

Effects of cigarette packaging and price on hypothetical quit-smoking behavior among Vietnamese adults who smoke

Background

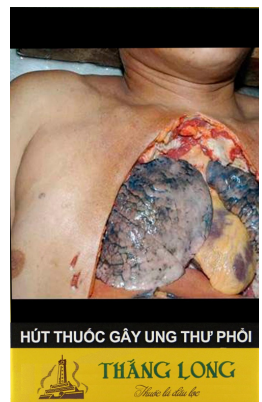
Approximately one in five Vietnamese adults currently smoke. The low average price of cigarette packs in Vietnam (among the world's lowest) is a factor in the nation's high smoking rate. Graphic health warning label (HWL) requirements have also not changed since 2012. Current regulations allow branding on the pack and require a graphic HWL that covers 50% of the area of the front and back of the pack. This study employed a discrete choice experiment (DCE) to estimate the relative impact of price and packaging policy options on hypothetical smoking behavior among Vietnamese adults who smoke.

Methods

From February to May 2022, we conducted a phone survey of 1,494 adults who smoke, equally distributed by nicotine dependence and geographic region. Participants saw 4 images on their phone; each image was viewed separately and varied by packaging design (see designs below) and price. The pack in each image either cost 15000, 20000, 30000, or 40000 Vietnamese đồng (VND). The images and corresponding prices were randomized for each participant.

For each image and price combination, we asked adults who smoke the following question:
“Consider a scenario where you could only purchase the cigarette pack in the image. In the situation presented, would you quit smoking? Or continue to smoke?”

Results on packaging



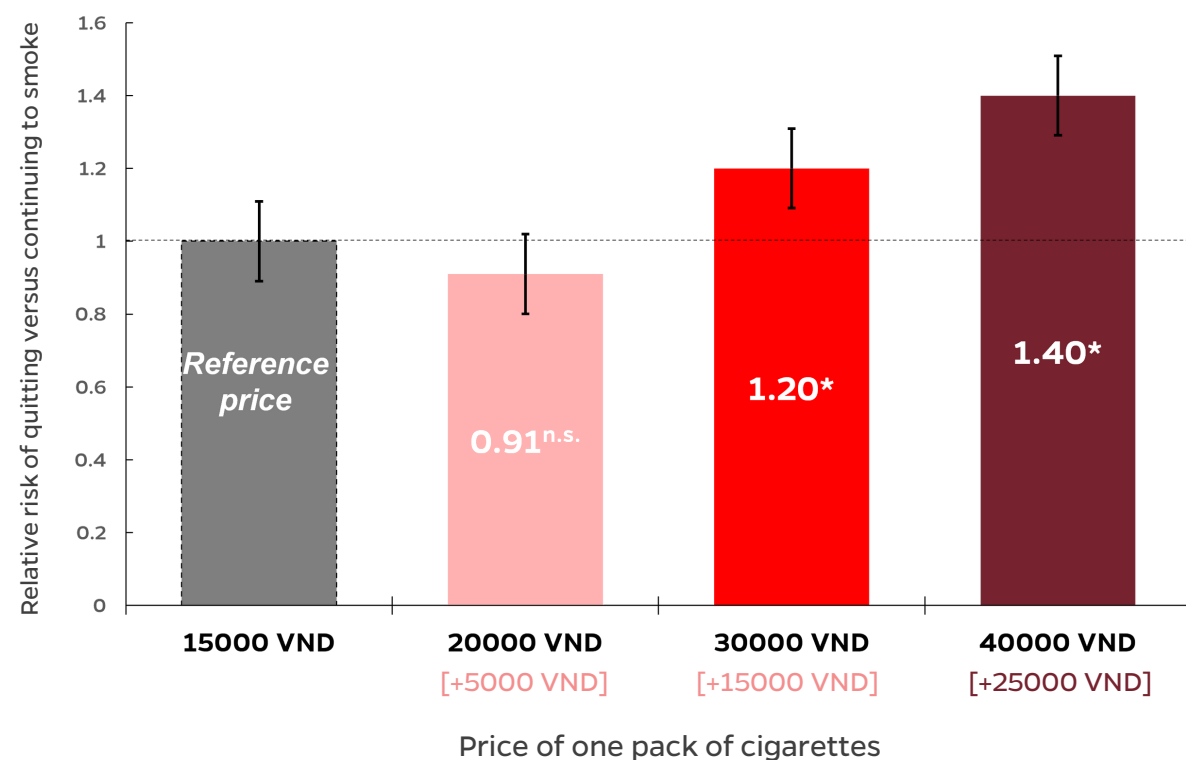
REFERENCE
Packs were compared to this branded pack with 50% HWL coverage

Participants were **29% more likely** to say that they would quit versus continue to smoke when shown the **branded pack with 85% HWL coverage**

Participants were **34% more likely** to say that they would quit versus continue to smoke when shown the **plain pack with 50% HWL coverage**

Participants were **59% less likely** to say that they would quit versus continue to smoke when shown the **branded Jet pack without a HWL**

Results on price



n.s. No statistically significant difference in participants saying they would quit versus continue to smoke when the price of a pack of cigarettes increased 5000 VND.

* Statistically significant difference in one saying they would quit versus continue to smoke when the price of a pack of cigarettes increased by 15000 VND or 25000 VND, respectively.

We calculated how likely it was that a participant said they would quit smoking based on increasing the price of a cigarette pack by 5000 VND, 15000 VND, or 25000 VND. The reference group was 15000 VND, or the average price of a cigarette pack sold in Vietnam.

There was no significant difference in participants saying they would quit smoking versus continue to smoke when the pack price increased by 5000 VND (20000 VND vs. 15000 VND).

As cigarette pack price increased in the discrete choice experiment, the likelihood that a participant indicated they would quit versus continue to smoke increased.

- **Adults who smoke were 20% more likely to say they would quit versus continue to smoke when the pack price increased by 15000 VND (30000 VND vs. 15000 VND).**
- **Adults who smoke were 38% more likely to say they would quit versus continue to smoke when the pack price increased by 25000 VND (40000 VND vs. 15000 VND).**

Key takeaway

Results are based on hypothetical behavior change and should be interpreted with this limitation in mind. Increasing cigarette prices through potential tax increases, increasing the size of HWL coverage, and implementing plain packaging may increase quit behavior in Vietnam.