

## SMOKING HABITS AND POVERTY AMONG FISHERIES: A STUDY BASED ON NINTAVUR DIVISIONAL SECRETARIAT AREA

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### Introduction

Smoking is one of the most common forms of recreational drug use (Hugh F Leona, William B, Helmreich William Mclord, 1992). Tobacco smoking is today most popular form of smoking and it practiced by over a one billion people in the majority of all human societies. Today medical studies have proven that smoking tobacco is the leading cause of many diseases such as lung cancer, heart attack, and erectile dysfunction and can also lead to birth defects. The inherent health hazard of smoking has caused many countries. In Sri Lanka, the diseases caused due to smoking kills 20,000 persons every year (National Authority on Tobacco and Alcohol - NATA). This smoking habit is one of the serious social issues among fisheries in most of the coastal villages of Ampara district, Sri Lanka, especially in Nintavur village where the number of social problems experiencing by fisheries in their common social life. Poverty has identified as an important problem among fisheries. Poverty is the deprivation of common necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, drinking water, and lack of accessibility to the opportunities like education and employment (Pete Alcock, 1997). This economic deprivation may create due to the increase of smoking habits of poor fisheries. Therefore, this research is significant as it explores how smoking habits causes for poverty among fisheries. So, the main objective of this study is to understand how smoking habits of fisheries causes for poverty among fishery people in Nintavur Divisional Secretariat area.

### Methodology

This paper deals with several data by using qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Data have gathered from primary as well as secondary sources. As the secondary sources, data also have gathered from the record of planning division of the Divisional Secretariat and the Kalmunai fisheries department. Primary data were collected mainly through questionnaire survey, key informant interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). 100 questionnaires dispersed based on simple random sampling method covering 10 Grama Niladhari divisions in the coastal belt of Nintavur Divisional Secretariat area. Data have also collected from the structured interview with key informants. The following groups of people were interviewed.

Fishery Inspector	- 01
Fishery Organization's Leaders	- 04
Grama Niladhari	- 05

In addition, at the village level, data have gathered through four (4) focus group discussions (FGD) with the participation of local fishery people and social activists. These FGDs have conducted using a number of participatory data collection instruments adopted from Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) method. And data have also be analyzed manually as well as by using computer software SPSS.

### Discussion and Conclusion

Smoking is a serious health hazard and it leads to increase poverty and other social problems. This paper deals with fisheries community and their smoking habits. And also it attempts to understand the causes for smoking habits and realize how smoking creates poverty among them. To assess the level of poverty, capability approach have used in this research (Dilani Gunawardena, 2004). So, the data for this research have gathered from various methods and analyzed on the basis of qualitative and quantitative structure. According to the data analysis, this research found that fisheries are highly attached with smoking habits in Nintavur Divisional Secretariat area due to many reasons, and it affected on biological, religious and cultural forms of social life as well as it highly affected on the economic condition of the poor fisheries in the area of research. So, it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between continuous smoking habits and the increase of poverty among fisheries. Smoking habits towards to absolute poverty among fisheries society. According to the findings, the poverty directly impact on the level of income, savings, livelihood, education of the children, health condition and other social aspects of fisheries. Therefore, it can be suggested to conduct awareness programs among fisheries community for diminishing smoking habits in order to eliminate poverty, and to fostering their standard of social life.

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