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AN INTERSECTIONAL ANALYSIS OF TOBACCO USE IN THE POPULATION ASSESSMENT OF TOBACCO AND HEALTH (PATH) STUDY

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Purpose of the study: Despite decades of progress in tobacco control, a disparate tobacco burden persists among vulnerable populations. The current study used the intersectionality framework to measure disparities in tobacco use prevalence in the United States. **Methods:** We used data from the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH) Study Wave 1 (2013-2014) to identify patterns of tobacco use behavior among adults at the intersection of sociodemographic population groups. Groups were defined as follows: gender; race/ethnicity (non-Hispanic white (NHW), non-Hispanic black (NHB), Hispanic); age (18-24, 25-44, 45-64, 65+); income (0k-15k, 15k-35k, 35k-75k, >75k); education (less than high school (HS), HS and some college, Bachelor's or higher). Tobacco use was identified as current use of any type of tobacco/nicotine product including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, hookah and smokeless/snus. **Results:** Among 32,317 adult respondents, the tobacco use rate was 26.7%. The rates varied widely among different groups. Higher rates of tobacco use were found for individuals who were male (33.8%), younger (38.7%), less wealthy (38.2%), or who had less than a HS education (36.6%). While many studies report that white and black tobacco use is similar, we found that the racial/ethnic group with the highest rate was NHB (30.9%); the NHW rate was 26.4%. Tobacco use was higher at the intersection of vulnerable population groups. The Hispanic adults under 25y used at a rate of 36.5%. Having higher education (Bachelor's degree) or an income over \$87.5K were protective factors, with rates being low in every intersection. The highest rate were at the intersections of less than HS with ages <25y or 25-44y (48.5 and 44.9%); and at the intersections of low income with young age or male gender (44.5% and 46.1%). **Conclusions:** The study highlights the complex role of sociodemographic factors in inequalities of tobacco use across multiple intersections of vulnerability, with large disparities associated with education, income, gender, and age. The high rates of tobacco use in younger adults of both genders and all racial/ethnic groups is concerning, possibly demonstrating a compromising of the successes of decades of tobacco control efforts.

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