

**Smoking as a risk factor for Non-Communicable Diseases:
A study on over-40s male smokers from the Colombo District**

A.P.H.S. Jayarathne

Department of Demography, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) can be observed as a leading cause of mortality in Sri Lanka. Smoking, physical inactivity, harmful use of alcohol, and unhealthy diets increase the risk of dying from NCDs according to the World Health Organization (2015). Smoking can be identified as one of the main behavioural risk factors that cause NCDs. The main objective of this study is to investigate the patterns and trends of smoking among men over 40 years of age in Sri Lanka because smoking is a risk factor for men with NCDs. The study used interviewer-administered questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and publications of the Department of Census and Statistics as primary and secondary data sources. The target population was 128 men in the study area of the Colombo District, who are over 40 years of age and suffer from any kind of NCD. The study reveals the prevalence, frequency, and patterns of smoking among this population. The mean age of starting to smoke was found to be 25 years of age. The study revealed that a majority of the respondents are non-smokers. A considerable number of respondents abstained from smoking after being diagnosed with an NCD and on their doctor's recommendation. Respondents who were smokers had limited the number of cigarettes smoked per day. A higher percentage of smokers' smoke with office colleagues, while some have become victims of passive smoking. This study identifies that to minimize mortality due to NCDs, smoking has to be controlled. Men should be encouraged to abstain, and awareness should be raised to that end. Attention should also be paid to reducing in-office smoking which is connected to work stress.

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