

Abstract

Introduction: In recent years, the tobacco industry has begun innovating novel new nicotine product categories. These include nicotine pouches. These are beginning to appeal particularly to the youth population, which may include secondary grammar school students.

Objectives: The aim of the study was to map the experiences of high school students in the Pardubice Region with the use of nicotine pouches. A sub-objective was to determine the prevalence of tobacco and nicotine product use among secondary grammar school students.

Methods: Quantitative research was used to obtain the data. The research was conducted using an anonymous online questionnaire survey in the Survio.com platform. The management of the Secondary Grammar School Dašická in Pardubice was approached for the research and agreed to conduct the research among students over 15 years of age. The research was conducted successively in all 16 classes, mostly during the Social Studies classes. Students completed the survey on their smart devices. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. The first part of the questionnaire mapped basic information about the respondents (age, gender, grade), the second part addressed students' awareness of nicotine pouches, the third part mapped the prevalence of tobacco and nicotine pouches use, and the last part tracked experiences and patterns of nicotine pouches use. The data were processed using descriptive statistics in IBM SPSS 28.0.0 software.

Results: 408 respondents took part in the survey, 55.8% of whom were women. 22.6% of respondents had used tobacco or nicotine products in the last 30 days. The most common tobacco product used by respondents was an electronic cigarette 32.5%. 18.6% of respondents had ever used nicotine pouches in their lifetime. 2.2% of students use nicotine pouches every day or almost every day. The most common motives for using nicotine pouches were curiosity, stimulant effects, and the discrete manner of usage. The most frequent use was with friends (81.6%), followed by restaurants and bars or outdoors and during relaxation. Respondents perceived nausea, dizziness, and headache as the main negative effects associated with nicotine pouches. The perceived positive effects most often included feeling relaxed, improved mood, and improved focus.

Conclusions: This study is one of the first studies in the Czech Republic to focus on nicotine pouches use among secondary school students. The contribution of this study is new knowledge

about how often, under what circumstances, and for what reasons secondary school students use nicotine pouches and what effects they most often experience when using them.

Keywords: Nicotine pouches, nicotine, addiction, students, patterns of use