

APPENDIX G

Literature Review on the Impact of Tobacco Advertising, Promotion, and Sponsorship Bans on Women

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Literature Review: Impact of Tobacco Advertising, Promotion, and Sponsorship Bans on Women

Summary

1. The tobacco industry has a long history of developing creative marketing strategies to promote their products and gain consumer loyalty. In particular, women and girls appear to be a primary target for tobacco industry marketing, especially in developing countries, where rates of tobacco use among women are currently low and thus represent an 'untapped market'.
2. It is important to restrict all forms of tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS) in order to protect non-smokers, especially women, from the harmful effects of exposure to tobacco marketing.
3. Global evidence shows that comprehensive bans on TAPS in line with FCTC Article 13 are more effective than partial bans. Comprehensive bans are especially important for preventing the tobacco industry from circumventing laws by turning towards unregulated forms of indirect advertising.
4. Studies from HICs and LMICs have found evidence of reduced tobacco consumption among adult smokers, as well as decreases in exposure to tobacco advertising and promotion in countries or jurisdictions that have implemented such comprehensive TAPS regulations, in comparison to countries with weaker TAPS legislation.
5. There is very little evidence examining whether gender differences exist in the impact of TAPS policies. There is some evidence that exposure to TAPS is higher among men than women; however, these studies were conducted in LMICs where male smoking prevalence is also much higher than female smoking prevalence.
6. Few countries have implemented bans on point-of-sale (POS) displays and advertising, despite this being a key channel for tobacco companies to market their products to consumers, including women. As a result, there is a lack of studies that have examined the impact of POS bans on smokers and only one study that has examined gender differences; however, the existing evidence shows that POS bans are effective in reducing exposure to tobacco advertising among adult smokers, and may be more effective among women.
7. Existing research on advertising and promotion of other types of tobacco products, such as smokeless tobacco and waterpipe tobacco, suggests that the tobacco industry uses similar strategies to market these products as for cigarettes. Therefore, there is a need for stronger TAPS regulations covering all types of tobacco products.
8. The expansion and growing popularity of new media forms, such as the Internet and entertainment media, presents challenges for tobacco control, especially for cross-border advertising. There is a need for further research on the use of new media as a source of marketing for tobacco companies to target women.

Background

The importance of banning tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS)

The tobacco industry uses a variety of communication tools and strategies to market its products to the public, including mass media advertising, sponsorship of cultural or sporting events, point-of-sale (POS) advertising, free distribution of tobacco products, internet promotions, and social media. Global evidence is clear that tobacco advertising and promotion increases tobacco consumption and initiation and that banning all tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS) is an effective tobacco control strategy for reducing consumption and preventing uptake of smoking.[1–4]

Econometric studies have shown that comprehensive bans have the greatest impact, and that partial bans have little to no effect. [2,5] The impact of TAPS bans may also be stronger in developing countries.[5]

The importance of banning TAPS is recognized by WHO FCTC Article 13, which obligates Parties to implement a comprehensive ban on all forms of TAPS within 5 years, or to apply restrictions that are comprehensive as possible for those Parties that are not in a position to implement a comprehensive ban due to their constitutions.

Challenges with regulating TAPS

Most countries today have introduced bans on at least some forms of direct tobacco marketing, such as television and radio advertising. Evidence on the impact of increased marketing restrictions that have been implemented in high-income countries since the 1990s shows an association with reductions in adolescent and adult tobacco consumption and prevalence, demonstrating the effectiveness of such laws.[4,6] However, according to WHO's 2017 Global Report on the Tobacco Epidemic, only 15% of the world's population is covered by a comprehensive TAPS ban, and 51 countries still do not have a ban on TAPS, or have implemented only weak TAPS regulations that do not cover national television, radio, and print media. [7] Therefore, there is still a need for stronger implementation of TAPS policies at the global level.

Even in countries that have implemented TAPS regulations, a growing challenge is that with greater restrictions on traditional forms of direct advertising, tobacco companies have turned to other, unregulated forms of marketing and promotion, such as price discounting and indirect advertising, which includes brand sharing, sponsorships, product placement, and POS displays in retail outlets.[1,4,8] Examples from countries including the United States and Singapore have shown that when certain forms of advertising are banned, the industry simply diverts their advertising expenditures to other forms of TAPS.[3]

Brand stretching is another way to circumvent existing bans on TAPS. This involves the application of tobacco brand names to non-tobacco products such as merchandise or services as a way of advertising or communicating the brand through other channels.

- For example, in Malaysia – where direct tobacco advertising was banned but there were no restrictions on indirect advertising, the Benson & Hedges name was used on a special blend of coffee served in bistros where the company colour gold was featured prominently.[9]

Point-of-sale display bans

POS displays have also become a primary source of tobacco advertising and promotion for tobacco companies. Data from the Global Adult Tobacco Surveys (GATS) in 14 countries between 2008-2010 showed that in almost every country, smokers were most likely to report noticing advertising in stores than from any other source.[10]

Worldwide, bans on POS displays are not as common as bans on other forms of TAPS, and those countries that have implemented POS bans face difficulties with enforcement and compliance.[7] As of 2016, 20 countries had passed legislation to ban visible pack displays, beginning with Iceland (2001), Thailand (2005), Canada (2004 to 2010), Ireland (2009),

Australia (most states in 2009), and Norway (2010).[11] As a result, there is little evidence on the impact of POS display bans on tobacco consumption and behavior.[6]

New media

The internet is also a rapidly changing and increasingly accessible source of marketing for tobacco companies to reach consumers around the world, including women and children, in an efficient way. Recent estimates indicate that almost half (45%) of households worldwide have Internet access and one in three individuals has a smart phone.[12]

The constant evolution of media forms and the shift to more interactive forms of “new media” presents a challenge for effective restrictions on tobacco marketing.[13] While many countries have included internet-based advertising in their laws banning tobacco advertising, there are difficulties with enforcement of such bans.[13] The availability of public wifi and smartphones, along with widespread use of online video sharing websites such as YouTube and social networking sites, have increased the amount and accessibility of media content.[13] While these social media channels can also be used for anti-smoking messages, content analyses have shown that the pro-smoking content dominates by a very wide margin.[14]

The changing landscape of the entertainment media is also a challenge for tobacco control, as tobacco companies are able to circumvent national bans on TAPS by using various forms of entertainment media as a means of cross-border advertising and promotion.[12] While some countries such as India have already implemented effective measures to regulate the depiction of tobacco use in entertainment media such as films and television, international cooperation is needed to help regulate and eliminate cross-border TAPS.

Tobacco Marketing to Women

A key purpose of tobacco advertising is to appeal to non-smokers to persuade them to start smoking, in order to gain new users. Accordingly, the tobacco industry specifically targets women and girls in their campaigns – especially those in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), as these groups are less likely to be current smokers.[3,15,16] Furthermore, as women gain more financial independence globally, they have become an increasingly important market for tobacco companies.

The tobacco industry has been marketing to women in developed countries since the 1920s, and tobacco messaging has pervaded women’s popular culture since then, through advertising, films, music, magazines, fashion, and the Internet.[9,17] This messaging typically emphasizes themes such as beauty, style, glamour, modernity, and independence in order to link smoking to desirable female attributes.[15] Tobacco advertising and promotion of female-oriented brands has also expanded to many LMICs, where Western models are commonly featured in advertisements to promote themes of sophistication, attractiveness, and independence, and to help normalize the association between women and tobacco in countries where female smoking is less acceptable.[9,15]

A wide variety of creative marketing strategies are used by tobacco companies to appeal to women. This includes packaging, mass media and POS advertising, promotions, free samples, and sponsorship of cultural or sporting events such as fashion shows and beauty contests, all of which are used to reinforce the company’s brand image and build consumer loyalty. Examples of sponsorship strategies used to attract women include the Virginia Slims women’s professional tennis tour sponsored by Philip Morris from 1973-1994, the More Fashion Awards

sponsored by R.J. Reynolds, and funding support that has been provided by tobacco companies to women's organizations.[9,18] These attempts to establish relationships with women's organizations are in line with the tobacco industry's history of exploiting other marginalized groups who may be at greater risk of tobacco-related harms, such as African Americans.[19]

Other forms of promotion specifically targeted to women include the use of female-oriented pack designs and branding, and specially formulated cigarettes such as slims and lights. Because tobacco packages have such wide reach and frequency of exposure among smokers, branding and packaging are key channels used by tobacco companies to project certain images, which are intended to attract women and to eliminate negative associations with the product. For example, cigarette advertisements use women in their ads to reduce the perception that smoking is socially unacceptable for women; and low-tar or 'light' cigarette brand names are used to reduce fears about the health effects of smoking. Cigarette packs have become an increasingly important form of communication and promotion for the tobacco industry as traditional forms of advertising are increasingly restricted. (For further information on the use of tobacco packaging to appeal to women, see the Chapter "Literature Review on the Impact of Plain Packaging on Women").

Researchers in New Zealand analyzed several sources of data and literature to examine tobacco marketing towards females and identified at least eight mechanisms by which tobacco companies still managed to market their products to women, despite the national advertising and sponsorship restrictions that have been in place since 1990.[20] Mechanisms included promotion of female-oriented brands at POS, on websites, and through imported magazines; female-oriented brand names; cigarette pack design and colouring designed to appeal to women; product design such as slim cigarettes; use of light and mild descriptors; and price discounts that may appeal to women with lower incomes than men. The World Health Organization has also recognized the importance of addressing gender differences and gender-specific risks when examining both tobacco industry marketing tactics and policies to restrict tobacco advertising.[18] For example, the annual WHO World No Tobacco Day campaign selected "gender and tobacco with an emphasis on marketing to women" as the theme in 2010. The aim of the campaign was to highlight the harmful effects of tobacco marketing on women and girls and to call on all countries to implement a comprehensive ban on all forms of TAPS in line with the FCTC to protect women from these harms. The Conference of the Parties to the WHO FCTC has recently called for further guidance in this area.[18]



World No Tobacco Day poster from 2010

Evidence on the Impact of TAPS Bans Across Countries

Evidence from countries that have implemented comprehensive laws banning TAPS has shown the positive impact of such bans. However, despite the importance of banning TAPS for women in particular, little research has examined the impact of TAPS legislation on female smokers or in comparing the impact of such measures by gender.

- Analyses across a large sample of 66 countries (including both HICs and LMICs) using data from 1990 to 2013 confirmed previous research showing that comprehensive bans

on tobacco advertising have a significant negative effect on consumption.[1] Pooled estimates across all countries found that comprehensive bans were associated with a decrease in tobacco consumption by 11.7% overall, and by 28.3% in LMICs. On the other hand, limited TAPS bans had no effect. Gender differences were not examined in this study.

- Data from the GATS in 14 countries from 2008-2010 was used to compare levels of awareness of TAPS across countries with varying restrictions in place.[10] Awareness ranged from 12% (in Turkey) to 70% (in Philippines). In general, awareness was lower in countries that had the strongest restrictions (i.e. the greatest number of advertising channels banned), although 13-15% of smokers still reported noticing tobacco marketing even in countries that had banned all forms of TAPS, suggesting that comprehensive bans can reduce, but not eliminate tobacco marketing. However, gender differences were not examined.

Evidence from HICs

- ITC data from the United Kingdom demonstrates the effectiveness of a comprehensive ban on TAPS in reducing exposure to tobacco marketing.[21] In the first year after their comprehensive law banning TAPS was implemented (in February 2003), there was a significant reduction in awareness of tobacco promotion among smokers, compared to pre-ban levels. Decreases in awareness were greatest for those forms of advertising that were regulated by the law (versus those channels that had not yet come into effect), and were greater than in other countries that did not implement any new laws during this same period (Canada, US, and Australia). Overall awareness at the follow up survey wave was still lowest in Australia, which had the strongest regulations overall, and highest in the US, which had the weakest regulations, further demonstrating that more comprehensive bans have greater impact. However, gender was not examined in this study.
- A more recent study using ITC data in these same countries over a longer period (between 2002 and 2008) extended the findings on the effectiveness of TAPS bans.[22] Reported awareness of tobacco marketing significantly decreased following the implementation of tobacco marketing regulations across countries. For example, in the UK, exposure to tobacco marketing decreased over the entire study period, but the greatest decline occurred in the first year after the new legislation banning tobacco marketing came into effect (between 2002 and 2003). Awareness of tobacco marketing was highest at baseline in the US, where regulations were the weakest at the time, and lowest in Australia, where regulations were the strongest. Both countries showed smaller declines in awareness over the study period as a result. Gender was not examined, but awareness of marketing and changes in awareness over time were similar across SES groups, suggesting that tobacco marketing regulations have an equal impact on all SES groups.

Evidence from LMICs

- Progress in the implementation of Article 13 in China has been slow. Despite ratifying the FCTC in 2005, a complete ban on tobacco advertising in mass media, public places, public transit, and outdoors was not implemented until September 2015. China still does not have a comprehensive ban on TAPS at the national level, and as a result, the

tobacco industry in China continues to advertise and promote their products.[23] Indeed, studies have shown high levels of awareness of tobacco advertising in China compared to other countries.

- Data from the ITC China Survey conducted in 2006 has shown that Chinese smokers (40%) were significantly more likely to report noticing things that are designed to encourage smoking “once in a while” or “often” in the last 6 months compared to countries with strong advertising restrictions (20% of smokers in Thailand and 19% of smokers in Australia), and compared to the US (36%), which had weak laws at the time.[24] Prominent sources of tobacco advertising were television and at POS. While younger smokers (ages 18-29) were more likely to have noticed tobacco marketing in various places, gender differences were not examined.
- These findings were supported by another study using ITC China Wave 1 (2006) data.[25] This study also found that 40% of smokers across six cities in China reported noticing things designed to encourage smoking at least once in a while in the last 6 months. Factors associated with noticing forms of advertising, promotion, and sponsorship were examined, and younger smokers (ages 18-24), and smokers with higher education and income were more likely to report noticing all forms of TAPS. Male smokers were generally more likely than females to notice all forms of TAPS, however there was only a significant gender difference for noticing any form of sponsorship. Differences were also found across cities, with the highest levels of noticing TAPS in those cities with the greatest tobacco industry presence.
- More recent data from the ITC China Survey demonstrates that exposure to tobacco promotion remains high.[23] In 2013-15, 47% of smokers across 10 cities and rural areas in China reported noticing things that promote smoking “once in a while” or “often” in the last 6 months. The percentage of smokers in China who noticed tobacco promotion “often” was the third highest among 10 LMICs in the ITC Project.
- ITC data from Malaysia and Thailand in 2005 found higher levels of awareness of tobacco marketing and promotion in Malaysia, where tobacco control policies were weak, compared to Thailand, which was a leader in tobacco control at the time and had comprehensive TAPS restrictions in place.[26] For example, 17.6% of Malaysian smokers reported noticing things that promote smoking “often/very often” in the last 6 months compared to only 5.7% of Thai smokers. These findings demonstrate the effectiveness of the comprehensive legislation in Thailand in reducing exposure to TAPS. In Malaysia, there were no significant gender differences in noticing of tobacco advertising, promotions, or sponsorship. Gender differences across countries could only be examined for noticing advertising around street vendors (because noticing of other types of TAPS was too low in Thailand), and results showed that female smokers in each country were significantly less likely to notice advertising around street vendors. Similar to findings from China, younger smokers and those with higher education and income also had greater awareness of tobacco promotions and sponsorship in Malaysia.
- A report that examined data from the 2009 GATS in Bangladesh, Thailand, and Uruguay found little or no gender difference in awareness of TAPS activities in two of the countries, but a significant difference in Bangladesh, where men had higher rates of noticing any cigarette advertising, sponsorship, or promotion in the last 30 days than women (68% vs. 29%).[27] In addition, in all countries, younger adult women (aged 15-

24) were more likely to notice cigarette marketing compared to women in older age groups. In Bangladesh, differences in awareness of smokeless tobacco marketing were also examined and there was no difference between males and females (71% vs. 70%). These findings suggest that exposure to tobacco advertising may be related to prevalence of use of smoked and smokeless tobacco – men had much higher prevalence of smoking in the Bangladesh survey (45% vs. 2%), whereas women had higher smokeless tobacco prevalence (28% vs. 26%). Awareness of any cigarette marketing was also lower among both men and women (17% vs. 15%) in Thailand, where regulations against tobacco advertising at the time were the strongest.

Impact of point-of-sale restrictions

Few countries have implemented bans on POS displays and advertising; thus there are fewer studies evaluating the impact of such bans, particularly among adults, and only one recent study examining gender differences. However, there is some evidence of a positive effect of POS restrictions in high-income and lower-middle income countries:

- Evidence from Ireland, where a POS display ban was implemented in July 2009, shows the effectiveness and popularity of the ban. Survey data among adults in Ireland before and after the law found that while smoking prevalence did not change in the short term, the percentage of adults who recalled seeing cigarette displays in shops in the last month decreased significantly (from 49% to 22%) and support for the law increased significantly (from 58% to 66%).^[28] However, gender was not examined.
- ITC data from four HICs compared the impact of POS restrictions implemented in Australia and Canada to the United Kingdom and United States, where there were no POS restrictions during the study period.^[29] Reported exposure to tobacco marketing, POS displays, and POS advertising decreased more in Canada and Australia compared to the UK and US. For example, the percentage of smokers who noticed POS displays in Canada decreased from 74% in 2006 to 6% in 2010, and from 74% to 43% in Australia. The greatest decline in Canada occurred between 2007 and 2008, when most of the provinces introduced POS display bans. In contrast, noticing POS displays remained high in the US (82% in 2006; 80% in 2010) and actually increased in the UK over the study period (from 81% to 88%). Overall in the sample, smokers who were covered by a POS display ban were less likely to be exposed to POS displays and other forms of tobacco advertising, were less likely to be notice tobacco promotion in general, and were less likely to purchase a different brand of cigarettes because of exposure to advertising (i.e. impulse purchasing). While gender was included in the analyses, gender differences were not examined in the study.
- Longitudinal ITC data from Thailand (where a ban on POS displays was implemented in 2005) and Malaysia (which had no POS restrictions) from 2005 to 2011 shows a positive impact of the ban in Thailand.^[30] After the ban was introduced, awareness and support for the ban was higher and noticing tobacco displays in stores was lower in Thailand compared to Malaysia. Noticing of POS displays was lowest in Thailand in the first year after the ban (17%, vs. 83% in Malaysia) and increased in subsequent years (up to 29% in 2011; vs. 90% in Malaysia). While gender was included in the analyses, gender differences were not examined in the study.

- A recent study analyzed longitudinal data from 77 countries to examine the impact of POS display bans on smoking prevalence among adults.[11] Results showed that implementation of a POS display ban was associated with a significant decrease in smoking prevalence by 7% overall. The findings also suggest that the impact of POS bans may be greater for females, as there was a greater decrease in smoking prevalence among adult females than males (9% vs. 6%).

Support for TAPS Bans

- Longitudinal data from the ITC Canada Survey was used to examine support for greater restrictions on marketing at POS among Canadian smokers from 2006 to 2009.[31] Support for bans on tobacco advertising and displays at POS was high overall and comparable across the ten provinces. There were no significant gender differences in support for advertising and display bans; however, smokers who intended to quit smoking were more likely to support advertising and display bans.
- A study evaluating Norway's ban on POS displays implemented in January 2010 found high levels of compliance and support for the law.[32] Support was higher for non-smokers (>70%) than occasional smokers (~50%) and daily smokers (~30%) and did not significantly change before and after the law. Gender was not examined.

Smokeless Tobacco Advertising and Exposure

Implementation of TAPS bans for smokeless tobacco

There is a gap in implementation of TAPS policies for smokeless tobacco products compared to cigarettes, with Bangladesh and India being the only Parties to have specifically developed indicators for implementation of smokeless tobacco policies.[33]

- According to a 2017 report, fewer Parties to the FCTC have implemented bans on advertisements of smokeless tobacco compared to cigarettes for the following sources: national TV and radio (78% vs. 84%), international TV and radio (59% vs. 70%), international print media (44% vs. 53%), Internet (59% vs. 65%), and at POS (42% vs. 46%).[33] However, bans on billboard advertising are similar for smoked and smokeless products (68% of Parties have bans on either) and more Parties have banned advertising in national print media for smokeless tobacco than for cigarettes (79% vs. 66%).
- Complete bans on sponsorship are low for both smokeless and smoked tobacco (20% vs. 21%).[33]

Challenges with regulation of smokeless tobacco advertising

In countries where smokeless tobacco use is most prevalent, such as India, there are challenges with regulating advertising of smokeless brands due to brand extension activities. Many smokeless tobacco brands use the same name and branding for products other than tobacco. Therefore, even though tobacco advertising has been banned in India since 2004 under national legislation, tobacco companies are still able to advertise and promote their brand through these other products, known as surrogate advertising.[33]

- For example, there are many different types of smokeless products in India, including those that contain tobacco (such as gutkha) and others that do not contain tobacco (such as pan masala). However, due to the similarities between products, as well as the use of the same branding across products, they are often associated with each other and perceived to be smokeless tobacco products regardless of the actual ingredients.
- Evidence from studies of advertisements on television and billboards suggests that tobacco companies do indeed use advertisements of plain pan masala products as surrogate advertisements for gutkha products that carry the same brand name.[34]

Evidence on Exposure to Smokeless Tobacco Advertising

Findings from the GATS in India suggest that exposure to smokeless tobacco advertising and promotion is high, but has decreased from 2010 to 2016-17.[35,36]

- In 2010, half of respondents (49.6%) noticed any form of smokeless advertising in the last month, compared to only one-quarter (25.3%) who noticed cigarette advertising. Noticing of tobacco promotion was also slightly higher overall for smokeless tobacco (8.8%) than for cigarettes (7.4%). The most common source of smokeless advertising was POS advertising in stores.
- In the 2016-17 Survey, however, noticing of tobacco advertising and promotion was similar for smoked and smokeless tobacco – 19.2% of respondents reported noticing smoked tobacco advertising compared to 18.3% for smokeless advertising. However, cigarette and bidi advertising were not examined separately in the 2016-17 Survey. Television was the most common source of noticing smokeless advertising in 2016-17.
- There was a significant decrease in noticing cigarette and smokeless promotion for both men (from 9.9% to 6.9% for cigarettes and 11.5% to 7.8% for smokeless) and women (from 4.6% to 3.6% for cigarettes and 5.9% to 3.5% for smokeless) from 2010 to 2016-17.

Waterpipe Tobacco Advertising

While there is limited research on marketing and advertising strategies for waterpipe tobacco compared to cigarettes, some studies of waterpipe tobacco advertising in the United States have found that the messages and themes portrayed in advertisements aimed at young adults are similar to those used in cigarette advertisements, such as relaxation, pleasure, attractiveness, social appeal, and sensory qualities.[37]

While tobacco advertising is banned in the US, newer forms of media through such as websites and YouTube videos are still used to advertise waterpipe cafes and products via the Internet. Unregulated advertising of waterpipe tobacco smoking, accessories, and locations has also been found in print media in the US, such as young adult newspapers (those targeted at 18-30 year olds).[37]

Qualitative research from interviews conducted in the EMR examined perceptions and attitudes towards waterpipe tobacco smoking among men and women.[38] Common themes included the sexual allure of waterpipe smoking and as a symbol of emancipation among female smokers – especially in more liberal countries such as Lebanon. These themes of glamour and independence are the same as those used by tobacco companies to market cigarettes to women in developing countries. The higher acceptability of waterpipe smoking among women in this region may contribute to higher prevalence rates of waterpipe compared to cigarettes.

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