



## Opinions of Social Studies Teacher Candidates About Smoking Addiction

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### *Abstract*

The aim of this study is to examine the opinions of social studies teacher candidates about smoking addiction. For the purpose of the study, phenomenological research design, which is one of the designs of qualitative research method, was used. The study group consisted of 20 volunteer teacher candidates (10 male and 10 female) who have been studying at Usak University Faculty of Education in the 2019-2020 academic year and who have been smoking for the last year. Data were collected with a semi-structured interview form. The interview form, which is a data collection tool, was prepared based on the opinions of three experts. 6 open-ended questions were asked to the participants according to expert opinions. The data was analyzed by content analysis.

*Keywords:* social studies, teacher candidates, smoking, addiction, opinion.

### 1. Introduction

**Addiction is attention bias for any substance (Kalıncılıç & Baran, 2019).** Nicotine addiction is the primary reason for the development of smoking habit, the maintenance of this behavior and the failure of treatment interventions (Okutan, Taş, Kaya & Kartaloğlu, 2007).

Addiction is when a person loses control of any substance. According to the World Health Organization (WHO): The person who smoked a pack of cigarettes a day for at least 6 months but quit left now is called an old smoker. The person who has never tried smoking is called a non-smoker. A person who smokes less than one cigarette per day is called an occasional smoker. At least one smoker every day is called a daily addict. Light smoker is the one who smokes less than 10 cigarettes a day (Canbaz, Sunter & Tunçel, 2005). The World Health Organization defines smoking as a state of bio-socio-**psychological poisoning (Sağar, 2017).**

**Smoking addiction is first among the preventable causes of death worldwide (Karadağ, Karadağ, Ediz & Işık, 2011).** Smoking is known to be the greatest preventable disease and death cause in the United States (Spring, Pingitore & McChargue, 2003).

Smoking is one of the biggest threats to human health. In developed countries, smoking habits increased rapidly at the beginning of the last century. Due to this situation, the **rate of smoking related diseases has increased (Okutan, Taş, Kaya & Kartaloğlu, 2007)**. While smoking tendency decreased in many developed countries in 2000s, cigarette consumption increased in **developing countries (Şahin, Öztürk, Ünlü, Uskun & Akkaya 2000)**. **Over time, developed countries reduced their smoking rates through anti-smoking campaigns, and especially the rate of lung cancer began to decline. However, smoking habits in women started a little late compared to men and continue to spread (Okutan, Taş, Kaya & Kartaloğlu, 2007)**.

Smoking is a direct cause or condition of many diseases such as chronic bronchitis, larynx, lung, oral mucosa and bladder cancers, especially in cardiovascular diseases (Erbaydar, Avcı & Altay, 2003). **Smoking is known to adversely affect cognitive performance (Pakyürek & Şenyüz, 2019)**.

Psychotherapy in smoking cessation clinics, treatment with hypnosis, behavioral methods (electrical stimulation, boredom or fast smoking), self-management techniques (writing and recording smoking cigarettes gradually), acupuncture, medical treatment, nicotine replacement therapy and nicotine transdermal therapeutic system smoking cessation methods are **recommended (Yorgancıoğlu & Esen, 2000)**.

According to the World Health Organization, prevalence of smoking among adults **over the age of 15 is 26.0% worldwide and 35.3% in the European Region (Çapık & Çingil, 2013)**. In Turkey, the smoking rate was 43.6% (Kayla & Yararbas, 2016). If no immediate action is taken, the World Health Organization assumes that there will be more than 8 million deaths per year starting in 2030 and 80% of these will be in developing countries. It is estimated that more than one billion people will die from smoking in **the 21st century (Karadağ, Karadağ, Ediz & Işık, 2011)**.

According to Turkey in 2012 Global Tobacco Survey, 41.4% men, 15.2% women have **used cigarette (Çapık & Çingil, 2013)**. **In recent years, smoking prevalence of male students between the ages of 13-15 increased from 9.4% to 10.2%, while the frequency of smoking among female students increased from 3.5% to 5.3%. age of onset of smoking in Turkey, the level has dropped to 10-11 years. Approximately 100 thousand people die due to cigarettes per year (Kaylı & Yararbaş, 2016)**. **If the measure is not taken, it is thought that this number will increase to 250 thousand people in 2030s (Kutlu, Marakoğlu & Çivi, 2005)**.

Since the age of starting smoking and the effect of friends are important, schools and teachers are important in the fight against smoking. There are many studies on teachers in literature. While there were studies conducted on prospective teachers in some branches, no studies were conducted on prospective social studies teachers. In this study, it was aimed to reveal the opinions of prospective social studies teachers about smoking addiction.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Research design

In this research, phenomenology research design which is one of the research designs of qualitative research method was used. Phenomenology researches are considered suitable for studies aiming to investigate phenomena and concepts that we are not completely foreign to, but which we do not fully understand. Phenomenon is the subjective life of the person who perceives himself and his environment in a unique way. In our lives, phenomena appear in different ways **such as events, experiences, perception, tendency / orientation, concepts and situations (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005: 72)**.

## 2.2 Study group

The study group of the research consists of a total of 20 volunteer teacher candidates, 10 male and 10 females, who have been smoking at the Usak University Faculty of Education in the 2019-2020 academic year.

## 2.3 Data collection and analysis

The data were collected through a semi-structured interview form. The interview form, which is a data collection tool, was prepared by taking three expert opinions. 6 open-ended questions were asked to the participants according to expert opinions.

The data were analyzed by content analysis. Content analysis is one of the most used methods among qualitative data analysis types. Content analysis is a commonly used technique for analyzing written and visual data tools. The purpose of content analysis is to reach concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data. The basic process of content analysis is to bring together similar data within the framework of certain concepts and themes, and to organize **and interpret them in a way that the reader can understand (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005: 227).**

The themes were coded to another academician and the reliability formula proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994: 64) was used to determine the index of agreement between the two codes. The percentage of agreement among the researchers was .94.

During the direct transfer, the identity of the prospective teachers was kept hidden due to ethical requirements. Direct quotation examples are coded as “volunteer” (gönüllü) abbreviated as “G” in the demonstration.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 Findings related to age starting to smoking according to the opinions of social studies teacher candidates

According to the opinions of social studies teacher candidates, the opinions about the age they started to smoke are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Age distribution of social studies teacher candidates

Voluntary	Current age	Age of onset to smoking
G1	21	15
G2	21	20
G3	21	17
G4	21	19
G5	21	19
G6	21	16
G7	23	21
G8	21	18
G9	22	20
G10	21	17
G11	22	20
G12	26	18
G13	22	13
G14	20	17
G15	23	19
G16	21	20
G17	21	12
G18	21	17
G19	23	20
G20	22	17

The age range of social studies teacher candidates who participated voluntarily and gave opinions was between 20-26. There are 1 teacher candidates at the age of 20, 11 teacher candidates at the age of 21, 4 teacher candidates at the age of 22, 3 teacher candidates at the age of 23, and 1 teacher candidate at the age of 26. The age range of the teacher candidates starting smoking is between 12-21. There are 1 teacher trainees starting at 12, 13, 15, 16 and 21, 5 teacher trainees starting at 17, 2 teacher trainees starting at 18, 3 teacher trainees starting at 19, and 5 teacher trainees starting at 20.

### 3.2 Findings regarding psychological factors causing smoking to start according to the opinions of social studies teacher candidates

The opinions of the pre-service social studies teachers about the psychological factors that lead to smoking are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of **social studies teacher candidates'** views on psychological factors causing smoking to start

Theme	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Wannabe	8	40
Stress / sadness	7	35
Family problems	3	15
Problems in emotional	2	10
Total	20	100

According to the data in Table 2, it is seen that the main psychological factor that causes social studies teacher candidates to start smoking is wannabe (8 people – 40 percent). Other psychological reasons; stress, family problems and emotional relationship problems.

Here are some examples of direct quotations about the opinions of prospective social studies teachers about the psychological factors that lead to smoking:

*I started with totally wannabe. At a young age, I had the desire to see myself smoking. I thought that my environment saw it and I started with this psychology... (G11)*

*I got a new job. It was difficult for me to get used to the new job and to adapt. I was very stressed and angry during this process. I started smoking with the idea that smoking is helpful for stress. (G6)*

*I started because of family problems. My father and I were broken and he didn't understand me. We were arguing. The fact that I was upset with my father led me start to smoke. (G18)*

*My problems with my boyfriend caused me to start smoking. I started smoking after our first departure. (G5)*

### 3.3 Findings regarding environmental factors causing to start smoking according to the opinions of social studies teacher candidates

Table 3 summarizes the opinions of prospective social studies teachers about environmental factors causing smoking.

Table 3. Distribution of **social studies teacher candidates'** views on environmental factors causing smoking to start

Theme	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Friend	16	80
Family	3	15
Relatives	1	5
Total	20	100

According to the data in Table 3, it was found out that the main environmental factor that caused social studies teacher candidates to start smoking was the friend effect. Other environmental reasons; family and **relatives'** effect.

Some examples of direct excerpts of social studies teacher candidates' views on environmental factors leading to smoking are given below:

*I had friends who smoked too much in the school I was studying. I started with their influence. Almost all of our group of friends smoked. There are no smokers in my family and relatives. I'm smoking for nine years. (G13)*

*Friends were the biggest factor in the surroundings. (G15)*

*My father is an idol for me. My father smoked with me for 15 years. I was very impressed with my father's smoking (G14).*

*My brother's smoking in the family made me try occasionally. I took cigarettes from my brother's package and burned them on the balcony when no one was at home. Later, I became an addict with the influence of my university classmates and roommates in the dormitory. (G4)*

*I started because of my cousin. He was smoking. Most of the time, he handed it to me. I said, once, let me smoke. I've been since that day. (G20)*

### 3.4 Findings on the according to the effects after starting to smoking

Table 4 summarizes the opinions of social studies teacher candidates about their effects after starting to smoke.

Table 4. Distribution of social studies teacher candidates' views on the effects after smoking

Theme	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Shortness of breath	12	60
Financial difficulty	4	20
Tooth yellowing	2	10
Bad smell	1	5
Frequent coughing	1	5
Total	20	100

According to the data in Table 4, the most serious effect of smoking for the prospective teachers was stated to be shortness of breath. According to the views of the prospective teachers, smoking also causes financial difficulties, teeth stains, foul breath, and frequent cough.

Here are some examples of direct quotations on the views of social studies teacher candidates about their effects after starting smoking:

*Sometimes I find it hard to breathe when I play ball, and I get tired quickly. (G16)*

*My smoking causes financial difficulties. It is both a financial burden by taking cigarettes and I use more perfume to remove the smell of cigarettes. Consequently, it constitutes the extra cost. I'm having a hard time because my parents don't know I drink. (G7)*

*My teeth and nails began to turn yellow. I had stains on my front teeth. I suffer mostly because my teeth are yellow. (G8)*

*I've been disturbed by foul breath since I smoked. My boyfriend doesn't smoke. I know he's uncomfortable with the bad smell. (G1)*

*My health problems increased after I started smoking. Especially like a cough. In the past, when you cough, it would pass right away. I often cough. (G19)*

### 3.5 Findings on the causes of increasing smoking desire

Table 5 presents the opinions of the social studies teacher candidates about the reasons that increase smoking desire.

Table 5. Distribution of social studies teacher candidates' views on the causes of smoking desire

Theme	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Coffee	9	45
Tea	7	35
Alcohol	2	10
Computer game	1	5
Match tracking	1	5
Total	20	100

According to the data in Table 5, 9 (45%) of the social studies teacher candidates reported that they always felt the need to smoke while drinking coffee. Distribution according to other views; 7 teacher candidates say that they drink cigarettes every time they drink tea and 2 teacher candidates say that they drink cigarettes when they drink alcohol. There are 1 teacher candidates who say that they should smoke while watching computer games and games.

Some examples of direct excerpts from social studies teacher candidates' opinions about the reasons that increase smoking desire are given below:

*It is very good to drink tea and coffee while smoking. I don't smoke without drinking coffee. Cigarette became a necessity because I love coffee too. (G9)*

*I burn cigarettes every time I drink tea. I smoke when I buy tea from the canteen between courses. (G12)*

*I would like to smoke while drinking alcohol. (G2)*

*It is very enjoyable to smoke while playing PC games. I'm smoking cigarettes in a row while I'm playing the PlayStation. (G20)*

*Normally, if I smoke a cigarette every hour, I watch 7-8, including halftime. When the matches of Fenerbahce, derby matches, the National Team's European matches are high excitement. (G11)*

### 3.6 Findings on the reasons for smoking cessation

Table 6 summarizes the opinions of social studies teacher candidates about the reasons that encourage smoking cessation.

Table 6. Distribution of social studies teacher candidates' views on the reasons causing encourage smoking cessation

Theme	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Economic problems	13	65
Health problems	4	20
Family pressure	2	10
Faith	1	5
Total	20	100

According to the data in Table 6, economic problems, namely the financial situation, are the first reason of smoking cessation. There are teacher candidates who report economic problems 13, health problems 4, family pressure 2, and belief 1.

Here are some examples of direct quotations on the opinions of social studies teacher candidates about the reasons that encourage to smoking cessation:

*I decided to quit a few times, but these were short-term. As for the price increases, I started to suffer financially. I couldn't quit, but I had to cut it down. (G7)*

*I've never tried to quit so far, but I want to quit because cigarette prices push me. The cigarette I had was 15 TL. (G17)*

*Sometimes I have trouble breathing. I can't breathe while I run. I had a lung problem. I want to leave in case more serious illnesses may occur. (G10)*

*I'm very upset that my parents found out I was smoking. (G3)*

*I want to stop smoking because it's a sin. There are those who say haram, but all the teachers say sin. Cigarette is sin. (G13)*

## 4. Discussion and conclusions

The research aimed to reveal the opinions of the prospective social studies teachers about smoking addiction. Pre-service teachers' age of onset of smoking, psychological factors that caused smoking, environmental factors, effects of smoking on their lives, causes that increase smoking desire and causes to stop smoking were tried to be determined.

It was seen that the age of starting smoking for social studies teacher candidates ranged between 12-21 and started at the age of 17 at most. In the literature, it is possible to see similar findings regarding the age of onset of smoking. Research has determined that smoking habit starts between the ages of 15-19 (Pekşen & Species; 1995; Unlu, Forest, Cirit & Demirel, 2002; Coskun, Karadağ, Ursavas & Aegean, 2010). In the United States, it was concluded that young adults started smoking during their adulthood (Arrazola, Neff, Kennedy, Holder-Hayes &

Jones, 2014; American Cancer Society, 2014; Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). Some researches show that students try smoking for the first time in the last year of primary school **or secondary school (Kocabaş, 1988). In 1992, 60% of young people between the** ages of 16 and 18 said they tried smoking for once (Moss, Allen, Giovino & Mills, 1992).

It was stated that at the end of the 20th century, 80% of smokers started smoking before the age of 18 and the age at which smoking started was gradually decreasing (Coogan et al., 1998; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998; Department of Health and Human Services, 2012; 2014). The age of starting smoking is gradually decreasing and has decreased to the age of 13-19 (Ünlü, Orman, Javelin & Demirel, 2002). 65.1% of the high school students stated that they smoke at least once in their lives (Ögel, Tamar, Evren & Çakmak, 2000). In university students, smoking rate was found to be 61.5% at least once in their lives (Kolay-Akfert, **Çakıcı & Çakıcı, 2009). In another study, the rate was found to be 73.9% (Boyacı, Corapcioglu, Ilgazli, Basyigit & Yildiz, 2003).**

It is seen that the basic psychological factor that causes social studies teacher candidates to start smoking is wannabe.

In this study, the wannabe is 40%. Ünlü, Orman, Cirit & Demirel (2002) research found that the reason for teachers to start smoking is 82.1% wannabe. In the study conducted on secondary and high school students, 42.4% of the smokers gave curiosity / wannabe answers when asked the reasons for starting to smoke in the same way (Emekdar et al., 2017). In our study, stress / sadness is the second reason with a rate of 35%. In another study, it was found that **relieving distress was the main reason for starting smoking (Boyacı et al., 2003).**

The main environmental factor that causes social studies teacher candidates to start smoking is the friend effect. 80% and it appears to be a very high factor. Many studies in the literature emphasize that peer influence of friends is strong in starting smoking (Keskinoglu et al., 2005; Flay, Hu & Richardson, 1998). In another study, the effect of friends on university students was mentioned and 69.7% of smokers were known to have two or more close friends who smoke (Öksüz, Mutlu & Malhan, 2007). 68.1% of primary school students stated that they were friends as a reason to start smoking (Ünsal & Sezgin, 2009). The closest friends are very effective in starting smoking (Varies, Engels, Kremers, Wetzels & Mudde, 2003). In a study conducted on 1028 adolescents in 6th, 8th and 10th grade students, the effect of close friend factor on smoking and alcohol use was examined. If a student's close friend smokes cigarette and alcohol, it is determined that he starts smoking and drinking (Görgülü, 2019). In some studies, it has been **revealed that smoking addicts consider smoking as friends (Şimşek, Akvardar, Doğanay, Pekel & Günay, 2014).**

The most serious problem expressed by the prospective teachers was found to be shortness of breath. There are many similar studies in the literature. It is known that smoking addicts who smoke every day experience more shortness of breath than non-smokers (Diana, Petitti, Gary & Friedman, 1985; Demircan et al., 1994; Movahead & Milne, 2007). It was found that smokers are more tired, run more slowly, have difficulty in physical movements, muscle weakness and especially **shortness of breath compared to nonsmokers (Soyuer, Ünalın & Elmalı, 2011).**

Social studies teacher candidates stated that consumption of coffee and tea increases the need for smoking. Marshall, Green, Epstein, Rogers, and McCoy (1980) showed that subjects smoked more when they took coffee in one hour session. Tea and coffee drinking habits are known **to affect smoking cessation treatment (Fidancı, Arslan, Tekin & Gümüş, 2016). Canbaz et al. (2005),** in the study of smoking needs are the strongest, 41.4% after meals. The tea/coffee factor was 6.9% as the lowest factor.



Social studies teacher candidates stated that they had difficulty in smoking with increasing hikes and they wanted to quit smoking for economic reasons. Some of their families do not know that they smoke and the money they send for education is not enough. In many studies in the literature, health problem is shown as the reason for smoking cessation. Sahin et al. (2005), the main reason for those who tried to quit smoking was found to be illness. Kutlu et al. (2005), in his study on those who quit smoking, stated that they quit smoking because it was a health problem and harmful. In the study of Konan (2012), 43.1% of the teachers who quit smoking stated that they would adversely affect their health in the future, 27.1% stated that they had health problems and 12.8% reported that they were harmful. In this research, the emergence of the economic problem can be interpreted as our study group is economically challenged because they are students.

As a result of the research, it is seen that the age of starting smoking is 12 age. Compared to previous years, the age of starting smoking is gradually decreasing. Pre-service teachers start smoking with wannabe. Especially the environment of friends is very effective in starting smoking. Smoking adversely affects the vital functions and physical activities of young people. Coffee and cigarettes increase the desire to smoke. Although teacher candidates experience some health problems due to smoking, they want to quit smoking not for health reasons but for financial reasons. According to the results of the research, it can be suggested that smoking incentives, publications or images should be prevented. Awareness raising activities and activities can be increased. Reducing smoking-promoting foods and beverages may be recommended. Since the age of onset of smoking decreases to primary and secondary schools, conferences and academic meetings can be organized in schools. It will also be useful to have family, school and teacher cooperation coordinated in the fight against smoking addiction. If it is determined those children are trying to smoke, the necessary intervention should be done with the support of experts and addiction should be prevented.

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