

**ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE**

DOI: 10.26727/NJRCM.2020.9.2.073-080

Year: 2020 Vol: 9 Issue: 2. Apr.-Jun. Page: 073-080

**Migration and Tobacco-Explosive Epidemic in Making? Lived Experiences of Tobacco use among Interstate Migrant Construction Workers in Chennai, Tamil Nadu**

Sree T. Sucharitha<sup>1</sup>, Suganya E<sup>2</sup>, S Divyadharshini<sup>3</sup>, T Akshaya Ponsuba<sup>4</sup>, Karthik RC<sup>5</sup> Radhakrishnan A<sup>6</sup>

**Affiliation:** 1 Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Tagore Medical College Hospital, Chennai 2,5,6 Assistant Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Tagore Medical College Hospital, Chennai,3.4. MBBS, Tagore Medical College Hospital, Chennai

**\*Author for correspondence:** Dr. Sree T. Sucharitha, Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Tagore Medical College Hospital, Chennai 2 Tamil Nadu.Pin: 600127. Email: sucharitha2@tagoremch.com

Date of Submission : 20-05-2020

Date of online Publication : 13-06-2020

Date of Acceptance : 10-06-2020

Date of Print Publication : 30-06-2020

**ABSTRACT**

Background: Migration impacts individuals physical, mental and social well-being thus acknowledged as a social determinant of health by increasing the health risks and vulnerabilities. Studying interplay of multiple factors associated with migration and tobacco use is essential for understanding the disproportionate burden of tobacco use among migrants. Objectives: To describe the lived experiences of tobacco use among interstate migrant construction workers in relation to migration and native socio-cultural factors in Chennai. Methods: Using qualitative narrative inquiry approach, with informed verbal consent brief personal interviews were conducted in Hindi language with interstate migrants at four construction sites in Chennai. The narrative quotes by migrants in Hindi were reported after translation into English. Results: Among 52 male and 5 female tobacco using migrants, the cultural acceptance and sanction for smokeless tobacco, peer influence on uptake of tobacco habits after arrival in the destination city, use of tobacco to overcome physical exertion and boredom were factors driving the higher use of tobacco among migrants. Conclusion: The study reveals the complex interplay of socio-cultural-economic factors associated with migration and disrupted social support systems as contributing to the high burden of tobacco consumption among interstate migrant populations.

**Key word:** migrant workers, social determinants of health, vulnerable populations, tobacco consumption, smokeless tobacco