

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

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ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Adolescent girls and young adult women's perceptions of superslims cigarette packaging: a qualitative study
AUTHORS	Ford, Allison; Moodie, Crawford; Purves, Richard; Mackintosh, Anne Marie

VERSION 1 - REVIEW

REVIEWER	Michele Bloch National Cancer Institute U.S.
REVIEW RETURNED	12-Oct-2015

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>Overall: The manuscript is thoughtful, well written, and well organized. The work it describes is quite useful and on target for the question the authors seek to answer. The limitation section appropriately acknowledges that the work should be replicated, expanded to larger populations and perhaps supplemented by experimental studies. A few comments for the authors to consider are provided.</p> <p>Both in the abstract and the body of the text, the new EU health warnings are described as having 3 dimensions (height, width, and depth). This is a new concept for many, and I suggest that it be further explained, since conventional health warnings are typically described in only 2 dimensions. Similarly, for those not familiar with the current or revised Tobacco Products Directive, it may be helpful to provide more information on what is contained in them, so readers have a better sense of the context.</p> <p>The methods section notes two "social grades" ABC1 and C2DE and indicates that these represent "higher income level" and "lower income level". For those outside the EU and not familiar with these terms, it may be useful to say more about what these categories represent in monetary terms, how they are calculated, and whether or not any other factors (e.g., education, employment status, etc.) are included in them.</p> <p>Page 7, line 7. Suggest explain where (what city) participant</p>
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	<p>recruitment occurred. The abstract states that focus groups were conducted in Greater Glasgow Scotland, but that doesn't tell the reader where participants were recruited from. For clarity – suggest add this to methods.</p> <p>Page 10, line 20/21. The term “Barbie fags” is used. I don't think this term is universally understood. Suggest provide an explanation of the term, if authors feel it's important to include.</p> <p>Page 16, line 52. Authors use the term “young females”. This is not an inaccurate term, but it may be helpful to use the terms adolescent girls (especially) and young adult women. This would be to emphasize one of the important strengths of your study – its implications for preventing tobacco initiation among adolescent girls.</p> <p>Page 17, line 8. Suggest tell reader what aspect(s) of “pack shape” may appeal to children.</p> <p>Page 18, line 32. Suggest finish the sentence, “In terms of limitations...are not generalizable TO WHAT/WHOM?”</p> <p>Page 18, lines 41-45. I would add that understanding appeal of packages to even younger children (5-12 year olds) might also yield important insights. Children of this age who live with smokers are exposed to tobacco packages as well, and undoubtedly forming opinions about tobacco use, based in part on package colors, shapes, etc.</p> <p>Page 19, lines 8-11. The author's comment about importance of addressing appeal of superslim packages outside of Europe and North America is a very good one, and deserves further emphasis if space permits.</p>
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REVIEWER	J McCool University of Auckland
REVIEW RETURNED	20-Oct-2015

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>This paper adds to literature on young people's perceptions of cigarette branding, product imagery and styling. I have little concern over the paper presentation, data analysis or interpretation and potential contribution to the literature and the EU Tobacco Products Directive.</p> <p>The findings are consistent with international literature on adolescent and young adult's perceptions of tobacco imagery and products design. Tobacco products are designed to achieve a specific response from a target consumer group - and indeed, the participants in this study have read these products as prescribed. Focus group interviews have been employed here as the sole methods to determine perceptions of the product and confirm whether they are being perceived as intended - and indeed they are. It is important that tobacco control research and policy makers are kept abreast of</p>
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	<p>product developments, especially as non-consumers they are often not well placed to access the product and consumer perspectives.</p> <p>The methods are minimally described, which may be due to the fact that the sample was recruited by a market research company. It was notable that incentives were offered to participants at the outset - do the authors think that this has influenced the sample that was generated or data collected? A clearer description of what role the market research company and the research contributed to the data collection process would be helpful.</p> <p>Page 4, lines 40-42: This statement is not clear. Who else are they appealing to with the fashion statement cigarette? Also, have the authors noted the release of the Dior lipstick called Addict?</p> <p>Was this work guided by any theoretical models or frameworks to guide the development of the research question/s or analysis? To what extent were this age group already aware of tobacco industry behaviour, marketing strategies and persuasive communications?</p>
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer: 1

Overall: The manuscript is thoughtful, well written, and well organized. The work it describes is quite useful and on target for the question the authors seek to answer. The limitation section appropriately acknowledges that the work should be replicated, expanded to larger populations and perhaps supplemented by experimental studies. A few comments for the authors to consider are provided.

Both in the abstract and the body of the text, the new EU health warnings are described as having 3 dimensions (height, width, and depth). This is a new concept for many, and I suggest that it be further explained, since conventional health warnings are typically described in only 2 dimensions. Similarly, for those not familiar with the current or revised Tobacco Products Directive, it may be helpful to provide more information on what is contained in them, so readers have a better sense of the context.

Response: We thank the reviewer for drawing attention to this, as it is unnecessarily confusing. The Tobacco Products Directive (TPD) stipulates that the new health warnings to appear on packs from next year will have to be a minimum height and width. The minimum width (52mm) specified effectively prohibits the type of superslims packs explored in this study. The TPD also requires additional text messages to be displayed on the side of packs, which is what we were referring to when we mentioned ‘depth’. However, as this is not novel (given that side of pack messages are used in many markets) or important (as it is irrelevant with respect to the ban on superslims packs), and has created confusion, then we have removed mention of ‘depth’ from the Abstract and Introduction and refer only to height and width, e.g. “Unlike in Australia, the TPD sets minimum warning (rather than pack) dimensions; warnings must be a minimum height (44mm) and width (52mm).”

We have chosen not to include additional information about the scope of the current and

revised directives, both of which are wide-reaching, as we think that it is better to focus only on legislation relevant to superslims, and not cause further confusion. Incidentally, there is nothing in the previous directive that is relevant to superslims packaging or would help with context.

The methods section notes two “social grades” ABC1 and C2DE and indicates that these represent “higher income level” and “lower income level”. For those outside the EU and not familiar with these terms, it may be useful to say more about what these categories represent in monetary terms, how they are calculated, and whether or not any other factors (e.g., education, employment status, etc.) are included in them.

Response: We have now included additional detail on the demographic classification system used. The additional text states: “ABC1 and C2DE groupings are based on the widely used UK demographic classifications system derived from the National Readership Survey. Social grade was determined by the chief income earner in the household. ABC1 social grade reflects managerial, administrative and professional occupations. C2DE reflects skilled and unskilled manual workers, and casual or lowest grade workers.”

Page 7, line 7. Suggest explain where (what city) participant recruitment occurred. The abstract states that focus groups were conducted in Greater Glasgow Scotland, but that doesn’t tell the reader where participants were recruited from. For clarity – suggest add this to methods.

Response: We have now included that participants were also recruited from Greater Glasgow in Scotland. The sentence on page 7 now states “Participants were recruited from Greater Glasgow in Scotland by independent professional market research recruiters.”

Page 10, line 20/21. The term “Barbie fags” is used. I don’t think this term is universally understood. Suggest provide an explanation of the term, if authors feel it’s important to include.

Response: We have included a further explanation of this term, which was used by participants to associate the compact cigarette packs with toys intended for young girls. The sentence on page 10 has been extended to read: “Unlike king-size and more standard shaped superslims packs they were described as “cute” and referred to as “Barbie fags” due to their small pack size and the perception of a toy-like appearance.”

Page 16, line 52. Authors use the term “young females”. This is not an inaccurate term, but it may be helpful to use the terms adolescent girls (especially) and young adult women. This would be to emphasize one of the important strengths of your study – its implications for preventing tobacco initiation among adolescent girls.

Response: Thank you for this useful suggestion. Where appropriate throughout the paper we have amended the term “young females” to better reflect the sample. We now refer to “adolescent girls and young adult women” in the title, the final paragraph of the introduction and the discussion.

Page 17, line 8. Suggest tell reader what aspect(s) of “pack shape” may appeal to children.

Response: As suggested, we have now included more information on which pack shapes may appeal to children according to the marketing literature. The sentence on page 17 now reads: "It is also consistent with the marketing literature, which suggests that pack shapes which are fun, convenient or easier to handle may appeal to children."

Page 18, line 32. Suggest finish the sentence, "In terms of limitations...are not generalizable TO WHAT/WHOM?"

Response: The sentence has now been expanded to say "the findings are not generalisable to wider young female populations."

Page 18, lines 41-45. I would add that understanding appeal of packages to even younger children (5-12 year olds) might also yield important insights. Children of this age who live with smokers are exposed to tobacco packages as well, and undoubtedly forming opinions about tobacco use, based in part on package colors, shapes, etc.

Response: We have now included this suggestion as a further area for investigation. The paragraph on page 18 now also states "Understanding the appeal of packaging to even younger children, for example, five to eleven year olds, may also yield important insights. Children of this age residing with smokers are likely exposed to tobacco packaging. Exploring their perceptions of pack branding, colours and shapes may provide new understanding of how these things relate to children's perceptions of tobacco use."

Page 19, lines 8-11. The author's comment about importance of addressing appeal of superslim packages outside of Europe and North America is a very good one, and deserves further emphasis if space permits.

Response: We have now included an additional sentence at the end of this final paragraph. "Cigarette packaging is considered to have universal appeal³² and further studies would highlight the public health ramifications of tobacco packaging in other countries."

Reviewer: 2

This paper adds to literature on young people's perceptions of cigarette branding, product imagery and styling. I have little concern over the paper presentation, data analysis or interpretation and potential contribution to the literature and the EU Tobacco Products Directive. The findings are consistent with international literature on adolescent and young adult's perceptions of tobacco imagery and products design. Tobacco products are designed to achieve a specific response from a target consumer group - and indeed, the participants in this study have read these products as prescribed. Focus group interviews have been employed here as the sole methods to determine perceptions of the product and confirm whether they are being perceived as intended - and indeed they are. It is important that tobacco control research and policy makers are kept abreast of product developments, especially as non-consumers they are often not well placed to access the product and consumer perspectives.

The methods are minimally described, which may be due to the fact that the sample was

recruited by a market research company. It was notable that incentives were offered to participants at the outset - do the authors think that this has influenced the sample that was generated or data collected? A clearer description of what role the market research company and the research contributed to the data collection process would be helpful.

Response: It is usual practice in this type of research to offer incentives as a thank you for taking part. As the sample was designed to capture both ABC1 (more affluent) and C2DE (less affluent) economic groupings it is unlikely in this instance to have influenced the sample. The market research company were not involved in the data collection process. Their involvement was only for participant recruitment. This included all the stages outlined in the paragraph on page 7. We have now made it clearer on pages 8 and 9 that the recruiters performed these tasks and that they were only involved in the recruitment stage, while the research team conducted the groups and were responsible for all the data collected.

Page 4, lines 40-42: This statement is not clear. Who else are they appealing to with the fashion statement cigarette?

Response: We have now clarified this statement so it is clear that it is not only existing female smokers that these cigarettes may appeal to, but female non-smokers as well. The sentence now concludes by stating: "... suggests that it may not only be existing female smokers that these products appeal to, but also non-smokers."

Also, have the authors noted the release of the Dior lipstick called Addict?

Response: Thank you and yes, we are aware of this Dior lipstick. This brand raises important questions about the imagery surrounding cosmetics and the association with addiction. This would be an interesting area of study, however we feel it is beyond the scope of this paper to refer to it in the text.

Was this work guided by any theoretical models or frameworks to guide the development of the research question/s or analysis? To what extent were this age group already aware of tobacco industry behaviour, marketing strategies and persuasive communications?

Response: As outlined in the methodology section, thematic analysis underpinned the study. No other theoretical models or frameworks were used. This particular set of focus groups did not explore how aware participants already were of tobacco industry behaviour and its marketing and communication strategies, so we are unable to comment on this in this instance. However, the research team do collect data on this as part of a different study.

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Michele Bloch U.S. National Cancer Institute
REVIEW RETURNED	06-Nov-2015

GENERAL COMMENTS	The authors have done a very nice job of addressing the points raised by both reviewers. The paper is very well written, very informative, and will make a positive contribution to the literature. Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript.
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