Reviewer's report

Title: How smokers may react to cigarette taxes and price increases in Brazil: data from a national survey

Version: 1 Date: 8 October 2013

Reviewer: Jie-Min Lee

Reviewer's report:

How smokers may react to cigarette taxes and price increases in Brazil: data from a national survey
Version: 1 Date: 7 October 2013
Reviewer: Jie-Min Lee
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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
This study examined the potential impact of new price increases on quitting smoking or reducing the demand for cigarettes instead of the adoption of alternative behaviors such as switching to cheaper brands or buying from the illegal market. This paper could potentially make a good contribution to conclude the relationship between decisions of whether to quit smoking or reducing the demand for cigarettes (simultaneous or sequential). However, there is one serious issue that the authors need to explain adequately at all, the big problem with the paper that needs to be fixed. The analysis data is cross-sectional in 2006. How to examined the potential impact of smokers’ reactions toward cigarette taxes and higher market prices increased.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

There are few places where clarifications or more details are needed (see specific comments below)

1. The introduction should give a more nuanced summary of the cigarette tax effects in Brazil, discussing the variation across time. The authors need to demonstrate a better grasp of literature relating to cigarette tax and of price policy responses in Brazil.
2. On page 3, the introduction part, I would have been interested to see some basic review of the existing evidence, even if it is only a few sentences. In particular, the authors should first refer to existing smoking prevalence, cigarette consumption and an cigarette tax emarked in Brazil.

3. On page 4, line 2 "With the 2011 legislation, the total tax burden on cigarettes went up from 60% to 72%, or 81% of the final retail price." This should be added References.

4. On page 4, study variables section, the analysis included 4 age groups (15-24, 25-44, 45-64 or 65+ years). But in Table 1~ Table 4, the age groups are 14-19, 20-39, 40-59 or 60+ years. The authors need to confirm these setting.

5. On page 4, this study used Brazilian National Alcohol Survey data and carried out in 2006. If there has been a subsequent and updated 2011 or 2012 survey on the smoking behaviors in Brazil - would it have been useful to assess the react of new taxes and prices rises in 2011.

6. On page 5, second para. The smokers make four independent decisions: smoke fewer cigarettes, switch to a cheaper cigarette brand, look for a cheaper source for your current cigarette brand, or try to quit. But in some studies, smokers engage in a sequential decision-making process. At the first stage, smokers decide whether to maintain their current cigarette consumption after the market prices increased. If the decision in the first stage is not to reduce the current level of cigarette consumption, smokers would then decide whether and how to practice brand switching in the second stage. In additional, smoker’s maybe choice from the four possible choices of behavioral. These four possible behaviors are 1) reduce total consumption but not switch brands, 2) reduce total consumption and practice brand switching, 3) do not reduce consumption but switch to different brands, and 4) do not reduce consumption and do not practice brand switching changes. The discussion need to address these limitations of the smokers making independent decisions.

7. On page 8, line 8 to 10, "This finding is consonant with results in a previous study conducted in Brazil and in another 19 countries, when smokers were asked to give their reasons to think about stopping smoking." This should be added References.

8. On Page 8, last two para, “the recent legislation may lead to an increase in smokers demand for treatment.” Please give more details.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests.