Hidden Power of Remorse

Smoking Machine Presentation questionnaire results, January 6, 2021

# Summary

On January 6, 2021, a presentation was given by Don Rechtman to a group of junior and senior high school students at an international high school in Shenzhen, China. At the beginning and end of the presentation, the same series of questions were presented to the students regarding attitudes toward smoking. As the questions and presentation were informal, the resulting suggestion that students were more concerned about the health effects of smoking cannot be considered to be conclusive.

Minimum number of students responding to the pre-presentation questionnaire:

41

Minimum number of students responding to the post-presentation questionnaire:

30

# Pre-presentation questionnaire

1. Should smokers be fined for smoking around children?

Yes No

38.6% 61.4%

1. Should smokers be fined for smoking in public?

Yes No

53.7% 46.3%

1. Should taxes on cigarettes be increased??

Yes No

42.6% 57.4%

Percent

I currently smoke cigarettes: 24.0%

I will not try smoking: 63.0%

I plan to try smoking: 8.7%

I want to quit smoking: 4.3%

# Post-presentation questionnaire

1. Should smokers be fined for smoking around children?

N/A (votes lost during counting!)

1. Should smokers be fined for smoking in public?

Yes No Change on Yes

96.7% 3.3% +43%

1. Should taxes on cigarettes be increased??

Yes No Change on Yes

68.8% 31.2% +26.2%

Percent Change

I currently smoke cigarettes: 3.7% -20.3%[[1]](#footnote-1)

I will not try smoking: 77.8% +14.8%

I plan to try smoking: 3.7% -4.0%

I want to quit smoking: 14.8% +10.5%

# The Statistics

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Before** |  |  | **TOTALS** | **% yes** | **% no** |  |  | **After** |  |  | **TOTALS** | **% yes** | **% no** |
|  | yes | no |  |  |  |  |  |  | yes | no |  |  |  |
| taxes | 20 | 27 | 47 | 42.6 | 57.4 |  |  | taxes | 22 | 10 | 32 | 68.75 | 31.25 |
| children | 17 | 27 | 44 | 38.6 | 61.4 |  |  | children | N/A | N/A |  |  |  |
| fined | 22 | 19 | 41 | 53.7 | 46.3 |  |  | fined | 29 | 1 | 30 | 96.7 | 3.3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| smoke | 11 |  | 41\* | 26.8 |  |  |  | smoke | 1 |  | 30\* | 3.3 |  |
| not try | 29 |  |  | 70.7 |  |  |  | not try | 21 |  |  | 70.0 |  |
| try | 4 |  |  | 9.8 |  |  |  | try | 1 |  |  | 3.3 |  |
| quit | 2 |  |  | 4.9 |  |  |  | quit | 4 |  |  | 13.3 |  |

\*Percentages based upon total number of students answering the “fined for smoking in public” question.

# Discussion:

Admittedly an informal, rushed, and poorly controlled assessment, the results are still dramatic enough to suggest that the attendees were impacted by the presentation and are less inclined to try or continue smoking. An additional complicating factor was that participation by attendees was not mandatory, and the beginning and ending population samples changed, and may have introduced a prejudicial change, especially in the number of smokers among the attendees.

# Conclusion:

Although the results suggest a correlation between the presentation and increased concerns of students regarding smoking, confirmation will require more controlled studies. Perhaps some students may wish to prepare a more controlled assessment in the future.

Don Rechtman,

January 17, 2021

Full disclosure: The author has no vested interest in any businesses or industries related to smoking or the sale or marketing of tobacco products.

1. (some may have left class; some may have decided that they are going to quit and will not admit to be smokers?) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)