

THE ELEMENTS IN SMOKING CESSATION APPS OF IOS AND ANDROID

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ABSTRACT

Background – Millions of people were killed by the sole usage of tobacco. WHO has launched the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control to combat pandemic around the world. Nowadays, smartphone is getting a lot of attention from the citizen for the health promotion status to manage their addiction and reinforce their health behaviour. However, some apps are in existence with unverified contents and this may lead to adverse effects to the users.

Purpose – The purpose of our study is (1) to evaluate the Smoking Cessation App based on the adherence to specific guidelines and (2) to compare Android and iOS smoking cessation apps.

Methods – A total of 50 smoking cessation apps were identified for the iPhone and 50 for the Android. Each app was evaluated by four reviewers for its content adhered to the U.S. Public Health Service's Updated Clinical Practice Guidelines for Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence. Mean of adherence score was compared between these two operating systems.

Results – Majority of apps have moderate to low levels of adherence, with adherence score in the range of 0-40 (out of 60). Based on our study, T-test of equality of means gave a significant difference of 0.029 which is less than 0.05 that is significant cut off point. The mean adherence score for Android is 26.72 which is more than android with a mean adherence score of 22.20. This shows that Android apps is more superior than iOS apps.

Conclusions – Smoking cessation apps can be improved by following the U.S. Public Health Service's 2008 Clinical Practice Guidelines for Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence. Available apps should be revised and improved with the help of IT experts and healthcare professionals to create a more reliable app.

Keywords: Mobile phone apps, smoking cessation, iOS, Android.