

Barriers To Smoking Cessation: Exploring Factors That Hinder Quitting Efforts- A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Smoking remains one of the leading causes of preventable diseases and premature deaths worldwide, contributing to conditions such as heart disease, stroke, respiratory disorders, and cancer. Smoking cessation is complex, as numerous factors contribute to the difficulty of quitting. A systematic understanding of these barriers can inform more effective cessation strategies.

Aim: To systematically review and analyse the barriers to smoking cessation that make quitting difficult.

An extensive literature search was conducted using the Scopus, PubMed, and Web of Science databases. The keywords included smoking cessation.

Methods: A systematic review of qualitative studies was conducted. An extensive literature search was conducted using the Scopus, PubMed, and Web of Science databases. Relevant studies on adult smokers' experiences and barriers to cessation were identified through databases. Articles were included if they explored the multifaceted obstacles to smoking cessation.

Results: The review identified psychological barriers, with stress and emotional dependence more prominent, environmental triggers,

such as social cues, failed assisted smoking cessation, sociocultural norms, including the role of societal pressures and stigmas; and barriers related to access and awareness of cessation resources. Both genders emphasised the need for supportive, non-judgmental interventions tailored to individual needs.

Conclusion: Factors that significantly influence barriers to smoking cessation include nicotine addiction, ingrained cultural norms, and limited knowledge of cessation resources. Women benefit more from emotionally supportive, group-based interventions, whereas men may respond better to structured, incentive-based approaches. Further research is needed to explore long-term effectiveness and sustainability of current cessation programmes.

Implications: The findings underscore the need to create supportive, nonjudgmental environments to reduce stigma and encourage individuals to seek help. Taxation and smoke-free laws should be implemented to support quitting efforts.

Keywords: Cessation strategies, Peer pressure, Psychological barriers

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