



Ban Smoking in Public Places

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Banning smoking in public places implies that all closed places and indoor workplaces accessible to the public must be completely free of tobacco smoke (Son et al.). Designing and assigning special areas or spaces in public buildings for smokers violates the WHO public health standards and does not comply with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Designating smoking areas in indoor places must be legally prohibited because the tobacco industry considers smoking-ban laws the most dangerous threat to their survival to date. The tobacco industry works through opposition groups that include economists, politicians, businesspersons, and health care specialists who strongly object to the passing of smoking-ban laws, be it at the local, national, or international levels. Tobacco companies claim that smoking-ban laws are pointless, difficult to apply, and will negatively impact the business sector, especially in cafes, restaurants, bars, and casinos. They also claim that good and enough ventilation to the buildings serve a satisfactory solution for the indoor smoking areas. 600,000 people die annually due to smoking-related problems; however, the tobacco industry falsifies these claims in a bid to keep smoking bans at bay, and this should be stopped. (Matt et al., pg. 1220).

Falsifying such claims does not take away the fact that smoking should be banned in public places for different reasons. Firstly, passive smoking has terrible impacts on individuals' health. Passive smoking, which is also referred to as secondhand smoke or environmental tobacco smoke (ETS), means inhaling tobacco products used by others. This phenomenon occurs upon exposure to tobacco smoke that diffuses into any environment, causing those inside that environment to inhale the contents. Scientific evidence has proven that exposure to second-hand

smoke causes illness, disability, and even death (Mahabee-Gittens et al., pg. 4). The idea of paying off harm to "innocent bystanders" or non-smokers should be the primary motivation for stricter rules on tobacco products. Despite their awareness of the potential harms of passive smoking, companies within the tobacco industry have coordinated with each other to steer the scientific debate to prevent regulatory actions for their products and industry. However, there is now a scientific consensus about the health risks of passive smoking. In the long term, passive smoking causes lung and breast cancer, nose, ear, throat infections, coronary heart diseases (CHD), lung diseases, premature birth, and many other medical complications (Schick et al., pg. 153). These health risks are some of the motives and the main reasons behind smoking bans in the workplace and enclosed public places, including restaurants, bars, and nightclubs. Thus, companies should stop falsifying claims related to tobacco deaths as it increases the likelihood of these risks occurring frequently.

Such health risks occur because tobacco contains numerous harmful chemical substances, including tar, nicotine, and carbon monoxide (Matt et al., pg. 552). Tar is a well-known carcinogen and is the responsible agent for all cancers which result from smoking. At the same time, nicotine induces the release of the neurotransmitter dopamine in the brain, initiating the reward system, thus causing addiction. Also, carbon monoxide has a high affinity to hemoglobin, the pigment responsible for carrying oxygen in the blood. The strong binding of carbon monoxide to hemoglobin deprives the body cells of oxygen (Torres et al.). Contrary to tobacco companies' claims, statistical evidence from confirmed studies shows that smoking-ban laws are welcomed, applicable, and have no negative effect on recreational industries. Smoke-free laws reduce exposure to passive smoking and aid in smoking cessation and deterrence. Smoking bans save lives and reduce healthcare and other costs associated with tobacco consumption. Among

the motives which compel the youth or teenagers to smoke are a parental indulgence, peer pressure, and the desire to adventure. With the increasing numbers of smokers, especially among the youth, confronting the myths propagated by the tobacco industry and ensuring that casualty numbers are reported accurately by the tobacco industry becomes the responsibility of the government, firms, and people, and a call to approve smoking bans is urgently needed.

References

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