

Letter to the Editor

Alarming rise in vape smoking among teenagers in Pakistan: a call for action

Sir,

I am writing to draw attention to a matter of great concern that demands our collective awareness and action: the alarming rise in vape smoking among teenagers in Pakistan. This disturbing trend poses a serious threat to the health and well-being of our young population, and it is imperative that we address this issue promptly in a comprehensive way.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable rise in the use of electronic cigarettes, or vapes, among teenagers in various parts of Pakistan. The accessibility and appeal of these devices, often marketed with tasty flavors and sleek designs, have contributed to their popularity and use among the youth. However, the consequences of this trend are concerning and potentially devastating.

The health risks associated with vaping are well-documented, and the adolescent brain is particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of nicotine and other substances found in e-cigarettes. Beyond the immediate health concerns, the rise in vape smoking among teenagers raises broader societal issues, including the potential for addiction, compromised academic performance, and a negative impact on mental health.

Several factors contribute to the urgency of addressing this issue:

Health impact

Vaping has been linked to respiratory issues, cardiovascular problems, and adverse effects on brain development. The long-term consequences of regular vape use in teenagers are yet to be fully understood, making prevention and intervention crucial.¹

Passive exposure

Smoke produced from vaping also has implications on the people around who are not actively engaged in vape smoking. People suffering from asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) face exacerbations of their conditions.²

Marketing tactics

Aggressive marketing strategies employed by vape manufacturers often target a susceptible younger

population, exploiting the allure of flavors and beautiful designs to attract teenagers. Regulatory measures to curb such marketing practices are essential.

Educational initiatives

There is a need for comprehensive educational campaigns in schools and communities to raise awareness about the dangers of vaping. Equipping teenagers with accurate information empowers them to make informed decisions about their health.

Regulatory measures

Policymakers must consider and implement strict regulations on the sale and marketing of vape products, with a focus on protecting the vulnerable teenage population from the potential harms of these devices.

As a community, we cannot afford to be complacent in the face of this growing public health crisis. I urge parents, educators, healthcare professionals, and policymakers to collaborate in developing and implementing effective strategies to combat the rise in vape smoking among the teenagers. By working together, we can safeguard the health and future of next generation.

It is my hope that this letter serves as reminder and catalyst for increased awareness and action on this important issue. Teenagers deserve healthier and brighter future, free from harmful consequences of vaping.

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