ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to study the designs and trends of health warning messages on tobacco packaging. The research's population includes 5 tobacco control experts and 333 tobacco warning labels. The research's tools consist of the in-depth interview questionaire and the database analysis on the designs of tobacco warning labels, using Matrix Analysis for the descriptive data analysis and SPSS statistical evaluation, such as frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean values and standard deviation.

The in-depth interview results show that the designs of health warning on tobacco packaging have to abide by Article 11 "Packaging and Labelling of Tobacco Products" of The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). The purpose of these warning messages is to keep the consumers away from smoking, thus, tobacco packaging is designed to create fears by using gruesome pictures of the effects of smoking. Since smokers are mostly poor-educated, the designs need to be easy to understand, so that existing smokers quit smoking and the number of new smokers decreases. The trends of health warning messages on tobacco packaging are simple font for the tobacco brand on a plain packet, with no trademark, to accentuate the warning picture. In order to create a strong emotional impact on tobacco consumers, the pictorial warning should be various, more fearful, such as a picture of a real person suffering from a disease caused by smoking. Tobacco packaging production, in the meantime, should be closely monitored to ensure that different pictorial warnings are equally used and printed on the package, and there are specific designs for different types of tobacco since they target different types of consumers.

The database from the Matrix Analysis found that the Region of the Americas, as classified by WHO, has the highest number of tobacco packaging with warning label, while the Region of Africa has the least. The size of the warning label is 46-50 percent of the entire space on the front of the package, and 31-35 percent on the back. Most labels include information on toxins and carcinogen using sans serifs fonts. Most of the fonts are bold, use two colors or more, but mainly white and red letters on black background. The warning message is mostly in English. The warning picture is mainly consisted of photographs of smoking-induced diseases, such as oral and respiratory cancers, accompanied by a warning message.