INTRODUCTION

Lung cancer (LC) is the second most commonly diagnosed cancer and is the leading cause of cancer death worldwide. Negative perceptions of LC are shaped by the association between the disease and the behaviors associated with it, such as smoking. However, the literature does not provide a clear understanding of the extent to which LC is stigmatized.

METHODS

At the outset of the study, participants provided demographic information: age, ethnicity, income, education, occupation, healthcare specialization, status as a cancer patient, type of cancer diagnosis, status as a caregiver for a cancer patient, and geographic location.

RESULTS

In the present study, LC is contrasted with BC control groups. The study measured explicit, conscious attitudes, and used the Implicit Association Test (IAT) to assess implicit, unconscious attitudes about cancer. The IAT is an indirect measure, because participants are asked to respond to a task involving an association (in this case, cancer vs. health) without being aware that the task involves a measurement of their attitudes. The IAT score reflects the strength of the association between the implicit and explicit attitudes. A positive score indicates that the implicit and explicit attitudes are related, while a negative score indicates that the implicit and explicit attitudes are unrelated.

Figure 2. Example of a Pair for Explicit Attitudes

Table 2. Example of 6-Point Scale for Explicit Attitudes

The Implicit Association Test

The IAT worked as intended, measuring the implicit and explicit attitudes. While these mean differences were less than a fifth of a second, these differences may be statistically significant, as they are based on large sample sizes. The IAT score reflects the strength of the association between the implicit and explicit attitudes. A positive score indicates that the implicit and explicit attitudes are related, while a negative score indicates that the implicit and explicit attitudes are unrelated. The lower the IAT score, the stronger the implicit attitude.

Table 3. Number of Participants With Explicit (A) Descriptive and (B) Normative Statements

In the present study, explicit attitudes were measured using a 6-point scale that represented on a 6-point scale that represented the following:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Moderately disagree
- Neutral
- Moderately agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

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Table 4. Number of Participants With Implicit (E) Association and (I) Association Toward Lung Cancer Relative to Breast Cancer

In summary, the present study provides evidence that the implicit and explicit attitudes about cancer are related. The IAT score reflects the strength of the association between the implicit and explicit attitudes. A positive score indicates that the implicit and explicit attitudes are related, while a negative score indicates that the implicit and explicit attitudes are unrelated. The lower the IAT score, the stronger the implicit attitude.