

# Review of: "Does Tobacco Make Consumers Happy? Evidence From Cameroon"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The study provides useful insights into the relationship between tobacco consumption and happiness, using survey data from Cameroon. I have a few notes to improve the paper.

1. The authors should kindly review the manuscript for language clarity. For instance, some unclear phrases that could use restructuring include:
  1. "to the **preeminent** of our awareness... (consider: **to the best of** our awareness/knowledge)
  2. "Being married and divorced **with respect to** single individuals tend to show high levels of happiness" (do you mean '**compared to**' single individuals?)
  3. "...for 2SLS, those who **consume only**, those who consume every day and those who consume intensively feel happy". It is unclear what "consume only" means here.
  4. "The findings reveal that individuals with the university level of education are less happy compared to their counterparts with **no level of education** for OLS results" (you probably mean those with **no education**, which is their level of education in your variable.
2. You refer to **gender** when you may actually mean **sex**. Gender is a social construct, while sex is the biological variable used in your study.
3. Depending on the journal policy, I would bring the descriptive statistics table from the supplementary material into the main text, as it provides useful insight into the characteristics of the studied population.
4. Kindly provide a reference(s) for this factual statement: "we also include dummy variables to capture alcohol consumption, **which is complementary to tobacco and tends to make consumers happy for a short period of time**".
5. The caption of table 1 should reflect what characteristic/quantity is being compared between groups. Consider changing it to: "Comparison of mean **happiness** across the sample" or something similar. Generally, your table captions should independently provide complete information about what is presented in the table, without requiring the reader to consult the body of the paper.
6. In Table 2, it is not obvious what the reference levels for some categorical variables are, e.g. **marital status**, **educational attainment**, **religion** and **wealth**. Consider stating the reference categories for all your variables in the footnotes of your table, in order to provide context to your audience and aid their understanding of the regression results.

7. Given the **cross-sectional** nature of your survey data, some of your “causal” inferences are rather bold. You would do well to consider this limitation in your discussion and conclusions, as your estimates may actually reflect reverse-causation (especially for your OLS analysis).
8. For instance, you say: “Employment **makes** people happy for the OLS result...”. But what if in fact, happiness makes people more likely to take up paid employment? You also say “Having at least a child **reduces** the happiness level of individuals”. But what if being happy makes a person more willing to have children? Given the limitations of cross-sectional data, It will be more prudent to talk about correlation (and not causation) in the context of OLS results. In terms of the IV analysis for the main exposure, I think the use of 2-stage LS may permit causal inferencing in certain conditions.

Again, these are quibbles about presentation and language. I think your methodology is sound, and the study should be published after these issues are addressed.

Thanks for your great work!

Stephen.