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### Overcoming Relapse: Determinants of Smoking Cessation Outcomes

Tobacco smoking remains a leading cause of global morbidity and mortality, and despite available treatments, relapse rates are high. This study investigates the determinants of smoking cessation outcomes and reasons for relapse among patients admitted to a smoking cessation outpatient clinic in Turkey. Using a mixed-methods design, 179 patients were recruited between May 2016 and May 2017. Quantitative data were collected through patient questionnaires and files, while qualitative insights were obtained via five focus group interviews with 28 patients who relapsed after treatment. Results showed a one-year smoking cessation success rate of 26%. Higher numbers of clinic visits, lower nicotine addiction scores, longer treatment duration, and consistent application of behavioral changes were associated with successful cessation. The primary reasons for relapse identified in focus groups were stress, presence of smokers in the environment, and personal health-related stressors. Multivariate analysis confirmed that higher nicotine dependence increased the likelihood of relapse, while repeated clinic engagement and use of varenicline therapy significantly reduced relapse risk. Qualitative findings emphasized the role of emotional triggers, social influences, and lack of relapse prevention education in smoking reuptake. The study concludes that integrating continuous support, enhancing coping skills, combining pharmacotherapy with behavioral strategies, and providing relapse education may improve long-term smoking cessation outcomes. These findings offer practical insights for clinicians and public health practitioners aiming to design more effective cessation programs.

**Keywords:** smoking cessation, relapse, behavioral therapy, nicotine addiction, stress management, self-discipline

#### Biography

Prof. Dr. Tijen Acar is a specialist in Family Medicine with over three decades of clinical, academic, and research experience. Currently a professor at Kafkas University Faculty of Medicine, she has extensively contributed to addiction prevention, tobacco control, and primary care education. She has authored numerous national and international publications, coordinated public health projects, and served in key academic and administrative roles. Prof. Acar is a member of multiple international medical associations and an active speaker at scientific congresses. Her work focuses on holistic care, functional medicine behavioral therapies, and preventive health strategies in both clinical and academic settings.