Reviewer's report

Title: Filter presence and tipping paper color influence consumer perceptions of cigarettes

Version: 2 Date: 20 March 2015

Reviewer: Michael J Oldham

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting manuscript that provides unique data drawn from a much larger study that has not yet been published. It is well written and provides a novel contribution to the literature. Some additional information and clarification would improve the manuscript.

Major Comment

1. Page 5, lines 15-16, “The two filtered cigarettes were 85mm (i.e., standard length)...” Figure 1, a photograph of the cigarettes, shows that the filtered cigarette with white tipping paper is longer than the filtered cigarette with cork tipping paper. The authors should correct the apparent conflict or adjust their analysis to account for the difference in length.

2. Page 5, line 1 and line 14, referring to “(Bansal-Travers et al., in preparation)” does not conform to the instructions to author provided by the journal which are “unpublished abstracts, unpublished data and personal communications should not be included in the reference list, but may be included in the text and referred to as "unpublished observations" or "personal communications" giving the names of the involved researchers.”

Minor Comment

1. Page 4, line 1, “banning the use of vents” is not supported by the references cited. Should “vents” be replaced with “filters”?

2. Page 4, lines 3-4, since the descriptor “light” was banned by the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act in 2009 use of present tense in this sentence seems incorrect and it distracts from the main thrust of the paragraph which is tipping paper. Suggest deleting sentence.

3. Page 5, lines 1-12, it would be useful if the authors also provided the number of current, ever and never smokers for each of the three study sites.

4. Page 8, line 18, there appears to be a missing word in phrase “that the risks of some forms of lung has...”

5. Page 13, lines 7-9, Brooks et al., 2005 reference is not numbered. It is not known if this reference was used or if subsequent references are appropriately numbered. The authors should confirm that the correct references are cited.

6. Table 1, although described well in the text, addition of footnotes describing what the Chi-Square analysis is comparing in the table would add clarity.
7. Table 2, the authors should indicate in the table that the bold values indicate statistical significance at a specified p value.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I am employed by a company that owns tobacco companies and own tobacco stocks.