National Attitudes About FDA’s Potential Regulatory Actions In The Family Smoking Prevention And Tobacco Control Act Of 2009

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Abstract

Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control: The Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control (SCS-TC) is an annual cross-sectional survey designed to operationalize the concept of social climate into a comprehensive set of quantifiable social and environmental indicators across the social institutions that characterize society.

Results: There is a high level of support for regulatory provisions of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act of 2009. The sample was representative of the U.S. population. Questions assessed level of agreement on a four-point scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree) with statements about potential FDA regulatory actions on tobacco.

Discussion

Limitations include response bias related to a cooperation rate of 59%, telephone coverage issues in random digit dial surveys generally, and subgroup comparisons that, while significant, should be confirmed in larger studies.

Detailed Methods

Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control: The Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control (SCS-TC) is an annual cross-sectional survey designed to operationalize the concept of social climate into a comprehensive set of quantifiable social and environmental indicators across the social institutions that characterize society.

Respondents: The 2009 SCS-TC was administered to a representative sample of U.S. adults in September-November 2009. Households were selected using random digit dialing procedures. Once a household was reached, an adult to be interviewed was selected by asking for the person in the household 18 years of age or older who has the next birthday. The sample was weighted by age, race, and gender within each census region, based on current U.S. Census estimates.

Measures: Six items assessed support for potential FDA regulatory actions on tobacco. Two questions from the Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) were used to assess current smoking status. Respondents were asked, “Have you smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your entire life?” and if yes, were then asked, “Do you now smoke cigarettes every day, some days, or not at all?”

Conclusions: There is a high level of support for regulatory provisions of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act of 2009 among smokers and non-smokers. Variability in support by different demographic groups may provide insight into how FDA regulatory actions may be received by different subpopulations. Support from a majority of Americans empowers the FDA to move forward in implementing its mandate to protect the public health of all citizens.

Percentage of the Public Who Agree with the Following Statements

Percentage of Smokers and Non-smokers who Agree with the Following Statements

Supported by grants to the AAP Julius B. Richmond Center of Excellence by the Flight Attendant Medical Research Institute and the American Legacy Foundation

Abstract

Background: The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act of 2009 grants FDA authority to regulate tobacco. However, public support for future regulatory measures is unknown.

Objective: To assess levels of public support for provisions of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act of 2009.

Design/Methods: Data were collected by a national random digit dial telephone survey in November 2009. The sample is weighted by race and gender based upon 2008 U.S. Census estimates to be representative of the U.S. population. Questions assessed level of agreement on a four-point scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree) with statements about potential FDA regulatory actions on tobacco.

Results: Of the 2,560 eligible respondents contacted, 1,514 (59.1%) completed the survey; 85% were non-smokers and 15% were smokers. Support for the following regulatory actions was higher among non-smokers than smokers: government should reduce the amount of nicotine in cigarettes so that kids do not become addicted (77% vs 63%); cigarette advertising increases the chance that a child starts smoking (75% vs 58%); cigarette advertising that increases the chance that children will start smoking should be prohibited (85% vs 74%); cigarettes with added flavorings like cherry, chocolate, lime, and mint should be prohibited (76% vs 60%); government should put larger warning labels covering half of the front of a pack of cigarettes to discourage people from smoking (60% vs 43%); cigarette advertising increases the chance that a child starts smoking (75% vs 58%); cigarette advertising increases the chance that children will start smoking; cigarette advertising increases the chance that a child starts smoking; cigarette advertising increases the chance that children will start smoking should be prohibited; cigarettes with added flavorings like cherry, chocolate, lime, and mint should be prohibited.

Measurements: Six items assessed support for potential FDA regulatory actions on tobacco. Two questions from the Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) were used to assess current smoking status. Respondents were asked, “Have you smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your entire life?” and if yes, were then asked, “Do you now smoke cigarettes every day, some days, or not at all?”

Conclusions: There is a high level of support for the following regulatory actions: government should reduce the amount of nicotine in cigarettes so that kids do not become addicted; cigarette advertising increases the chance that children will start smoking; cigarette advertising should be prohibited; cigarettes with added flavorings like cherry, chocolate, lime, and mint should be prohibited. Support from a majority of Americans empowers the FDA to move forward in implementing its mandate to protect the public health of all citizens.

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