



Smoking Cessation Barriers in Kathmandu, Nepal

Luana Gnatenco^{1*} BS, Morgan Dewey^{1*} BS, Aisha Alkandari² MPH, Narayan Mahotra³ MD, Prashant Paneru³ BS, Ali Musani^{1**} MD, Madiha Abdel-Maksoud^{1,2**} MD/PhD

* Co-first authors. **Co-senior authors.

University of Colorado School of Medicine, University of Colorado School of Public Health, Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital



Background:

- The overall smoking prevalence in Nepal for the population aged over 15 is 37.4%.
- Yearly, there are 27,100 premature deaths related to tobacco consumption in Nepal.
- Although tobacco is a known risk factor for pulmonary and cardiac disease-related morbidity and mortality, the smoking epidemic is still under researched in Nepal.

Study Goal:

- Our cross sectional, quantitative research study aims to identify the motivations for smoking and main barriers to successful smoking cessation in Kathmandu, Nepal

Methods:

- Eligible participants were 18-89 years old and either current smokers or former smokers (pts that used a tobacco product in the previous 15 years).
- Participants were recruited at the Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital outpatient multispecialty clinics (respiratory, nephrology, gastroenterology, endocrinology, and neurology).
- Participants provides consent both verbally and in written form. Participation in the study was voluntary.
- A 46-question survey was administered verbally through interpreters.
- All data was collected in data management application Qualtrics and analyzed using R. statistical analysis software.

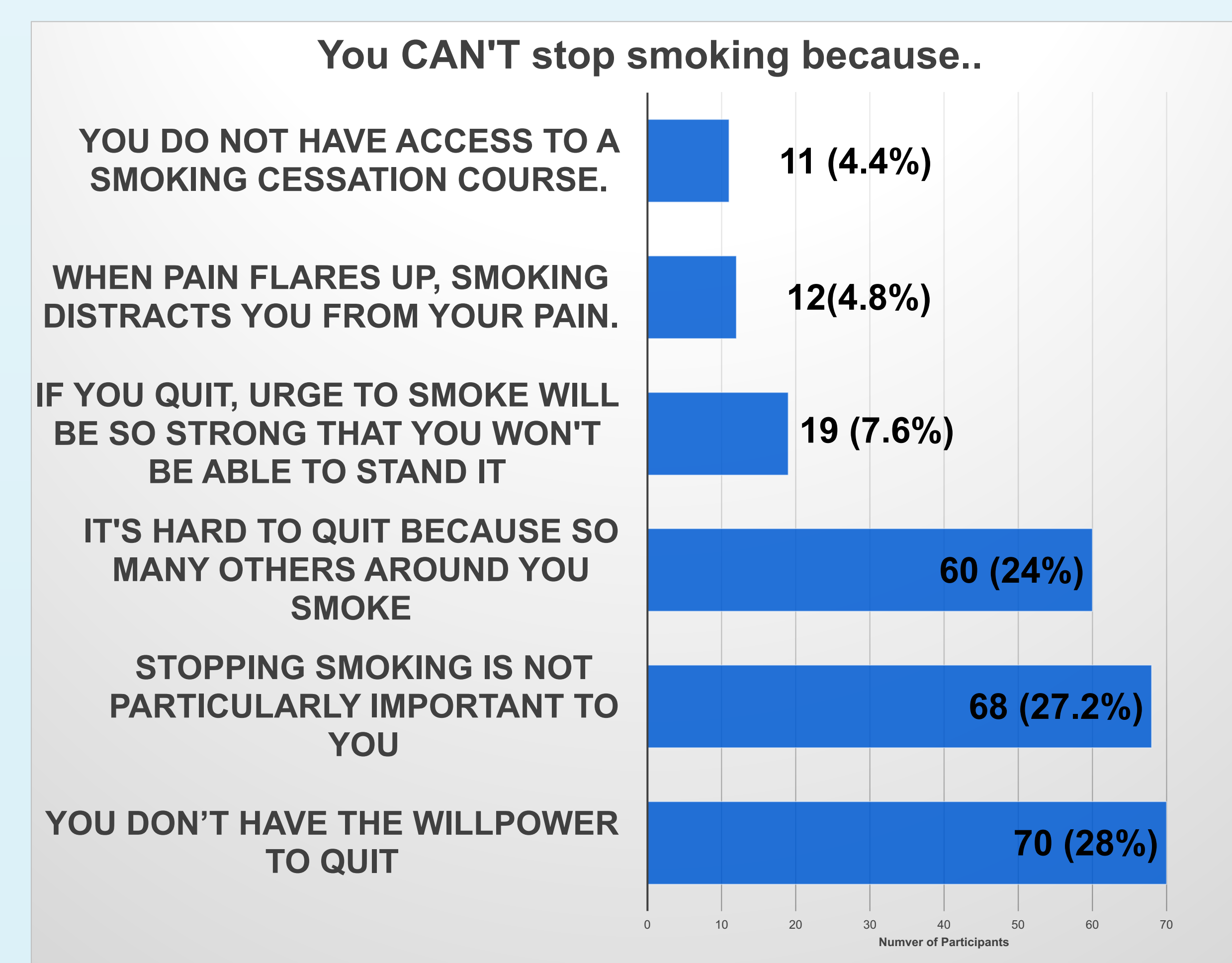
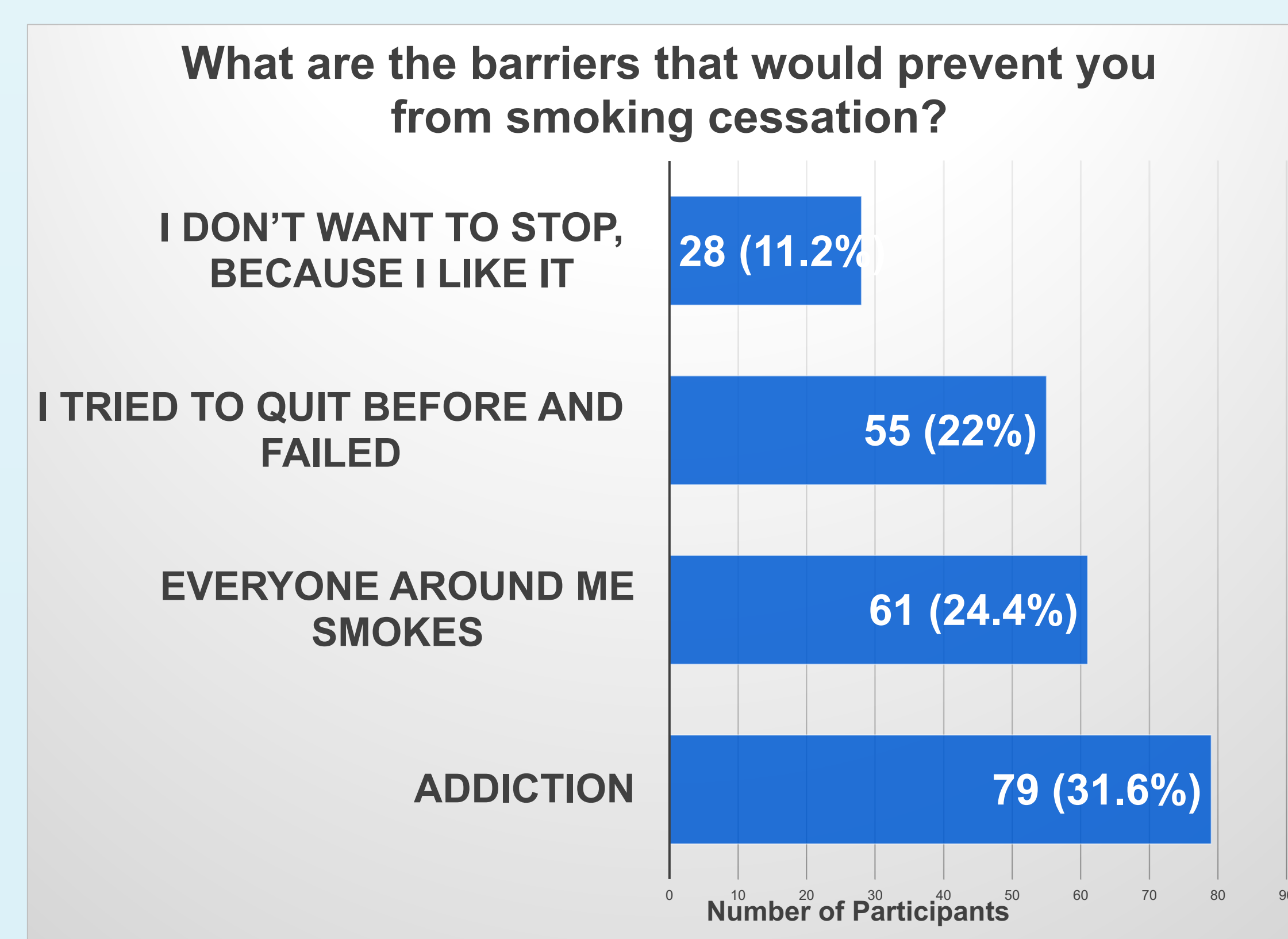
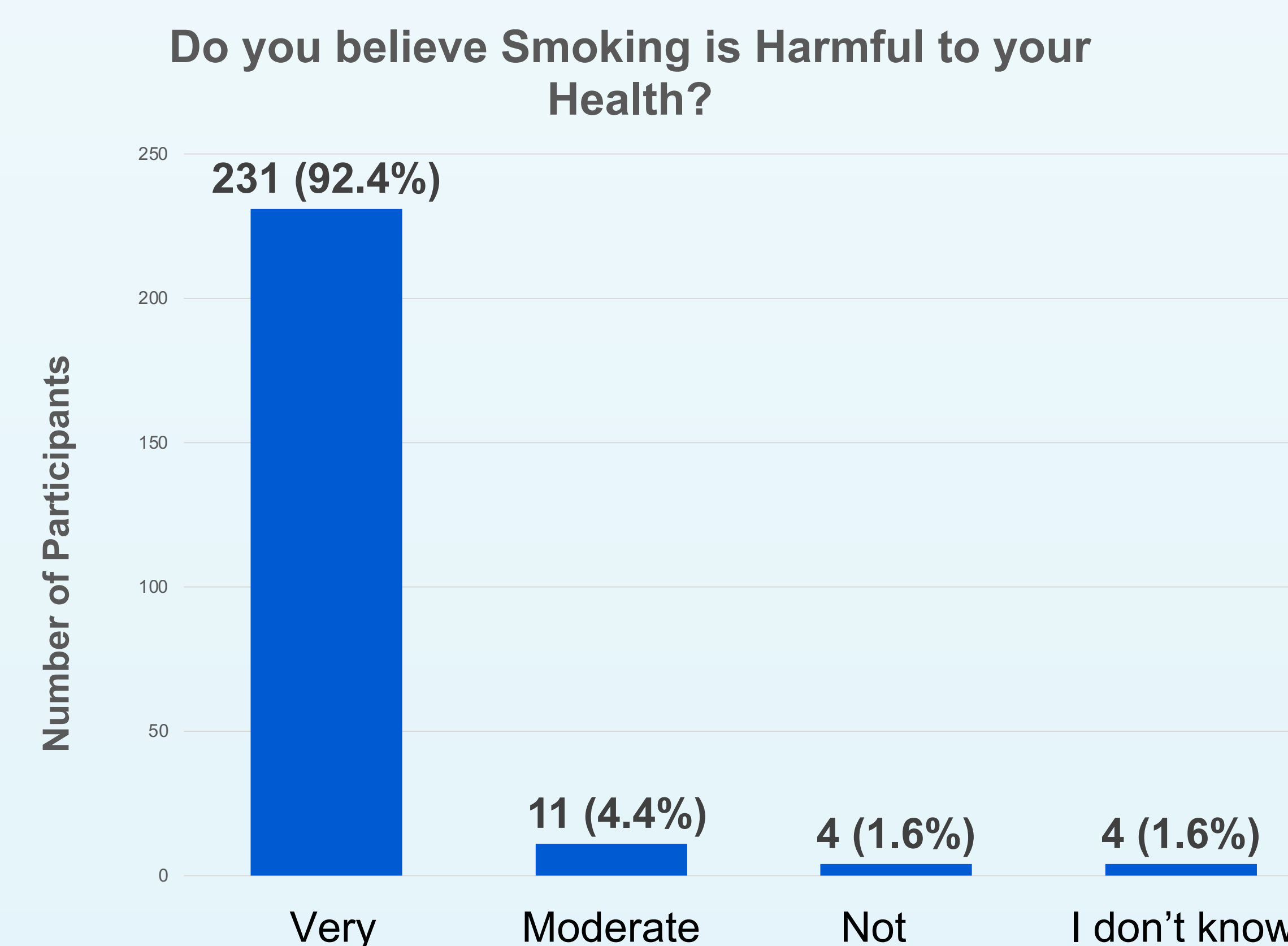
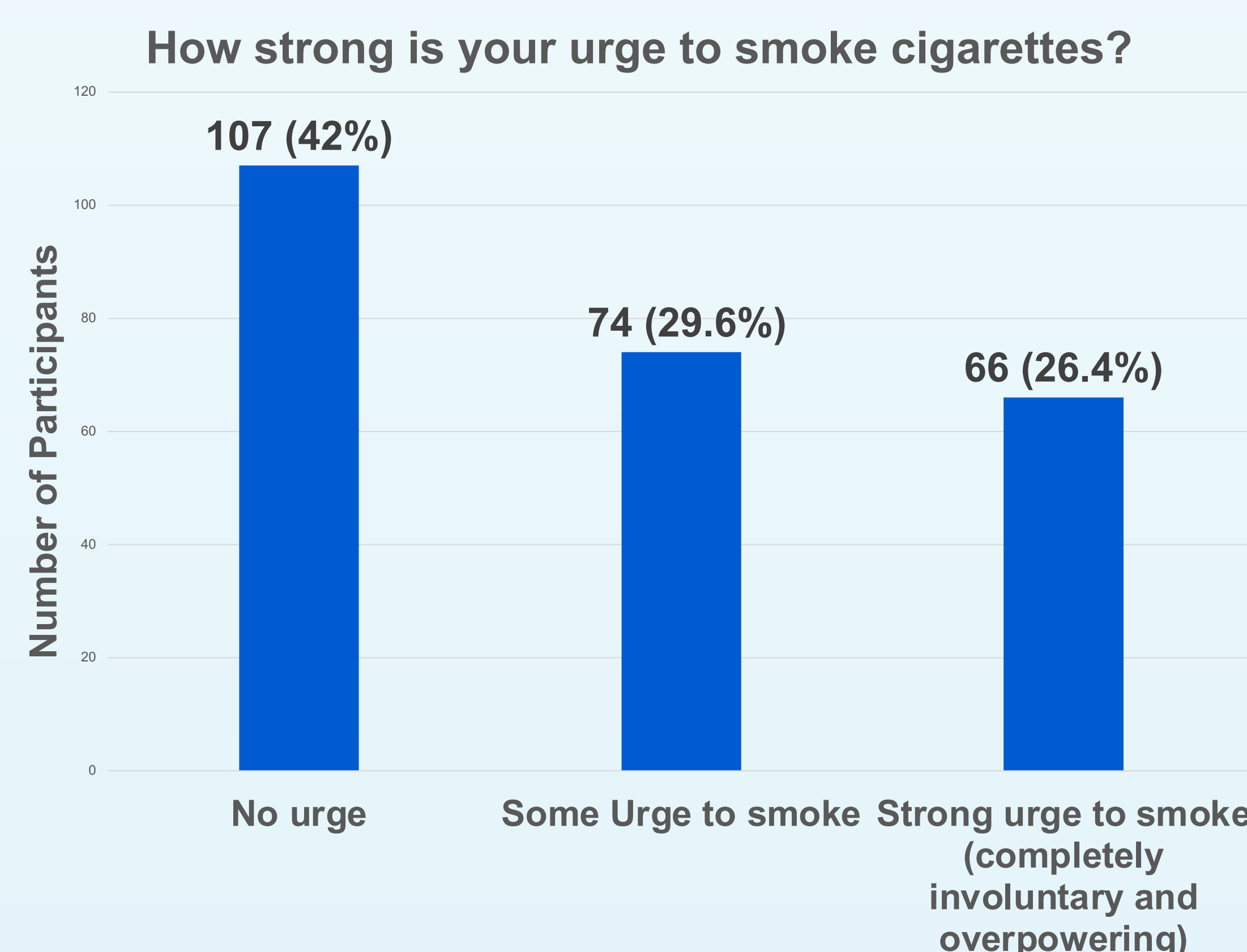
Results:

In our sample, 112 (44.8%) participants were former smokers, 86 (34.4%) were everyday smokers, and 52 (20.8%) were some day smokers.

Sex:	Number of Pts:
Males:	231 (92.4%)
Females:	18 (7.2%)
Other:	1 (4%)

Age:	Number of Pts
18-24 years	36 (14.4%)
25-39 years	82 (32.8%)
40-54 years	64 (25.6%)
55-89 years	68 (27.2%)

Education Level:	Number of Pts:
No school education	44 (17.6%)
Elementary School (5 th grade)	35 (14%)
Middle School (8 th grade)	26 (10.4%)
High School (12 th grade)	88 (35.2%)
Undergraduate School	43 (17.2%)
Graduate School	14 (5.6%)



Discussion:

- The large male demographic in our study supports previous research that males are 3x more likely to smoke than women in Nepal (Khanal, 2021).
- A large majority of participants (92.4%) knew smoking was very harmful for their health, which signifies that knowledge about the dangers of smoking has increased in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- A majority of participants (56%) had cravings/some urge to smoke tobacco products.
- Addiction to smoking was the main barrier preventing individuals from successful smoking cessation.
- 24% of participants listed everyone smoking around them as a barrier to quitting, and 24% of participants also listed they could not stop smoking because so many individuals in their interpersonal circle smoke.
- Overall, while education has grown about the dangers of smoking, people continue to smoke due addiction and the extreme social pressure.

Conclusions:

Based on these results, implementing smoking cessation programs and treatments in Kathmandu that target habits, addiction, and social pressures could potentially lead to sustainable improvements in combatting the smoking epidemic in Nepal.

Acknowledgements

This study was funded by the Denver Rotary Club and the Global Chest Initiative. Thank you to our international collaborators, and interpreters: Puspa Bhatt and Praina Kansakar.