ABSTRACT

A community based cross-sectional analytical study was conducted in urban area of Hpa-An Township, Kayin State to assess tobacco utilization and perception on pictorial warnings, from September to November, 2014. A total of 278 respondents (18-65 years), 188 males and 90 females were involved. It was conducted by using pre-tested semi-structured questionnaires and ten pictorial health warnings. The mean age of the respondents was 36.3 ± 13.4 years and the majority was middle age group. Most of them passed primary school level. Although 55.8% had good knowledge, only 16.3% were knowledgeable about law of tobacco control. The respondents had satisfactory knowledge only on non-smoking areas (70.5%). More than half of the respondents were positive attitude on tobacco use and tobacco control law, and good perception towards both text-based and pictorial warnings. Pictorial warnings relating to 'mouth cancer', tongue cancer' and 'peripheral vascular disease' were most often mentioned as the most scary, the most believable and the most effective in motivating to quit smoking and giving health education to the community. The overall prevalence of tobacco use was 66.2%. Among the users, 27.3% were ever smokers, 57.6% were ever smokeless tobacco users and 18.7% were dual users. Prevalence of current smokers was 24.1% whereas current betel chewers was 56.1%. Percent distribution of smoking is reported as 71.6% cigarettes and 56.7% cheroots. Among chewers, almost all chewed betel quid with tobacco and there was no one who chewed raw tobacco. Current smokers spent 17.4% of their monthly income for smoking while current betel chewer spent 35.2% for betel chewing. Besides, dual users spent 45.1% of their monthly income for tobacco use. So, tobacco users spend a huge percent of their income on tobacco. Nearly 80% had ever tried to quit smoking and more than 60% tried to quit betel chewing. Positive attitude and good perception level is also found among non-users and strong association is detected ($p<0.001$). There is significant association between knowledge level and attitude, knowledge level and perception towards both text-based and pictorial health warnings ($p<0.001$, $p=0.010$ and $p=0.001$ respectively).