

E-cigarette Use Among Filipino Adults Who Smoke

Background

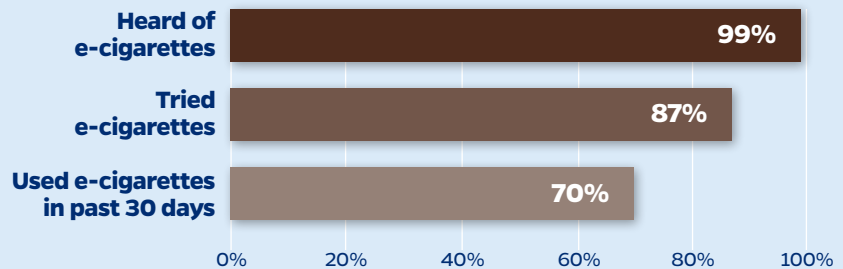
E-cigarette use is prevalent in the Philippines; 14% of youth¹ (1.21 million people) and 2% of adults² (1.63 million) report current use.

Very little is known about patterns of e-cigarette use among adults in the Philippines who smoke.

To examine e-cigarette awareness, use patterns, and reasons for e-cigarette use, we conducted an online survey of 886 Filipino adults who smoke.

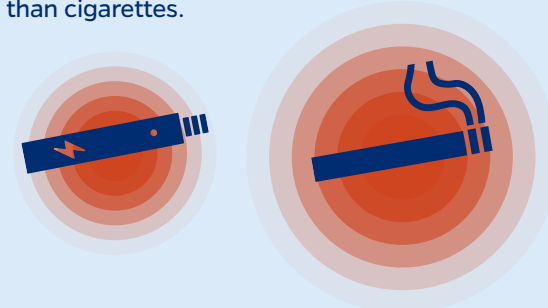
E-cigarette Awareness and Use

Among all participants (n=886), 99% had **heard of or seen** e-cigarettes. Most participants (87%) had **tried** e-cigarettes, and 70% had **used an e-cigarette in the past 30 days**.



E-cigarette Harm Perceptions

Among those who had heard of e-cigarettes (n=877), **most (70%) thought they were less harmful** than cigarettes. Very few (7%) thought they were more harmful than cigarettes.

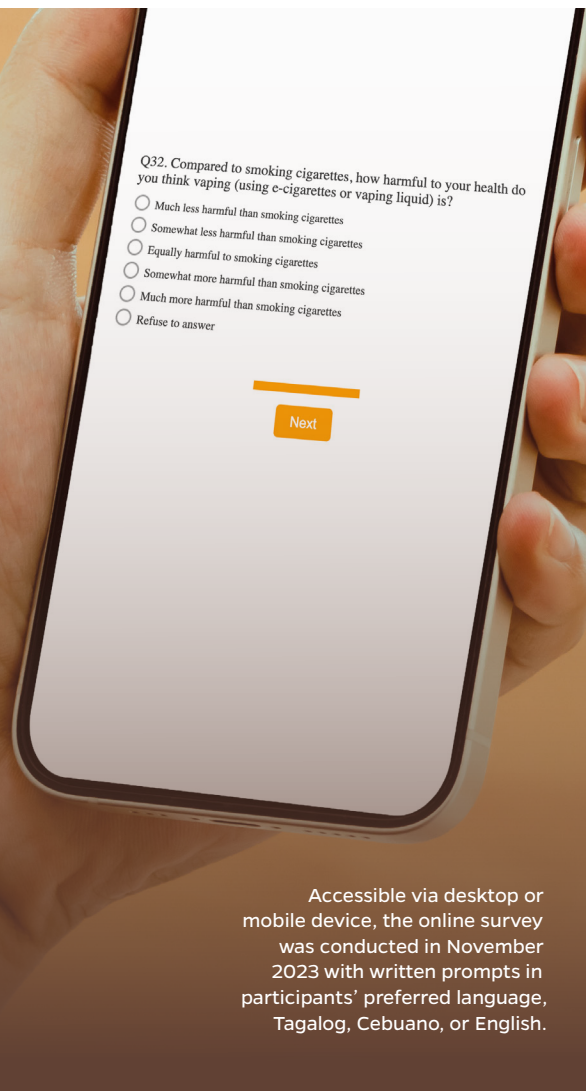
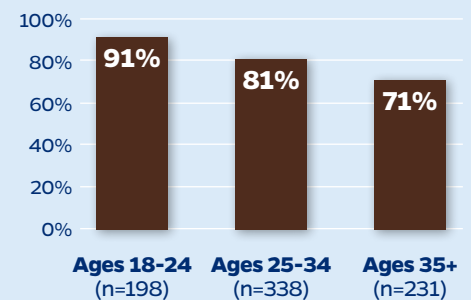


Factors Associated with Past 30-Day Use

Among those who had tried e-cigarettes (n=767), there were no significant differences in past 30-day use based on participants' income, gender, level of cigarette dependence, or past 12-month quit attempts.

A significantly higher proportion of those **aged 18-24** (versus older adults) **used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days** ($p < 0.001$).

E-cigarette use during past 30 days



Accessible via desktop or mobile device, the online survey was conducted in November 2023 with written prompts in participants' preferred language, Tagalog, Cebuano, or English.

E-cigarette Purchase Sources

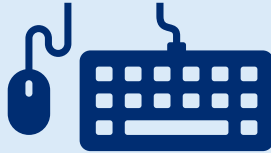
Most participants who had used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days (n=618) **purchased the product in-person** at a retail outlet.

In-person
(70%, n=433)



Vape shops (67%, n=290)
Mall kiosks (17%, n=73)
Sari-sari store (5%, n=22)

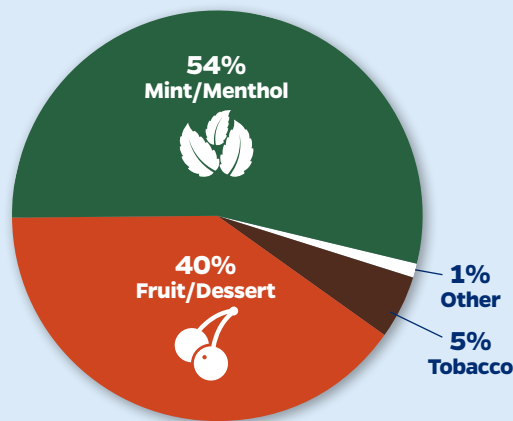
Internet
(27%, n=164)



E-cigarette Device Type & Last Flavor Used

Most participants who had used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days (n=618) reported using **reusable devices with refillable pods/tanks** (51%, n=317), followed by disposable devices (30%, n=184) and reusable devices with disposable pods (18%, n=108).

Over 95% of participants had used a non-tobacco flavored e-cigarette.



Reported Reasons for Using E-cigarettes

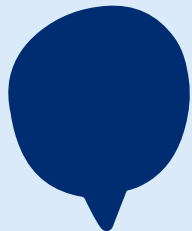
Based on a list of 15 possible answer choices, the **most commonly selected primary reasons for using e-cigarettes** were:



To **cut down smoking**
(26%, n=162)



To help **quit smoking**
(25%, n=155)



To use **when smoking is not allowed**
(12%, n=71)



Less harmful than smoking to those around me
(12%, n=71)

Conclusions

In this survey of Filipino adults who currently smoke, 7 out of 10 participants used e-cigarettes concurrently with cigarettes (known as dual use). There were no differences in past 30-day e-cigarette use by cigarette dependence level or past 12-month quit attempts.

We did observe higher levels of dual use among young adults (18-24). This, coupled with the popularity of flavored e-cigarettes among survey participants and data showing high rates of e-cigarette use among youth¹, indicates an opportunity for policy intervention to reduce e-cigarette appeal—including a ban on non-tobacco flavored e-cigarettes.

Various reasons for using e-cigarettes were selected by survey participants; only half chose “to cut down” or “to help quit smoking” as their answer choice. However, it is important to note that these are stated intentions and not confirmed actions indicating a behavior change.

Data suggest a need for additional research to understand potential behavior change outcomes relative to survey responses, as well as policies to reduce prolonged dual use and better access to approved cessation methods for people who smoke.

EVALUATION & SURVEILLANCE

IGTC examined online marketing tactics used by e-cigarette companies to promote their products in the Philippines.



References:

1. [Global Youth Tobacco Survey, Philippines, 2019](#)
2. [Global Adult Tobacco Survey, Philippines, 2021](#)