

<Review>

Health science for smoking problems — Scientific approach for health policy —

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INTRODUCTION

"Smoking" has become one of the most important subjects for health policy in both national and international levels.

In Japan, the governmental initiatives were not so active at the initial stage, for socially acceptable consensus had not been adequately established for making policies against smoking. In modern society, it is preferable to consider the perception and behaviors of general public, and activities of non-governmental organizations prior to the policy making at the central level.

To deal with smoking problem, scientific

approach through the studies on public health, biology, sociological behavior science etc. is necessary. Because there are profound and complicated socio-cultural reasons behind the smoking habit. Therefore comprehensive and interactive factors including various kinds of people's views and opinion, sense of value deeply rooted in the daily lives have to be studied before making a policy.

As the approaching methods of policy science, the three pairs of following six basic factors (norm, human, contingency, organization, comparison, and efficiency studies) are going to be explained in this essay (Fig. 1).

I. Norm study and human study

In the category of norm study and human study, moral and legal aspects, behavior pattern, human psychology and etc. should be studied, based on the following questions; 1) "What do you think about the moral responsibility of smokers on health in view of socio-biological principles of human being?" 2) "What are the differences between individual and social roles in the antismoking activities?"

I-1 Norm study

The various kinds of conflicts between smokers and non-smokers derive from the different sense of value of the individual which affects on the life style and habit of each person.

Historically speaking, there were two typical views on smoking in Edo era: One of them was a praise by calling tobacco grass 'Life-Prolongation Grass' (ENMEI-SOU), 'Resistance Spirit Grass' (HANKOU-SOU) or 'Virtuous Grass' (TOKU-SOU).

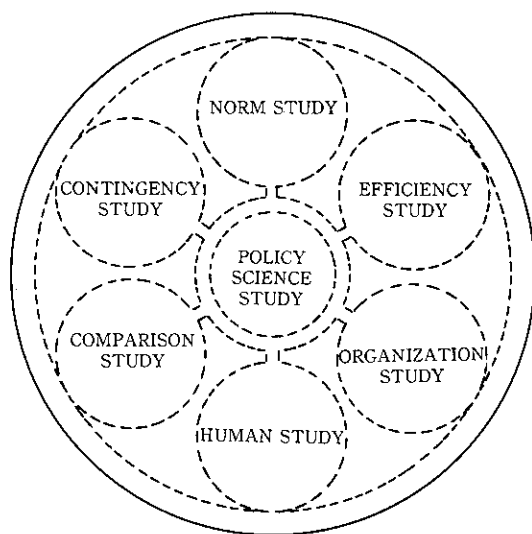


Fig. 1 Policy Science Study for Smoking

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The other one is a disparagement by calling it 'Toxic Grass' (DOKU-SOU), or 'Poverty Grass' (BINBOU-SOU).

One of the examples of norm study is the history of smoking control. The order of prohibition of smoking to the students was issued by the headmaster of the Japan Nobility School (GAKU-SHUIN) in 1894, and the prohibition order of both smoking and puffing a pipe for primary school children was issued by Minister of Education in 1894. The Law for Prohibiting Minors from Smoking (Law No. 33) was enacted in 1900. However, the measures against smoking was immature, influenced by national economic development policy in which tobacco industry was promoted.

The Ministry of Health and Welfare of Japan, paying respect to the Recommendation for Smoking Prevention of World Health Organization, has been positively implementing following three programs:

- i) health education,
- ii) restriction of smoking place, and
- iii) systematic health research related to smoking.

I-2 Human study

Human beings are not always strong existence, but rather weak one with some kinds of dependency or unhealthy life style.

Smoking dependency is one of the examples of biological and social weakness of human beings to seek tranquillity and serenity in daily life in spite of the awareness of the unhealthy effect.

Therefore human studies of smoking from the view point of public health and behavior science are very important to consider the roots of the people's needs, demands and desires.

Smokers always insist on the tranquillity and serenity of their minds obtained by smoking, but non-smokers always have discomfort by smell and smoke of tobacco, insisting on unhealthy influence and increasing risk factors of passive smoking.

Furthermore, the motivation study of smoking is also useful for the prevention of smoking.

According to the several studies of smoking motivation, the most common reasons of starting smoking were merely curiosity and mischiefs influenced by friend-smokers or grown-ups, whereas cases of seeking the tranquillity of mind from the beginning were found to be very rare and almost negligible.

About 70% of smokers wish to stop smoking for themselves and actually tried to give up smoking several times. As smoking habit was well established among many people, various kinds of convenient tools have been invented to promote smoking. Therefore, in spite of many smokers' intentions to take walks of non-smokers' road, they tend to return back to smokers' lane again. They are called "wandering smokers".

Among such wandering smokers, some, especially young smokers, have typical behavioral attitude from the psychological point of view: namely smoking for vanity or smoking as fashion.

Thus human study of smoking behavior on the basis of biological, social and psychological approaches is indispensable for the creation of desirable human behavior and healthy life style.

II. Contingency study and organization study

The main focal points of the contingency study and organization study are as follows:

- i) general perception and environment
- ii) potentiality of reconstruction and reorganization
- iii) continuity and stability in connection with human resources development (availability of staff training and education)

II-1. Contingency study

In the past, tobacco sales campaign used the following slogan; "Today I am very well, and so I enjoy good taste of tobacco." [Kyo mo genkida,

tbako ga umai] . This slogan had paradoxically caught hold of favorable feelings for smoking among people and contingently promoted the sales remarkably.

One of the most effective approaches for sales promotion of goods and services would be organizational campaign system, together with slogan and propaganda carrying the feeling of health promotion easily acceptable by everybody.

The total environment around smokers has been changing. Recently smoking situation became unfavorable for because of general public's awareness of health hazard. Non-smoking areas, Non-smoking seats, Non-smoking cars, Non-smoking rooms etc. have been set up in many places.

But the restriction of smoking areas caused other problems by the misunderstanding of smokers. Some smokers think that smoking is allowed everywhere outside the restricted areas. Therefore many smokers do not ask the neighboring persons, saying like "Do you mind if I smoke?".

Our common sense tells us that anybody should not smoke without the consent of the persons nearby even outside the non-smoking areas. If many smokers loose such simple courteous behavior in daily life, it would be reasonable to set up the complete banned areas such as public institutions. At the same time, it is necessary to promote the policy science research on self-control system of smoking.

II-2 Organization study

The organizational activities of community participation and involvement are very important elements to get effective results. Especially, it is necessary to obtain the synergistic effects by using excellent ideas and flexible procedures of appropriate non-governmental organizations.

Of course, we cannot neglect the systematic approaches by governmental activities. But the community-based organizational activities are

really useful to develop the public consensus and understanding of inhabitants, and with the cooperation of the community people, self-control system will certainly work.

In order to promote the active campaign against smoking, it would be expected to establish the appropriate organizations with know-how and useful informations concerning "how to do more efficient campaign with people", "how to promote the community participation and involvement", "how to set the voluntary action plans to support the public sector's plans", and "how to cooperate and coordinate with other related social resources".

Needless to say, to establish the above-mentioned organization, it is necessary to provide various informations including relevant activities of existing organizations.

The progress of organization study in policy science will contribute to the promotion of private organizational activities and produce the synthetic effects with public sectors by sharing common data base and respecting mutual roles.

One of the governmental responsibilities is to develop research activities related to smoking. Another one is to offer reliable data and information to support community activities.

Ministry of Health and Welfare in Japan organized the expert committee for smoking issues within the Public Health Council and reported the White Papers for Smoking and Health Problems in 1987 and 1993. These reports aimed at easy comprehension of the scientific studies for the people by systematic approaches. At the same time the Reports recommended the organizational activities in collaboration with the related social resources to tackle smoking problems. The planning of continuing education services, especially for public health nurses, and other social services were advised.

The following activities have been operated based on action plans; joint campaign, leaders' training and research. They are supported by Japan Anti-

Tuberculosis Association, Japan Cancer Control Association, Japan Foundation of Health and Physical Strength Promotion, and other various non-governmental associations and community organizations.

III. Efficiency study and comparative study

The example of efficiency study and comparative study are as follows: planning, direction, freedom and benefit as for efficiency study; and to improve the discrepancy of consciousness and action, comparative study on the trend of risk and on the network formations etc., in different areas, societies and generations.

What kind of factors has priority for taking actions against smoking? How do the community leaders make use of the comparative study to fill the discrepancy between consciousness and actions of community people?

III-1 Efficiency study

In view of present situation of health promotion activities, one of the most important thing is to develop more effective and smoother action plan utilizing the people's original ideas.

Free conceptions of people sometimes cause the intentions and actions to be scattered. On the contrary, the strict systems bring often no progress at all. Therefore the efficiency study has to focus on the young generation who has high degree of discretionary power but needs to nurture the appropriate sense of balance of intentions and actions.

The focal point on anti-smoking activities should be set on the education for young people. On this point, community leaders have to show the practical and exemplary conducts of non-smoking to young boys and girls.

Recently, the effect of smoking on health became one of the subjects to be discussed in the health education at primary school (higher grades), junior

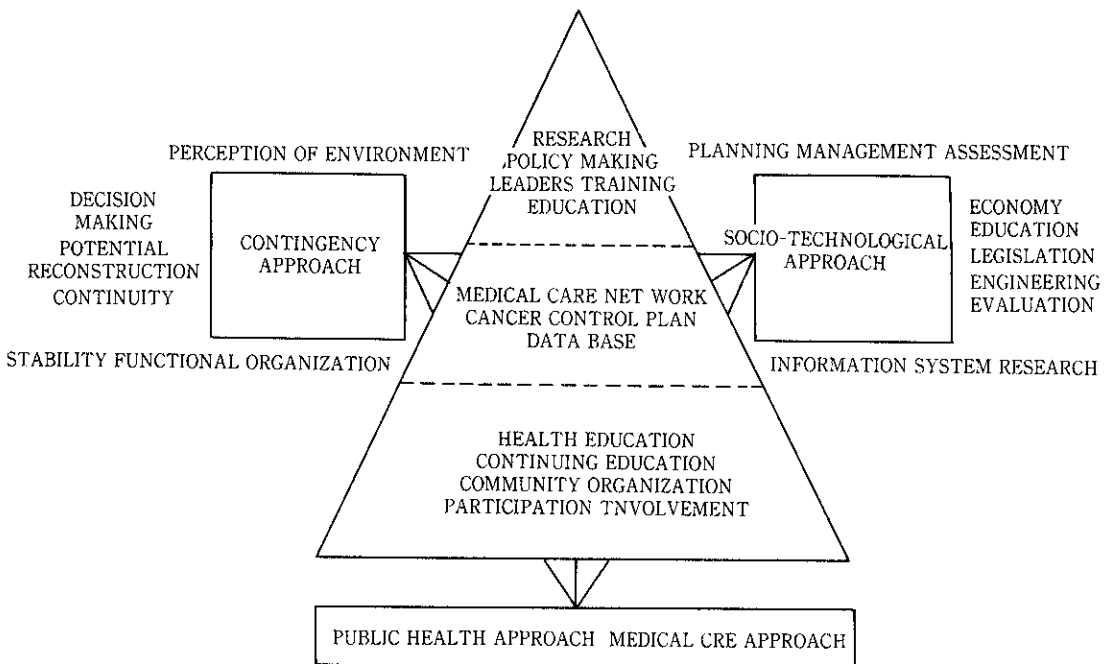


Fig. 2 Interdisciplinary and Structural Study for Smoking

and senior high school. The pamphlets titled "Your tales, Tobacco and Lung Cancer" targetted to the junior high school students were published in connection with Decade Strategic Project of Cancer Control.

These pamphlets and campaign media had following focal points: Targeted group, leading idea to focus, scientific grounds, method of explanation especially for younger generations.

In our modern society, science and technology of information and communication systems are remarkably developing year by year. The media mix are very useful and convenient for scientific approaches in efficiency study.

In the process of tackling smoking problem, the meaning of health and lifevalue have to be taken into account, and alternative approaches should be considered with regard to life cycles and generation gaps.

During the recent 15 years, smoking rate of male has been decreasing, especially that of 40 year-old and over has remarkably decreased. The female smoking rate is almost equivalent to 15% and smoking rate of young female shows the tendency of slight increase.

In the efficiency study, the key words are health impact, social influence, education and media mix.

III-2 Comparative study

The comparative study has many kinds of topics, for example, age specific comparison, country-wide comparison, historical comparison, cost-effective comparison and so on.

In the age specific comparative study for smoking rates, the age groups of 20's and 30's indicated no tendency of decrease, on the contrary, age group of 40's and over showed the decreasing tendency. The result of this comparative study reveals very important factors to analyze; that is, the difference of the views on value of life in each generation.

International comparative study is also important

to analyze the socio-cultural background of smoking; the resemblances or differences of general public's smoking behavior and social needs for smoking in other countries. In order to attain the aim of healthy life of the people, reasonable and suitable approaches should be taken, referring to the analysis of socio-cultural backgrounds and consensual actions.

Those approaches will be subject to natural adjustment, social adjustment and individual adjustment. The resolution of smoking problems is not so simple, because smoking has deep roots in human habit and daily life. If we expect to attain the objectives of anti-smoking campaign, multiple functional aspects of smoking should be properly assessed and analysed.

Japan was compelled to adopt the tobacco ration system during the Second World War and several years of post-war period, in order to control the supply of tobacco to cope with its shortage. By this ration system, smoking population increased. Under the psychologically gloomy conditions at hungry period, most of the people could not afford to think about hazardous effect of smoking in scientific sense.

During this gloomy, period, many people used the substitutes of tobacco leaves and papers instead of genuine ones. However, Japanese people never used the hemp leaves as substitutes, unlike some other places of the world where loop materials and wild hemp leaves were used. The use of marijuana was luckily evaded in the case of Japan. The comparative study shows that this is one of the remarkable historical miracles of human wisdom and ethnological discipline.

CONCLUSION

To tackle smoking problems, various kinds of interdisciplinary approaches based on policy science will be necessary. In this essay, the new approaches on the basis of policy science were suggested by 3

pairs of 6 factors in order to analyse the meaning of smoking problems and develop systems for solution, following the report of the Sixth World Congress on Tobacco and Health held in Tokyo in November, 1987.

In the policy making of smoking issue, we cannot ignore the human behaviors and changes of people's feeling towards smoking attached to socio-cultural background and their views of life.

As smoking habit is deeply rooted in people's daily lives and customs, policy science should be applied for the theoretical armaments and strategic operation: which means, interdisciplinary and structural studies of policy making, research program, training & education of leaders, continuing education, community organization etc. are requisite, and those studies should be supported by both socio-technological approach and contingency approach (Fig. 2).

The Bosnian proverb says "it is easier to destroy our villages than to change our customs". To tackle

the smoking problems, long-term comprehensive public health activities based on the action plan have to be offered, which will contribute to the establishment of healthy life and good custom among people through community participation and involvement.

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