Author's response to reviews

Title: The Effects of a Rise in Cigarette Price on Cigarette Consumption, Tobacco Taxation Revenues, and Incidences of Smoking-Related Deaths in 28 EU Countries-- Applying Threshold Regression Modelling

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The Effects of a Rise in Cigarette Price on Cigarette Consumption, Tobacco Taxation Revenues, and Incidences of Smoking-Related Deaths in 28 EU Countries-- Applying Threshold Regression Modelling

Chun-Yuan Yeh, PhD; Christin Schafferer; Jie-Min Lee; Li-Ming Ho, PhD; Chi-Jung Hsieh

Dear Ms Pafitis,

Thank you for your e-mail dated 19 July 2017. We have studied the reviewer’s comments and revised our paper accordingly. We also attached a point-to-point response letter as required.

Thank you for your interest in our manuscript.

Regards,

Reviewer 1

Abstract, page 2, line 7. Please delete the word incidences.
Our response:

We have deleted the word.

Reviewer 1

Background, page 4, line 20. European Commission published a recent report on smoking in the EU in late May 2017 (Eurobarometer data). I suggest the authors update the data they present.

Our response:

We have updated the prevalence figures.

Reviewer 1

Page 8, line 48-54. The authors do mention that they have MPOWER data from 2008 to 2014, but what did they do for years 2005-2007? Did they use 2008 data? This needs to be clarified.

Our response:

Figures for the years 2007 to 2014 were taken from the 2015 WHO report on global tobacco epidemic. Data for the years 2005, 2006 and 2015 were unavailable and treated as missing data in the analysis.

We have added this information on p. 8.

Reviewer 1

Page 13, lines 20-23. It seems that the sum of squared errors for the double-threshold model (0.355) is NOT lower than that of the single-threshold model (0.311). Is this a numerical error? This requires clarification.

Our response:

The two figures have been mistakenly flipped. In Table 2, the sum of squared errors for the double-threshold model should be at 0.311 and the sum of squared errors for the single-threshold model 0.355.

We have revised relevant parts in the text and Table 2.

Reviewer 1
Results. Some methodological details are unnecessarily repeated in the Results section. For example, page 14, lines 29-34.

Our response:

We have revised p.14, p. 13 and p.10 accordingly.

Reviewer 1

Page 14, lines 38-55. It is not clear to me how these 3 groups of countries were selected and why group averages are presented. Please clarify in the methods or results why and how this was done.

Our response:

We added an explanation in the results section on p. 13: As we used a double threshold model in our analysis, three groups of countries (income regimes) were formed depending on GNI per capita. Results presented on p. 14 (line 38-55) are thus group averages rather than figures of individual countries.

We explained on p. 6 why we applied a threshold regression model rather than adopting a linear model to estimate cigarette demand structure.

Reviewer 1

Page 16, line 8. 0.282 to 0.576 is not "similar" to 0.3-0.4. There is a quite big difference. The direction of the effect is consistent, but not the effect size.

Our response:

We have revised this sentence and point out that despite the differences in size, income elasticity figures suggest that income growth may have promoted cigarette consumption in the observed EU countries.

Reviewer 1

The authors have included number of MPOWER policies implemented at the highest level. I suggest they explicitly mention this throughout the text, rather than just "number of MPOWER policies".

Our response:
We have revised the text accordingly and always referred to “the number of MPOWER measures at the highest level of achievement.”

Reviewer 1

Page 17, line 34. I believe it should be "two" countries, not "three".

Our response:

We have corrected this error.

Reviewer 1

Page 17. One of the limitations of the study is that it has not taken into account roll-your-own (RYO) tobacco consumption. RYO tobacco has become quite popular in the EU and some people may have switched to RYO. This somewhat limits the validity of the analysis, as only manufactured cigarette data has been included in the analysis. This should be at least briefly discussed.

Our response:

We have addressed the limitation in the final paragraph.