

**The Youth Tobacco Epidemic
in Asia :
Implications on Health Education**

Minja Kim Choe, East-West Center
and
Jin Young Byon, University of Hawaii

International Symposium of
Korean Society for Health Education and Promotion

September 14, 2001 Ewha University, Seoul, KOREA

The Youth Tobacco Epidemic in Asia: Implications on Health Education

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Why Study Smoking Behavior? Consequences of Smoking

- Smoking increases risks of heart disease, cancers of many sites, and respiratory diseases
- Smoking during pregnancy increases babies' risk of low birth weight and other perinatal complications
- Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke can cause lung cancer and children's respiratory health
- Smoking incurs high cost of health care

Tobacco Use and Mortality

- If things do not change, deaths due to tobacco use in the world will increase from 4 million in 1998 to 10 million in 2030
- Developed regions will experience 50% increase, while Asia will experience fourfold increase
- Globally, tobacco will be responsible for one in eight deaths by late 2020s
- Globally, at least one in three teenage smokers will die prematurely as a result of smoking

Youth and Smoking

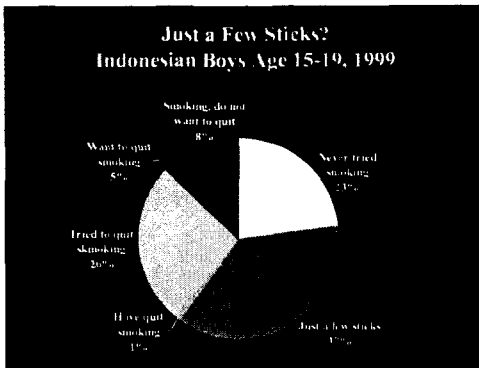
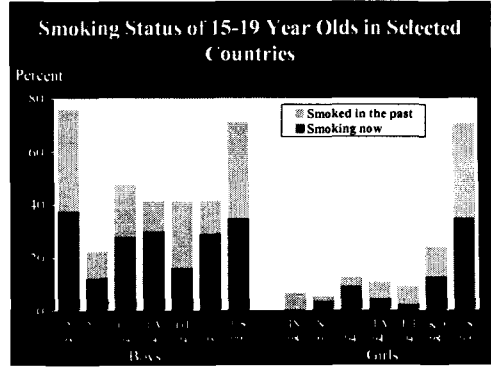
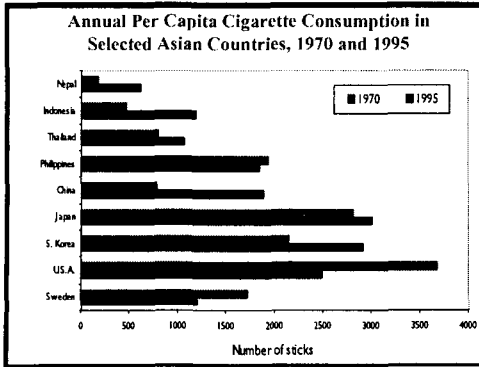
- Smoking affects growth and youth activities
- The younger people start smoking, the more likely they are to become strongly addicted to nicotine
- Adolescents who smoke are much more likely to use alcohol, use drugs, engage in fighting, and engage in unprotected sex
- In most countries, children are smoking more and start smoking at younger ages

Smoking Behavior

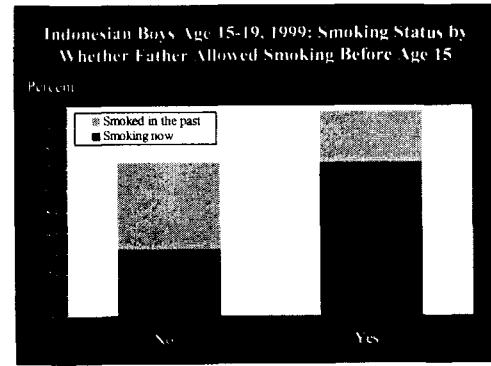
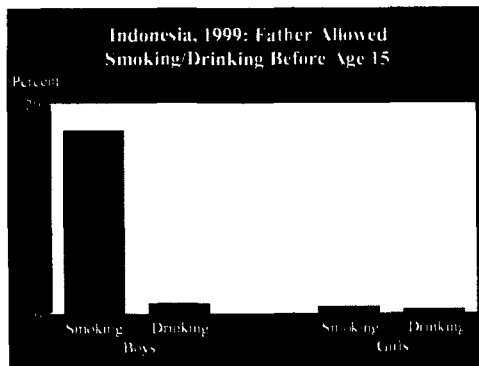
- Smoking is addictive
- Health consequences of smoking takes decades to take place
- Smoking is preventable

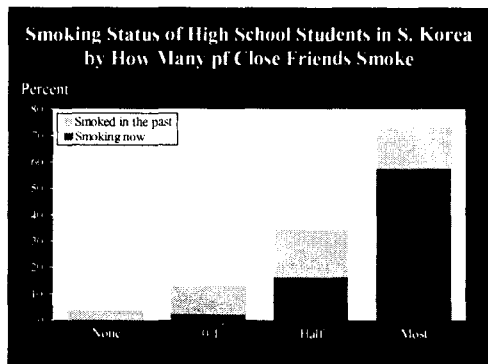
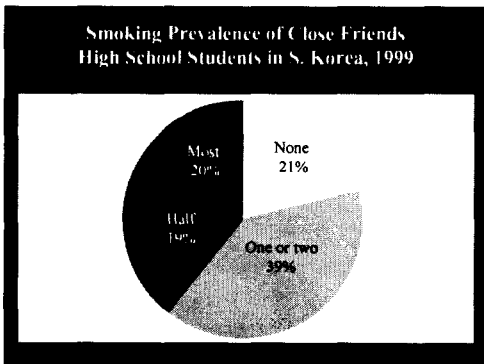
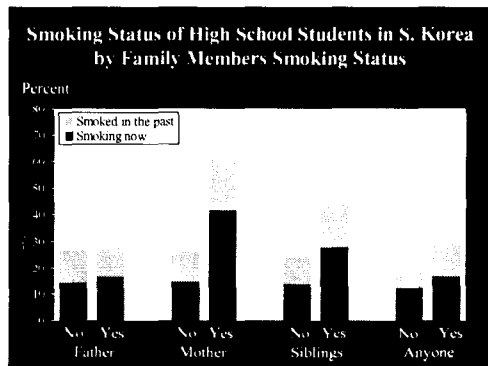
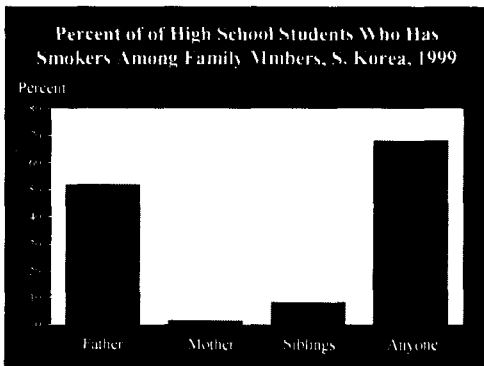
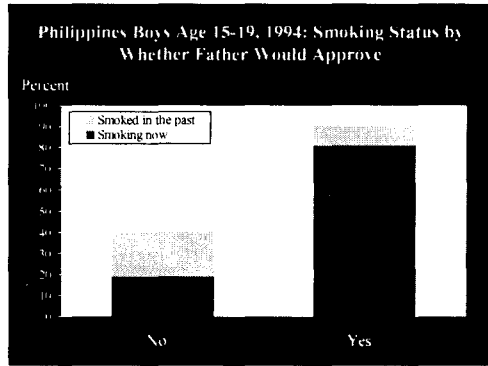
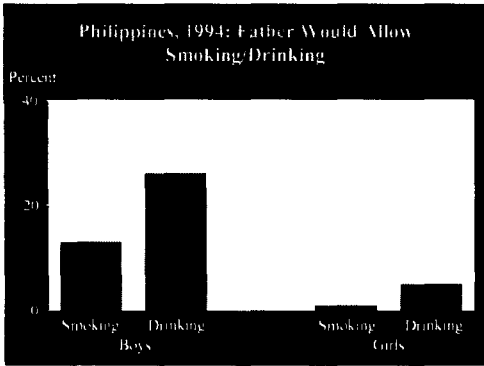
Tobacco Use in Asia

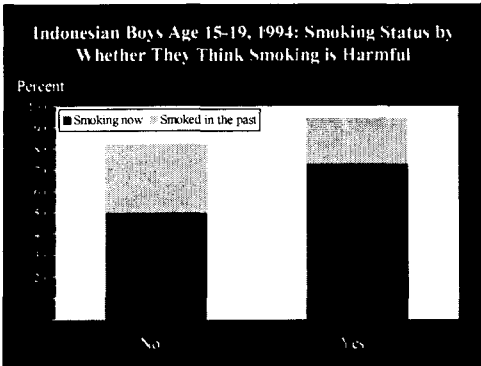
- Asia has a very long history of using tobacco products
- Many forms of tobacco consumption exist in South and Southeast Asia, some preferred by women
- Tobacco industry and trade provide large sources of employment in many Asian countries
- Political commitment to tobacco control is weak in Asian countries with the exception of Thailand



Smoking Behavior Among Teens are Affected by Family and Friends

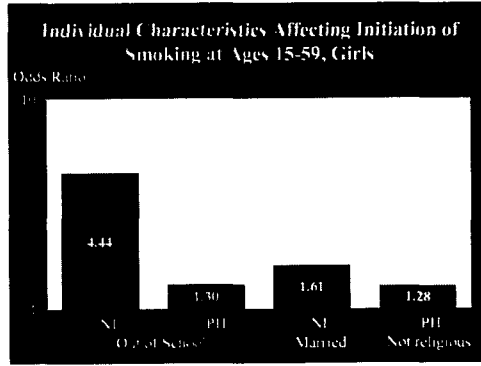
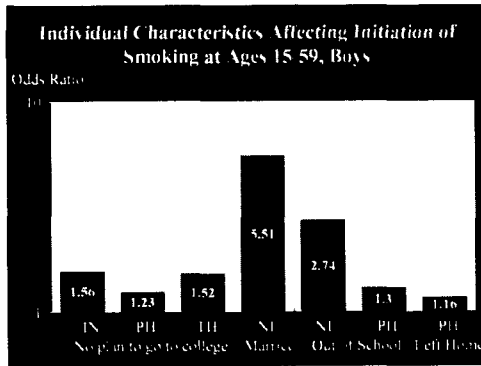
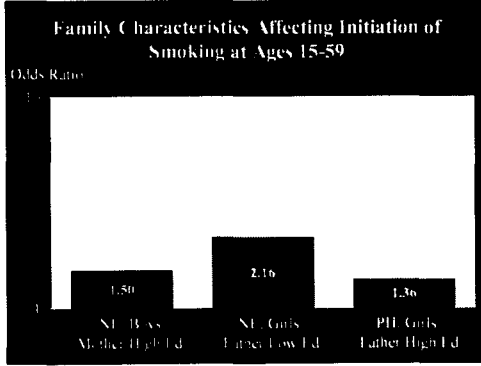
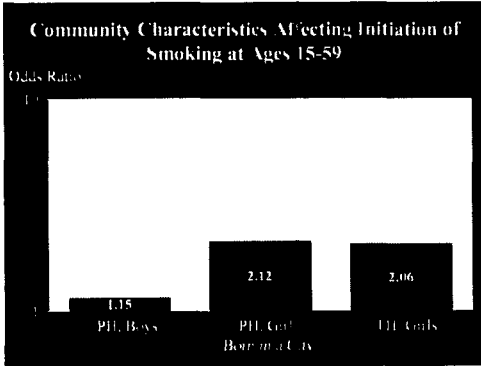


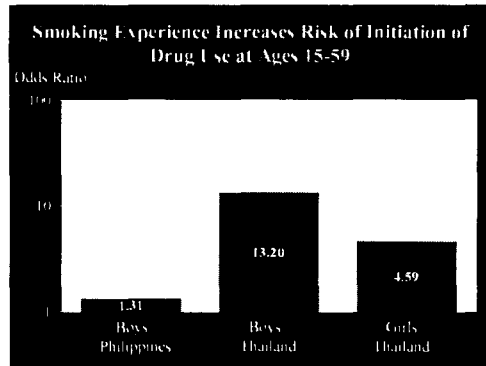
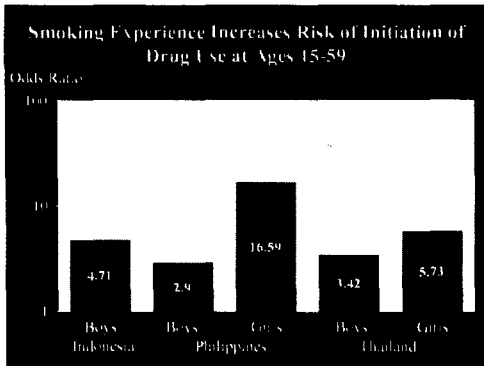




Are Some Teenagers More Likely to Begin Smoking than Others?

- Community characteristics
- Family characteristics
- Individual characteristics





What Can We Do to Reduce Youth Tobacco Epidemic?: School-Based Health Education

- Comprehensive health education
- Begin early
- Teacher training
- Involve students themselves and parents
- Special programs for high risk students
- Need consistency in rules and enforcement

What Can We Do to Reduce Youth Tobacco Epidemic?: Other Programs

- Regulation and enforcement
 - Pricing and tax: selling cigarettes, non smoking in public areas, warning signs on cigarette packages
- Community based programs
 - Advertisement sponsorship, mass media, internet, community leaders
- Challenging tobacco industry
- Cross-national cooperation