

Quitting activity and tobacco brand switching: Findings from the ITC 4-Country Survey

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE: Among Australian smokers, to examine associations between cigarette brand switching, quitting activity and possible causal directions by lagging the relationships in different directions.

METHODS: Current smokers from nine waves (2002 to early 2012) of the ITC-4 Country Survey Australian dataset were surveyed. Measures were brand switching, both brand family and product type (roll-your-own versus factory-made cigarettes) reported in adjacent waves, interest in quitting, recent quit attempts, and one month sustained abstinence.

RESULTS: Switching at one interval was unrelated to concurrent quit interest. Quit interest predicted switching at the following interval, but the effect disappeared once subsequent quit attempts were controlled for. Recent quit attempts more strongly predicted switching at concurrent (OR 1.34, 95%CI=1.18-1.52, $p<0.001$) and subsequent intervals (OR 1.31, 95%CI=1.12-1.53, $p=0.001$) than switching predicted quit attempts, with greater asymmetry when both types of switching were combined. One month sustained abstinence and switching were unrelated in the same interval; however, after controlling for concurrent switching and excluding type switchers, sustained abstinence predicted lower chance of switching at the following interval (OR=0.66, 95%CI=0.47-0.93, $p=0.016$).

CONCLUSIONS: The asymmetry suggests brand switching does not affect subsequent quitting.

IMPLICATIONS: Brand switching does not appear to interfere with quitting.

Recommended Citation

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