

**TITLE:** An evaluation of the relationship between access to e-cigarettes and the usage of e-cigarettes among high and middle school students in the US.

**AUTHOR(S):** Ibukun E Fowe

**PRESENTER(S):** Ibukun E Fowe

**STUDENT SUBMISSION:** Yes

**TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE:** E-Cigarette access and use among US High and Middle School Students/ Policymakers, and Public Health Researchers

**ABSTRACT:** Background: The use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) among US adolescents and youths is a gradually increasing trend, and tobacco use remains a leading cause of preventable mortality in the US with its use beginning mostly during adolescence.

Purpose: This study is aimed at assessing how the amount of e-cigarette used by high and middle school students is correlated with access to e-cigarettes through various channels of access.

Methods: Sample data was drawn from the most current wave of the National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS 2018 survey) which included a nationally representative sample of US high and middle school students (N= 22,729) from 310 selected schools. The Chi-Square test of independence and Cramer's V test were used to assess the relationship between the amount of e-cigarette used in the last 30 days and various points of access to e-cigarettes by high and middle schoolers.

Results: Showed an association between the amount of use of e-cigarettes in the last 30 days and access points to e-cigarettes.

Conclusions/implications: Policies targeted at limiting the sale of and access to e-cigarettes from the evaluated access points might have some limiting effect on the prevalence of e-cigarette use in this population.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Demonstrate the impact of available e-cigarette access points on the use of e-cigarettes among high and middle school US students. Evaluate the strength of association between access to e-cigarettes and the usage of e-cigarettes among high and middle school students in the US. Design and formulate policies and interventions that can limit gateway access to e-cigarette as well as continued access to e-cigarette among new, occasional and habitual smokers in this population.

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