

**THE PARADOX OF ADVERTISEMENT, LICENSING, AND
CONSUMPTION ETHICS OF CIGARETTES IN NIGERIA**

By

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Abstract

In contemporary times, cigarette consumption is seemingly a global cultural enterprise despite orchestrated health hazards. The advertisement of cigarette sales with such pay-off lines as “smokers are liable to die young” are common-placed, yet, very instructive. This state of affairs raises pertinent ethical concerns as to why individuals, healthcare delivery services, and respective governments in Nigeria use, legitimate cigarette production and the licensing of same as typified in official endorsement throngs of advertisement in the print and electronic media. This study utilizes sociological methods to examine cigarette consumption patterns in Ikeji-Arakeji, a local region in southwest Nigeria, employing both primary data and secondary sources. It argues that the implicit endorsement of smoking, especially among youths, stems from a combination of individual choices and government policies. The government's involvement in the cigarette industry, including revenue generated from production and importation, adds complexity to the ethical landscape surrounding tobacco control. Furthermore, the paper acknowledges tobacco companies for including warning labels in their advertisements. Moreover, the observed gradual decline in smoking rates in Nigeria highlights the effectiveness of heightened awareness and improved cessation efforts. However, it also emphasizes the need for intensified anti-tobacco measures and educational campaigns. These initiatives should be spearheaded by government bodies, religious institutions, and non-governmental organizations to address the persistent challenge of tobacco use effectively.

Keywords: Advertisement, consumption, ethics, license, and health hazards.

Introduction

The advertising, licensing, and consumption ethics of cigarettes in Nigeria present a complex interplay of societal norms, governmental policies, religious norms, and individual choices. Despite well-documented health risks associated with cigarette smoking, tobacco products continue to be promoted and sold in Nigerian society. Advertisements bearing cautionary messages such as "The Federal Ministry of Health warns that Smokers are liable to die young" paradoxically coexist with the widespread availability and promotion of these products through various media channels.

This paper examines the ethical implications of the Nigerian government's tacit endorsement of cigarette production and consumption, particularly among the youth demographic, by exploring advert jingles, road shows, awareness campaigns, and other secondary sources. By examining the government's role in legitimizing the tobacco industry through licensing and official endorsements in advertising, this study seeks to unravel the underlying motivations driving such policies.

The paper argues that the government's ambivalence towards the ethical concerns surrounding cigarette consumption stems from financial gains derived from the production and importation of tobacco products. The government's seeming prioritization of economic interests over public health underscores a broader disregard for the long-term consequences of widespread smoking habits, especially among vulnerable populations.

To avoid overgeneralization, the study takes into consideration, a local community in Osun state, Nigeria for proper assessment of data on cigarette consumption patterns. The sociological methods are employed to delve into the intricacies of cigarette consumption patterns within Ikeji-Arakeji, a community situated in southwest Nigeria. Utilizing a mixed-method approach, the research draws upon both primary and secondary sources of data to provide a comprehensive understanding of smoking behaviors in the locality. Central to the investigation is the administration of 100 questionnaires, strategically distributed among members of the local community. The questionnaire, meticulously designed to capture various facets of smoking habits and attitudes, will serve as a primary data collection tool. Through targeted distribution, the research aims to gather insights directly from individuals residing in Ikeji-Arakeji. This method allows for the exploration of nuanced factors influencing smoking behaviors, including social norms, cultural influences, economic factors, and access to healthcare resources. In addition, by supplementing questionnaire data with information from secondary sources such as

existing literature and official reports, the study enriches its analysis with broader contextual understanding and comparative insights.

It is on this background that this work posits that cigarette consumption serves as a gateway to more severe substance abuse, with potential ramifications for societal well-being and public health in Nigeria. By shedding light on the intricate dynamics at play within the realm of cigarette advertising, licensing, and consumption ethics, this study aims to provoke critical reflection on the ethical responsibilities of both governmental authorities and individuals in shaping public health outcomes. Through an exploration of key concepts such as advertisement, consumption patterns, ethical considerations, licensing practices, and health hazards, this paper seeks to stimulate discourse on the multifaceted challenges posed by the tobacco industry in Nigeria and the broader implications for societal well-being.

The Concept of Advertising and Licensing

The concept of advertising is intricate and has been interpreted in various ways by scholars. Despite the diverse definitions, the core idea remains consistent: advertising serves as a promotional tool to capture public attention towards a product or service. It is a marketing communication strategy employed by businesses to promote and sell their offerings.

According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), an individual or organization defines advertising as a paid, non-personal presentation and promotion of goods, services, or ideas. In the 21st century, the landscape of advertising has evolved significantly, influenced by digitalization and technological advancements. Advertising theory, as described by Faber, Duff, and Nan (2012), emphasizes the detailed characteristics and tone that shape advertising messages. These elements play a crucial role in influencing consumers and influencing their behavior.

Thorson and Rodgers (2012) suggest that advertisements are designed to influence consumer behavior, although the level of success may vary among individuals. They argue that the effectiveness of advertisements is contingent upon the consumer's level of engagement. Advertising endeavors to create a model for predicting how consumers will respond to an advertisement.

On the other hand, Licensing is a legal mechanism that allows individuals or organizations to use intellectual property rights, such as trademarks or patents, under specific conditions. Scholars have explored the concept of licensing from various perspectives. According to Park and Gordon (1996), licensing can be defined as "a legal agreement that permits one party (the licensee) to use another party's (the

licensor) intellectual property rights under specified conditions." This definition highlights the contractual nature of licensing agreements and the importance of setting clear terms and conditions for the use of intellectual property.

Additionally, Kogut and Kulatilaka (1994) argue that licensing can be a strategic tool for firms to leverage their intellectual property assets and expand their market reach. They emphasize that licensing agreements allow companies to access new markets, technologies, or distribution channels without having to make substantial investments in these areas. This perspective underscores the strategic implications of licensing as a means of generating revenue and enhancing competitive advantage.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the theory of consumption ethics to place the work in a scholarly context. Consumption ethics therefore pertains to the moral principles and considerations that guide individuals and societies in their consumption behaviors. This includes the impact of consumption on personal well-being, societal welfare, and environmental sustainability. Juliet B. Schor, a prominent scholar in consumer culture and ethical consumption, has contributed significantly to the theory of consumption ethics.

In this context, consumption ethics is a critical focal point when considering the conflicting dynamics between the promotion and consumption of cigarettes, the licensing of tobacco companies to operate in Nigeria, and the ethical considerations associated with the health and societal implications of tobacco consumption. Schor (2010) emphasized the ethical dimensions of consumption, particularly in industries with significant societal impact. In the case of tobacco consumption, the ethical considerations revolve around the health consequences of smoking, the targeting of vulnerable populations through advertising, and the societal costs associated with tobacco-related illnesses.

Drawing from Schor's perspective, we can explore the ethical implications of advertising and licensing practices in the tobacco industry, particularly in the context of a developing country like Nigeria.

Literature Review: The Evolution of Tobacco Advertising and Regulation in Nigeria

The evolution of tobacco advertising and regulation in Nigeria reflects a complex interplay between industry marketing strategies, public health concerns, and government intervention. Tobacco advertising in Nigeria has a historical background

dating back to the colonial era when British tobacco companies introduced their products to the Nigerian market (Smith, 2005). During the mid-20th century, cigarette advertising in Nigeria was largely unregulated, utilizing various tactics such as celebrity endorsements and event sponsorships to promote smoking (Jones, 1998).

However, as awareness of the health risks associated with tobacco consumption grew globally, Nigeria began implementing regulations to control cigarette advertising (WHO, 2003). In response to escalating health concerns related to smoking, the Nigerian government started imposing restrictions on tobacco advertising in the 1980s and 1990s, aiming to protect vulnerable populations, particularly youth, from the influence of tobacco promotions (CDC, 2010). The ratification of the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) in the early 2000s marked a significant turning point, leading to the implementation of more stringent regulations on cigarette advertising (FCTC, 2005).

Despite the regulatory efforts, tobacco companies in Nigeria have adapted their marketing strategies to circumvent advertising restrictions, shifting towards sponsorships of events popular among young people (Brown, 2017). The National Tobacco Control Act of 2015 introduced stricter measures on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship, aiming to curb the industry's influence on consumption patterns (NTCA, 2015). The Act also addressed other key areas of tobacco control, including smoke-free policies and packaging regulations.

Interaction with the Tobacco Industry and their Control Policies

Nigeria's tobacco control policies, aligned with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control since January 18, 2006, reflect a concerted effort to curb smoking and its associated health risks. Smoking is confined to designated areas in indoor public places and workplaces, with stringent prohibitions enforced on public transport. Outdoor smoking is also restricted, encompassing spaces such as restaurants, bars, playgrounds, and public parks, among others. The National Tobacco Control Regulations bolster these measures, imposing additional restrictions on the operation and construction of designated smoking areas. In cases where compliance is unfeasible, smoking is entirely prohibited within enclosed public places or workplaces. Moreover, sub-national jurisdictions possess the autonomy to enact more stringent smoke-free laws, providing localized solutions to combat tobacco use.

In parallel, Nigeria has implemented comprehensive measures to regulate tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship. While advertising and promotion of

tobacco products are largely prohibited, exceptions exist for promotion targeting consenting adults. However, restrictions are in place to curb tobacco sponsorship and its publicity, subject to similar loopholes pertaining to consenting adults.

Notably, stringent regulations mandate the display of combined picture and text health warnings covering 50% of all tobacco product packaging, with plans to increase this to 60% by 2024. These laws also prohibit misleading packaging and labeling practices, including the use of terms such as "light" and "low tar," underscoring Nigeria's commitment to promoting informed decision-making among consumers. However, challenges persist in aligning tobacco taxation with WHO recommendations, as current excise taxes fall well below the suggested threshold of 70% of retail prices, indicating the potential for further policy adjustments to address this disparity.

In Nigeria, tobacco control policies are implemented with the aim of reducing the health risks associated with tobacco use. Smoke-free environments are enforced in indoor public places and workplaces, with smoking restricted to designated areas, covering 50% of principal display areas, and taxes accounting for 37% of retail prices. Public transport is entirely smoke-free, and smoking is prohibited in various outdoor spaces, including restaurants, bars, playgrounds, and public parks. Sub-national jurisdictions have the authority to enact even stricter smoke-free laws if desired (*Tax: WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2021* Available at: www.who.int/tobacco/global_report/en/).

Tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship are comprehensively restricted, with exceptions for promotion to consenting adults, and health warnings covering 50% of tobacco product packaging. Regulations prohibit misleading packaging and labeling, including terms such as "light" and "low tar." However, tobacco taxation and prices in Nigeria remain below the recommended level, with taxes accounting for only 30% of retail prices (*SF, APS, PL: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids Legal* Available at: www.tobaccocontrollaws.org).

Cigarette Consumption Patterns and Public Health Implications in Nigeria

The examination of cigarette consumption patterns in Nigeria, as highlighted in Adelaye et al.'s (2017) paper on the current prevalence pattern of tobacco smoking, holds significant importance. The study suggests a noteworthy trend: while the prevalence of ever smokers in Nigeria increased between 1995 and 2015, there was a noticeable decrease in the prevalence of current smokers over the same period. This divergence contrasts with reports from some sub-Saharan African countries,

where rising smoking rates have been attributed to factors like changing socio-economic status, rural-urban migration, and increased affordability of cigarettes.

Adeloye et al. (2017) further note a wide-ranging prevalence of current smokers across Nigeria, with rates varying from 1.2% in Yaba Lagos, South-west Nigeria, recorded in 2015, to as high as 55.5% in Amassoma Delta State, South-south Nigeria, also in 2015. The pooled crude prevalence of current smokers for the entire country stands at 10.4%, with a notable gender disparity: women exhibit a significantly lower prevalence at 3.6%, compared to men at 13.4%. This data underscores the heterogeneity of smoking behavior across different regions of Nigeria and highlights the importance of tailored interventions to address this public health concern.

Their study conducted a comprehensive analysis of smoking patterns across Nigeria, revealing significant insights into the prevalence and characteristics of smoking behavior in the country. It found that approximately 10.4% of Nigerians are current smokers, with a higher prevalence among men compared to women. Moreover, about 17.7% of Nigerians have ever smoked, indicating a substantial proportion of the population has experimented with smoking. Regional disparities were evident, with the North-east exhibiting the highest rates of smoking and the North-west the lowest. Surprisingly, urban and rural areas showed similar smoking prevalence, suggesting that smoking is not strictly limited to urban environments. The study also shed light on the age at which individuals typically initiate smoking, with the median age being around 16.8 years, underscoring the need for targeted prevention efforts aimed at youth.

Noticeably, in Nigeria, the decreasing smoking rates may reflect improved awareness of health risks associated with smoking and the implementation of effective measures to support smoking cessation. For instance, a national survey revealed that nearly half of current smokers attempted to quit smoking in the preceding 12 months, with a significant portion receiving advice from healthcare providers and counselors. Despite the decline, the absolute number of current smokers in Nigeria remained high, with an estimated 11 million individuals in 2015. This figure, along with the prevalence of ever smokers, underscores the ongoing challenge of tobacco use in the country. Discrepancies in prevalence estimates between studies highlight potential issues with sampling and data quality, as seen in variations between different surveys and reports. While the World Health Organization (WHO) reported a lower overall smoking prevalence in 2015 compared to some other estimates, the higher prevalence among men in Nigeria remains a concerning trend. Addressing this gender disparity and implementing

targeted interventions to reduce tobacco use among men present important opportunities for public health efforts in Nigeria.

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Smoking Patterns and Motivations in a Rural Nigerian Community: A Purposive Random Sampling Approach in Ikeji-Arakeji, Osun State

We will now look at the local immediate community of the researcher in southwest part of Nigeria. To better understand, the extent of smoking addiction and the underlying reasons within a specific rural community, Ikeji-Arakeji in southwest Nigeria, is taken into consideration. This research employed a purposive random sampling technique. This method was chosen for its ability to target specific groups within the community who are likely to engage in smoking behavior, including okada drivers, community members, individuals involved in hard labor, and community leaders.

Purposive random sampling involves selecting participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research question, in this case, their likelihood of smoking. By distributing questionnaires to 101 members of the community, the researcher aimed

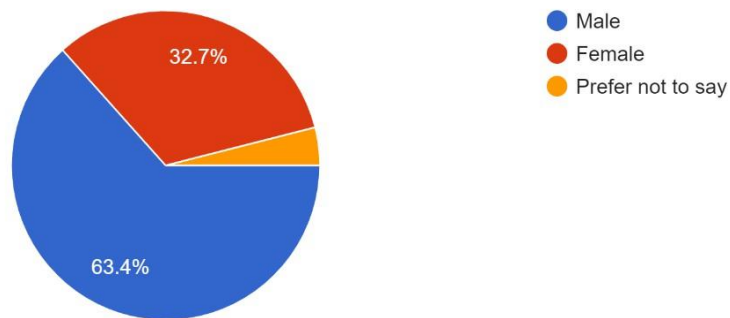
to gather diverse perspectives on smoking habits and motivations. The data is therefore analyzed through charts and percentages as follows:

Data Analysis

Section A: Demographic data

1. Gender:

101 responses



In the study, the participation rates between genders were notably skewed, with 63.4% of participants being male and 32.7% female, indicating a significant imbalance. This statistic suggests a higher prevalence of male participants compared to their female counterparts, highlighting a potential disparity in smoking habits between the sexes. The data strongly implies that males were more inclined to smoke than females, with a substantial majority of participants being male.

2. Age:

101 responses

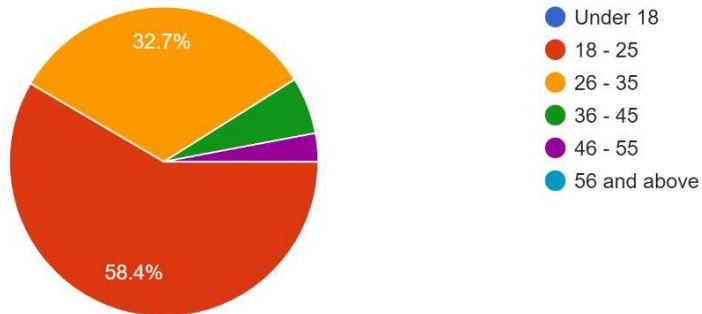


Chart 2 reveals a notable concentration of respondents within the 18-25 age bracket, comprising a majority at 58.4%. This suggests that the study primarily attracted younger participants, indicating a potential bias towards this demographic group. Additionally, 32.7% of respondents fell within the 26-35 age range, representing a significant but comparatively smaller portion of the sample. The distribution underscores a prevalent trend of younger individuals participating in the study, while those in the slightly older age bracket are less represented.

3. Education Level:

101 responses

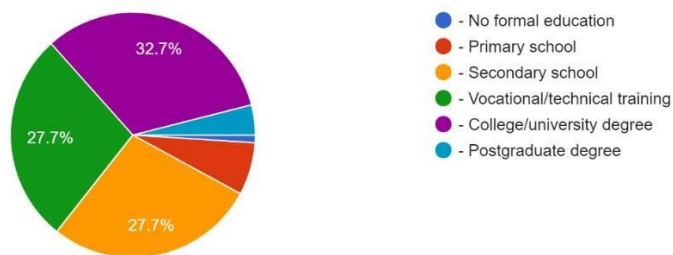


Chart 3

Chart 3 delineates the educational attainment of the respondents, revealing a diverse distribution across different levels of education. Notably, 27.7% of participants had vocational training, while an equivalent percentage possessed only secondary school qualifications. Furthermore, 32.7% of respondents were currently pursuing college education. This array of educational backgrounds within the sample highlights the importance of considering varied levels of educational attainment when analyzing study outcomes, as individuals with different educational backgrounds may exhibit distinct attitudes, behaviors, and responses to smoking-related factors

4. Occupation:
100 responses

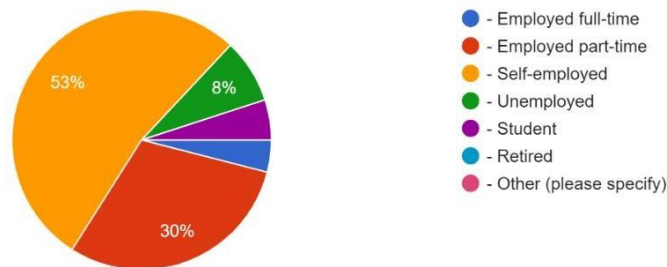


Chart 4

The depicted chart indicates a notable distribution of employment statuses among the respondents, with 53% identifying as self-employed, constituting the majority of the sample. Additionally, 30% of participants reported being employed in part-time positions, representing a substantial portion of the surveyed population. Furthermore, 8% of respondents indicated unemployment as their current status

Section B: Cigarette Consumption Pattern

1. Do you currently smoke cigarettes?

101 responses

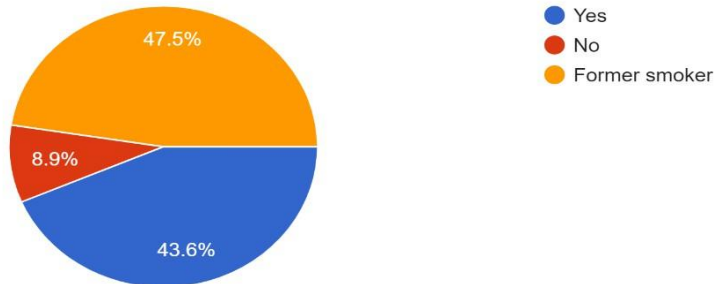


Chart I

The provided chart presents insights into the smoking behaviors of the surveyed population, revealing distinct categories of smokers and non-smokers. Notably, approximately 47.5% of respondents identified as former smokers, indicating a significant proportion of individuals who had previously engaged in smoking but have since ceased the habit. Additionally, 8.9% of participants reported as non-smokers, suggesting a minority within the sample who have never smoked. Conversely, 43.6% of respondents indicated that they currently smoke, representing an ongoing prevalence of smoking within the surveyed population.

3. How long have you been smoking?

101 responses

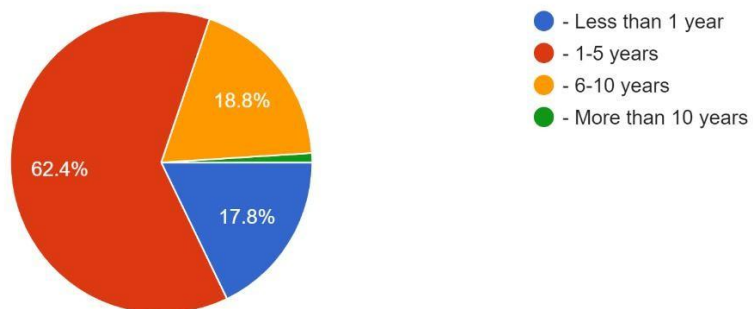


Chart II

Chart II delineates the duration of smoking habits among the surveyed population, offering insights into the temporal patterns of smoking behavior. Notably, the majority of respondents, comprising 62.4%, reported having smoked for a duration ranging from 1 to 5 years, indicating a substantial proportion of relatively recent smokers within the sample. Additionally, 17.8% of participants reported smoking for less than a year, suggesting a notable portion of individuals who have initiated smoking more recently. Furthermore, 18.8% of respondents indicated a smoking duration falling between 6 to 10 years, highlighting a significant but comparatively smaller subset of participants with a moderate to longer-term smoking history.

4. Do any of your family members or close friends smoke?

101 responses

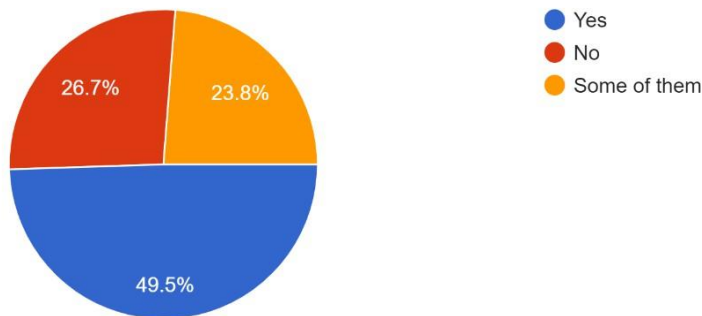


Chart III

The provided chart offers insights into the social context of smoking behaviors among the surveyed population, particularly in relation to the presence of smoking among family members or close friends. Notably, 49.5% of respondents reported having family members or close friends who engage in smoking, indicating a significant prevalence of smoking within their social circles. Conversely, 26.7% of participants stated that they did not have any family members or close friends who smoke, suggesting a substantial portion of individuals with limited exposure to smoking within their immediate social networks. Additionally, 23.8% of respondents indicated that only some of their close friends or relatives smoke, highlighting a nuanced spectrum of smoking prevalence within participants' social circles.

5. How concerned are you about the health risks associated with smoking?

101 responses

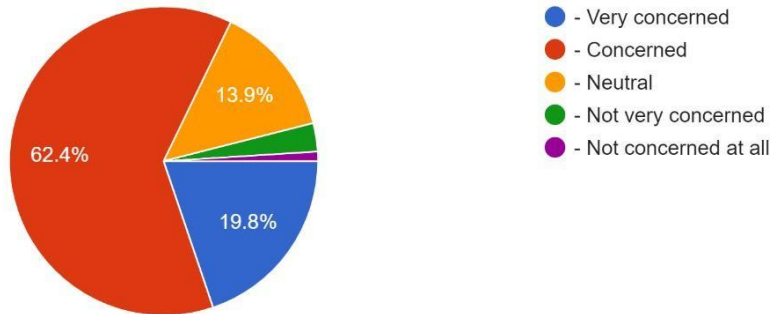


Chart IV

Chart IV provides valuable insights into the attitudes and perceptions of the surveyed population regarding the health risks associated with smoking. Notably, a substantial majority, comprising 62.4% of respondents, expressed concerns about the health risks linked to smoking, indicating a widespread awareness of the potential negative consequences of tobacco use on health. Furthermore, 19.8% of participants reported being very concerned about these health risks, highlighting a significant subset of individuals who perceive smoking as a particularly serious health hazard. Conversely, 13.9% of respondents expressed a neutral stance towards the idea of health risks associated with smoking, suggesting a notable proportion of participants with potentially ambivalent attitudes or beliefs regarding the health implications of tobacco use.

6. The government should invest more in educating the public about the health risks of smoking.

101 responses

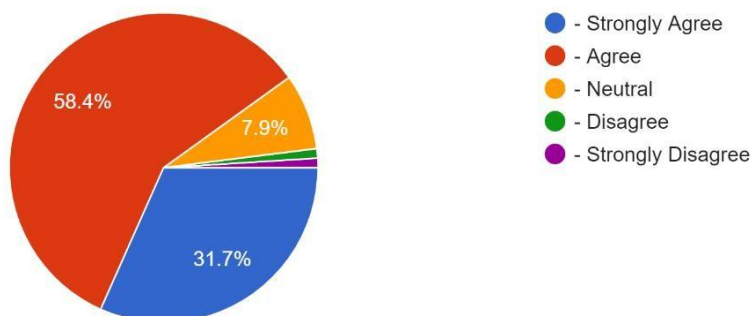


Chart V

Notably, a significant majority, comprising 58.4% of respondents, agreed that the government should allocate more resources towards educating the public about the health risks associated with smoking, indicating widespread support for enhanced public health initiatives in this regard. Furthermore, 31.7% of participants strongly agreed with this idea, underscoring a substantial subset of individuals who advocate for proactive government action in addressing smoking-related health concerns. Conversely, approximately 7.9% of respondents expressed a neutral stance towards the notion of increased government investment in smoking education, suggesting a smaller but notable proportion of participants with potentially ambivalent attitudes

towards the role of government intervention in this area

7. It is easy for minors to purchase cigarettes in our community.

101 responses

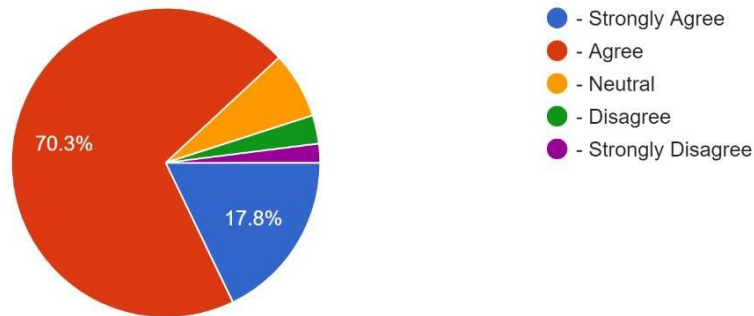


Chart VI

Chart VI highlights concerning perceptions among the surveyed population regarding underage access to cigarettes within the local community. Alarmingly, approximately 70.3% of respondents agreed that it was easy for minors to purchase cigarettes, indicating a widespread belief in the accessibility of tobacco products to underage individuals. Furthermore, 17.8% of participants strongly agreed with this view, underscoring a notable subset of individuals who perceive the issue of underage tobacco access as particularly serious. Additionally, some respondents expressed concerns that the majority of buyers were under 18 and lacked exposure to formal education and awareness about the risks associated with smoking, shedding light on the potential consequences of inadequate regulation and enforcement measures.

8. Cigarette advertising influences people's decisions to smoke.

101 responses

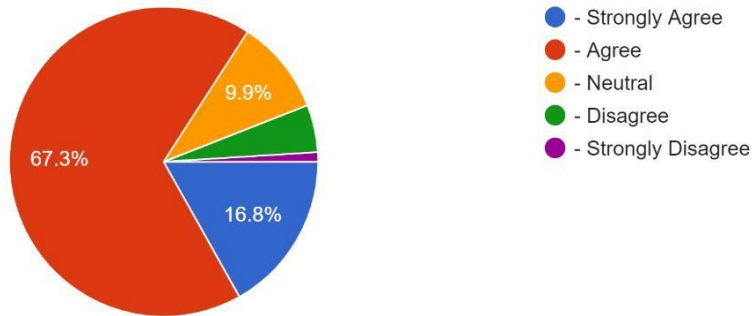


Chart VII

Chart VI sheds light on the perceived influence of cigarette advertising on smoking decisions within the local community among the surveyed population. A significant majority, comprising 67.3% of respondents, agreed that cigarette advertising has an impact on people's decisions to smoke, suggesting widespread recognition of the persuasive power of marketing tactics employed by tobacco companies. Additionally, 16.8% of participants strongly agreed with this view, indicating a notable subset of individuals who perceive cigarette advertising as highly influential in shaping smoking behaviors. However, approximately 9.9% of respondents expressed a neutral stance towards the influence of cigarette advertising on smoking decisions, suggesting a smaller but notable proportion of participants with potentially ambivalent attitudes or beliefs regarding the role of advertising in tobacco use.

9. The government should allocate more resources to support smoking cessation programs.

101 responses

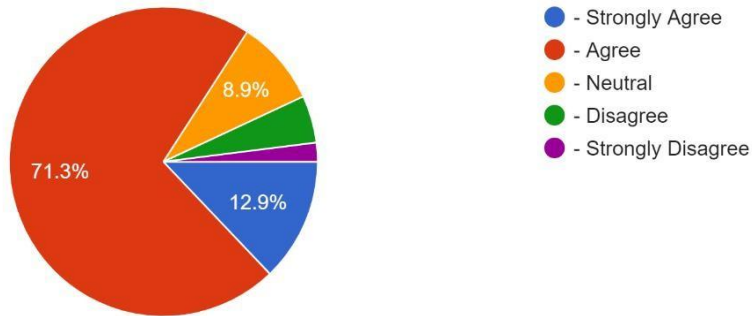


Chart VIII

The chart here showed that 71.3% of the entire respondents agreed that the government should allocate more resources to support smoking cessation programs. 12.9% of the respondents strongly agreed to the above view. While 8.9% of the respondents were neutral to the above view.

10. Cigarette advertising targets vulnerable populations such as youth and low-income individuals.

101 responses

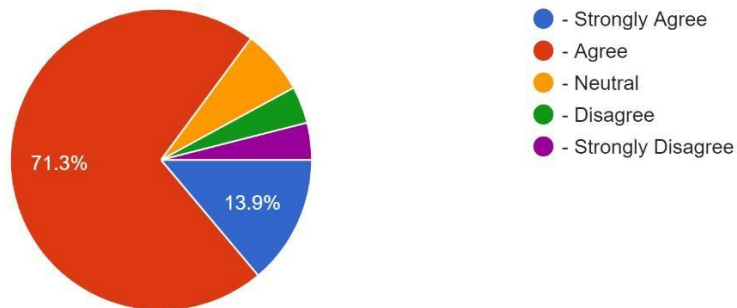


Chart IX

The above chart shows that 71.3% of the respondents agreed that cigarette advertising targeted the vulnerable populations such as the youth and low-income individuals. 13.9% strongly agreed to this view.

11. I feel pressure from peers or society to smoke.

101 responses

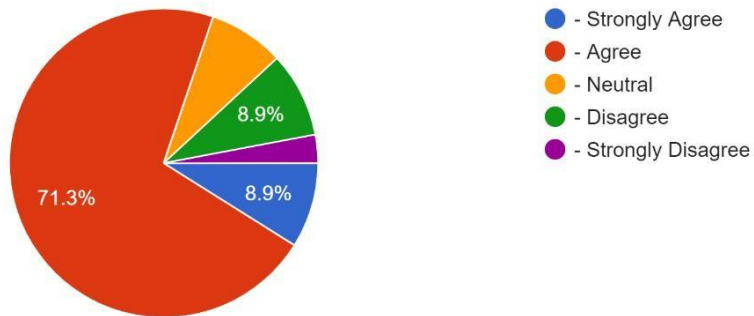


Chart X

The chart above shows that a significant percentage of 71.3% of the respondents agreed to the fact that they most times feel pressured from peers or the society to smoke. 8.9% strongly agreed to the view while another 8.9% were neutral to the view.

16. I believe the government should provide more support for individuals trying to quit smoking.

101 responses

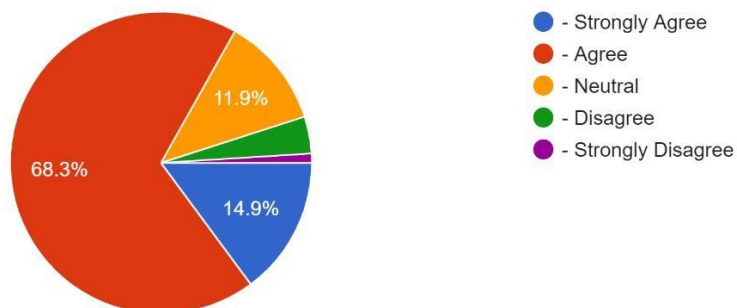


Chart XI

The presented chart offers insights into the attitudes of the surveyed population regarding government support for smoking cessation efforts. A substantial majority, comprising 68.3% of respondents, believed that the government should offer more support for individuals endeavoring to quit smoking, indicating widespread support for enhanced cessation services and resources. Furthermore, 14.9% of participants strongly agreed with this view, underscoring a significant subset of individuals who advocate for robust government intervention in aiding smoking cessation. However, 11.9% of respondents expressed neutrality towards the idea of increased government support for quitting smoking, suggesting a smaller but notable proportion of participants with potentially ambivalent attitudes or beliefs regarding the role of government in cessation efforts. Interestingly, a limited percentage of respondents suggested a collaborative approach involving religious institutions, healthcare providers, and the government for a more effective cessation support system, highlighting the recognition of the multifaceted nature of smoking cessation and the potential benefits of a holistic approach involving various stakeholders.

18. The government should impose higher taxes on cigarettes to fund healthcare services.

101 responses

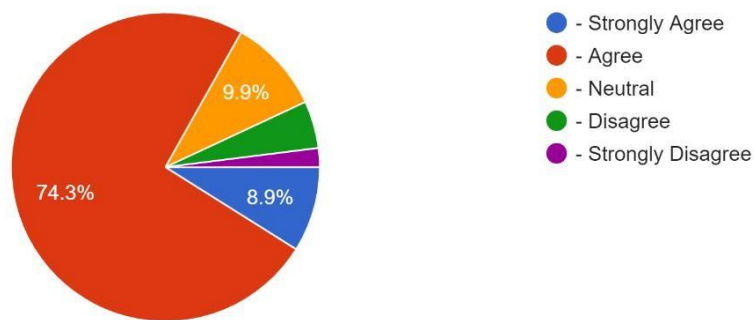


Chart XII

The chart above illustrates that 74.3% of the respondents agreed that the government should impose higher taxes on cigarettes to fund health care services. 8.9% of the respondents strongly agreed while 9.9% were categorically neutral to the idea.

19. I believe there should be stricter regulations on the sale and distribution of e-cigarettes.
101 responses

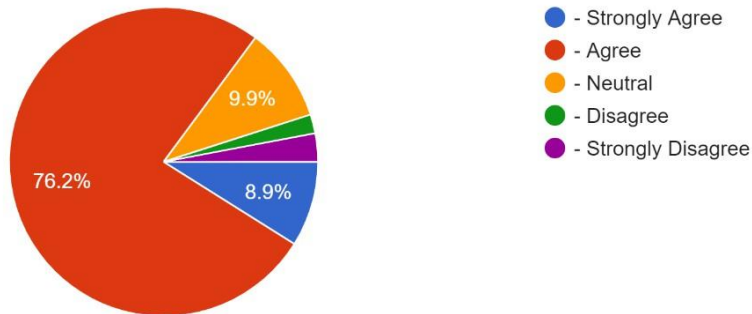


Chart XIII

The provided chart reveals the perspectives of the surveyed population regarding regulations on the sales and distribution of e-cigarettes. A significant majority, comprising 76.2% of respondents, advocated for stricter regulations on e-cigarette sales and distribution, indicating widespread support for measures to enhance oversight and control over these products. Furthermore, 8.9% of participants strongly agreed with this idea, underscoring a notable subset of individuals who perceive the need for stringent regulations as particularly urgent. Conversely, approximately 9.9% of respondents expressed neutrality towards the idea of stricter regulations on e-cigarettes.

Discussion of Findings

The provided data offers a comprehensive view of smoking behaviors, perceptions, and attitudes among the surveyed population. Firstly, it highlights the prevalence of smoking and former smoking habits, with a significant proportion of respondents identifying as former smokers (47.5%) and current smokers (43.6%). This suggests a dynamic landscape of smoking behaviors, with a considerable portion of individuals having quit smoking while others continue to smoke. Additionally, insights into the duration of smoking habits reveal a concentration of relatively recent smokers, with the majority having smoked for 1 to 5 years, indicating a potential trend of new smokers within the sample.

Secondly, the data underscores the influence of social factors on smoking behaviors, with a notable percentage of respondents reporting family members or close friends who smoke (49.5%). This highlights the role of social networks in shaping smoking habits and suggests that exposure to smoking within one's social circle may influence individual smoking behaviors. Furthermore, perceptions regarding cigarette advertising and its impact on smoking decisions reflect a widespread recognition of the persuasive power of marketing tactics, particularly among vulnerable populations such as youth and low-income individuals. These findings emphasize the importance of addressing social influences and marketing strategies in tobacco control efforts.

Lastly, the data reveals a strong endorsement for government intervention in tobacco control, with the majority of respondents advocating for stricter regulations on e-cigarette sales and distribution (76.2%) and increased government support for smoking cessation efforts (68.3%). This reflects a collective recognition of the role of policy measures and public health initiatives in addressing smoking-related issues and protecting public health. In addition, concerns about underage access to cigarettes highlight the need for comprehensive regulatory frameworks to prevent youth initiation and access to tobacco products.

In summary, the findings underscore the multifaceted nature of smoking behaviors and perceptions, influenced by individual, social, and environmental factors. They emphasize the importance of targeted interventions, comprehensive tobacco control policies, and public health initiatives to address smoking prevalence, protect vulnerable populations, and support smoking cessation efforts within communities.

Exploring the Contradictions on Advertisement, Licensing, and Consumption Ethics of Cigarettes in Nigeria

In considering the contradictions and paradoxes around promoting substances like cigarettes, we confront a deep-seated conflict between public health and economic interests. On one side, there's a clear push for healthier lifestyles and reducing the harms associated with smoking. Yet, on the other side, there's a significant reliance on the revenue generated by the tobacco industry, creating a complex ethical dilemma.

In Nigeria, the contradictions and paradoxes surrounding the promotion, licensing, and consumption of cigarettes take on a distinct context shaped by the country's economic landscape, public health challenges, and regulatory frameworks. The

promotion of cigarettes in Nigeria presents a stark contrast between public health campaigns aimed at reducing smoking rates and the economic interests tied to the tobacco industry. While efforts to raise awareness about the health risks of smoking are ongoing, Nigeria also relies on revenue from tobacco taxes, creating a delicate balance between discouraging consumption and benefiting from its sales.

Government policies on tobacco control in Nigeria reflect these contradictions. Despite implementing measures like health warnings on cigarette packs and restrictions on advertising, the government still grapples with the dilemma of curbing smoking while deriving income from tobacco-related activities. This paradox underscores the challenging task of balancing public health objectives with economic considerations.

Moreover, the cultural acceptance and promotion of smoking products in Nigeria add another layer to these contradictions. Advertising campaigns often portray cigarettes as symbols of status or pleasure, despite the well-known health hazards they pose. This cultural acceptance creates a paradox where societal norms endorse products that can cause addiction and diseases. In the Nigerian context, careful thought is required to navigate these contradictions. Policymakers must weigh the economic benefits of the tobacco industry against the health costs associated with smoking-related illnesses.

These careful considerations bring us to a crucial point of reflection. Do we inadvertently wish harm upon ourselves by perpetuating the consumption and promotion of substances known to cause severe health issues? This question underscores the need for a thoughtful balance between economic benefits, public health imperatives, and ethical responsibilities towards individuals and communities. Resolving these contradictions requires navigating through nuanced discussions and policy decisions that prioritize human well-being above all else.

The Place of Religious Ethics in Shaping Health and Consumption Patterns

Religious ethics have a significant impact on shaping individual behaviors and societal norms around health and consumption practices, particularly when it comes to smoking. The ethical implications of smoking are addressed differently within various religious traditions, including Christianity, Islam, and African traditional religions. By examining the perspectives of these religions, we can gain insights from their sacred texts and teachings.

Christianity values the Bible as a fundamental source of ethical direction for its followers. Although smoking is not explicitly mentioned, principles of stewardship,

body care, and consideration for others can be applied to discussions on smoking. For example, the Apostle Paul's message in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 highlights the importance of treating one's body as a temple of the Holy Spirit and avoiding behaviors that harm the body, such as smoking.

Islam looks to the Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad as a source of guidance for ethical conduct, emphasizing the avoidance of harm to oneself and others. Although smoking is not explicitly prohibited in the Quran, the principle of not causing self-destruction, as mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:195), can be interpreted as discouraging actions detrimental to one's health, including smoking. The concept of stewardship (khilafah) in Islam further highlights the responsibility of caring for one's body and the environment, which can be relevant to discussions on smoking.

African traditional religions prioritize communal well-being and harmony with nature, given their diverse cosmologies. Many African traditions consider the body sacred and deserving of respect and care. Smoking, especially if perceived as harmful, may be regarded as a violation of this principle. Moreover, the interconnectedness of individuals within the community and with the spiritual realm can influence attitudes toward behaviors that impact personal and collective health.

We can therefore agree here that the perspectives of Christianity, Islam, and African traditional religions offer valuable insights into the ethical dimensions of smoking cigarettes. Although these religions do not explicitly address smoking, their teachings on stewardship, body care, harm avoidance, and communal well-being can guide discussions on health and consumption patterns. By critically examining these religious ethics in the context of smoking, individuals and communities can make informed decisions that prioritize well-being and ethical behavior.

Conclusion

The ethical dilemma surrounding the advertisement, licensing, and consumption of cigarettes in Nigeria highlights the complex balance between individual freedoms and public health considerations. While cigarette companies argue for their legal right to promote and sell their products, critics raise valid concerns about the potential influence of advertising on consumer behavior, particularly among vulnerable populations such as youth. The debate over the responsibility of these companies in promoting a harmful product further complicates the issue.

To move forward, policymakers, healthcare professionals, and the public need to engage in meaningful discussions and take action to address this paradox. Measures

should be implemented to promote responsible advertising practices, regulate the licensing of cigarette companies, and encourage ethical consumption behaviors related to smoking. By prioritizing public health and well-being while respecting individual freedoms, a more balanced and ethical approach can be achieved in addressing the challenges posed by the promotion and consumption of cigarettes in Nigeria.

Recommendations and Future Directions

This study therefore recommends the following;

1. The government at all levels should further implement stricter regulations on tobacco advertising to limit the promotion of cigarettes, particularly targeting vulnerable groups like youth. By imposing tighter controls on marketing strategies used by cigarette companies, we can reduce the potential impact on consumer behavior and decrease the prevalence of smoking-related health problems.
2. Government, religious institutions, and non-governmental institutions should invest in comprehensive public health education and awareness initiatives to educate the public about the dangers of smoking and empower individuals to make informed choices regarding their health. By increasing awareness of the adverse effects of smoking and promoting healthier lifestyle options, we can work towards reducing tobacco use and enhancing overall public health outcomes.
3. An encouraged collaboration and dialogue among various stakeholders, religious leaders including government bodies, healthcare professionals, advocacy organizations, and the general public to help foster partnerships and discussions, where we can develop coordinated approaches that prioritize both individual freedoms and public health concerns. Engaging in ongoing conversations and cooperative efforts will be essential in implementing effective strategies and policies that promote responsible advertising, regulate licensing, and encourage ethical consumption practices related to cigarettes in Nigeria.

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