Factors Influencing the Consumer Psychology of Cigarette Smokers and Impact of Awareness on Cigarette Consumption - A Literature Review

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Abstract

Smoking is a process in which a cigarette is burnt and the resulting smoke is inhaled. A total of 96% of tobacco users are cigarette smokers. With nearly eight million people killed in the world annually, the levels are expected to rise. Despite having a basic knowledge of its adverse effects, the psychology of individuals still prompts them to go towards cigarette consumption causing health and social harms. The purpose of this paper is to review the existing literature to identify the smokers' psychological factors, which enables to comprehend what drives an individual towards smoking. Further, the article focuses on the awareness element of a smoker concerning how it has an overall effect on smoking consumption. With the backing of literature, the paper reasons that awareness can have a significant impact on the consumption levels and must be considered along with the consumer psychology component in order to find more accurate results and interpretations.

Keywords: awareness, consumer psychology, covid-19, smoking consumption

1. Introduction

"Smoking Kills, Smoking causes Cancer" is a phrase that is frequently received by people all over the world. Tobacco use has a major impact on health, killing one person every 4 seconds globally (*PAHO/WHO, 201*9). Cigarette contained chemicals blamed for such a horrible fatality rate include ambergris, cyanide, radioactive lead and polonium, benzene, fertilizer, gasoline and pesticides which weakens the human body. Smoking just one cigarette can take an estimated 11 minutes of one's life (*minutes - fact 228 / truth*). With 11 minutes of life deducted with every cigarette consumed the question remains of how much time does a cigarette smoker has left in the world.

As defined by Boadu, (2012) a small roll of finely cut tobacco leaves enfolded in a cylinder of thin paper for smoking is acknowledged as a cigarette. He also states that most modern mass-produced cigarettes are filtered and contain reconstituted tobacco and other classes of additives. Smoking is the process in which a cigarette is burnt, and the resulting smoke is breathed into the lungs. Smoking usually has negative health effects on the human body. Majority of current consumers have initially started smoking during their teenage or young adult years. Burning of cigarettes is one of the leading causes of global deaths. Around 6

million mortalities each year are because of smoking-allied illnesses on a global scale. In other words, in every minute individuals pass away from consuming tobacco-related products. Worst of all, it is projected that the smoking-associated deaths will upsurge enormously to more than 8 million by the year 2030. Smoking causes most deaths in the low- and middle-income nations, With an assessed 80% of annual deaths (World Health Organization, 2011 cited in Cheah and Naidu, 2012). There are many reasons for a person to initiate the behaviour of smoking, for some it is an addiction, some start smoking because of their peer pressure and others believe it is a way to relieve stress or boredom. Survey research investigates that social associations are key indicators of a person's smoking behaviour.

Being in social systems with people who smoke increment another person's chance of smoking (Christakis & Fowler, 2008 cited in Thomeer *et al.*, 2019). Cigarettes usage has also been made known to harm the environment and air quality. Cigarette smoker percentage out of the total tobacco users is seen, at 97% in the Sri Lankan context and 96% in the global setting.

Consumption of cigarette is a problem, which is faced by any country and complications due to usage, is increasing as well. Cigarette smoking is a habit of nearly 1 billion individuals, which is 20% of the whole world populace in 2014. An evaluated 680 million smokers, more than half of the world's smoking-addicted people, resides in the Asia Pacific area (incl. Western Pacific and Southeast Asia, 2013 cited in Ho *et al.*, 2018). It is estimated that approximately one billion smokers consume six trillion cigarettes annually worldwide (Aparecida *et al.*, 2019). According to the latest data in 2015, 14.40% of the total population of Sri Lanka are smokers (ADIC Sri Lanka, 2020). Every year the tobacco-caused disease kills more than 12,300 smokers, more than 6,000 children (10-14 years of age) and 1,685,000 adults (15+ years of age) yet the use of tobacco escalates every day in Sri Lanka (Tobacco Atlas 2010). As stated in the *Research Reports – ADIC Sri Lanka,* (2018) 8 out of 10 smokers in Sri Lanka use only cigarettes of all tobacco products and 9.5 out of 10 smoking provocation of the youth within the last year was through cigarettes. Furthermore of the local smoking population, 7 out of 10 smokers are used to smoking cigarettes daily.

From childhood days we are given certain understanding through education, cultural factors and more about explanations to stay away from smoking cigarettes and a certain awareness level is created on the subject of abstaining from smoking. According to Gayatri and Basanta, (2018) parents, teachers and also the healthcare professionals do perform a model position in terms of educating and advising the adolescents about the risks of smoking. However, despite this awareness, certain other factors come into play in a person's life that affects their psychology and prompts a person to go towards cigarette consumption.

Various factors in relation to the social aspect of one's life and emotional features influence an individual to go towards cigarette usage despite the existing awareness of its consequences. There are a number of psychosocial components interrelated to smoking start and smoking upkeep. Smokers regularly sight smoking as a viable means of adapting to minor and major stressful circumstances in day-to-day life. (Khantzian, 1985; Koval et al., 2000 cited in Sun *et al.*, 2011). Stress and associated trouble or depression is a vital element within the adoption

of smoking conduct (Pritchard et al., 2007 cited in Sun *et al.*, 2011). According to Lund, (2015) Nicotine reliance is looked upon as a crucial obstacle to giving up smoking and is predictive of smoking continuation figure of cigarettes per day (CPD) has frequently been utilized as an intermediary for nicotine dependence, in spite of the fact that a few studies indicate that one should be vigilant in interpreting high cigarette consumption as nicotine reliance. CPD is meaningfully related to nicotine reliance, but contrasts in dependence are found to be autonomous of CPD level. However, high cigarette consumption point toward a solid practice and outlines characteristics of dependence such as the time and effort the smoker devote to the smoking conduct.

Tobacco control has seen positive progress over the recent years in Sri Lanka, yet the effects of tobacco use on the society and the death and illness rate prevail. Sri Lankan government has imposed tobacco and smoking control laws such as smoke-free public places, restrictions on tobacco smoking advertising, promotions and packaging. As per ADIC, (2016) The economic cost of smoking in Sri Lanka amounts to 99,965 million rupees. This incorporates direct costs connected to healthcare expenditures and indirect outlays associated with lost efficiency due to early mortality and morbidity.

The vulnerability which smoking creates can be best explained by the recent outbreak of the novel virus disease commonly known as coronavirus and also acknowledged in the name of COVID19 has become a global pandemic as officially stated by the World Health Organization (WHO,2020). According to Zhang et al. (2020 cited in Cai, 2020), a considerable trend towards an association was seen between smoking and severity of COVID-19 which was not particularly significant. Chronic nicotine use, systemically through the cigarette and other tobacco products or indirectly possibly through second-hand smoke, now presents an important factor in COVID-19 vulnerability in different populaces (Olds and Kabbani, 2020). Likely, the SARS-CoV-2 infection happens asymptomatically or with mild symptoms that don't require hospitalization; the predominance of smoking in these cases is unidentified and it does not offer assistance to clarify the association between smoking and seriousness of pneumonia (Garufi *et al.*, 2020).

The extent to which this smoking habit has taken control over the lives of smokers can be comprehended perfectly with the pandemic in action, "Smokers say they are finding replica cigarettes in sealed packets that look precisely like genuine brands. And those who are frantic enough are purchasing obscure brands that have appeared amid the lockdown with names like Pineapple and Chestel, and are notorious for prompting instant coughing" (*South Africa Coronavirus Lockdown Include Tobacco and Alcohol Sales Bam - The New York Times*, 2020). With all this being said, past research has identified factors influencing cigarette usage and smoking but it misses the mark to identify how these factors affect individuals with the awareness levels in play.

Past research has identified factors influencing cigarette usage and smoking but it fails to identify how these factors affect individuals with the awareness levels in play. By the end of the study, we would be ascertaining why do still cigarette consumption rate is snowballing after knowing all the consequences. Besides what factors influence their consumer

psychology and the impact of awareness in the consumption of cigarette smokers will also be considered.

This paper will comprise of four sections, beginning with the literature review on our independent variables of consumer psychology, awareness and the dependent variable of smoking consumption. Following that the research opportunity will be discussed along with the significance of the study to various individuals and sectors, and to close the conclusion of the paper.

The study anticipates undertaking a detailed investigation on cigarette smokers, with the purpose of identifying the most persuasive consumer psychological elements alongside with awareness of different levels, as well as to comprehend in what manner these factors drive and control the smoking intake of consumers in Sri Lanka. There is a clear deficiency of literature in this context as previous intellectuals have explored these variables however not in a single study, thus a clear knowledge gap is realized.

This research will be carried out with the cigarette smoking population at the centre of attention, despite the fact that there are users of numerous smoking substances in Sri Lanka, given the time constraints the focus is primarily given to smokers of cigarettes.

2. Literature Review

Survey of past literature revealed that cigarette consumption was a common problem faced by society and a certain amount of research and studies conducted have focused on mainly the driving factors towards cigarette consumption. Through the past studies, three main variables were found which contribute to the current research, which is to be conducted.

2.1 Consumer Psychology

Consumer psychology in basic terms can be explained as studying the behaviour of consumers of goods and servicing about their buying patterns and reactions (*Consumer Psychology | Encyclopedia.com*, no date). Concerning identifying the psychology of cigarette consumers, multiple studies have been done to analyse the various factors arising and affecting cigarette consumption. External factors are what can mostly be seen to have an impact on consumer psychology.

A recent study was conducted by Rocha *et al.*, (2019) prevalence of smoking and the reasons for continuing to smoke among adults in Brazil in 2019. They conducted a cross-sectional population-based study of the population. The finding shows that low economic class and a low level of education are characteristic of smokers. Many continue smoking it reduces their tension and although there were more female smokers than male smokers in our sample, the men had greater smoking histories. A similar study conducted by Ra and Jung, (2018) in Korea with relation to the school-related factors which affect smoking intent of middle school students shows that adolescent smoking intention is very much influenced by the psychological factors. These were focused mainly on family, personal, and school matters. The results went to show that close friends' smoking status was used as a justification for individual smoking and peer smoking was also of creating a sense of belonging. Less

engagement in school activities was also seen to have an impact on adolescent smoking.

A study in 2017 examined reasons for E-cigarette use in Southern California, data were collected by an online questionnaire. The main reason for using e-cigarettes is different Flavourings and few stated that it helps to quit smoking and they believe it's less harmful than cigarettes (H. *et al.*, 2017).

Ben David and Ben Zion, (2009) conducted a study in Israel to Measure the relevant effect of the relevant explanatory variable on smoking tendency and smoking intensity relevant to marital status and ethnic group. They used secondary data was used, the sample was divided using strata methods which were defined to population, age, and sex demographic variables. Findings show that for males, non-Jews, and those who are unmarried and younger, the probability of being a smoker, as well as having a higher intensity of smoking, is greater. Further, the study reveals that smoking is often learned at home or in the community from friends, parents, or other family members. Also, friends and parents are key role models for children and may influence cigarette smoking through modelling the behaviour and conveying positive attitudes and norms toward usage. But for females, it is found that being Jewish significantly increases the smoking probability, and females born in America or Europe smoke more intensively.

Research conducted in Germany by Boadu, (2012) gives prominence to identifying the factors which influence the buying decision of a cigarette consumer. To fulfil their objectives, the focus was given to the buying behaviour and process of the consumer. Buying behaviour types and the process was thoroughly analysed and several factors affecting the behaviour were chosen such as culture and psychological factors to be tested. The findings determined that price, tallying with quality was seen as the highest influential factor for cigarette consumption. Along with these factors like family, peer pressure, and also a desire to belong to a certain social group were seen to have a marginal effect on consumption as well. Cheah and Naidu, (2012) explored the factors influencing smoking behaviour in Malaysia focusing on the lifestyle and health-related factors that were seen as a gap. The findings concluded that particularly, low-income earners, unmarried individuals, youngsters, primary educated individuals, etc. are more prone to go towards smoking whereas individuals with health issues were seen to abstain. Another finding was that older individuals have a less rate of smoking due to factors like living a more relaxed lifestyle, and health deterioration. In conclusion, socio-demographic, health, and lifestyle factors were seen to make a visible impact on cigarette consumption.

Zao li and Zao li, (2012) conducted a study in China to review current cigarette smoking trends in China. Five separate studies were conducted, one study used a random sampling method the other one used an intercept survey method, and three used a convenience sampling method. Findings suggest that teens should be educated with consumer psychological skills such as resist peer pressure and to resists the temptation to stay away from cigarette smoking. With adolescent smoking being a well-researched area, a study conducted to understand the impact of advertising and other social factors on smoking habits. Sen and Basu, (2000) conducted a cross-sectional school-based survey to gain results. They

concluded through their findings that increased smoking was associated with the male and older age groups and having peers and friends who are current smokers also increase the chances of the respondent being a smoker by 8.5 times. It was shown that advertising did not show a significant responsive change in smoking behaviour, neither did the parental smoking status.

A similar study was conducted to investigate how popularity, peer network, and best friend smoking can influence school students. The research conducted by Alexander *et al.*, (2001) and the analysed data resulted in the conclusion that schools with high smoking prevalence were seen to have high smoking rates within popular students while the reverse was also observed. Peer networks and associating with close friends who were current smokers were also seen to have significantly increased the possibility and risk of current cigarette smoking.

Sarason *et al.*, (1992) conducted research to provide information on reasons reported by adolescents for their smoking behaviour in Washington State USA. A questionnaire was used to collect data among 10th-grade students from different schools. Results show most of the smokers are continuing smoking because of some psychological factors such as pleasure/effect, addiction habit, and desire. The most frequently reported reasons for beginning to smoke were a curiosity, social norms, offers/pressure, and desire. A gender difference was found only for social norms.

2.2 Awareness

According to Fishbein (2001 cited in Steptoe *et al.*, 2002) attitudes to smoking and awareness of the specific health risks of tobacco have been identified as important influences on smoking habits. Jamal *et al.*, (2020) states that proven interventions, such as anti-tobacco mass media campaigns, and better access to tobacco cessation counselling and medications, are essential to reduce cigarette smoking and smoking-related disease. The study also states racial/ ethnic variances in smoking may be explained through sociocultural norms, influences, and education levels concerning smoking acceptability. Boadu, (2012) also went forward to talk about the cultural factor influencing consumption decisions. He says that culture is the programming of the mind, and it is present in every aspect of an individual's life and is passed on from generations, and the way people will live in a world influences largely by such factors. Cultural factors are seen as shared features and therefore, the cultural differences of families etc. can have an impact on the individual as a customer. Perception of the product was also stressed upon in the study as to having an effect on the customer.

Zao li and Zao li, (2012) talks about the Chinese perspective in particular. He states the Chinese culture is seen to have a significant impact on smoking habits and levels of individuals. The culture of smoking is very much rooted deeply and any action take to ban smoking is rather unheard of. Smoking was frequently seen in the health sector works and this was a cultural issue, therefore no consequence was seen and no corrective action is taken. Smoking was established as a stress reliever and this belief is carried forward from medical school age, meaning that the habit occurs due to pre-existing conviction. Another established belief is that smoking is well accepted in the culture, which makes it extremely hard to change. An ironic factor, however, was smoking amongst women is rare and perceived

negatively by the culture. Ra and Jung, (2018) state in their research that in the Korean culture adolescent smoking is frowned upon due to beliefs passed down from Confucius's teachings. Due to this, a social norm is created which creates a barrier for a young individual to consume cigarettes, showing how far the influence of cultural norms goes.

Changes and acceptance of various forms and meanings happen in various stages of life (Thomeer *et al.*, 2019). Individuals who have accepted their families as non-smokers tend to abstain from smoking. Any peer pressure to smoke was dismissed using family and cultural teaching as a backing. The non-smoker background from childhood remains significant in some cases to prevent smoking. The study proved that the cycle of an individual's and changes in existing mind-set and beliefs have a deep effect on overall smoking behaviour.

In terms of the United States, cigarette smoking has become the most avoidable cause of death and disease. However, despite the obvious health risks going in hand with smoking, the rates of cigarette consumption are seen to be increasing rather than decreasing (Alexander *et al.*, 2001). Smoker's beliefs about the negative health effects of smoking are a strong predictor of attempting to quit (West et al., 2001 cited by Benton *et al.*, 2020).

One method of gaining disease-related information was through physicians as there was a higher level of trust. Knowledge related to health issues was seen to be gained through physicians with more trust in higher-income level households and such individuals were seen more likely to quit (Benton *et al.*, 2020). In the study conducted by Cheah and Naidu (2012), older respondents were seen to abstain from cigarette consumption due to the health risk diagnosis and awareness of the consequences of smoking. As they have an understanding of the risks and health deterioration, the awareness factor can be seen to have a positive play to influence the consumption rate.

Awareness of smoking hazards can come through various forms of educational background. Research conducted in Portuguese analysed the awareness levels of smoking-related diseases of university students. The research concluded saying that medical students had better knowledge of related diseases and therefore happened to show a lower frequency of smoking habits as opposed to the engineering students. The reason for the difference was concluded up to be the variation in the educational background (Saleiro, Damas and Gomes, 2007). Focusing on the knowledge of smoking risks and awareness of laws a study was conducted by Shomar *et al.*, (2014) where Smoking and knowledge levels were identified. Out of the respondents, 88.7% were aware that smoking is harmful. However, only a handful knew about anti-smoking legislation and even less knew about smoking quitting centres available in the country. It was also seen that individuals were unaware of passive smoking risks as well which increased the smokers count. Having an inadequate level of understanding and knowledge can be a threat to an individual as well.

A rather comprehensive research done with the inclusion of 21 countries regarding tobacco smoking-related to attitudes and risk awareness gave a final result that the benefit of not smoking was constantly related to smoking behaviour throughout the countries.

It was also seen in the majority that risk awareness was seen more in smokers as opposed to

non-smokers. It concluded saying that overall, estimated odds of smoking were reduced for those who had more understanding of the risks and benefits of smoking and not (Steptoe *et al.*, 1995). The continuation of the same research done later suggested that the overall belief of not smoking was rather strong, particularly within females. The final results indicated that countries with very strong beliefs had lower smoking prevalence independent of other factors, and lower beliefs lead to higher smoking behaviour among individuals (Steptoe *et al.*, 2002). In a conclusion, it was said that although basic risk awareness and knowledge were present it was far from accurate or comprehensive enough to have an impact on smoking behaviour and risk awareness levels were very poor in Asia, South America, and Africa.

2.3 Smoking Consumption

According to the latest report from The Tobacco Atlas organization, about 5.7 trillion cigarettes have been smoked worldwide and over 15 billion cigarettes are smoked worldwide daily (Consumption – Tobacco Atlas, 2020). Further, overall consumption has declined to some extent over the past years around the world and future tobacco consumption trend remains uncertain. Due to the expansion of the world's population, the number of smokers will increase even if the consumption of cigarettes levelled off or decreased. In Sri Lanka, the current smoking trend is appeared to be uncertain but in the years 2017 to 2018, smoking consumption has increased gradually (Sri Lanka Country Facts – ADIC Sri Lanka, 2020). According to WHO, the prevalence of smoking is 29.4% and 0.1% between males and females between 18 to 69 years respectively (STEPS Survey Sri Lanka, 2020). The Tobacco Atlas organization report states cigarette consumption in Sri Lanka is 255 cigarettes per person per year among the smoking population (Consumption – Tobacco Atlas, 2020).

The researchers have not addressed the consumption of cigarettes or tobacco in particular, but numerous studies have been conducted in the areas of marketing tobacco products, which eventually leads to cigarette or tobacco consumption. The study from Arli, Rundle-Thiele, and Lasmono, (2014) explores the outcomes of CSR activities of Indonesian tobacco companies and their views from smokers and non-smokers. It revealed that CSR activities done by the tobacco companies create a positive image especially among the current smokers and therefore consumers are likely to consider the company as responsible which influence them to remain as a consumer.

A study conducted at the University of Sao Paulo by Rondina, Gorayeb, and Botelho, (2007) specifies the psychological characteristics related to smoking behaviour of smokers, which eventually lead them to consume tobacco products. It reveals that psychological characteristics wise, smokers learned to be very extroverted, tense, impulsive, depressive, and uneasy, as well as displaying traits of neuroticism, psychoticism, and attention-seeking. Further, it reveals that the frequency of smoking is higher in patients with mental disorders than the general population concluding that psychosocial and social aspects simultaneously interact with the genetic factors to influence the tendency to smoke.

The key to identifying and understanding individual smoking behaviour can be found in human feelings and emotions (Tomkins, 1966). Proposing eight primary effects (positive and negative) which lead to motivate smoking Tomkins states that the negative/ positive effects

which are learned or innate are at some point stimulated, leading to smoking. As humans are motivated to increase positive and reduce negative emotions, the level and type of smoking differ to the extent of need satisfaction.

Tomkins classifies smoking behaviour into four categories; habitual, positive affect, negative affect, and addictive smoking. Each level of smoking starts in response to a stimulus of his pre-mentioned effects and can slowly evolve to a later stage of smoking, varying on the motivation and control level of the individual.

Various works of literature explore the personality and smoking behaviour of smokers. The following study at the University of South Florida by Spielberger and Jacobs, (1982) investigates the relationship between personality measures and the initiation and maintenance of smoking behaviour through several tests. The results suggested that the magnitude of the difference was huge between Male and females when both the genders were tested separately.

Burton *et al.*, (2015) have researched cues for tobacco consumption in a 'dark' market of Australia. This study reveals that social effects on cigarette consumption appeared to be with the combination of alcohol. Besides, the consumption of alcohol and the contact of other smokers are the main stimuli to influence smoking consumption. Some of the participants of this study revealed that responses to environmental cues such as tiredness, stress, and boredom increase the temptation to smoke. The longitudinal study done at Mid-Atlantic University explored the reasons for the transition from Electronic cigarette use to cigarette smoking among young adult college students (Hiler *et al.*, 2020). By the results at the end of this study, it's identified that 8 clusters characterizing reasons for transition were found that are Sharing with Others, Psychological Coping, Cigarette Appeal, Reinforcing Effects of Cigarettes, Accessibility, Social Influence, Vaping Stigma, and Vaping Deficiencies.

A recent study conducted in Brazil by Rocha *et al.*, (2019) to investigate the prevalence of smoking and the reasons for continuing to smoke among adults in Brazil revealed that racial and ethnic differences can have a significant influence on the prevalence, patterns, health implications and consequences of smoking. The followings are the predetermined reasons for smoking determined in this study; physical dependence, the pleasure of smoking, tension reduction, stimulus, automatism, handling, social smoking, weight control, and close association. Among these reasons, the pleasure of smoking, tension reduction, and physical dependence are the reasons that encourage the participants to continue smoking the most. A thirty-year-old longitudinal study conducted by Sherman *et al.*, (2016) identified the social-cognitive factors that are involved in smoking attitudes, beliefs, judgments, and behaviours. The study showed the following as the variables that influence the cigarette consumption over the years; social environment factors (parent, peer support, strictness), attitudes and beliefs (values/ expectations of academic success) and personality factors (tolerance for deviance, locus of control).

From the initial articles and researches found and analysed, it was seen that the three variables associated with this study were studied and researched through different aspects. However, the variables together in one context are yet to be observed and analysed and a rather in-depth analysis of the relationship between the various psychological factors,

awareness levels, and the actual cigarette consumption remains to be found. The past researches give a solid basis to start upon and are found to be very informative. With these, further knowledge can be added to the existing pool of information on this vast topic.

3. Research Opportunity

From the existing literature that has been investigated and based on the discussion on the above article, it is apparent that there is a grey area to explore and to be addressed when the variable of awareness comes into play hand in hand with the consumer psychology variable. The available works of literature on this area of the study appear to have not spoken on this particular research gap of examining both of the variables in a single study that we bring into being. This study will focus on contributing to fill the above-said gap by examining the impact of awareness on smoking consumption and the consumer psychology of cigarette smokers, with an interest in Sri Lanka.
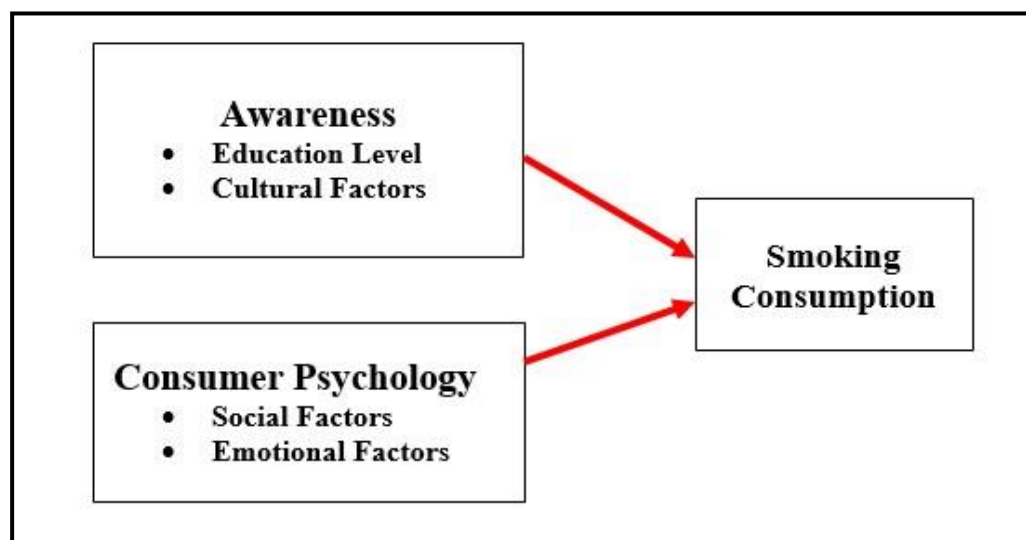

Figure 1. Concept Indicator Model

Source: Authors Creation

The concept indicator model shown in Figure 1 was drawn up with the existing literature serving as a basis for the variables chosen. The model consists of the two main independent variables of the study Awareness and Consumer Psychology, along with the dependent variable Smoking Consumption.

4. Significance of the Study

Every smoker of cigarettes is well and truly aware of the consequences of smoking this injurious product. Consequently, Cigarette is also being considered as a harmful product in all parts of the world, thus to control this behaviour, Awareness is being shared with the general public highlighting the ways it can affect the lives of cigarette smokers. Smoking can cause

harm to both mental and physical health. In terms of consumer health, cardiovascular disease, Respiratory disease, and Cancer are the most noticeable health-related conducts of smoking cigarettes. More severely, the smoking habit of cigarette users can affect the lives of people nearby. Despite receiving the required level of awareness through factors such as education and culture about the consequences of smoking cigarettes, the statistics display that the number of cigarette smokers has been on the rise due to several psychological factors.

Psychologically aspects such as emotional factors, social factors of cigarette smokers come into play spontaneously or grow over time, which ultimately suppresses the awareness element of cigarette smokers. In this study, factors of Awareness will be identified as a "prohibitor" for cigarette smokers, while factors of Consumer Psychology will be identified as influencers to cigarette smokers. Though the "prohibitors" are feeding awareness since childhood, people still are provoked to smoke cigarettes due to the influential factors, which come under consumer psychology.

The importance of this study is to indicate how the influencers (Consumer Psychology) overpowers the prohibition (Awareness) which eventually leads to the smoking of cigarettes. The research will focus on factors such as level of education and cultural factors that come under the variable of awareness and will look at the emotional and social factors, which are the elements of consumer psychology variable.

The significance of accomplishing this research will profit various interested groups,

1. The study will identify the factors of awareness and consumer psychology, which leads to the smoking of cigarettes. Through which The World Health Organization, The National Authority on Tobacco and Alcohol would be able to gain insightful facts, on improving their awareness programs directed at the community.

2. Contribution to the literature by ascertaining the impact of awareness and consumer psychology on cigarette consumption. Through this, researchers will be able to substantiate how psychological factors influence consumers to smoke cigarettes.

3. The overall study will support the government in better understanding the driving forces behind cigarette consumption and the factors that overpower their level of awareness. Hence, they would be able to design a proactive mechanism to control the rising consumption of cigarettes.

4. Cigarette consumers would be able to comprehend how their psychology overwhelms their level of awareness, which will enable smokers to anticipate methods of controlling their specific psychological needs.

Besides, this knowledge gap has not been contemplated in Sri Lanka. Hence, the study will help to fill these knowledge gaps and will also contribute to further research work.

In conclusion, this study will assist in providing insights as to why the influencers overpower the "prohibitors" leading to smoking cigarettes.

5. Methodology

In reviewing and compiling this research paper, the researchers followed a desk research method in which all collected data were secondary in nature. The main focus was on the existing work of literature and along with it related articles, blog posts and websites of World Health Organization, Tobacco Atlas and Alcohol and Drug Information Centre of Sri Lanka were correspondingly referred and utilized as inputs for the research paper.

The discussed variables in our study of awareness, consumer psychology and smoking consumption were studied and analysed individually, in which a rich understanding was obtained about each variable and how it has behaved and impacted in different geographical and demographical settings. With the operating desk methodology, sub-elements of awareness and consumer psychology variables were found that was identified by past scholars in their work. By the support of the desk research methodology collected data, the concept indicator model was established by the authors of our study and the variables of the model has been backed by the existing work of literature.

6. Conclusion

The battle against smoking and cigarette consumption is a problem faced by the entire world population and it is a social concern that needs addressing. Despite the efforts made to stop smoking and create awareness as of its side effects, a gap of what needs to be happening as awareness increases is still to be further explored, leaving a question of why the current awareness levels have a significantly low impact on reducing the habit of smoking cigarettes. With the rise of novel diseases, such as COVID-19 it is of paramount importance to convert this adverse smoking behaviour for the betterment of the smokers and the society at large.

As the available literature provides a basis for starting the study and gives a stepping-stone towards what techniques and methods must be followed in this specific context a clear understanding has been gained as to how to further proceed and complete the research successfully. The available works of literature on this area of the study appear to have not addressed the research gap of studying both the variables of consumer psychology and awareness in single learning. This study will focus on contributing to fill the above-said gap by examining the impact of awareness on consumption and consumer psychology of cigarette smokers, with an interest in Sri Lanka.

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