Analysis of ‘Willingness-to-Quit’ Cigarette Price among Korean Male Adults

The purpose of this study was to estimate the willingness to quit cigarette price among Korean male adults, using contingent valuation method (willingness to pay), and to examine the factors affecting the willingness to quit cigarette price.

The data were collected by a random digit dial telephone survey. Among 3,000 men, 1,219 were smokers and samples had been excluded answering willingness to quit price less than actual price they paid. Finally, 702 samples were analyzed using t-test, ANOVA and OLS (Ordinary Least Squares) procedures. The questionnaire of this study contained items on socioeconomic status, smoking-related and health-related characteristics. To estimate willingness to quit cigarette price, smokers were asked dichotomous question with open-ended follow-up and the starting point of price was randomized by one of 5 bid prices elicited from pilot study.

The mean of willingness to quit cigarette price was 4,287 Won per package, higher about 2,000 Won than the mean of actual price they paid, 2,283 Won per package. About 41% of respondents were willing to quit smoking if the price of cigarette would be increased by 3,000 Won, and about 73% by 4,000 Won. However, if price would be increased by 20,000 Won, all respondents were willing to quit smoking. The factors associated with willingness to quit cigarette price were the place of residence, the amount of smoking and the degree of exposure to smoking through mass media. Smokers who live in small towns answered higher willingness to quit price than in Seoul and the price was also increased as the amount of smoking and the degree of exposure to smoking through mass media increased.

The results showed that to lead people quitting smoking, increasing cigarette price would be obviously effective and higher price affect more. Futhermore, to enlarge the effect of increasing of cigarette price, providing more cessation programs to small towns, reducing the amount of smoking and decreasing or prohibiting advertisements of cigarette and smoking of actors in the mass media will be efficient. Also, this was the first attempt to measure willingness to quit cigarette price by willingness to pay method, which can be applied for further study.