The purpose of this study is to describe patterns of and attitudes and beliefs towards hookah use among young adult Muslims residing in New York City.

The first objective is to describe knowledge of health risks associated with tobacco use.

The second objective is to examine the prevalence of hookah use under specific settings.

The third objective is to describe the level of awareness of the addictive properties of hookah.

The fourth objective is to describe attitudes on the relative harm of hookah compared to other substances like cigarettes, marijuana, prescription drugs, alcohol.

METHODS

A survey study was conducted. The survey was administered in the form of an online survey using Qualtrics. To recruit participants, an ad was circulated on WhatsApp and Instagram.

RESULTS

Total of 50 individuals participated in this survey: 15 males and 35 females.

Demographics: 76% of respondents identified as Middle Eastern, 10% North African, 6% South Asian, 6% Black/African American, and 2% Turkish.

Most participants self-reported they first use hookah between their late teens to early twenties. While 88% reported they have not smoked 100 cigarettes, a typical 1-hour hookah smoking session, users may inhale 100–200 times the amount of smoke they would inhale from a single cigarette. Furthermore, 92% believed hookah would lead them to experiment with other drugs, however, a substantial amount also believed that you could NOT get addicted to hookah and that it is less addictive than the use of other tobacco products.

Miseducation and biased presumptions are often what lead to physical and psychological dependency on the drugs from the frequency of use. Hookah smokers are led by the belief that because hookah tobacco smoke is filtered by the water in the base of the smoking apparatus, many of the harmful substances are removed, making it less detrimental to health.

To combat it, more health workshops would be necessary in concentrated Muslim communities to educate and lift the burden of tobacco-related illnesses.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at SUNY Downstate Medical Center. Thank you Dr. Azure Thompson’s and everyone who has participated in this study, this research would not have been completed without them. A special thank you to my partner, family and friends.

REFERENCES