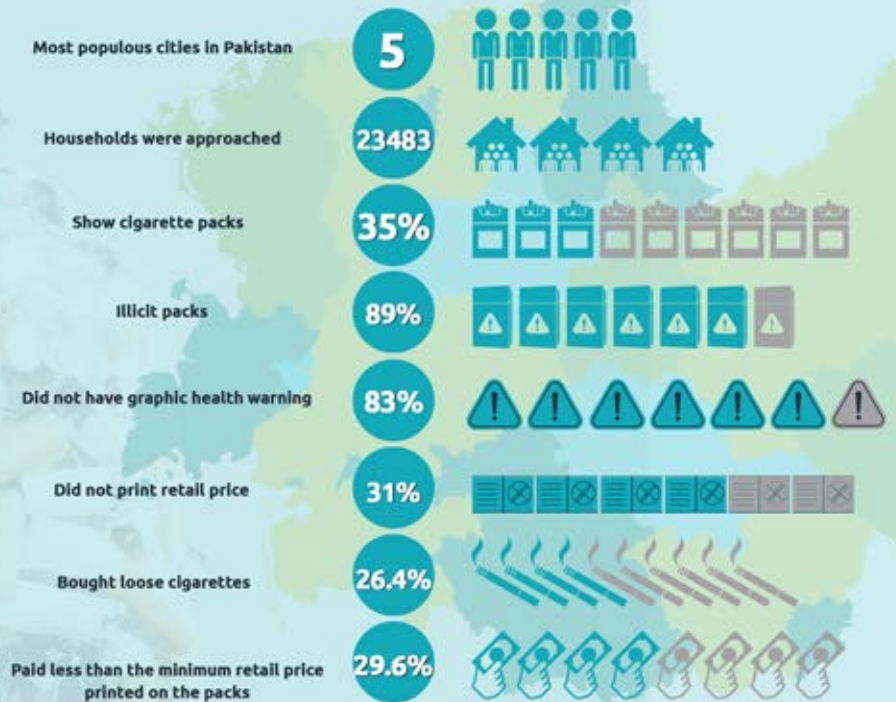|				
Its price was substantially below the known price of PKR 63	It had no mandatory textual or graphic health warning in Urdu and English.	It had no warning that sales under 18 are prohibited.	It had no printing of the name and address/ country of the manufacturer.	it had no printing of retail prices & sales tax.

RESULTS
Type of users:

Smokers	Smokeless	Dual users
55.2%	41.2%	3.6%

MOST COMMONLY USED TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Cigarette   Naswar   Hookah

> In Pakistan, tobacco causes 160,000 deaths per year

STOP Urban		STOP Rural
10	Most populous cities in Pakistan	5
97345	Households were approached	23483
40%	Show cigarette packs	35%
17.8%	Illicit packs	89%
11.2%	Did not have graphic health warning	83%
9.6%	Did not print retail price	31%
29.5%	Bought loose cigarettes	26.4%
13.8%	Paid less than the minimum retail price printed on the packs	29.6%

Conclusions

We found profound differences in the proportion of potentially illicit cigarette packs between those purchased in urbaan and rural areas (17.8% vs 89%). This indicates vast urban/rural divide in the implementation of tobacco control policies in Pakistan. This calls for a better understanding of the drivers of illicit cigarette trade in rural areas and to assess if such differences also exist in other high tobacco-burden countries. The absence of graphic health warnings in most packs observed in rural Pakistan has serious implications for tobacco uptake and its control efforts.

For further information:

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