

Harm perceptions and behavioral intentions in response to smokeless tobacco graphic health warning labels in Bangladesh

Presenter: Laura Kroart

Background

- Smokeless tobacco (SLT) use has increased in Bangladesh over the last twenty years.
- Health warning labels (HWLs) communicate potential harm and may influence behavior.

Methods

- We conducted 28 focus groups with SLT users and non-users in Bangladesh in February 2021.
- Participants were shown SLT products of a standard shape and size. Each pack contained one of two current graphic HWLs applied as required by law.
- Participants discussed HWL noticeability and perceived harm.



Image 1:
A baby with an oxygen cannula



Image 2:
A woman with oral cancer

In Bangladesh, graphic HWLs on SLT products of a standard shape and size produced **strong, emotional** responses which can influence harm perceptions and behavioral intentions.

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Results

- Both graphic HWLs generated **strong, emotional** responses about perceived harm.
- Image 1 produced responses about harm to children.
- Women in particular expressed concerns about harm to pregnancy: **“if a pregnant woman consumes it, her baby will be affected as well.”**
- Participants discussed the potential for these images to influence SLT use, where adults may reduce their use **“because the children are suffering.”**

Conclusions

- The current SLT graphic HWLs in Bangladesh, when applied as required, can produce strong emotional responses, which can influence SLT harm perceptions and behavioral intentions.
- Future development of graphic HWLs should incorporate images as effective as the current SLT graphic HWLs in Bangladesh.

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