

# A YouTube Showing that it is not Cool nor Healthy to Smoke - An Online Typeform Survey Analysis

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## Abstract

### Background

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention cite a WHO report, on the Global Tobacco Epidemic [2019] stating it causes more than 7 million deaths globally/year.

### Methods

A YouTube was created based upon the Audrey Hepburn Breakfast at Tiffany's theme. Paramount Pictures Aust/NZ were contacted asking permission to utilise the theme, but didn't reply. The YouTube has Audrey smoking, while another woman makes comments to convey the health dangers & smoking unacceptability. A Typeform online survey created in August 2021 allowed accessibility to the general public enabling generation of an online convenience survey. Questions focused on the participant's opinion regarding the idea's general usefulness, whether the messages about unacceptability and potential harm were conveyed and lastly whether the viewer thought it had potential to change smoking habits.

### Results

The survey was viewed 127 times, 60 people commenced the survey, and 27 completed it [completion rate; 45%, average time; 5 minutes]. Opinions on the YouTube general usefulness were; extremely [7.7%], very [42.3%], somewhat [26.9%], neutral/unsure [19.2%] or no [3.8%]. In terms of conveying that smoking is foul or disgusting replies were; extremely [32%], very much [40%], somewhat [20%], neutral/unsure [8%] or not at all [0%]. In terms of conveying harmfulness replies were; extremely [30.8%], very much [30.8%], somewhat [38.5%], neutral/unsure [0%] or not at all [0%]. In terms of the potential to change habits replies were; extremely [7.4%], very much [22.2%], somewhat [25.9%], neutral/unsure [29.6%] or not at all [14.8%].

### Discussion

This novel YouTube seems to be a plausible, useful idea if you consider the replies of survey respondents. Typeform is also an easy, online package with which to generate survey forms.

### Conclusion

Ideas such as this maybe interesting, but in terms of assessing ability to alter habits, that determination would require additional research, funding and thought and maybe indeterminable.

**Keywords: Smoking Cessation, Tobacco Use, Prevention**

## Introduction and Review of the Literature

Smoking continues to have a high prevalence globally and also among certain populations. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention [CDC] [<https://www.cdc.gov/>] have a report on their website titled; Tobacco Use & Tobacco-Related Behaviors - 11 Countries, 2008-2017 which was published in 2019 [Ahluwalia, 2019]. Every year, tobacco use causes approximately 8 million deaths globally, [7 million deaths among tobacco users & 1.2 million deaths among nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke (SHS)]. Four out of five people of the 1.1 billion persons who smoke tobacco worldwide reside in low- and middle-income countries. The country-specific data from 11 countries that were analyzed being two or more completed rounds of the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) during 2008-2017 included; Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Mexico, the Philippines, Russian Federation, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay, and Vietnam [Ahluwalia, 2019].

From those years, it was estimated that there is a decrease of 20 million adults using tobacco, exposure to SHS decreased for 53.4 million adults, and quitting smoking was considered by 12.4 million people because of warning labels that graphically picture the dangers.

Some studies report on specific cultures, countries, or demographic groups such as school students. They also report on the catastrophic effects on morbidity and mortality worldwide. Various of these are detailed below.

Thomas [2012] reported on the National trends in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander smoking and quitting, 1994–2008. They found that Indigenous male smoking prevalence decreased significantly from 58.5% in 1994 to 52.6% in 2008, while for Indigenous females smoking decreased from 51.0% to 47.4% in the same time frame [Thomas 2012].

Among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians smoking is the leading contributor to the burden of disease [Maddox et al 2020]. It is also a main preventable contributor to morbidity and mortality. Compared to the levels of smoking in 2004/05 there are almost 50,000 fewer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adult daily smokers in 2018-9.

Hill and colleagues [Hill et al 1995] estimated the prevalence of cigarette smoking in Australian secondary school students in 1993. The survey from all states and the Northern Territory included 22,696 students across 332 secondary schools (and feeder schools) who were aged 12- to 17-year-old. The current smoker prevalence of those aged 12 to 15 years was 15.7% in 1990 and 17.5% in 1993.

A New Zealand 1976 and 1981 Censuses of Population and Dwellings that included persons over the age of 15 enquired about cigarette smoking habits. This was to determine and calculate the effect of ever-smoking on mortality. Male life expectancy was reduced by 11.7 years and female life expectancy was reduced by 15.6 years [Easton 1995].

There have been efforts to decrease smoking prevalence in Australia which have been successful. Yet, tobacco is still the leading modifiable risk factor in Australia for ill-health [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Burden of tobacco use in Australia]. Overall, it accounts for 9.3% of the disease burden in 2015 [Australian Institute of

Health and Welfare], and 22% of the cancer burden, 12% of cardiovascular disease burden, and 41% of respiratory illness burden [Buchanan and colleagues 2021].

Daily smoking from four waves of the triennial National Drug Strategy Household Survey (2007, 2010, 2013, and 2016) was reviewed by Roche and colleagues [Roche et al 2021]. From 2007 to 2016 workers' daily smoking prevalence reduced by 32%. To address smoking among male, rural, and low SES workers, tailored, innovative and culturally appropriate strategies that address both prevention and intervention in workplace settings are required.

More recently vaping using 'pod' e-cigarettes has emerged and this was investigated in secondary school students (aged 13-18 years) in New Zealand (NZ) [Ball and colleagues 2021]. Many New Zealand adolescents, many of whom have never smoked are using nicotine-containing e-cigarettes often.

Smoking and tobacco use is still quite prevalent in society and hence continues to pose a significant health burden on society. This short study details a novel video designed to deter people away by warning them of the health risks.

### Materials and Methods

A YouTube was created. It was just a short segment, warning people of smoking dangers, & also conveying that smoking is foul and disgusting to some people. The video was not endorsed by any organization, nor funded in any way, & is just a simple skit. It was previously presented at the Asia Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health conference [Hilton, 2019]. Please note that Paramount Pictures Aust/NZ were contacted with a query about whether this picture could be used as such in this YouTube health promotion idea, however, they did not reply, so hence they have not endorsed nor barred use of their theme, they just did not reply.

The information provided included background information such as various statistics from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention on country-specific rates of smoking, deaths in smokers, and people exposed to SHS. Following that information was given as below.

The information stated that the person's name & any identifying details were not to be collected.

This questionnaire was purely designed to have people 18 years or older look at a short youtube that was created, & then give feedback on whether they think it would be useful & / or effective in preventing people from commencing smoking & / or in helping them stop smoking once they have commenced. This link was given advising that it allows the viewer to watch the YouTube; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzdhUBoGs-8>. Viewers were advised firstly to watch the YouTube. It shows the author dressed in an Audrey Hepburn costume being the Breakfast at Tiffany's theme. While smoking a long cigarette, her companion at the table describes this as foul, disgusting, deadly, cancerous & hazardous, also throwing the cigarette repeatedly into the trash while the film actress ignores her. The message conveyed by the acquaintance about the lethal effects of smoking is clear & hits home to viewers. The information then states; if you are happy for your feedback & thoughts on this youtube to be collected & you are 18 or over, please answer yes below if you consent to answer the questions.



The questionnaire was created in typeform [<https://admin.typeform.com/>]. It allows collecting and sharing of information in an easy-to-read, online web-based platform. Surveys to apps can be easily created without needing to write any code at all. Typeform has a lovely layout with already built

templates, that scrolls through questions created one at a time mimicking a real conversation, which means the surveys are engaging and fun to finish.

The Typeform online survey was created in August 2021 allowing accessibility to the online public community who searched for smoking surveys, allowing respondent replies. The survey was titled; Is it cool and/or not healthy to smoke - view a YouTube and decide? The initial demographic questions focused on age group, gender, ethnicity, smoking status, and exposure to 2nd hand tobacco smoke. Questions on the YouTube focused on the respondent's opinion regarding the idea's general usefulness, whether the messages about unacceptability and potential harm were conveyed and whether the viewer thought it had the potential to change smoking habits.

## Results

The survey was viewed 127 times, 60 people commenced the survey, and 27 completed it [completion rate; 45%, average time; 5 minutes].

Figures 1 to figure 5 show the demographics including the age group, gender, ethnicity, smoking status, and exposure to 2nd hand tobacco smoke. The majority of the respondents were from 35 to 64 years old, while a lesser percentage were in the other age group categories. In terms of the gender category, 80.8% of respondents were female, while 19.2% were male as is shown in Figure 2 below. The other gender categories listed had nil percentage respondents. Just over three-quarters of respondents were Caucasian or white, while 15.4% were Asian, and 7.7% stated other or that the category wasn't listed [refer to Figure 3]. The other categories given included; American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, or lastly Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. These categories were sourced basically from the National Centre for Education Statistics and the State Data Centre [National Centre for Education Statistics – accessed Nov 2021]; [Pratt et al., 2015].

Current smokers were 4%, while 76% of respondents were not currently nor had ever smoked and 20% of respondents indicated they had previously smoked [refer to Figure 4].

Figure 5 shows those exposed to SHS. 57.7% were previously exposed but not currently, while 38.5% had never been exposed to SHS and 3.8% indicated they were currently exposed to SHS.

Figures 6 to figure 9 summarise the respondent's replies to the questions that relate specifically to their opinion of the Audrey Hepburn YouTube created. This includes general usefulness, the ability of the YouTube to convey that smoking is both foul and disgusting, and also harmful and dangerous. The last question was whether the respondent thought that it had the potential to alter a smoker's habits [either themselves if they smoke, or someone else if they don't smoke or both].

Opinions on the YouTube general usefulness were; extremely [7.7%], very much [42.3%], somewhat [26.9%], neutral/unsure [19.2%] or no [3.8%] [Figure 6]. In terms of conveying that smoking is foul or disgusting replies were; extremely [32%], very much [40%], somewhat [20%], neutral/unsure [8%] or not at all [0%] [Figure 7]. In terms of conveying harmfulness replies were; extremely [30.8%], very much [30.8%], somewhat [38.5%], neutral/unsure [0%] or not at all [0%] [Figure 8]. In terms of potential to change habits replies were; extremely [7.4%], very much [22.2%], somewhat [25.9%], neutral/unsure [29.6%] or not at all [14.8%] [Figure 9].

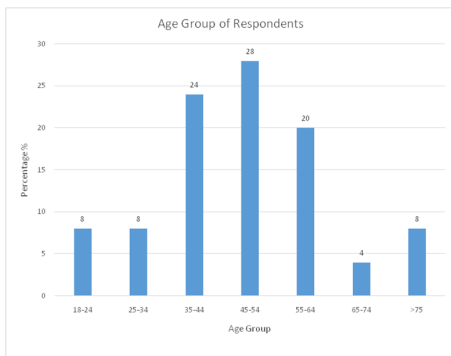


Figure 1 Age group of respondents

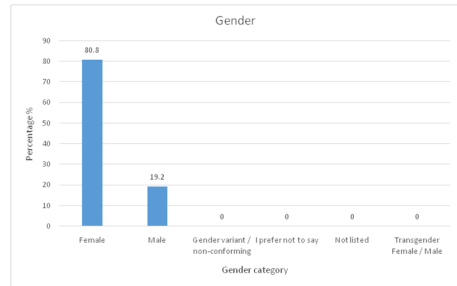


Figure 2 Gender category of respondents

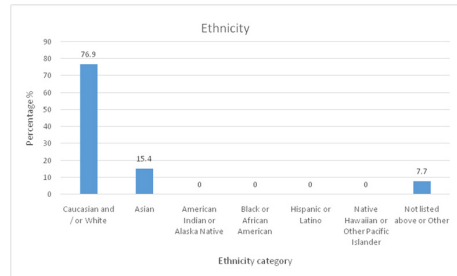


Figure 3 Ethnicity of respondents

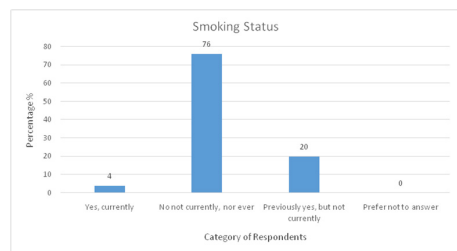


Figure 4 Current smoking status

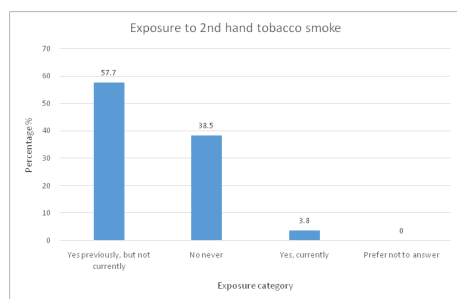
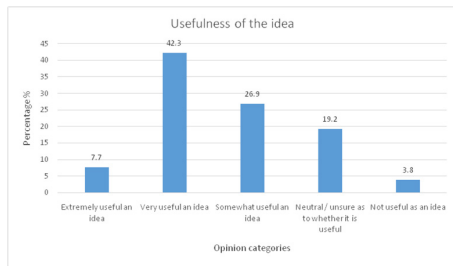
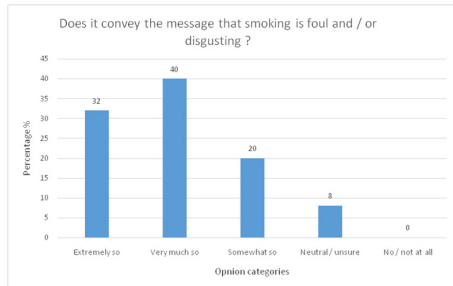


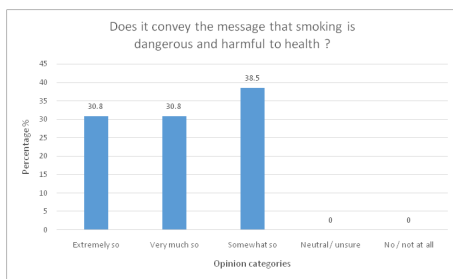
Figure 5 Exposure to 2nd hand tobacco smoke



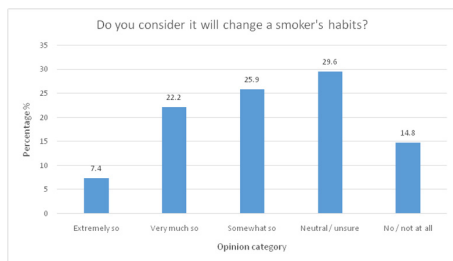
**Figure 6 Respondent’s opinion of the YouTube in terms of general usefulness**



**Figure 7 Respondent’s opinion of the YouTube in terms of whether it conveys the message that smoking is foul and/or disgusting?**



**Figure 8 Respondent’s opinion of the YouTube in terms of whether it conveys the message that smoking is harmful and dangerous to your health?**



**Figure 9 Respondent’s opinion of the YouTube in terms of whether they think it has the ability to change a smoker’s habits [either themselves if they smoke or someone else if they don’t smoke]**

## Discussion

In terms of assessing whether health promotion initiatives such as this will be effective, the literature on health promotion ideas must be explored. There are various manuscripts that delve into understanding perceptions of campaigns or effectiveness of strategies.

In Western Australia, a long-term follow-up of a randomised controlled trial of a smoking education program for children was done [Shean and colleagues, 1994]. In girls, teacher-led and peer-led programs reduced the taking up of smoking to about the same degree. This differed in boys, however, where the teacher-led program appeared to be effective after one year. However, after two years neither program was effective.

A research study was done to assess how smokers and ‘experts’ (individuals with knowledge of health promotion, public health, or advertising) code anti-smoking advertisement characteristics [Lizama et al, 2019]. They were coded under four key characteristics (emotional/cognitive approach, negative/positive tone, message frame, and main message) by 49 smokers and 42 experts. Experts’ perception of advertisements was more likely to be negative in tone and fear-inducing when compared to how smokers perceived advertisements.

The difficulty with any promotion idea such as this is that even if awareness of dangers is increased as may occur with this YouTube idea, obstacles such as nicotine dependence impede the ability for someone to stop smoking tobacco. It is known that most smokers start smoking during adolescence [Guo et al, 2010]. These authors performed a study to assess smoking behaviors and contextual influences on adolescent nicotine dependence.

Using the Hooked on Nicotine Checklist (HONC) to measure dependence, they included 625 current adolescent smokers. Nicotine dependence is very likely in adolescence, and the HONC score was higher if monthly smoking commenced early, if there was heavier consumption and if peers were smoking. Factors such as this are important to consider to understand how to reduce nicotine dependence.

There are a heterogeneous group of studies of varying methodological quality providing evidence that comprehensive tobacco control programs including mass media campaigns can be effective in altering smoking in adults [Bala et al 2017].



A systematic review was performed on the topic of community interventions for reducing smoking among adults [Secker-Walker et al 2002]. There is a social context to smoking, so community-wide programs using varying channels for reinforcement, support, and not smoking norms may be the best way to reduce prevalence. Thirty-seven studies were included, of which 17 included only one intervention and one comparison community. Using cross-sectional follow-up data, 21 studies looked at the change in smoking prevalence. For men and women combined (11 studies), the estimated net decrease ranged from -1.0% to +3.0%.

Within workplaces, clinics, hospitals, and also community programs, they have used financial incentives, money or vouchers, in an attempt to promote or sustain smoking change or cessation [Notley et al 2019].

A Cochrane Review was done to assess the effect of reduction-to-quit interventions on long-term smoking cessation [Lindson et al 2019]. 51 trials with 22,509 participants were identified. Reduction to quit interventions was compared to no treatment on cessation rates (RR 1.74, 95% CI 0.90 to 3.38). Neither reduction-to-quit nor abrupt quitting interventions resulted in superior long-term quit rates when compared with one another and the evidence, in this case, was of moderate certainty. There was inconclusive and low certainty evidence comparing the efficacy of reduction-to-quit interventions with no treatment.

A Cochrane Review was also completed on the topic of aversive smoking for smoking cessation [Hajek et al 2001]. Randomized trials comparing aversion treatments with 'inactive' procedures for smoking cessation were included or those that compared different intensities of aversion treatments were also included. 25 trials were included, with a dozen on rapid smoking and 9 including other aversion methods. Abstinence following rapid smoking compared to control had an odds ratio (OR) of 2.01 (95% confidence intervals [CI]: 1.36-2.95). The conclusion was that rapid smoking is an unproven method.

School policies for preventing smoking among young people were investigated by Coppo and colleagues [Coppo et al 2014]. No evidence was

found despite a comprehensive literature search, and rigorous evaluation of studies, in support of school tobacco policies.

Hefler and colleagues assessed incentives for preventing smoking in children and adolescents [Hefler et al 2017]. There was very limited evidence currently available. However, they conclude that incentive programs do not prevent smoking initiation among youth.

### Research Gap and Conclusion

There are a range and variety of programs and ideas currently available and reported in the literature. This study suggests one idea that may appeal to some people. The survey was only a small sample of respondents but it did indicate that ideas like this maybe useful in conveying messages about the harmful effects of smoking and that society doesn't find smoking acceptable.

### Acknowledgement

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