Reviewer's report

Title: The importance of the belief that "light" cigarettes are smoother in misperceptions of the harmfulness of "light" cigarettes in the Republic of Korea: a nationally representative cohort study

Version: 3 Date: 9 October 2015

Reviewer: Tina M. Lowrey

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions: None

Minor Essential Revisions: None

Discretionary Revisions:

This is a very clear, clean, descriptive study, with no claim to a theoretical contribution. Minor suggestions for improvement include:

p. 6, were surveys back-translated (from Korean back to English)? This is the standard, but you don't mention it

p. 7, it might help if you convert income figures into U.S. dollars to help readers understand the three income categories?

p. 9, you mention that "out of all of the variables included in the analysis, the only variable that was predictive in both models was the belief that light cigarettes are smoother..." -- isn't that the only variable of interest that you measured? Perhaps I'm misunderstanding, but that suggests that you need to clarify somewhat

pp. 9-10, I find it intriguing that misperceptions were associated with both older age AND with being a little worried about smoking damaging health -- can you dig a little deeper here? For example, were smokers who weren't concerned about the effects of smoking on health less likely to hold such misperceptions? Why might that be? I think this could potentially enhance the contribution of your study

p. 11, lines 234-237, I think this is a bit of an overreach, given your results. Experimentation should be conducted to determine whether plain packaging helps to reduce misperceptions before making this claim

p. 11, I agree that one of your limitations is that, if smokers already have experience with light cigarettes, this could skew your results. In fact, it could be true that light cigarettes are, indeed, smoother on the throat and chest, which makes your results more complicated than presented here

p. 17, I realize that 25% of your sample have misperceptions, but isn't it somewhat encouraging that 75% do NOT have misperceptions?
pp. 17-18, I would like to see more discussion of the differences between the 2 models -- although you present full data, it would help readers if you explain key differences of importance

Finally, I would like you to spend a bit more time/space explaining which design elements you're suggesting should be changed? In fact, experimentation manipulating such elements would be a strong addition to your research

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests