

# Perceived Efficacy of Different Types of Smoking Cessation Campaigns Among College Students

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## Introduction

- In the US, young adults ages 18–25 have the highest prevalence of cigarette smoking
  - 31.8% of young adults smoke cigarettes<sup>1</sup>
- Cigarette usage among college students is slowly declining but other forms of nicotine usage like e-cigarettes are increasing rapidly
  - In 2017, 6.1% of college students said they vaped nicotine in the past month and in 2019, that number rose to 22%<sup>2</sup>
- Smoking is known to cause disease and disability that harms nearly every organ in the body<sup>3</sup>

## Objective

- The purpose of this study is to ask Southern California college students what the perceived efficacy is of the different anti-smoking campaigns in order to measure which method is most likely to influence smoking cessation

## Methodology

### Data Collected

- Data collected April–May 2022
- 154 responses collected
- Responses from schools all over the US

### Measures

- Penn State Electronic Cigarette Dependence Index
- Google Form survey distributed online via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Reddit
  - 5-point Likert scale on the Google Form for participants to answer the question, “How effective do you believe this campaign is in encouraging college students to quit smoking tobacco products?” and “Would you consider stopping smoking after viewing this image, whether you use tobacco products or not?”

### Analysis

- Compared the answers from participants by calculating the average rating from 1–5 of how effective each smoking cessation campaign

## Results

- Our study population had 26.0% who reports tobacco product usage (Figure 1)
- Those who smoked, 6.5% had less than 10 cigarettes per day (Figure 2)
- “Tips from Former Smokers” (Figure 3) scored the highest average of 3.89 for effectiveness in encouraging college students to quit smoking tobacco products
- The UK Department of Health campaign (Figure 4) scored the second highest average of 3.51 in effectiveness in encouraging college students to quit smoking tobacco products
- The Marlboro cigarette packaging graphic warning label and the Social Media Campaign were scored equally effective at notable averages of 3.50 for effectiveness and 3.89 for likelihood of smoking cessation (see Graph 1)
- Least effective and least likely to encourage smoking cessation would be Canada’s Social Farting video campaign and the Truth Initiative video campaign (see Graph 1)

Tobacco Product Usage

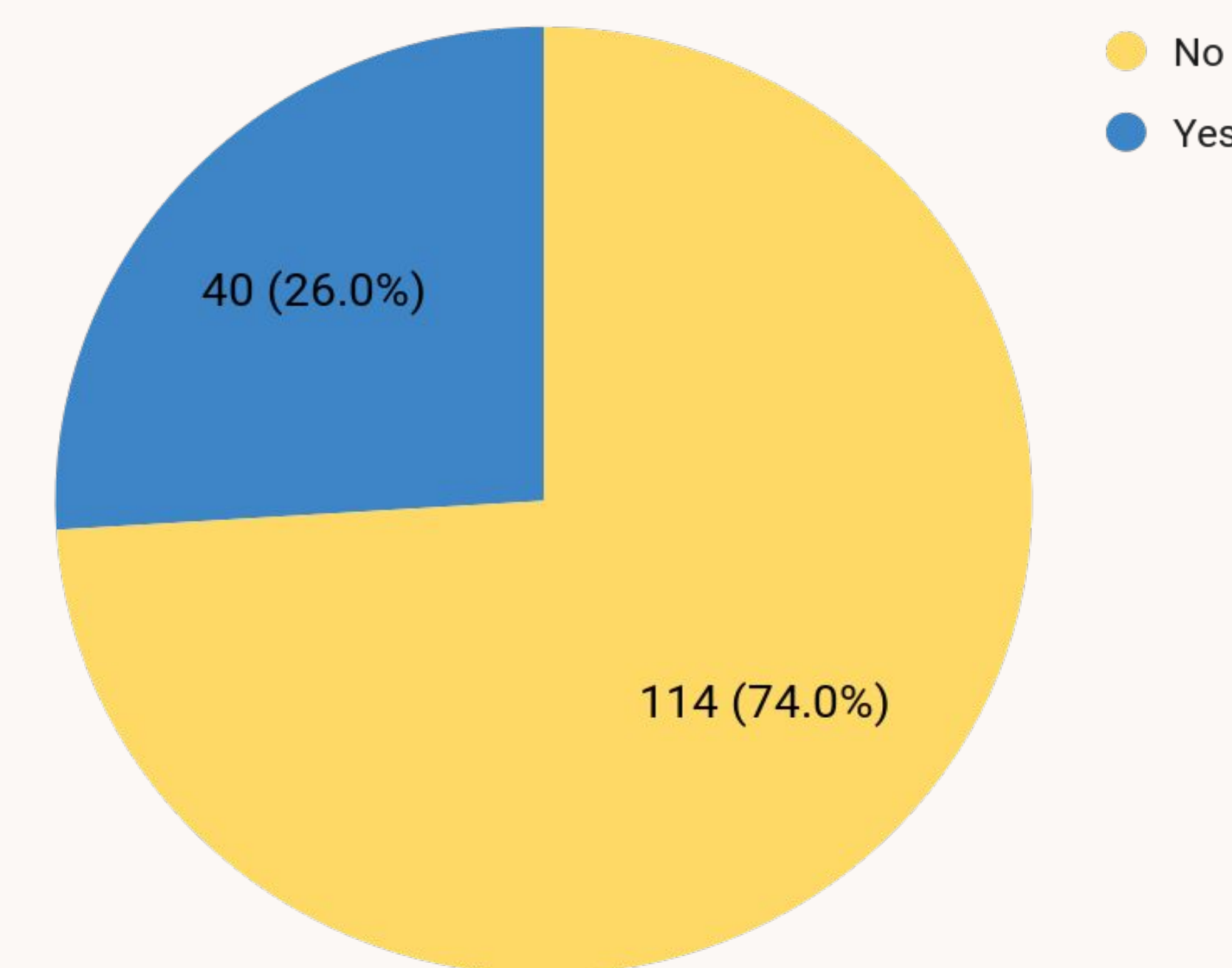


Figure 1. Percent of participants who use tobacco products.

Cigarettes Smoked Per Day

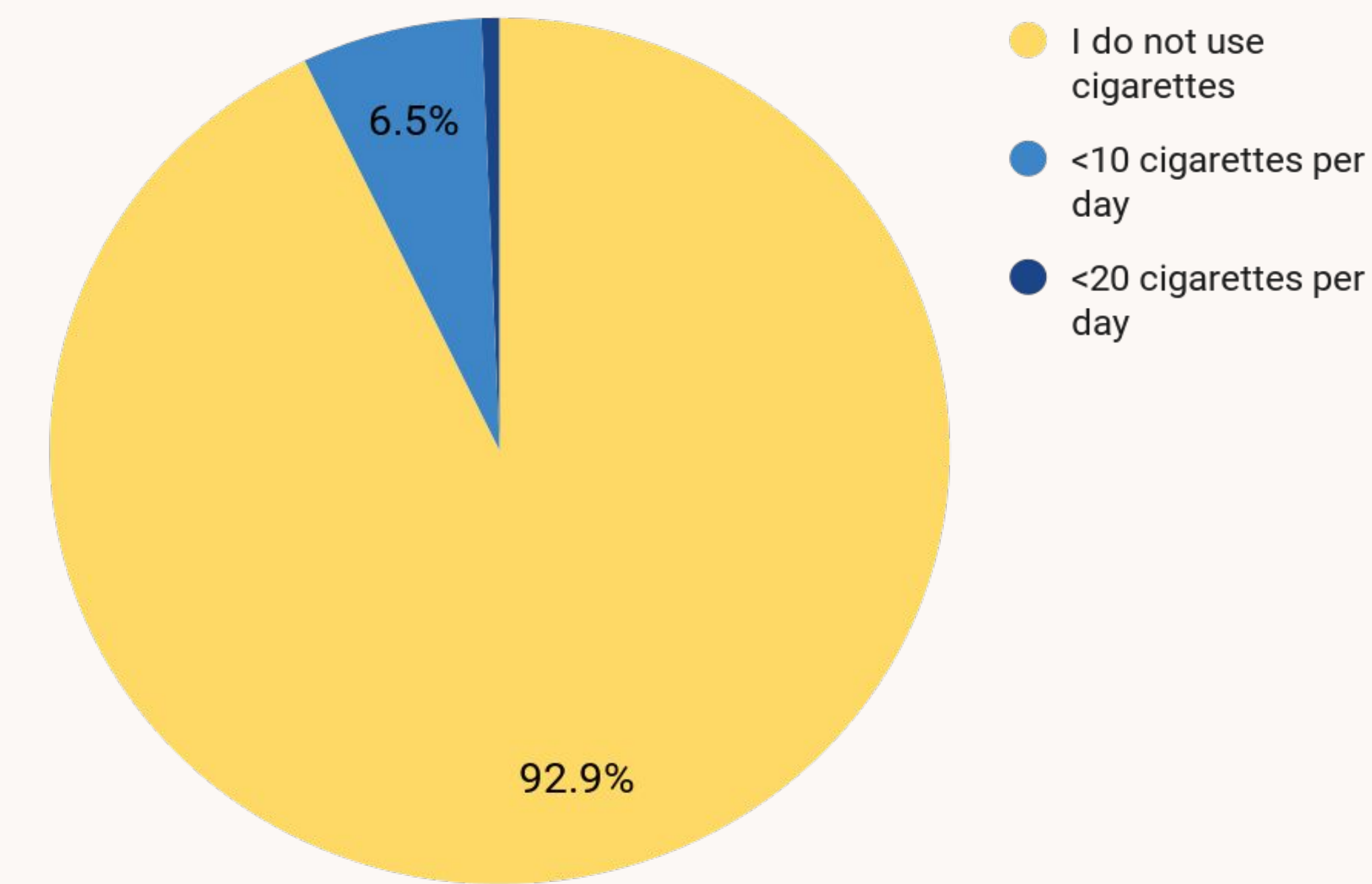
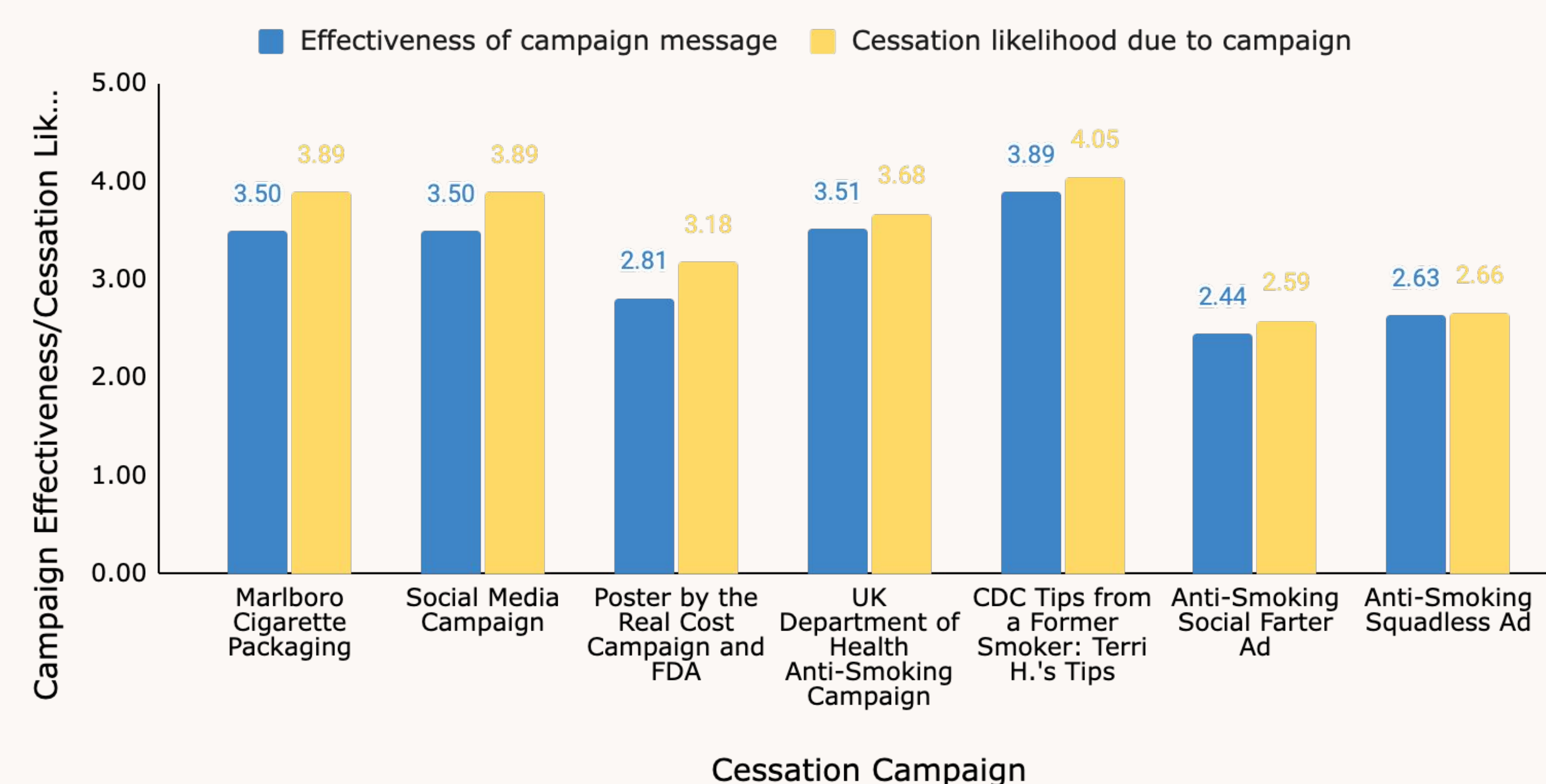


Figure 2. Percent of participants who smoke cigarettes.

Table 1: Demographics Table (N=154)		
		n (%)
Age	Younger than 18	0 (0%)
	18–21	85 (55.2%)
	22–24	47 (30.5%)
	Older than 24	22 (14.3%)
Gender	Female	98 (63.6%)
	Male	52 (33.8%)
	Non-binary	4 (2.6%)
Current Education Level	Freshman	13 (8.4%)
	Sophomore	26 (16.9%)
	Junior	28 (18.2%)
	Senior	67 (43.5%)
	First Year Transfer	8 (5.2%)
	Second Year Transfer	12 (7.8%)

Graph 1: Cessation Campaign Survey Results



## Conclusion

- There is a connotation that graphic images and real stories, such as the ‘CDC Tips from a Former Smoker,’ are an effective campaign in promoting smoking cessation, rather than smoking cessation campaigns trying to be humorous and less serious.
- Because graphic images and real life accounts scored highest for encouragement of smoking cessation and are both seen more by college students, they can be the most effective strategy for communicating with college students.



Figure 3. Screenshot from the “Tips From Former Smokers” video.



Figure 4. Screenshot from the UK Department of Health video campaign



## Policy Implications

- Adding consistent graphic warning labels on tobacco products would be a public health policy that could be considered for reform at a state or federal level.
- FDA should consider issuing a law that *requires* tobacco companies to display graphic warning labels on their products from real-life individuals facing the effects of tobacco, and continue to intervene on producing ads on cessation campaigns.

## Acknowledgements

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### References:

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