

**Smoking prevalence and stage of change: the role of failed smoking quit attempts**

(pp. 261-274)

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The aim of this research was to identify the stage of change distribution among university staff and also to analyse the role of failed attempts to quit smoking. A cross sectional survey design was used. Questionnaires about smoking habits were distributed among a representative sample (N= 366) of 1800 staff members at a Spanish university. The distribution of smokers and ex-smokers, by cessation phase, was as follows: precontemplation, 30.1%; contemplation, 11.8%; preparation, 1.3%; action, 7.8%; and maintenance, 49%. 72.7% of precontemplators and 68.8% of contemplators had attempted to take action in the past year. When asked about the number of prior smoking cessation attempts, the percentages of ex-smokers who reported having tried to quit smoking only once in the previous year were: action, 58.3%; and maintenance, 89.7%. So interventions developed specifically for precontemplators are needed. It would also seem appropriate to help prepare smokers to successfully achieve abstinence with only one try, thereby avoiding the potential negative effects of a relapse.