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The Impact of Anxiety and Depression on Individuals with Smoking Habit

Dian Cahaya Utami[1*]

[1]Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia

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***Corresponding author:**
Dian Cahaya Utami

E-mail address:
diancu150390@gmail.com

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A B S T R A C T

Anxiety and depressive disorder is a prevalent mental health disorder on a global scale, often exhibiting a high comorbidity rate with smoking behavior. This present review offers a comprehensive narrative synthesis of the latest scholarly studies pertaining to the influence of anxiety and depression on the onset, perpetuation, and cessation of smoking behavior. The existing literature exhibits variability in terms of the evidence supporting the association between anxiety or anxious symptoms and smoking behavior. The findings consistently indicate a significant association between anxiety and smoking, suggesting a high comorbidity rate between these two illnesses. The existing literature on the association between anxiety, depression and various factors such as onset, severity indicators, and cessation outcomes has yielded inconsistent findings. While there exists compelling data supporting the association between smoking and anxiety, notable distinctions may be observed regarding the specific impact of anxiety on the beginning, severity, and quitting outcomes of smoking. In the future, it will be necessary to employ more advanced approaches in order to ascertain causative relationships, as well as potential moderators and mediators, within the association between anxiety, depression and smoking habit.

1. Introduction

Tobacco consumption is the primary contributor to avoidable mortality, resulting in an annual death toll above 5,000,000 individuals.[1] It is anticipated that this number will continue to rise.[2,3] The financial costs resulting from this event have the potential to amount to billions of dollars. For an extended period, there has been an established correlation between cigarette consumption and several psychiatric disorders, such as depression, anxiety, and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders. Several studies have found a correlation between daily smoking addiction and the occurrence of depression or anxiety, as observed in a subset of the analyzed research.[4,5]

The utilization of tobacco presents a noteworthy risk factor in the progression of several diseases, including cancer, cardiovascular ailments, and respiratory disorders.[3] However, it is important to note that the cessation of smoking plays a crucial role in significantly reducing these health risks. The relationship between smoking and emotional well-being, however, remains uncertain. Despite the fact that a significant number of individuals who smoke express a desire to quit, a considerable portion of them persist in their smoking habits due to the belief that it has positive effects on their mental well-being. Quantitative and subjective assessments revealed that those who engage in habitual smoking reported using cigarettes as a means to alleviate emotional distress, feelings of sadness, and anxiety, stabilize their mood, unwind, and alleviate stress. This phenomenon of behavior occurs among individuals who smoke, regardless of whether they have diagnosed mental disorders.[5] This literature review aims to examine the impact of anxiety and depression on individuals with a smoking habit.

Smoking habit and anxiety disorder

Numerous studies have established a correlation between anxiety and nicotine withdrawal.[6,7] The DSM-IV-TR acknowledges uneasiness as a documented side effect of nicotine withdrawal; nevertheless, it does not provide a functional definition to distinguish clinical anxiety from restlessness. The prevalence of instances among adolescents has generated contradictory findings, but the outcomes among adults have demonstrated greater reliability.[8]

The correlation between smoking and tension ranges from approximately 9 to 63 percent, with a higher prevalence of comorbidity observed among smokers who are dependent on nicotine. Previous study conducted on a representative sample of the general population revealed that the prevalence rates of personality disorders and anxiety disorders were 21.1% and 22%, respectively, among those diagnosed with nicotine dependence. There is a significant correlation between tension and smoking in adults. Researchers found that 47% of individuals receiving outpatient mental health treatment for anxiety disorders were identified as smokers, a significantly greater proportion compared to the general population benchmark group.[8-10]

In addition, they made efforts to replicate the findings while also examining comorbidity measures for each anxiety disorder individually. The researchers identified the prevalence rates of comorbidity as follows: specific phobia (47%), social anxiety disorder (27%), agoraphobia (57%), panic disorder (47%), generalized anxiety disorder (29%), and obsessive-compulsive disorder (9%). Due to the limited prevalence of people who exhibited the clinical criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the researchers opted to remove this condition from their investigation.[11]

Smoking habit and depression

A comprehensive investigation into the correlation between smoking and the experience of sadness has been conducted. The term "clinical discouragement" is often used interchangeably with major depressive disorder (MDD) as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) in the context of smoking. Various consequences of mental health disorders, such as dysthymic disorder and bipolar disorder, have been identified in this study on smoking. The observation of scores on non-indicative scales, such as the magnitude of the decline in the temperament state profile, provides evidence for our analysis.[12,13]

Numerous studies have consistently demonstrated a notable level of comorbidity between smoking and major depressive disorder (MDD).[13,14] The evidence supporting the association between smoking and major depressive disorder (MDD) is generally more robust and consistent compared to the evidence supporting the association between smoking and anxiety. Regardless of the population, study design, or significance of smoking behavior, this association was clearly evident.

One possible explanation for the consistently high rate of comorbidity between major depressive disorder (MDD) and smoking may stem from the fact that MDD is often defined and measured as an isolated and distinct condition rather than as part of a broader category of related disorders (e.g., anxiety disorders). The results indicated that the co-occurrence of smoking and major depressive disorder (MDD) was more reliably anticipated compared to the co-occurrence of smoking and tension. The implications of this assessment were evident, regardless of the population, curriculum, or significance of smoking behavior. There is a strong link between major depressive disorder (MDD) and smoking. This is because MDD is usually thought of as a single, complicated concept instead of a broad category that includes all related conditions.[15]

The co-occurrence of depression and smoking has been postulated based on studies that have demonstrated a notable level of comorbidity. The four speculations that are frequently discussed in the literature are: There are four main hypotheses regarding the relationship between major depressive disorder (MDD) and smoking: (1) People with a history

of major depressive disorder (MDD) or significant symptoms are more likely to start smoking; (2) People who smoke or are addicted to nicotine are more likely to develop MDD or depressive symptoms; (3) There is a link between smoking and depression at the same time; or (4) There is a link between smoking and depression that is not caused by one cause but by shared genetic or environmental vulnerabilities.[11,12]

Temperament issues in smokers

Anxiety can be characterized as a temperamental issue. Several studies have observed a correlation between anxiety disorders and smoking, while the findings are contingent upon the specific sample composition, encompassing both young individuals and adults. Prior research has indicated that there are two distinct patterns in which comorbidity measures exhibit more stability within the adult population and increase in conjunction with higher degrees of nicotine dependence.[6]

The analysis reveals that strain can initiate smoking behavior; however, there is also a reciprocal relationship. Similarly, in recent times, scholarly investigations have been unable to establish a definitive correlation between anxiety and smoking. The behavior of those who engage in smoking has an impact on mental health issues, including the development of anxiety. Individuals tend to engage in increased smoking behavior during periods of restlessness, and smoking appears to alleviate feelings of anxiety in many contexts.[7,9]

Nervousness can also contribute to relapse among those who have ceased smoking; however, research in this domain is limited and inconclusive. A significant manifestation of discouragement can be observed in the relapse rates among individuals seeking to quit smoking. Several scientists have observed an increased rate of depression and decreased levels of self-efficacy after quitting. Numerous incidents that result in negative outcomes might potentially precipitate a regression within a span of a few hours. Several theoretical frameworks have been put up to elucidate the mechanisms through which discouragement perpetuates smoking behavior and hence contributes to relapse. The neurochemical effects of nicotine, for example, have the potential to alleviate feelings of discouragement by enhancing happy outcomes or diminishing bad outcomes.[5] Individuals can develop strategies to regulate their nicotine consumption over time, resulting in a diminished ability to respond to aversive stimuli that trigger cravings. It is recommended that future studies investigate the correlation between smoking and alterations in emotional well-being, employing rigorous methodologies that can strengthen the causal inferences derived from observational research. The utilization of inclination score coordination can be employed to balance the distribution of benchmark factors that impact group participation attitudes, such as smoking status.

2. Conclusion

There is plausible empirical evidence that supports the hypothesis that quitting smoking improves mood. The act of consistently using tobacco is associated with neuroadaptations occurring inside the nicotinic circuit of the brain. Neuroadaptations within this circuit have been found to be associated with the occurrence of negative affect, craving, and anxiety subsequent to smoking.

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