

## **Extended Abstract**

### **Determination and Evaluation of Smoking Status of Individuals Under Probation**

#### **Introduction**

This study aimed to evaluate the sociodemographic characteristics of individuals subjected to probation measures, their smoking status (age of smoking onset, daily cigarette consumption, factors affecting starting and quitting, and past cessation experiences), and their preparedness, motivations, and decision-making processes regarding smoking cessation.

Probation is defined as an alternative punishment and execution system in which supervision and follow-up is provided for suspects, defendants, or convicts in the community, as well as services, programs, and resources needed for improvement and reintegration. In this system, convicts who have completed part of their sentences with good conduct are released from imprisonment on the condition of probation and continue the remaining penalty period as probationers. As another measure, persons who are under investigation for substance use acquire the right to suspend public prosecution by taking a one-year probation measure. The feature common to both groups is that they are included in guidance activities known as “training and improvement work” while they are under the supervision of probation. These guidance activities are in the form of individual interviews, structured group workshops, seminar events, literacy or vocational courses, and activities for leisure structuring.

#### **Method**

This study adopted a quantitative research design, using a cross-sectional research method. The study sample consisted of 200 randomly selected adult males who were current smokers and probationers through the Karşıyaka Directorate of Probation. Personal information forms, average smoking prevalence scores, a general motivation test, and a decision-making balance scale were given to the participants. Data were tested using descriptive statistics, chi-square test, Mann–Whitney U Tests, and Kruskal Wallis and Spearman correlation analyses.

#### **Discussion**

The obtained data provided some important information for experts working in this field to help smokers gain awareness of their situation, protect and improve health, motivate smoking cessation, and fight against smoking. Accordingly, it is thought that an awareness-raising study could be performed. Further, as trying smoking at an early age can turn into an addiction in adulthood, information can be provided about the psychological and physiological effects of smoking and nicotine withdrawal

symptoms. Additionally, based on the finding that smoking is frequently used to cope with emotional changes, awareness can be raised regarding exposure to cigarette smoke (passive smoking). It could be supported by developing an insight related to the economic burden brought on by cigarettes, information about smoking cessation methods, discussion of treatment options, provision of nicotine replacement treatments, trainings on issues related to coping with stress and problems, and alternative options. The decision balance could be studied to increase negative perceptions of smoking and change motivation in individual interviews and group work for individuals receiving probation.

### **Conclusion**

It was found that the participants started smoking during adolescence, mostly due to the social environment or curiosity. The majority had previous smoking cessation experiences, and most of them stated that emotional changes were a reason for relapse. It was observed that people in the pre-thinking stage in terms of their preparedness and people who are considering cessation smoking have higher readiness and motivation. Further, those who are married and have children are partially aware of the effects of smoking. It was understood that most participants had negative perceptions of smoking; however, they did not have enough information and motivation to quit and required external motivation.