

**Changes in Gender Differences on
Smoking Behavior and
Perception:
*Evidence from ITC-SEA Thailand
Waves 1 to 5***

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Background

- Tobacco use among women is often assumed as a problem confined to men and may not be viewed as a priority health issue, because of men's much higher rate of smoking (i.e. about 4 times higher)
- Nevertheless, while smoking rates among men have either reached a plateau or are in a slow decline, the prevalence of tobacco use among women is on the rise (20% of women smoke by 2025)
- Consequently, tobacco control campaigns targeted at helping female smokers quit is equally important as those targeting men
- To formulate gender-specific tobacco control campaigns to reach current population of smokers more effectively, we need to understand differences between female and male smokers and whether the differences have changed over time

Background

- Using the case of Thailand where the proportion of women smoking is much lower than men (2% VS 42%) and relatively low compared to western countries to answer the research question of *to what extent that female smokers are distinct from males and whether the distinctions have remained or changed over time*
- Contributes to the topic of gender and tobacco control by providing evidence based on cross-sectional panel data over 5 years period

Methodology

- ***Adult smokers (18+)*** interviewed in the ITC-SEA Thailand project surveyed annually in 6 waves, 2005 to 2012
- Employ Wave 1 (2005) and Wave 5 (2010) for analysis
- Wave 1 (n=2,000), 8% are women
- Wave 5 (n=1,737), 9% are women
- The sample in Wave 5 include those recruited in Waves 1-4 as well as newly-recruited in Wave 5
- Descriptively analyze general characteristics, smoking behavior, perception about smoking and tobacco control advertisings in Wave 1 and Wave 5

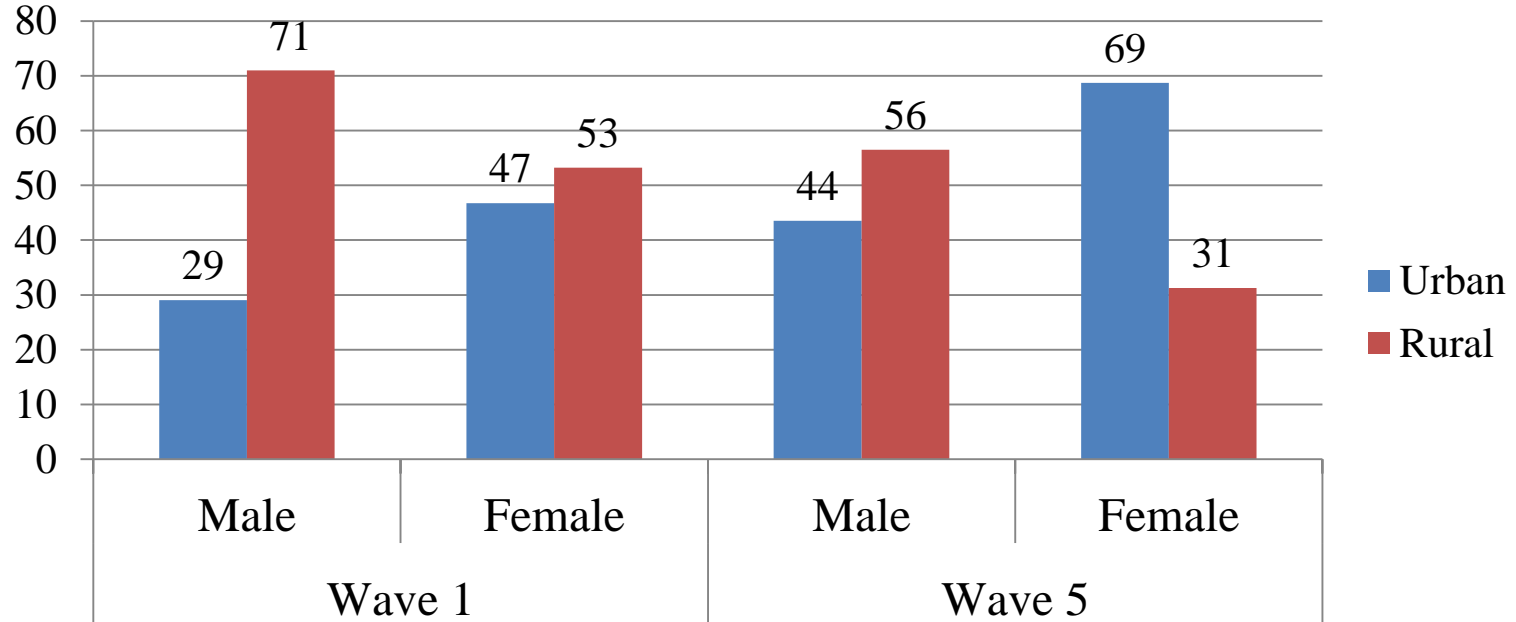
Results

Area of residence

Female smokers are more likely than males to live in urban areas, in both waves

- Over time, smokers are more urban, but women are more urban than men

- Female smokers in urban areas outweigh those in rural areas in Wave 5



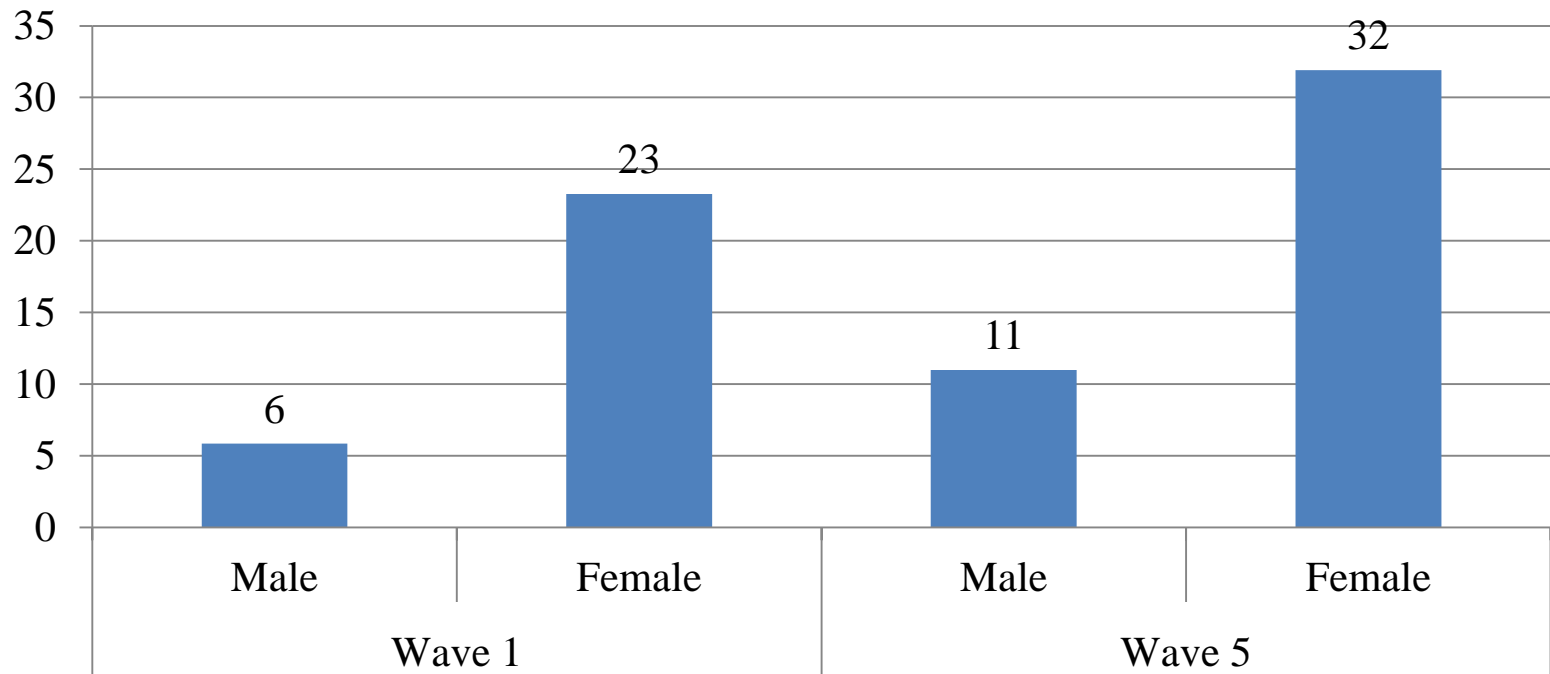
Results

Marital status

Female smokers are more likely than males to be divorced, separated, or widowed

Gender gap persists in both waves (~3 times higher)

% Divorced/separated/widowed



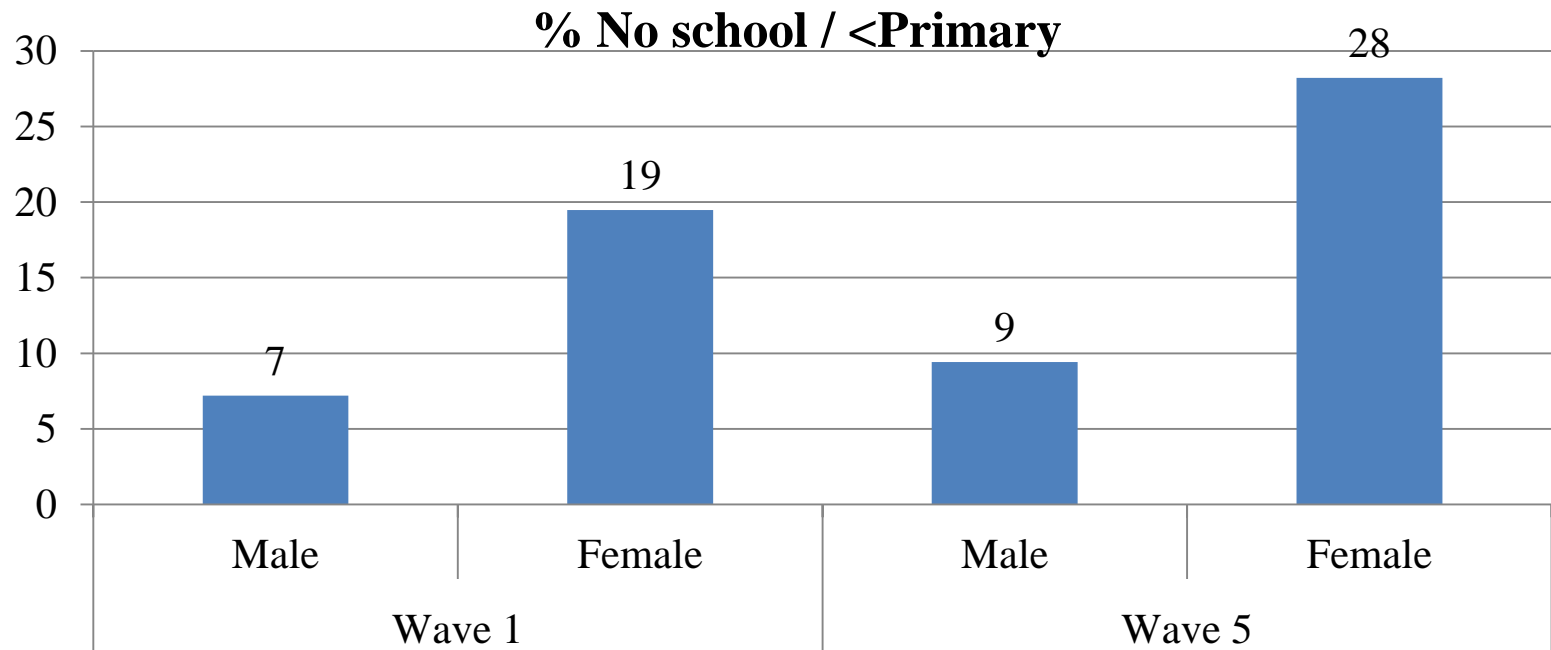
Results

Education

Female smokers are less educated than males

Gender differences get larger over time

(e.g. No school/<Primary between males-females are 7% VS 19% in Wave 1 and are 9% VS 28% in Wave 5)



Results

Amount of cigarette smoke daily

- Female smokers smoke in a smaller amount daily than males

But the difference is narrowing over time

	Wave 1		Wave 5	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Mean amount of cigarette/day	13.6	8.7	10.9	7.0

Type of cigarette

- Female smokers are less likely to smoke both types of cigarette (factory-made and hand-rolled)

But the gender gap in Wave 5 is smaller than Wave 1 (5% VS 24% in Wave 1 and 2% VS 17% in Wave 5)

Results

Try menthol or light/mild/low tar

- Female smokers ever tried menthol or light/mild/low tar cigarette less than males

-the differences lessen over time

- Menthol -- 53% VS 70% at Wave 1 and 50% VS 61% at Wave 5

- Light/mild/low tar –56% VS 78% at Wave 1 and 59% VS 70% at Wave 5

Smoke light cigarette

- Female smokers are more likely to smoke light cigarette than males

- The gender difference becomes insignificant at Wave 5

- 38% VS 26% at Wave 1

- 38%VS 4% at Wave 5 (NS)

Results

Time to 1st cigarette in a day

- *Female smokers have 1st cigarette at a later time than males do*
- *Have 1st cigarette <30mins after getting up*
 - *Wave 1-- 53% for female and 56% for males*
 - *Wave 5--39% for females and 49% for males*
- *The gender differences increase over time*

Number of five close friends who smoke

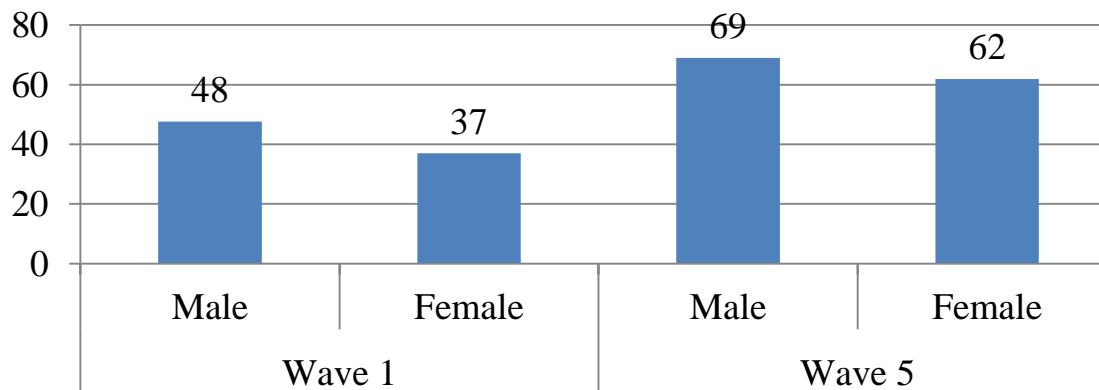
- *Female smokers are more likely than males to have none of their five close friends smoke*
 - *27%VS6% at Wave 1 and 24%VS2% at Wave 5*
 - *Indicating women being less dependent on friends than males*
 - *The differences remain over time*

Results

Responsiveness to anti-tobacco advertising

- *Female smokers are less responsive to anti-tobacco campaigns*
 - *are less likely to report that they often/very often look closely at warning labels*
 - *are less like to report notice anti-tobacco information on mass media (bill boards, papers/magazine, or cigarette packs)*
- *Gender gaps are narrowing over the 5 years period*

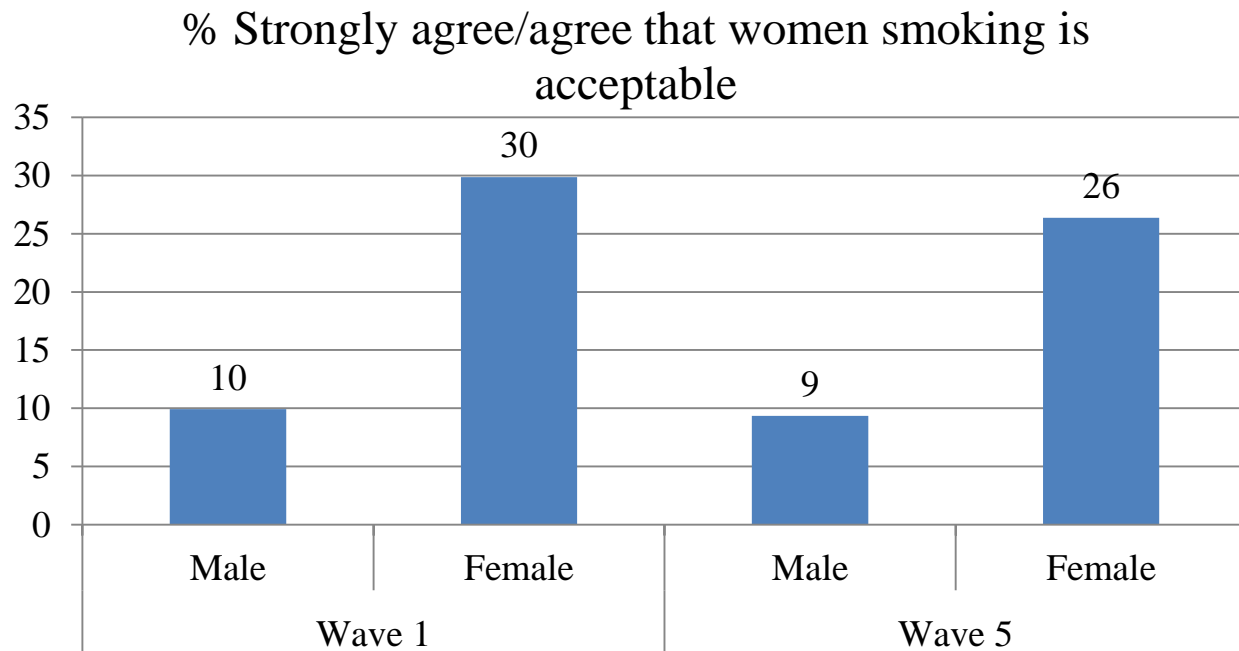
% Reported often/very often look closely at warning labels



Results

Perception about women smoking is acceptable

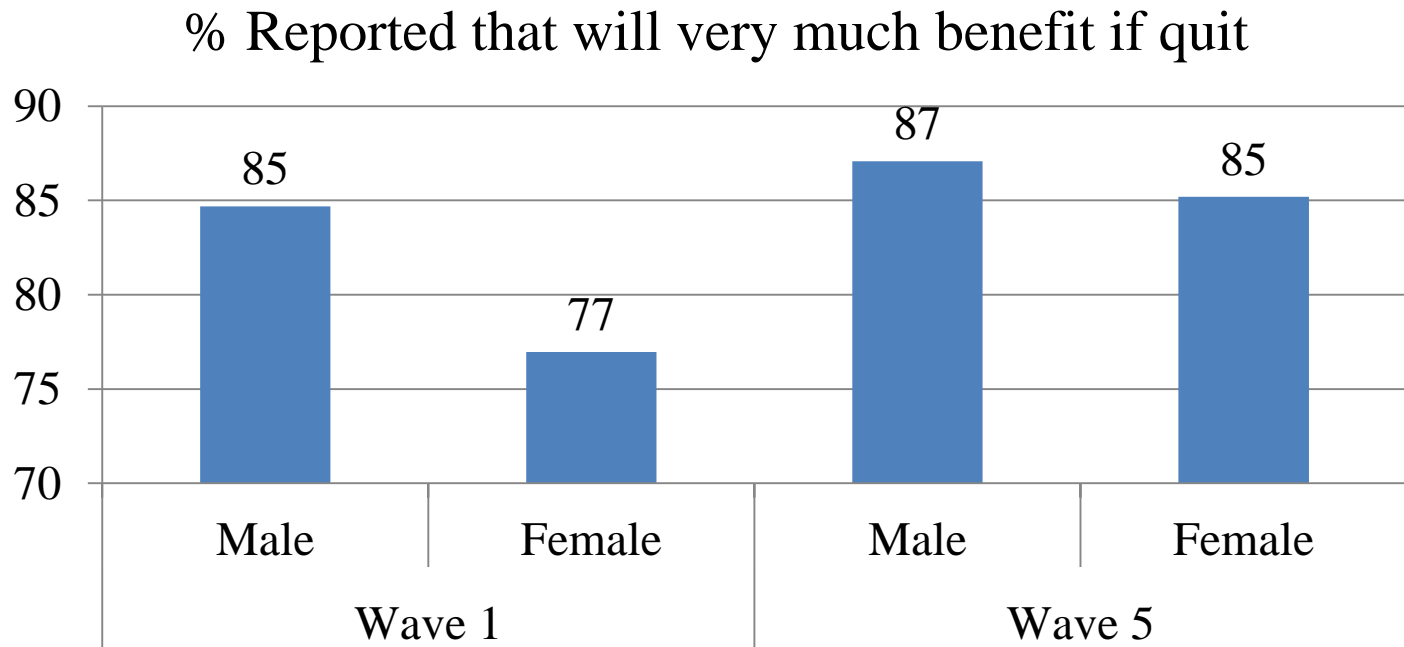
- *Female smokers perceive that smoking among women is acceptable in a higher proportion than males do*
- *Gender differences remain so over time*



Results

Perception that will benefit if quit

- *Female smokers are less likely than males to perceive that they will benefit very much if quit*
- *The differences are sig at Wave 1, not sig at Wave 5, suggesting smokers get similar over time*



Conclusion

- Findings not only shed light on gender differences among smokers, but also on changes in gender gap -- some persist, while some decrease over time
- To create gender-sensitive tobacco control campaigns and interventions for more effective results, *these differences and changes* need to be taken into consideration

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