

# Influence of Tobacco Control related Facebook Messages in Bangladesh

Shamim Jubayer<sup>1</sup>, Mahamudul Hasan<sup>1</sup>, Ahmad Abrar<sup>1</sup>, Sohel R Choudhury<sup>1</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>National Heart Foundation Hospital and Research Institute, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Behavioral  
Epidemiology  
P3-C14

The majority of respondents (80%) who used tobacco planned to quit, and 74% had already tried to quit. Almost all respondents (95%) were planning to advise, and 86% had already advised their tobacco-user friends and family members to quit.

## BACKGROUND

- The objective was to assess the tobacco control related messages on Facebook and investigate the influence of these messages on Facebook users in Bangladesh.

Building awareness among the general population is one of the major ways to combat tobacco epidemic. Social media plays a vital role in creating mass awareness at a minimum cost. Nowadays, various organizations working on tobacco control issues in Bangladesh use Facebook, the most popular social media platform, to disseminate tobacco control related messages. Tobacco Control related Facebook (TCFB) messages or postings may influence its users, but no such study has yet been conducted to determine it.

## METHODS

- This cross-sectional study was conducted during April-November 2019 following mixed method approach.
- All TCFB pages were included in this study. The previous year's posts from every page were observed and the content analysis was done on a randomly selected month's posts to assess quality of the messages.
- A total of 601 TCFB page followers participated in the online survey through self-administered questionnaire to investigate the influence of these messages. To explore the challenges and way forward, administrators of these pages were interviewed as key informants.

## RESULTS (GRAPH)

Figure 1: Favorite topics of post

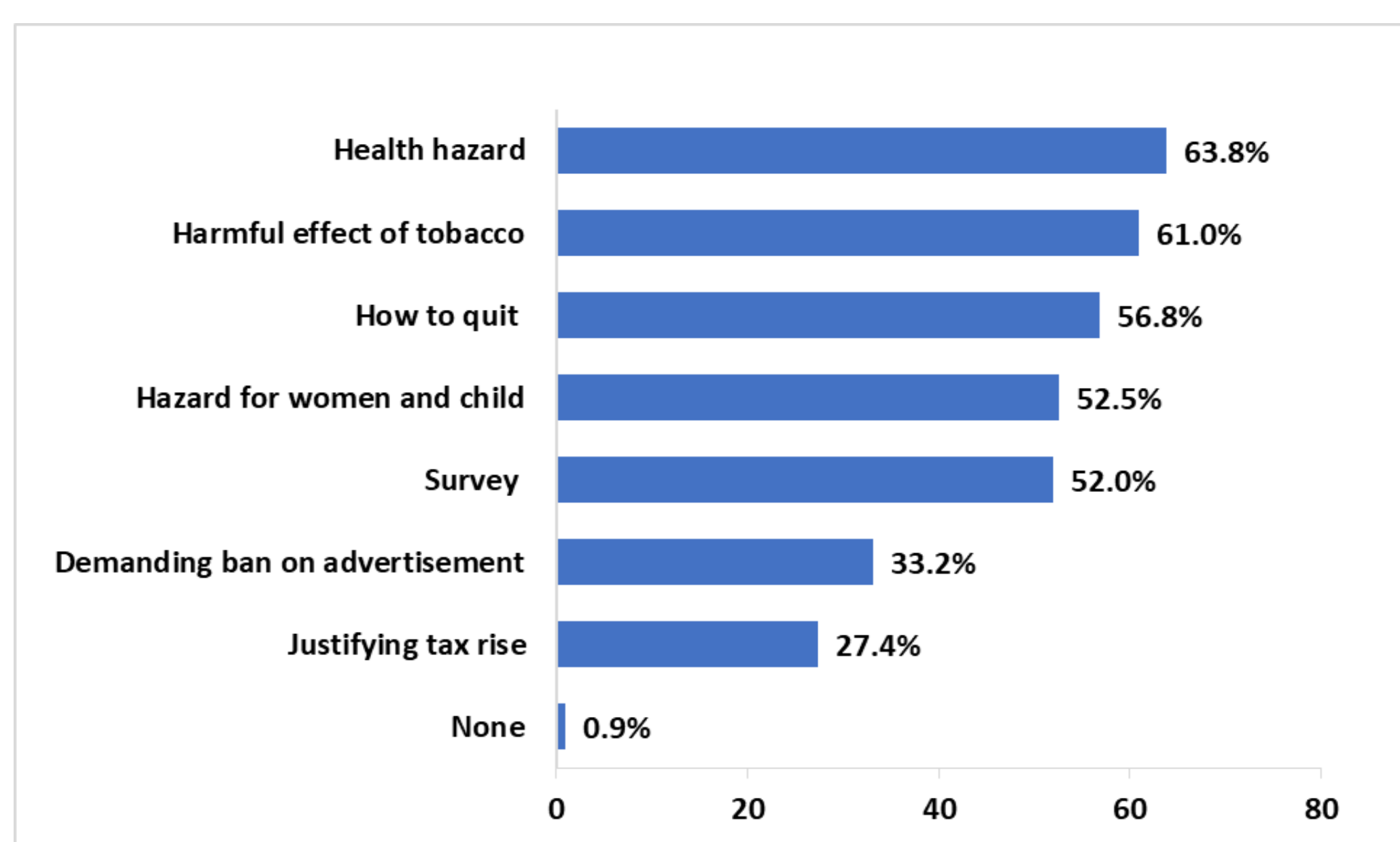
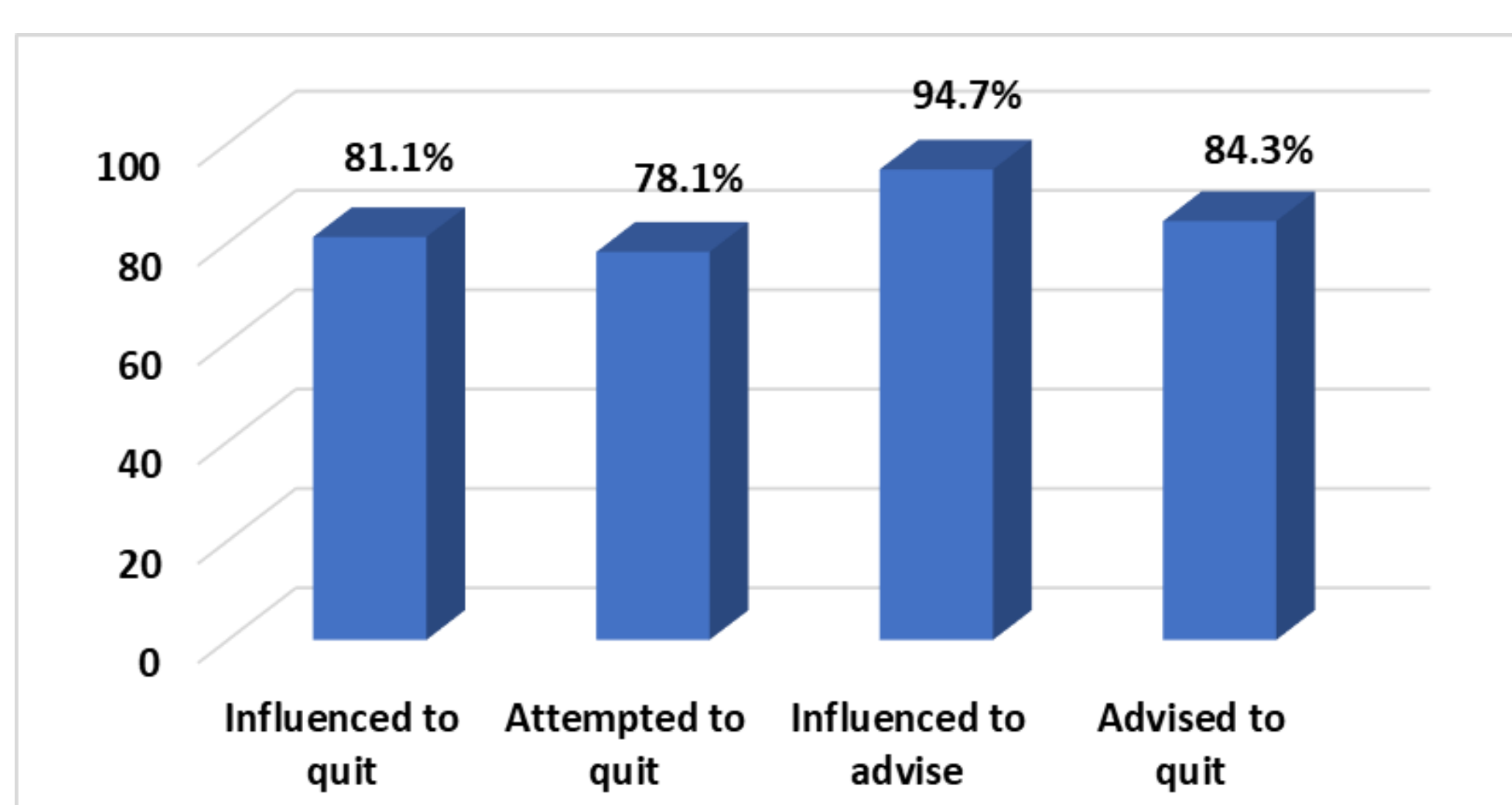


Figure 2: Effect of post on the respondents



## RESULTS CONTINUED

- The majority of them (80%) who used tobacco planned to quit, and 74% had already tried to quit. Almost all respondents (95%) were planning to advise, and 86% had already advised their tobacco-user friends and family members to quit.
- Attempts to quit and advice given to others for quitting tobacco were significantly associated with knowledge about the health hazards of tobacco from TCFB pages ( $p < 0.001$ ).
- Those who were aware of health hazards from TCFB pages were three times more likely to attempt to quit (OR: 2.8, 95% CI: 1.2-6.5,  $p < 0.05$ ) and 3 times more likely to advise others to quit (OR: 2.6, 95% CI: 1.4-5.0,  $p < 0.01$ ).
- Respondents who liked posts related to health hazards in women and children were two times more likely to advise to quit (OR: 2.3, 95% CI: 1.2-4.5,  $p = 0.05$ ).

This study found that 16 tobacco TCFB pages were operating in Bangladesh and published an average of one post weekly. They had a total of 624,569 followers. These pages published 2118 posts from July 2018 - June 2019. About one-third of the posts (31%) analyzed were created to raise awareness, and the remaining posts were updates of events and news shared from other pages. Users mostly interacted with the posts that offered cessation services. Most of the posts (62%) exceeded five lines, and 46% were sticky. Among survey respondents, 92% were male, 85.0% were between 18-35 years old, and 64% had been following TCFB pages for about two years. Almost every respondent (98%) knew tobacco-related diseases.

## CONCLUSIONS

- Proper utilization of Facebook can be a potential tool for tobacco control campaign to create mass awareness.
- Posts should be innovative, specific, and visually attractive.
- Fund allocation for skill development and publicity of the posts can help disseminate key tobacco control messages in this ever-changing digital world.

## ADDITIONAL KEY INFORMATION

### Author Contact Information:

Shamim Jubayer: bith74@yahoo.com

### Acknowledgment:

- Institute for Global Tobacco Control (IGTC) of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHSPH)
- Bangladesh Center for Communication Programs'