Chapter IV
Research Framework
Tobacco use is one of the leading preventable causes of death worldwide. It is estimated that 70% of which will be in the developing world by 2030. Like other developing countries, the most susceptible age (15-24 year) for initiating tobacco use in India is during adolescence and early adulthood (NSS 50th round (1993-1994). Children today begin to experiment with tobacco at a relatively younger age than they were doing a decade ago. It is found that the vast majority of tobacco users started consuming tobacco when they were adolescents (WHO, 2009). Studies show that most tobacco users start consuming tobacco before the age of 18 year, while some start as young as 10 years (Arora, 2005). This progressive increase in the consumption of tobacco amongst adolescents is emerging as a complex and multidimensional problem. The risks of tobacco use are highest among those who start early and continue its use for a long period (Sinha, 2002). The early age of initiation underscores the urgent need to intervene and protect this vulnerable group from falling prey to this addiction (Reddy & Arora, 2005).

Therefore, reducing youth access to tobacco products must become an essential component of any coherent strategy to prevent nicotine addiction in children and youth and thereby reduce the number of deaths from tobacco related diseases (Global Tobacco-Free Research Initiative, 2008).

The present study aims to focus on the patterns and prevalence of tobacco consumption among students and assess their awareness regarding the harmful effects of tobacco. The study also examines the opinion and role of the schools and parents of the students in order to develop interventions strategies aimed at preventing tobacco consumption among school students.

4.1 RELEVANCE TO SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Students spend major part of their day in the school and have close interaction with their peers. The school environment provides a standard against which young people some time test themselves (GYST, 2000). School personnel also often serve as
highly influential role models by which the pre-adolescents and adolescents judge themselves. Relationships with teachers and social workers/school counselors are most important for many students, especially the middle school students (Muttappallymyalil et al., 2010). According to a study (McNeely, 2004) social workers/schools counselors play important role in tackling different problems of the students in which tobacco consumption is one of the important issue. Social workers who work in collaboration with community, family and school professionals are well situated to identify students with signs and symptoms of tobacco use in early adulthood (Kotwar & Thakur, 2004). There are studies which indicate that adolescents who perceive that their teachers/counselors care about them are less likely to initiate marijuana use, tobacco use, alcohol, and other health risk behaviors (Sen, 2002 & Kishore, 2007). It is, therefore, important to know how the school system views the problem and responds to it. The findings of the present study will help the existing school authorities to become more sensitive to the needs of the students and plan awareness and support programmes in the school with a view to check tobacco consumption. This research will also help the social workers/counselors in understanding the issues related to tobacco consumption and its dimensions making them better equipped to tackle the problem more effectively.

4.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study attempts to understand the various aspects related to tobacco use among school students with the following objectives:

1. To determine the prevalence of tobacco among senior secondary school students.

2. To study the pattern of tobacco consumption among school children.

3. To find out the major reason for tobacco consumption

4. To analyze the consequences of tobacco use.

5. To analyze the awareness level of children, school authorities and parents on use of Tobacco

6. To find out the role of school and family in dealing with the problem of tobacco use.
7. Suggest measures to develop programmes and policies at school and community level.

4.3 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- **Tobacco**: It is an agricultural product processed from the leaves of plants in the genus *Nicotiana* of the family Solanaceae. The leaves of these plants are dried and processed chiefly for use in cigarettes, cigars, or snuff or for smoking in pipes, gutkka and hookkas (Wikipedia, Encyclopedia, 2010).

For the present study, “tobacco is a dependence producing substance with a capacity to cause physical, psychological and social harm to the user”. It includes tobacco products like beedi, cigarette, cigar, gutkka, snuff, hookka, and pipe. These are the most common forms of tobacco used and popular among adolescents too.

- **Pattern of Tobacco Consumption**: The pattern of tobacco consumption among school students is studied in terms of various factors such as--age of initiation of tobacco, gender and regular use of tobacco, family income and drug abuse among students, common forms of tobacco, frequency of tobacco use, influencing factor of tobacco use, cause & consequence of tobacco use, money spent on tobacco and awareness of tobacco ill effects and legal provisions.

- **Adolescent**: According to WHO adolescence is divided into three stages of development: early (10-13 years), middle (14-15 years), and late adolescence (16-19 years). It is usually seen that risk-taking behaviours begin to manifest from the middle adolescence onwards (WHO, 2000). Hence, the present study focuses on the middle and late stages of adolescence. The subjects were thus chosen from the corresponding age group of 14-18 years studying in classes 9th to 12th in government and private (co-education) schools of Delhi.

- **Regular Users of Tobacco**: for the present study, regular users were considered those students who were taking tobacco once or more than once in a day.

- **Experimentation of Tobacco**: those students who had taken tobacco at least once or more in their life time but were not regular user of tobacco.
4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Descriptive research design has been taken for the present research study to identify the cause of something that is happening and to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. The study seeks to describe the factors that could influence the pattern of tobacco consumption among school students and the role of teachers/counselors and parents in dealing with the problem of tobacco use among students.

4.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions raised were:

1. Is consumption of tobacco higher among boys rather than girls?
2. Are children belonging to drug abusers having higher chance of getting into tobacco use?
3. Is peer pressure the main cause of taking tobacco products?
4. Is tobacco smoking higher than the other products of tobacco?
5. What role is the school playing in the prevention of tobacco use?

4.6 UNIT OF THE STUDY

The sample units for the purpose of the study are:

1. Government and private co-educational senior secondary school in UT of Delhi
2. Student between the age group of 14-18 years studying in classes IX - XII.
3. Teacher and school social worker/school counselor/ Principals/ Parents

4.7 CONSENT

Written and verbal permission and consent from the Principals were obtained prior to conducting the study in their school. A written and verbal consent was also obtained from the parents.
4.8 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Purposive and Convenient sampling procedure was adopted for selection of units of the study.

Selection of District and Schools: The Education Board of Delhi is divided into 12 districts. From these, two districts (North and North East) were selected by purposive sampling. From each of the two districts one co-educational private school and one co-educational government school (one with counselor and one without counselor) was selected for the purpose of the study. The two districts and the schools were selected on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Co-educational School-both government and private school.
2. Consent by the school principal.
3. Presence of the counselor.

Selection of the Students and Parents: 100 students (25 students from each class) from each school were selected by the use of convenient sampling. Those students who were willing to give the response and whose parent’s shows consented were covered as part of the sample.

Sample of 10 parents was selected from each school. Those parents whose children were studying in the classes 9th to 12th and who were willing to give the response were covered under the sample unit.

Four class teachers referred by the principal of each school from 9th to 12th class were taken as the respondents. All the four Principals and two counselor of the selected schools were interviewed.

4.9 SAMPLE SIZE

The total of 400 Students (100 from each school), 16 class teachers (4 class teachers of 9th – 12th classes from each school), 4 Principals (one from each school), 2 counselors (one from each district) and 40 parents (10 from each school) were covered. Total sample size was 462.
SELECTION OF THE RESPONDENT

12 District of Education Board of Delhi

Two Districts from the entire 12 District

Two schools for each District
(Co-educational Senior Secondary School)

One school with counselor and one school
without counselor from each District

Total: 100 students, all 4 class teacher
(9th, 10th, 11th, 12th) and one school
principal and 10 parents from each school

Total sample size = 462 (4 schools): 400 students
16 teachers, 4 principals, 40 parents
and 2 counselors
4.10 TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

Separate tools were framed for each category of respondents to reduce the non-response rate. The framed tools were pre tested and the questions were modified where ever required before formal data collection.

❖ Questionnaire for the School Student

A questionnaire, originally developed by WHO and GYTS, was modified and developed for the students. The questionnaire covered information from the students with regard to-

- Socio- demographic profile of the respondent
- Prevalence of tobacco use;
- Age of onset of tobacco use;
- Frequency of use
- Sources of acquiring the substance,
- Awareness regarding the effects of tobacco use on their health and status.
- Substance by parents,
- Family problem (if any), reasons etc.

Complete confidentiality was assured to the respondents (Annexure -1).

❖ Questionnaire for the School Teacher

For the purpose of seeking opinion of the principals and teachers on the consumption of tobacco among school children, a separate questionnaire was framed (Annexure –II). On the basis of the pre-testing, the questionnaire was modified. The pre-tested questionnaires were not included in the final analysis. The questionnaire primarily aimed at collecting information from the teachers with regard to-

- Data about their qualifications
- Their duties or job responsibility in the school
Their opinion and understanding regarding tobacco problem among school children programmes implemented by them to minimize the rate of tobacco abuse among school children

School responsibility

Questionnaire for the Parents

For the purpose of seeking opinion of the parents on the consumption of tobacco among children, a separate questionnaire (Annexure-III) was framed. On the basis of the pre-testing, the schedule was modified. The questionnaire primarily aimed at collecting information from the parents with regard to-

- Brief personal data
- Regarding their habit of drug consumption, if any
- Their opinion on problem of tobacco use
- Reaction toward addicted child
- Awareness regarding symptoms, effects and treatment of tobacco use
- Awareness about the legal provisions and Anti – Tobacco programmes
- Their responsibility towards the child

All questionnaires had closed and open-ended questions.

Interview Schedule for Principal and Counselor

The scheduled primarily aimed at collecting information from the principals and counselor with regard to- (Annexure-IV)

- Their age and sex
- Qualification
- Their role and responsibility at school
- Their opinion and understanding regarding tobacco problem among school children programmes implemented by them to minimize the rate of tobacco abuse among school children
For the collection of data from the children written and verbal consent was taken from their parents and teacher. For the preparation of the tool, faculty of Indian Institute of Human Behavioural and Allied Sciences and scientist from the Indian Council of Medical Research were consulted.

4.11 DURATION OF DATA COLLECTION

The data was collected from the selected schools between the periods of the end of 2007 to end of 2009, taking a total time span of about two years because of schools schedules like examinations, festivals, functions, etc.

4.12 DATA ANALYSIS

The software system SPSS+ was used extensively for undertaking analysis of the collected data. Frequency tabulations, Co-relation etc have been used for the purpose of statistical analysis of the data.

4.13 DIFFICULTIES FACED DURING THE STUDY

The following difficulties were faced while conducting the study:

- Most of the respondents perhaps had never interacted with outsiders on such kind of topic, therefore, took time to get over their discomfort and initial hesitation.

- School curriculum like examination, school functions, vacations, etc., resulted in loss of time and eventually prolonged the period of data collection.

- Scheduled meetings with the principals had to be frequently postponed because of their heavy overworked schedules.

- The attitude of the teachers and parents and their undue interference was also one of the main reasons, which made data collection very time consuming and difficult because most of the researcher’s time was spent in holding discussions with them to make them understand the purpose of the study.
4.14 REFERENCES

