

Spot Survey – December 2012  
Trends in Tobacco Consumption

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

The Spot Survey on Tobacco trends has been conducted bi- annually since 1998. This survey helps to monitor and identify the prevailing trends and patterns related to tobacco use. It also identifies the prevailing attitudes with regard to tobacco. In this report, we concentrate on the results of the survey conducted in July 2012. In addition, a comparative analysis of results obtained this year with results obtained in December 2011 is also included.

The survey was conducted in following districts; Colombo, Gampaha, Galle, Kegalle, Anuradhapura, Jaffna, Batticaloa, Kandy, Rathnapura and Vavunia.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the spot survey are as follows:

1. Core Objective:

- To investigate the prevailing tobacco consumption trends in Sri Lanka

2. General Objectives:

- To determine the prevailing tobacco consumption trends in the sample districts
- To identify prevailing tobacco consumption trends according to age groups
- To determine prevailing attitudes and reasons for smoking
- To find the age and causes for initiation of smoking

## 1.3 LIMITATIONS

- Some respondents did not have time to respond, or they vaguely answered.

**However, the reader of this report should not generalize the prevalence rates given in this report to national level without conducting a validation study.**

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted in ten districts covering North and East provinces. Hence the survey was focused on the following districts; Colombo, Gampaha, Galle, Kegalle, Anuradhapura, Jaffna, Batticaloa, and Kandy. Two districts Rathnapura and Vavunia were included in the survey from the routing selection.

Questionnaires were used to collect the information. The questions asked were straightforward and easy to comprehend.

In order to carry out the survey, the Research and Evaluation Programme trained field investigators, with appropriate research techniques. SPSS software was used for analyzing the data.

The survey was conducted over a period of one month and covered a total number of 2,349 respondents who were males of the age fifteen and above. The sample is shown in Table1

		District										Total
		Colombo	Gampaha	Galle	Kegalle	Anuradhapura	Kandy	Batticaloa	Jaffna	Rathnapura	Vavuniya	
Age Category	15-24	105	117	88	87	98	92	90	82	104	88	951
		42.2%	47.4%	38.6%	42.6%	37.7%	36.8%	39.0%	38.7%	41.6%	40.4%	40.5%
	25-39	85	78	87	70	100	88	89	74	93	78	842
		34.1%	31.6%	38.2%	34.3%	38.5%	35.2%	38.5%	38.5%	37.2%	35.8%	35.8%
	>=40	59	52	53	47	62	70	52	52	53	52	556
		23.7%	21.1%	23.2%	23.0%	23.8%	28.0%	22.5%	22.5%	21.2%	23.9%	23.7%
Total		249	247	228	204	260	250	231	231	250	218	2349
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 1: Sample of the survey – by district and age

### 2.1 SAMPLE

The age distribution of the sample population is shown in Table 1. 40.5% of the sample population comprised of the age range 15-24 years, 35.8% of the sample population comprised of the age range 25-39 years and 23.7% in the age range of 40 and above years. The age of the sample population ranged from 15 years to 80 years and mean age was 31.53 years.

## 2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The level of education is shown in Table 2. majority of the respondents have reached the education level of completion of GCE O/L (34.7%).

<b>Education</b>		
	Frequency	Percentage
No education	36	1.5
1-5 grade	108	4.6
6-10 grade	348	14.8
O/L	815	34.7
A/L	760	32.4
Graduate	106	4.5
Diploma	94	4.0
Professional Training	25	1.1
Postgraduate	3	.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2295</b>	<b>97.7</b>
No response	54	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2349</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2: Sample of the survey – by highest level of education

The occupation classification is shown in Table 3.

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Legislators	49	2.1
Professionals	64	2.7
Technical associate professionals	163	6.9
Clerks	57	2.4
Service worker and market service workers	518	22.1
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	50	2.1
Craft and related workers	105	4.5
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	263	11.2
Elementary occupations	301	12.8
Forces / Police	101	4.3
Students	372	15.8
Retired	32	1.4
Foreign employed	6	.3
Unemployed	104	4.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2185</b>	<b>93.0</b>
No Response	164	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2349</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3: Sample of the survey – by occupation

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1 TOBACCO USE

Tobacco use of the sample was assessed according to the responses of the sample population. These responses were analyzed according to (1) Current Users (respondents who used tobacco within the previous month), (2) Ever Used (respondents who have at any rate initiated tobacco use in their lifetime) and (3) Never Used (respondents who have never used any tobacco product).

#### 3.2 CURRENT USERS

Current Users were identified based on their tobacco consumption within the previous month. According to the responses, it was found that 32.5% used tobacco while 67.5% did not use tobacco. This is shown in Figure 1. (N=2,348)

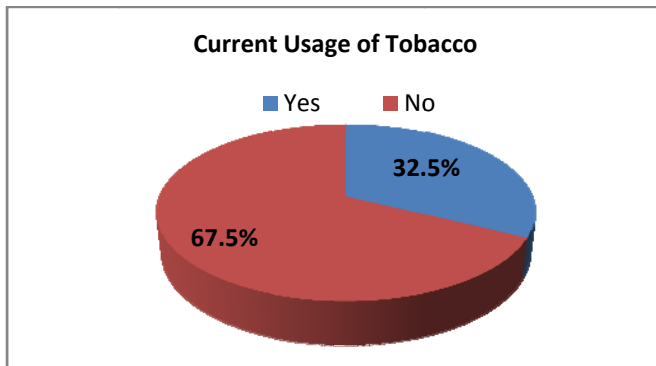


Figure 1: Tobacco prevalence

#### 3.2.1 CURRENT TOBACCO USAGE BY-AGE

The current smoking was further analyzed according to the age distribution. According to the responses, the highest response on current smoking was from the age category of 25 to 39 years (39.9%). The lowest current tobacco usage is recorded from the age category of 15-24 years (23.8%). This is shown in Figure 2.

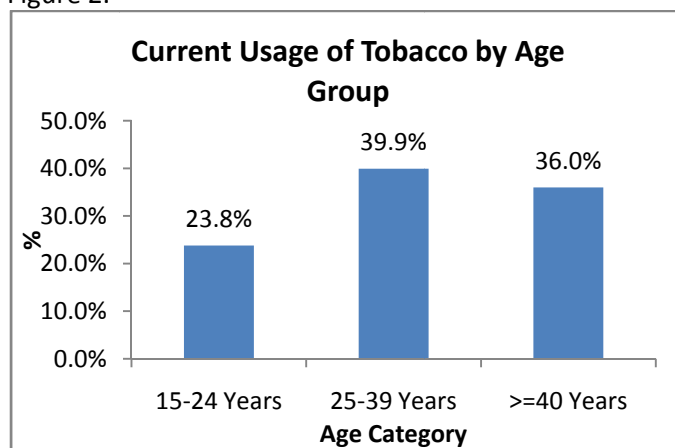


Figure 2: Tobacco prevalence by age group

### 3.2.2 CURRENT TOBACCO USAGE BY DISTRICT

The current tobacco usage was further analyzed based on district. The highest percentage of current tobacco use was recorded from Jaffna(40.1%) while the lowest percentage was from Gampaha (24.3%). This is shown in Figure 3.

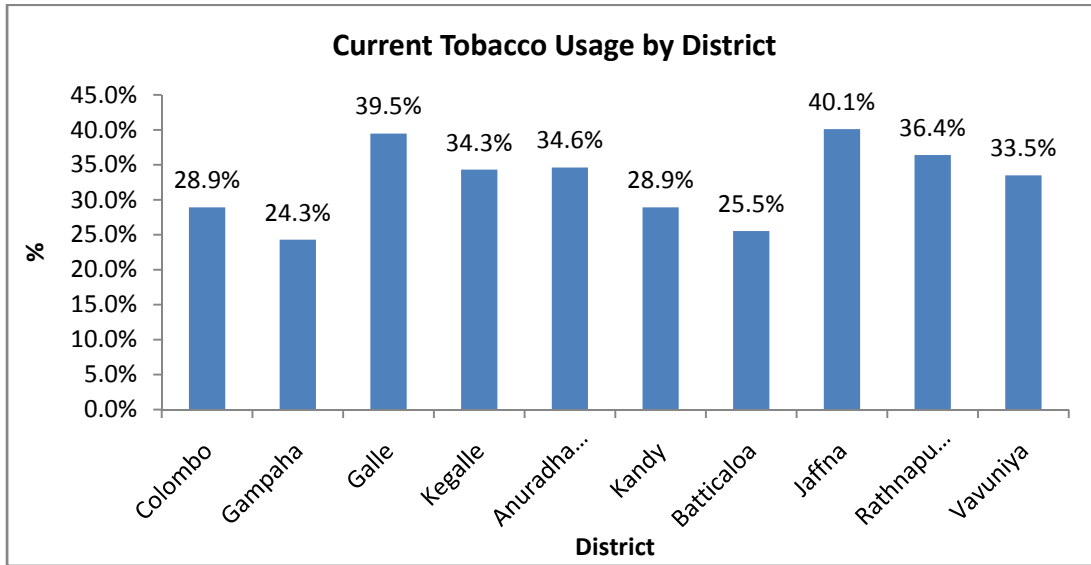


Figure 3: Tobacco prevalence by district

### 3.2.3 FREQUENCY OF TOBACCO USE

The current tobacco users were analysed based on the frequency of usage; Daily, Monthly and Special occasion basis. The highest percentage of tobacco users were consuming in daily (76.8%) while the lowest percentage was in Special Occasions (8.7%). This is shown in Figure 4.

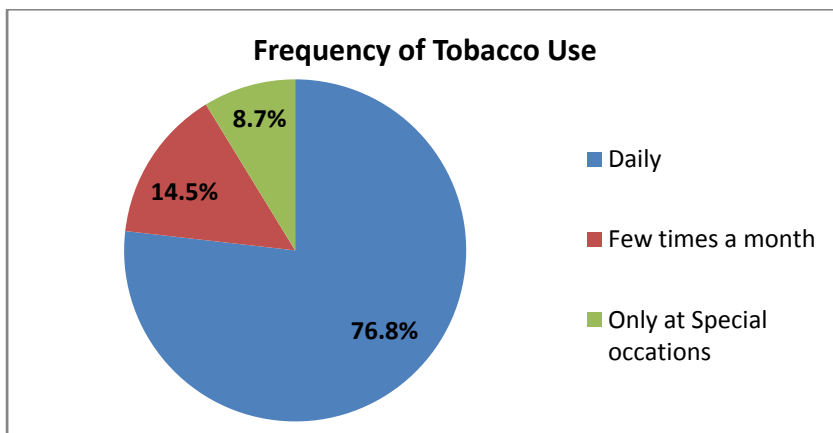


Figure 4: Frequency of tobacco use



### 3.2.4 FREQUENCY OF TOBACCO USAGE BY AGE DISTRIBUTION

The frequency of tobacco use was analysed further according to age group. It was identified that individuals in the age range of 40 and above, daily smoking was high (88.2%) while the age range of 15-24 tobacco usage on daily basis was 65.6%. The percentage of monthly tobacco users were the 18.4% in the age range of 15-24. The lowest percentage of monthly users was in the age range of 40 and above (8.2%). The smokers of age range 15-24 have the highest smoking prevalence at special occasions (16.0%) than the other age ranges. This is shown in Figure 5.

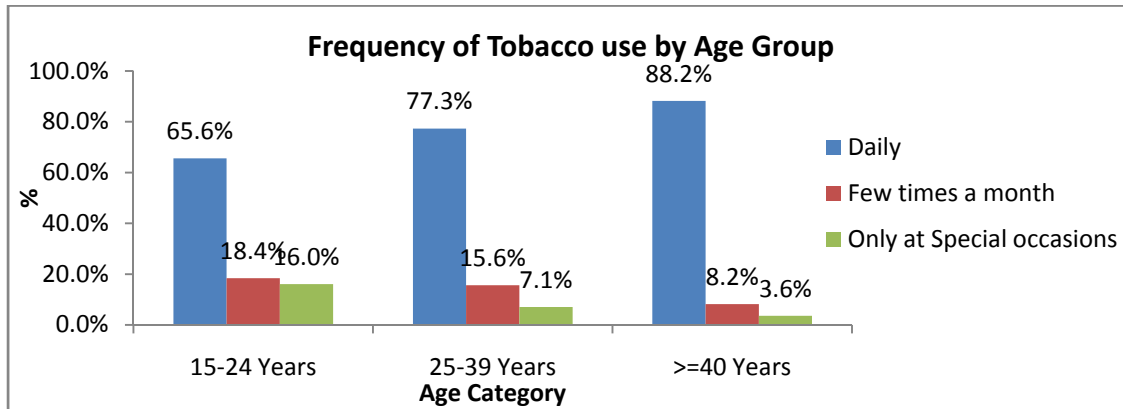


Figure 5: Frequency of tobacco use by age group

### 3.2.5 FREQUENCY OF TOBACCO USE BY DISTRICT

The frequency of tobacco use was analyzed according to districts. The highest percentage of daily smokers was from Vavuniya district (86.9%) while the lowest percentage of daily tobacco users was from Rathnapura (64.0%). The highest percentage of tobacco users at the special occasions was from Colombo (20.0%) while lowest was reported in Jaffna (3.7%). The highest percentage of monthly tobacco users was from Rathnapura (25.8%) whereas the lowest percentage of monthly tobacco users was from Batticaloa (5.1%). This is shown in Figure 6.

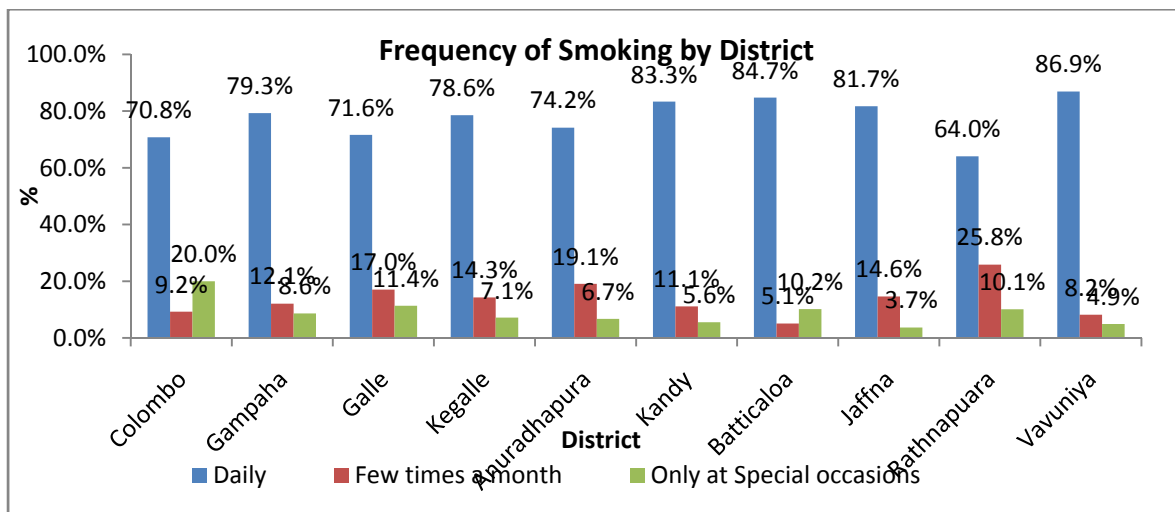


Figure 6: Frequency of tobacco use by district

### 3.2.6 NUMBER OF STICKS USED

The number of sticks was analyzed according to the frequency level of consumption. Further, the number of sticks according to the age range was also assessed on a daily and monthly basis. These are shown in figures below.

#### 3.2.6.1 DAILY USE

Of the responses, 63.6% use 5 or above sticks daily, while a least percentage (2.9%) use more than 20 sticks (Figure 7).

According to the analysis of daily users, the daily usage of tobacco sticks varied from 1 tobacco stick to 61 tobacco sticks with the mean of 6.43 sticks (standard deviation of 6.444). This tobacco sticks frequency distribution has a skewness of 3.111.

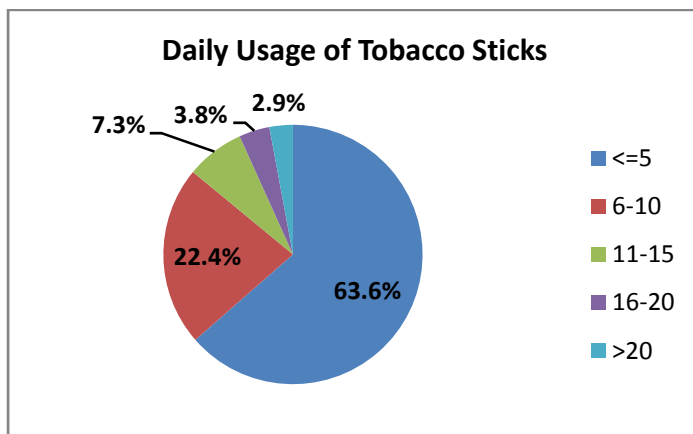


Figure7- Number of sticks per day

Further, number of sticks used daily was assessed according to the age range.

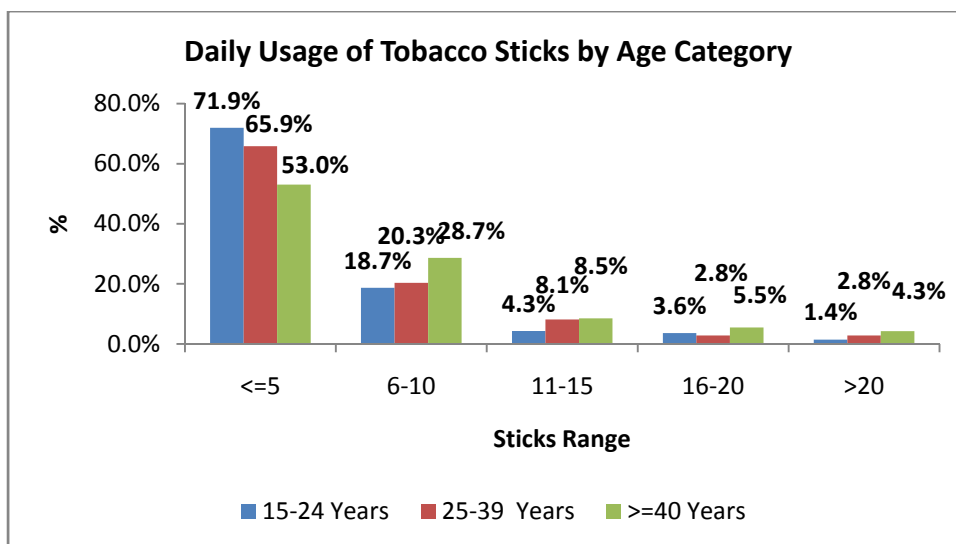


Figure8- Number of Sticks per Day by Age

### 3.2.6.1 MONTHLY USE

From the responses of users who consume tobacco few times a month, 53.8% uses 5 or below while a least percentage (4.8%) uses 16-20 sticks (Table 7). The mean of the monthly sticks is 8 while the mode of the monthly sticks is 10 (Table 8).

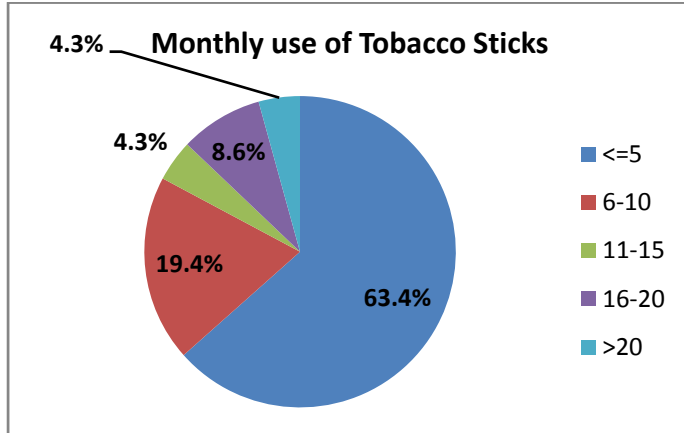


Figure9- Number of Sticks per Month

According to the analysis of monthly users, the monthly usage of tobacco sticks varied from 1 tobacco stick to 60 tobacco sticks with the mean of 7.52 sticks and standard deviation of 9.096. This tobacco sticks frequency distribution has skewness of 3.115.

### 3.2.6.3 ONLY AT SPECIAL OCCASIONS

From the responses, 94.4% use 5 or less number of sticks at special occasions, while a least percentage (2.3%) uses 16-20 sticks (Figure10).

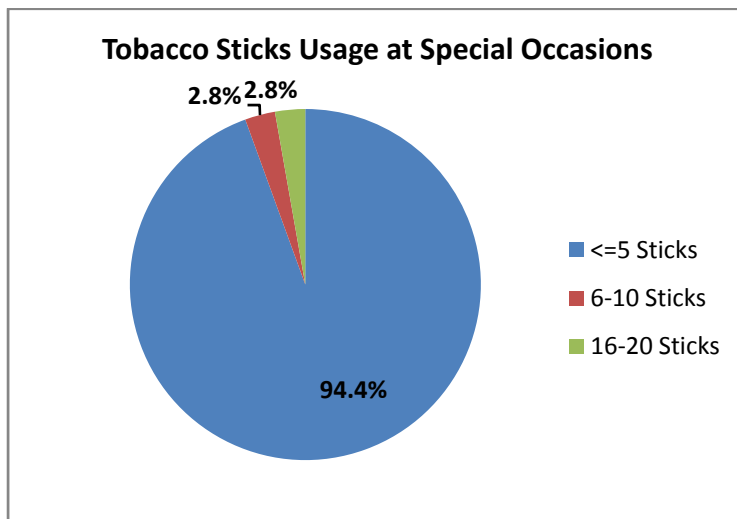


Figure10- Number of Sticks only at Special Occasions

### 3.2.7 REASONS FOR TOBACCO USE

The survey also emphasized on the reasons for tobacco use. Among the reasons given on the use of tobacco, the majority (36.1%) have mentioned that they use tobacco as a habit followed by second highest reason being no obvious reason (33.1%) (Figure11).

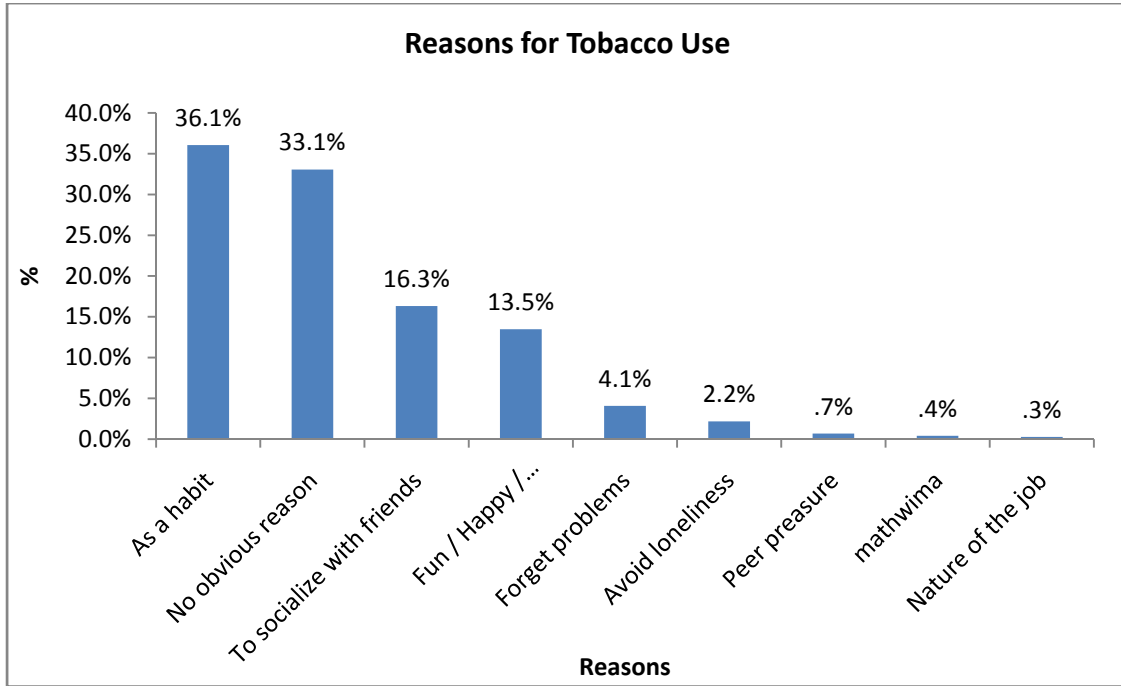


Figure11: Reasons for tobacco use

The reasons for tobacco use by age group are shown in Figure 12.

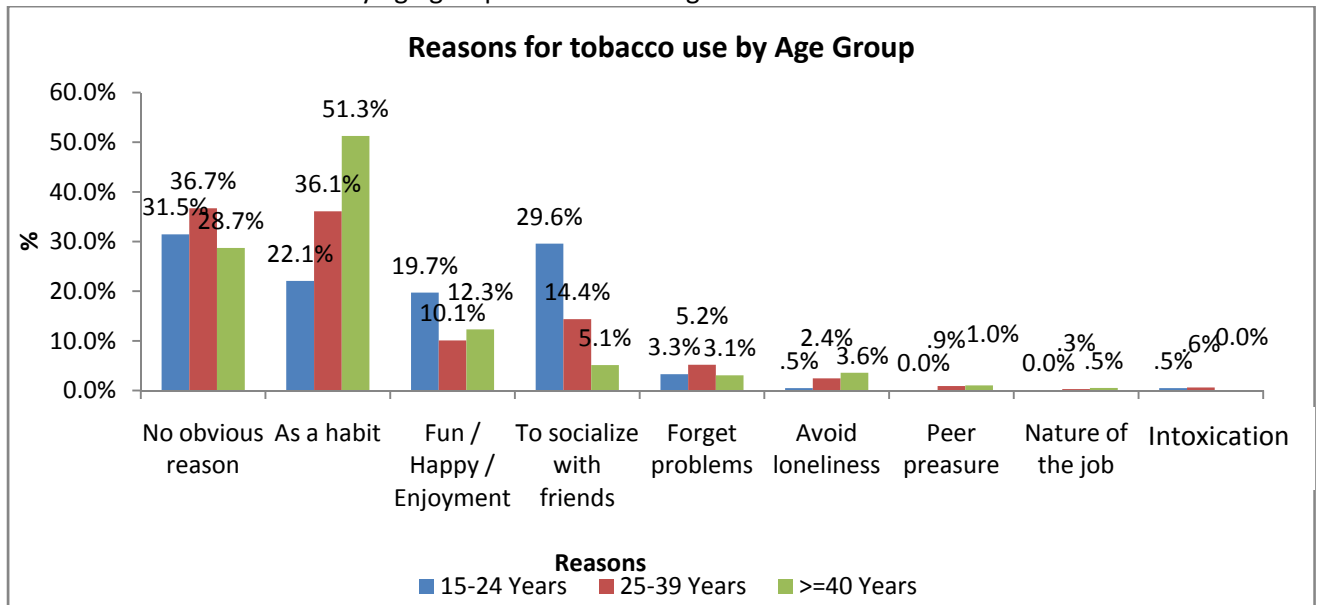


Figure12: Reasons for tobacco use by age group

### 3.2.8 ATTEMPT TO QUIT TOBACCO USE

In-depth questions were asked of respondents who currently consume tobacco however, who have attempted to quit the use of tobacco.

Out of the current tobacco users 49.6% have tried quitting tobacco use (*From the current users*). This is shown in figure 13.

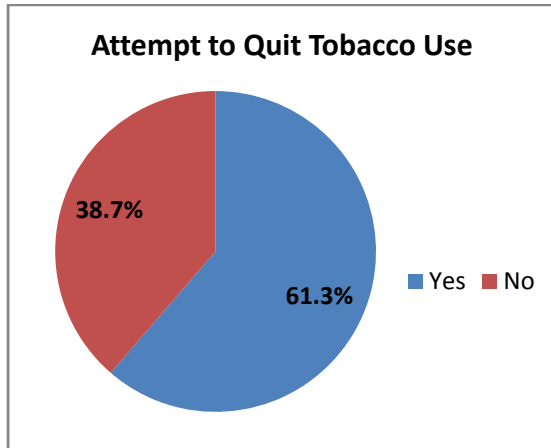


Figure 13: Attempt to quit tobacco use

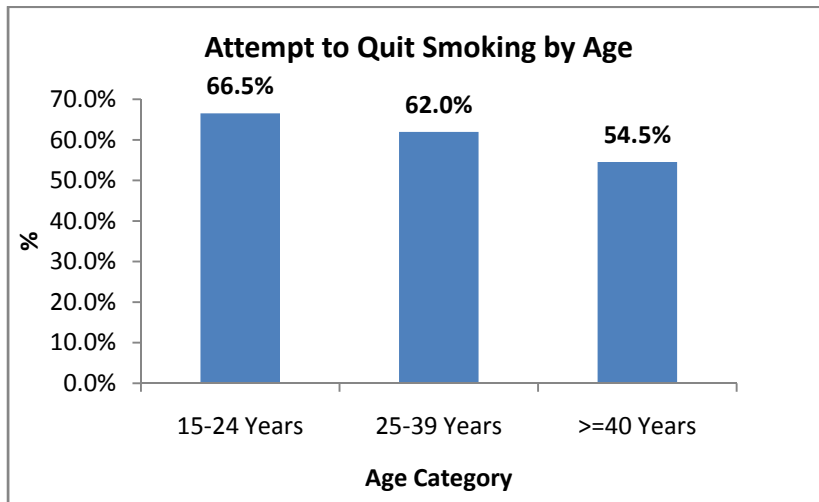


Figure 14: Attempt to quit tobacco use by age

### 3.2.8.1 REASONS FOR ATTEMPTING TO QUIT TOBACCO

Further questions were asked about the reasons which caused them to attempt to quit smoking. 31.6% of the people have attempted to quit tobacco use because they think tobacco will cause to health hazards and 20.3% of them have attempted to quit because of financial problems and the price of it.

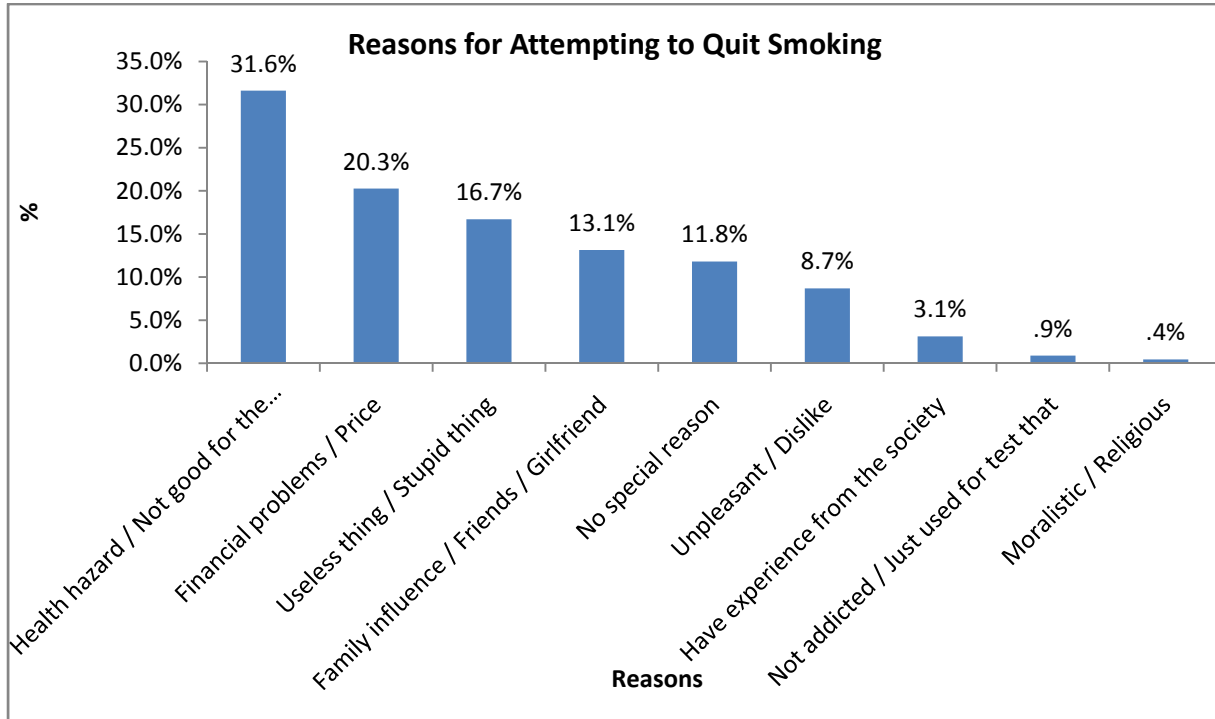


Figure 15: Reasons for attempting to quit tobacco

### 3.2.8.2 REASONS FOR NOT ATTEMPTING TO QUIT TOBACCO

Further questions were asked about the reasons, which caused them not to attempt to quit smoking. 31.8% of the people have not quitted tobacco use because they think they were not addicted for tobacco and 30.4% of them think they are already addicted for the tobacco and cannot stop that habit.

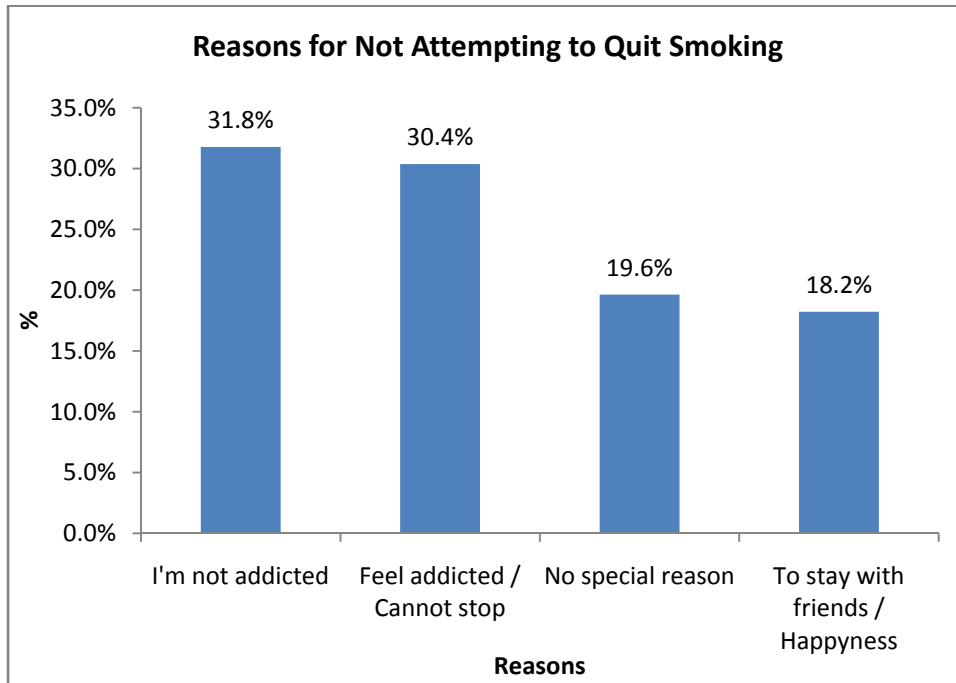


Figure 16: Reasons for not attempting to quit tobacco

### 3.3 EVER USERS

Questions were asked on whether the respondents have ever used tobacco in their life until now. According to the respondents, 50.1% have ever used tobacco while 49.9% have not. This is shown in Figure 19.

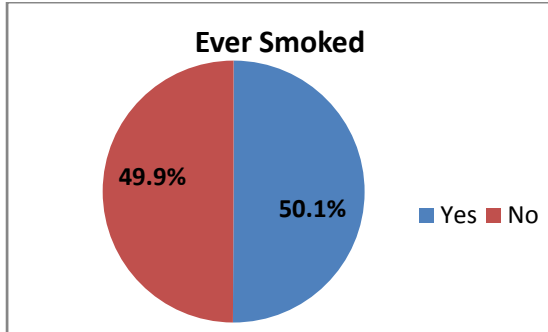


Figure 19: Ever use of tobacco

On further studying the prevalence of ever users of tobacco according to the age distribution, it was found that the highest percentage of respondents having used tobacco at any point in their lifetime was found to be among those belonging to the age group 40 and above (62.4%). This is shown in Figure 20.

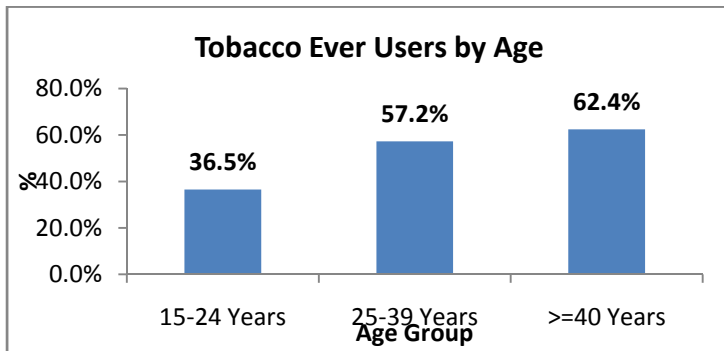


Figure 20: Ever use tobacco by age group

#### 3.3.1 INITIATION OF TOBACCO USE

Initiation is a main concern of the survey. With the ever users of tobacco, the question which needs to be addressed next is the age of initiation.

#### 3.3.2 INITIATION AGE OF TOBACCO USE

Among the respondents, the highest percentage of respondents has initiated tobacco in the age range of 16-20 years (53.5%). This is shown in Figure 21.

The minimum age at which smoking initiated recorded as at 7 years and maximum at age 56. On average smoking is initiated at age of 19.28 years (standard deviation of 5.039). This tobacco initiated frequency distribution has skewness of 1.382.



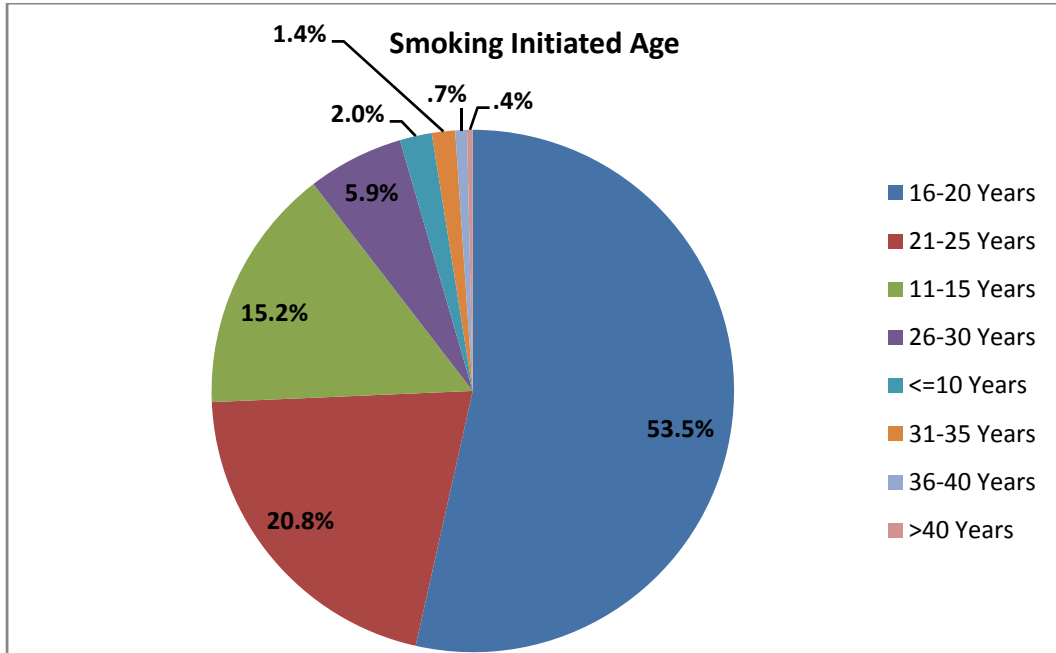


Figure 21: Initiation of tobacco use

### 3.3.3 OCCASION OF TOBACCO INITIATION

Apart from the age of initiation, questions were asked on the occasion in which tobacco use was initiated. The majority of the respondents stated that they initiated smoking with friends (49.3%).

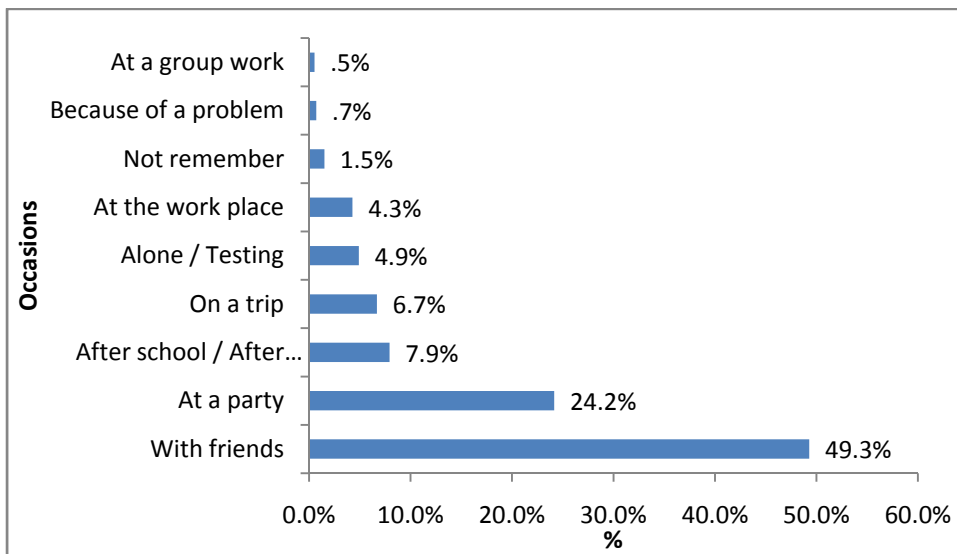


Figure 22: Occasions in which initiation of tobacco use

### 3.4 NEVER USERS

In-depth questions were asked of respondents who have never used tobacco (49.9% of respondent in Figure 19). Further questions were asked regarding the reasons for not initiating smoking. And, the responses were analyzed accordingly. The most frequent reason for never using tobacco was due to dislike and unpleasant attitude towards tobacco (29.4%) and due to health hazards (20.7%). This is shown in Figure 23.

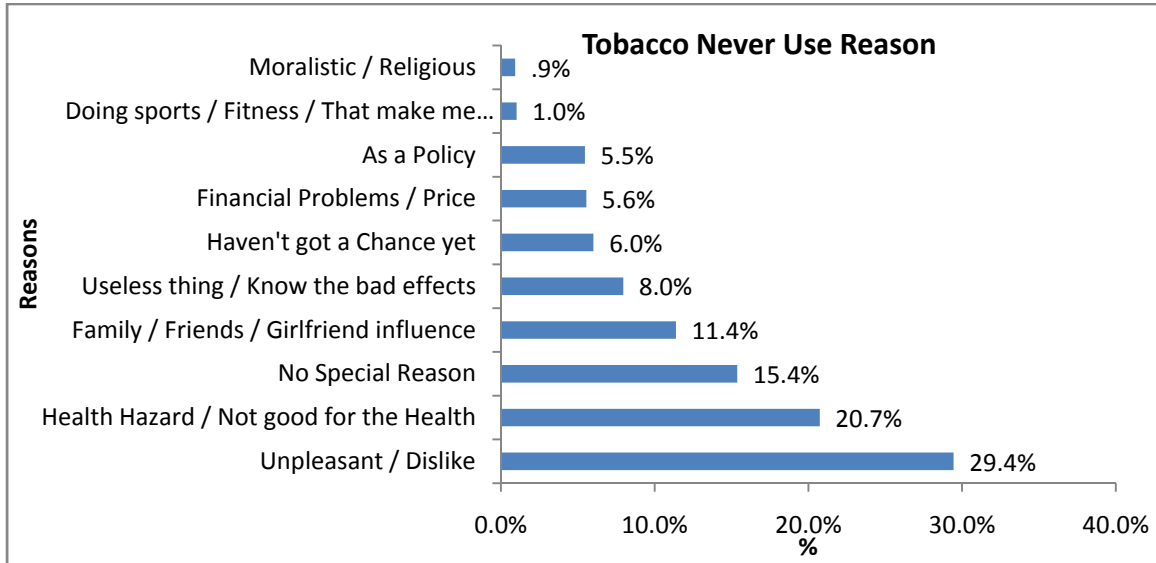


Figure 23: Reasons for never use of tobacco

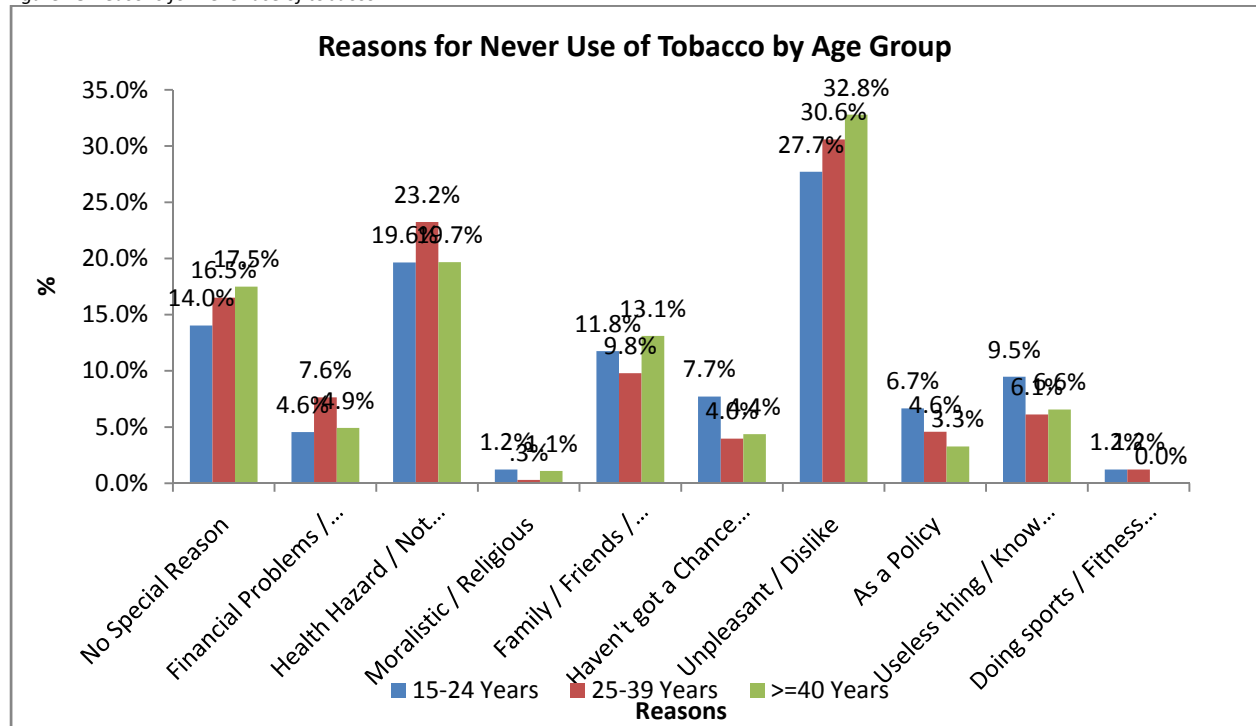


Figure 24: Reasons for never use of tobacco by age group

#### 4 COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH THE 2011 SPOT SURVEY

In comparison with the results of the December 2011 and December 2012 spot surveys, the tobacco use has a slight increase of 6.7% in comparison to the previous year. This is shown in Figure 25.

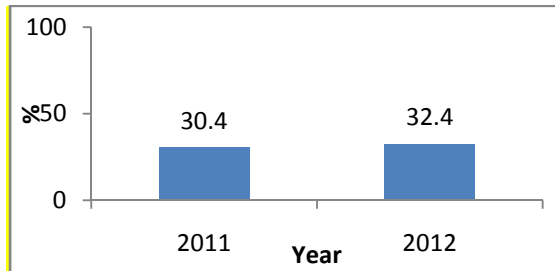


Figure 25: Comparison of tobacco use

#### 5 THE TREND OF TOBACCO USE 2000-2012

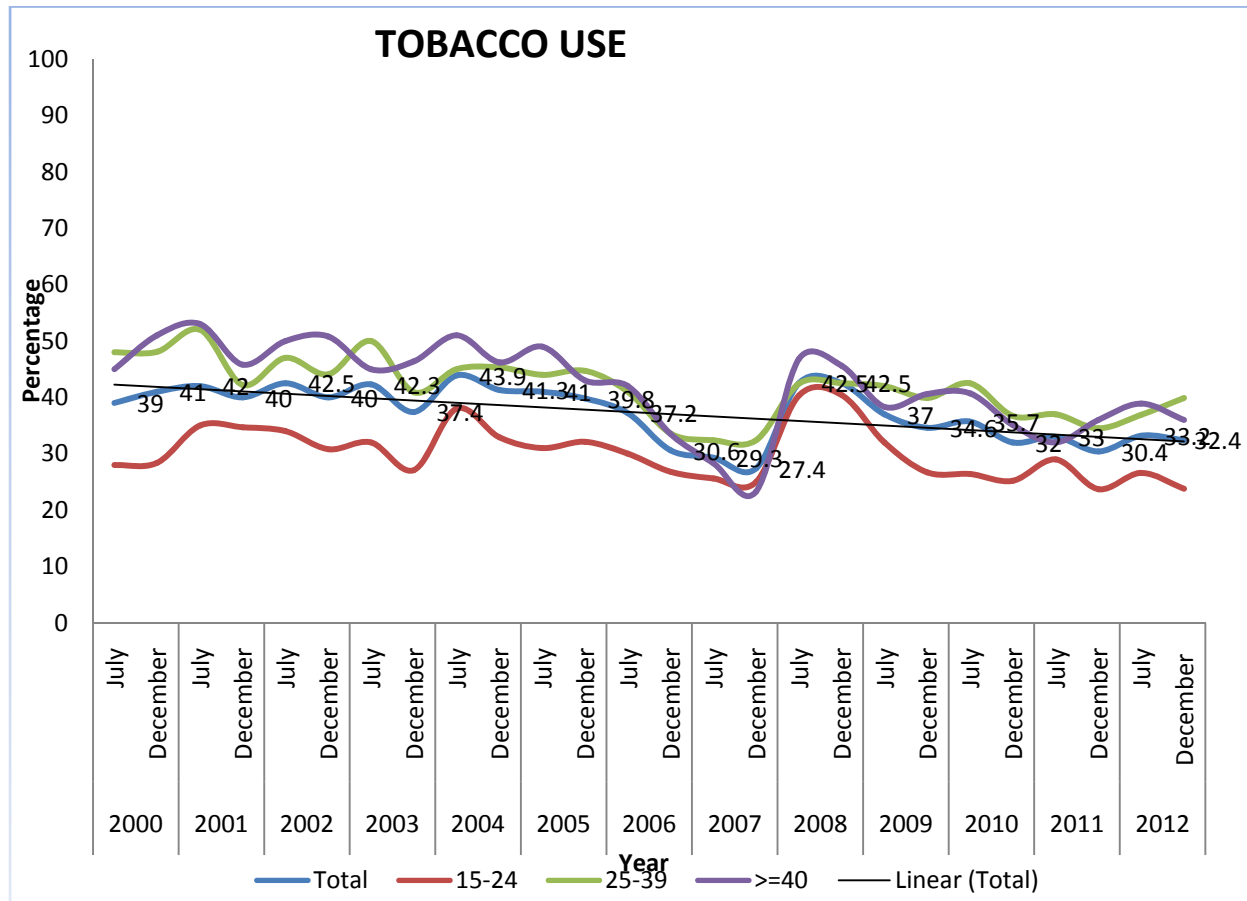


Figure26: The trend of tobacco use

The percentage of tobacco users from year 2000 to December 2012 obtained from bi-annual spot surveys is shown in Figure 26. An overall decreasing trend in tobacco use can be observed.

## 6 SUMMERY

1. 32.4% of the sample population is tobacco current users. The highest percentage was recorded from the district of Jaffna (40.1%) and lowest from the district of Gampaha (24.3%).
2. The highest percentage of tobacco users were found to be among those belonging to the age group of 25-39 years (39.9%).
3. On average, smoking is initiated at age of 19.28 years
4. The highest percentage of tobacco users use Daily (76.8%).The highest percentage of responses on daily use was from the district of Vavuniya (86.4%).
5. The majority (36.1%) have mentioned that they use tobacco as a habit.
6. Out of the current tobacco users 49.6% have tried quitting tobacco use. 31.6% of the people have attempted because they think tobacco will lead to health hazards.
7. Among the current users 31.8% have not quitted tobacco use because they think they were not addicted for tobacco.
8. Among the respondents, 49.9% never used tobacco while 50.1% did. The highest percentage of ever users was among the age group of above 40years (62.4%). 29.4% of never users of tobacco mentioned that never used tobacco because they dislike the product and due to unpleasant attitude towards tobacco.
9. In comparison with the results of the December 2011 Spot Survey and December 2012 Spot Survey, the tobacco use has decreased by 0.7 percentage.
10. A decreasing trend with regards to cigarette smoking is observed from 2000 to to-date.