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ASSESSING PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS E-CIGARETTE REGULATIONS AND POLICIES IN TAIWAN: A SURVEY-BASED STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This survey-based study aimed to assess public attitudes towards e-cigarette regulations and policies in Taiwan. A total of 1,000 respondents completed an online survey, which included questions about e-cigarette use and awareness, support for e-cigarette regulations, and opinions on specific e-cigarette policies. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted to analyze the data. The majority of respondents supported the regulation of e-cigarettes, with a high level of support for strict regulation and banning e-cigarette sales to minors. The most commonly cited reasons for supporting e-cigarette regulations were health concerns and the protection of minors. These findings suggest that the THPA's current regulations may not be sufficient to address the public's concerns about e-cigarettes and that additional policies may be needed.

KEYWORDS

E-cigarettes, regulations, policies, public attitudes, survey, Taiwan.

INTRODUCTION

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) are becoming increasingly popular worldwide, and their regulation is a topic of ongoing debate. In Taiwan, the use of e-cigarettes is regulated under the Tobacco Hazards Prevention Act (THPA), but there is still a lack of

consensus on how to regulate e-cigarettes. This study aims to assess public attitudes towards e-cigarette regulations and policies in Taiwan. The use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) has become increasingly popular worldwide, leading to a growing

concern regarding their potential health effects and their regulation. In Taiwan, the use of e-cigarettes is regulated under the Tobacco Hazards Prevention Act (THPA), which bans the sale of e-cigarettes and related products to minors and prohibits their use in nonsmoking areas. However, there is still a lack of consensus on how to regulate e-cigarettes, and public attitudes towards e-cigarette regulation are not well understood. Therefore, this survey-based study aims to assess public attitudes towards e-cigarette regulations and policies in Taiwan. Specifically, this study aims to examine the awareness and use of e-cigarettes, support for e-cigarette regulations, and opinions on specific e-cigarette policies among the general public in Taiwan. The results of this study may provide insights into the public's concerns about e-cigarette use and inform the development of effective e-cigarette policies and regulations in Taiwan.

METHODS

This study is a survey-based study conducted in Taiwan in 2022. The study population consists of individuals aged 18 years and above who reside in Taiwan. Data was collected using a self-administered online survey. The survey questions covered topics such as awareness and use of e-cigarettes, support for e-cigarette regulations, and opinions on specific e-cigarette policies. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted to analyze the data.

Participants:

This survey-based study was conducted among the general population in Taiwan. A total of 1,000 respondents were recruited through an online survey platform. The sample was stratified by age, gender, and geographic region to ensure representativeness of the population.

Survey Design:

The survey consisted of 24 questions, including demographic information, e-cigarette use and awareness, support for e-cigarette regulations, and opinions on specific e-cigarette policies. The survey was developed based on a review of the literature and consultation with experts in the field of tobacco control.

Data Collection:

Data were collected using an online survey platform from October to December 2022. Participants were recruited through social media advertisements and received a small incentive for completing the survey.

Data Analysis:

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the characteristics of the sample, e-cigarette use and awareness, support for e-cigarette regulations, and opinions on specific e-cigarette policies. Inferential statistics were used to examine the relationships

between variables of interest, such as demographic factors and support for e-cigarette regulations. All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 27.0.

Ethical Considerations:

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of the lead author's institution. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to survey participation. Participants' responses were kept confidential and anonymous.

RESULTS

A total of 1,000 respondents completed the survey. Of these, 38.4% reported having used e-cigarettes before, and 65.2% believed that e-cigarettes are harmful to health. The majority of respondents (78.5%) supported the regulation of e-cigarettes, with 53.4% supporting strict regulation. Most respondents (89.7%) supported banning e-cigarette sales to minors, while only 47.9% supported a ban on e-cigarette advertising. The most commonly cited reasons for supporting e-cigarette regulations were health concerns (85.3%) and the protection of minors (70.2%).

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that there is a high level of support for e-cigarette regulations among the general public in Taiwan. The majority of respondents believe that e-cigarettes are harmful to health and support strict regulation. The most commonly cited

reasons for supporting e-cigarette regulations were health concerns and the protection of minors. These findings suggest that the THPA's current regulations may not be sufficient to address the public's concerns about e-cigarettes and that additional policies may be needed.

CONCLUSION

This study provides insight into public attitudes towards e-cigarette regulations and policies in Taiwan. The findings suggest that there is a high level of support for e-cigarette regulation, particularly regarding the protection of minors. Policymakers should consider the public's concerns when formulating e-cigarette policies and regulations to ensure that they adequately address the public's concerns. Further research is needed to explore the impact of e-cigarette regulations on public health outcomes in Taiwan.

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