Reviewer's report


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Reviewer: Danielle Ompad

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Summary: The authors investigate the relationship between tobacco control policies and smoking prevalence in the U.S. using serial cross-sectional data from the Tobacco Use Supplement to the Current Population Study (TUS-CPS). The revised manuscript is significantly improved. In particular, there is considerably more detail in the back ground and methods.

Comments:

Major Compulsory Revisions
none

Minor Essential Revisions
1. In my initial review, I was concerned about residual confounding due to tobacco control policies implemented post-1998/99 that would impact smoking prevalence in 2006/7. The author’s were not clear about my concern, so I will try to explain a bit better. The main outcome of the study is smoking prevalence in 2006/7. The main exposures are the IOI and SOTC indexes in 1998/99. Two important confounders are controlled for: inflation-adjusted cigarette prices and percent of indoor workers with smoke-free. However, I am concerned that there is residual confounding from other tobacco control policies that generally have immediate effects on behavior (e.g., public smoking bans) implemented between 1998/99 and 2006/7 that may explain the lack of association between 1998/99 the IOI and SOTC and 2006/7 smoking prevalence. There should either be additional control variables or this should issue be addressed in the limitations.

2. I do not think restricting the analysis to non-Hispanic whites adds value. Indeed, one could imagine that the findings could be different for other ethnic groups in light of entrenched health and economic disparities.

3. Page 4, 2nd paragraph: Change to Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance
System (BRFSS) surveys.

4. Page 7: Please provide a definition of clean air ordinances and/or examples of policies for the IOI description.

5. Page 7: Please provide definitions and/or examples of resources, capacity and program efforts for the SOTC. For example, are resources human or budgetary? What is meant by capacity, number of individuals that can be served? What are program efforts?

Discretionary Revisions

none

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests