

SMOKER *susceptibility & smoking status* AMONG employed & unemployed HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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*BACKGROUND

Students who are employed are frequently more susceptible to at-risk behaviors. One risk they face is becoming a smoker (Monahan, Lee, & Steinberg, 2011). Past research has focused on intensity of work hours and the amount of discretionary income as predictors of being at risk for smoking among high school students (Gruber & Zinman, 2001; Bachman & Schulenberg, 1993; Dun, 2005, Zhang, 2008). Less is known about other social factors associated with student employment and smoking. We know exposure to smoking from family members is a risk factor for future smoking behavior (Leonardi-Bee, Jere, & Britton, 2011). However, beyond family exposure, it may be that exposure in itself is what is predictive of future smoking behavior. Further, an overwhelming majority of high school students work in the service industry (The Report on the Youth Labor Force), and there is a substantial prevalence of smoking behavior in adult, low income workers in the service industry (Barbeau, Krieger, & Soobader, 2004). As such, we believe that the high prevalence of exposure to smoking at a high school student's job will be predictive of future smoking behavior.

*OBJECTIVE

To determine if social factors, primarily, employment status and exposure to smoking at work relates to smoking behaviors in high school students.

Table 1 Sample Characteristics

Participants	N = 1657
Sex	
Male	49.7%
Female	50.3%
Race	
White	42.6%
Black	51.4%
Other	6.0%
Grade	
9th	28.2%
10th	26.3%
11th	23.9%
12th	21.6%
Employment Status	
Unemployed	80.3%
Employed but Not Exposed to Smoking at Work	10.2%
Employed and Exposed to Smoking at Work	9.5%
Spending Money	
\$20 or Less Per Week	44.1%
\$21 or More Per Week	55.9%

Table 2 Bivariate Statistics

	Susceptible Non-Smoker	Current Smoker
Employment Status	p < .001	p < .001
Unemployed	26.1%	13.2%
Employed but Not Exposed to Smoking at Work	33.9%	23.2%
Employed and Exposed to Smoking at Work	55.4%	56.6%
Spending Money	ns	p < .001
\$20 or Less Per Week	26.9%	13.3%
\$21 or More Per Week	30.4%	22.0%

Table 3 Logistic Regression

	Susceptible Non-Smoker Odds Ratio (95% C.I.)	Current Smoker Odds Ratio (95% C.I.)
Employment Status	p = .001	p < .001
Employed and Exposed to Smoking at Work	3.5 (2.0, 6.3)	7.4 (5.0, 10.9)
Employed but Not Exposed to Smoking at Work	1.3 (0.9, 2.0)	1.6 (1.0, 2.5)
Unemployed	Reference	Reference
Spending Money	ns	p = .001
\$21 or More Per Week	1.2 (0.8, 1.7)	1.7 (1.3, 2.3)
\$20 or Less Per Week	Reference	Reference

*Note: The model statistically controlled for sex, grade, and race.

*METHODOLOGY

2012 Mississippi Youth Tobacco Survey

We Applied a multi-stage sample design with public high schools selected proportional to enrollment size. Two to three classrooms were chosen randomly within selected schools and all students in selected classes were eligible for participation. Data were collected by means of an anonymous self-administered questionnaire. The questions were group administered in classrooms during a normal class period by teachers following standardized procedures. Bivariate and multivariable analyses were used to analyze the relationship between both employment and exposure to smoke at work on high school student's smoking status and their susceptibility to smoke while controlling for weekly spending money and demographic characteristics.

*RESULTS

Bivariate and multivariable analyses indicated that having a job was a risk factor for current smoking and susceptibility to smoking among non-smokers. This relationship remained even after controlling for having weekly spending money. Subsequent analysis of employed students found that students who were exposed to smoke at work were more likely to be at risk than those who reported no exposure.

*DISCUSSION & FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

Students who are employed are more likely to be at risk for smoking. Smoking risk appears to be attributable to social processes beyond simply having more discretionary income. Future research should address social norms and tobacco use in teen workplaces.

