



Challenges in surveying in different cultures: Experiences from the ITC Collaboration

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Culture crops up everywhere

- **ITC-SEA: Key source of these learnings**
- **But also issues elsewhere:**
- **French version for Canada**
- **Colloquial differences in English**
 - Eg, pub vs bar
- **Effects of Policy context**

Only some differences are consequential

- **No interaction effects in ITC-4 Country**
 - Questions and interventions appear to work in essentially the same ways
- **Many questions also seem to work similarly in broader contexts**
 - But may vary in absolute potency
- **Others are affected by some cultural differences**

What are the big differences? – Culture

: Malaysia and Thailand versus USA, Canada, UK and Australia

- **Tropical versus temperate climate**
- **Languages**
- **Middle income versus high income**
- **Religion more important in SEA**
- **Collective versus individualist orientation**
- **Gender: few women smoke in Asia**
- **Larger Urban-rural differences**
- **Lower phone use, esp rural**

ITC – SEA: Preliminary findings

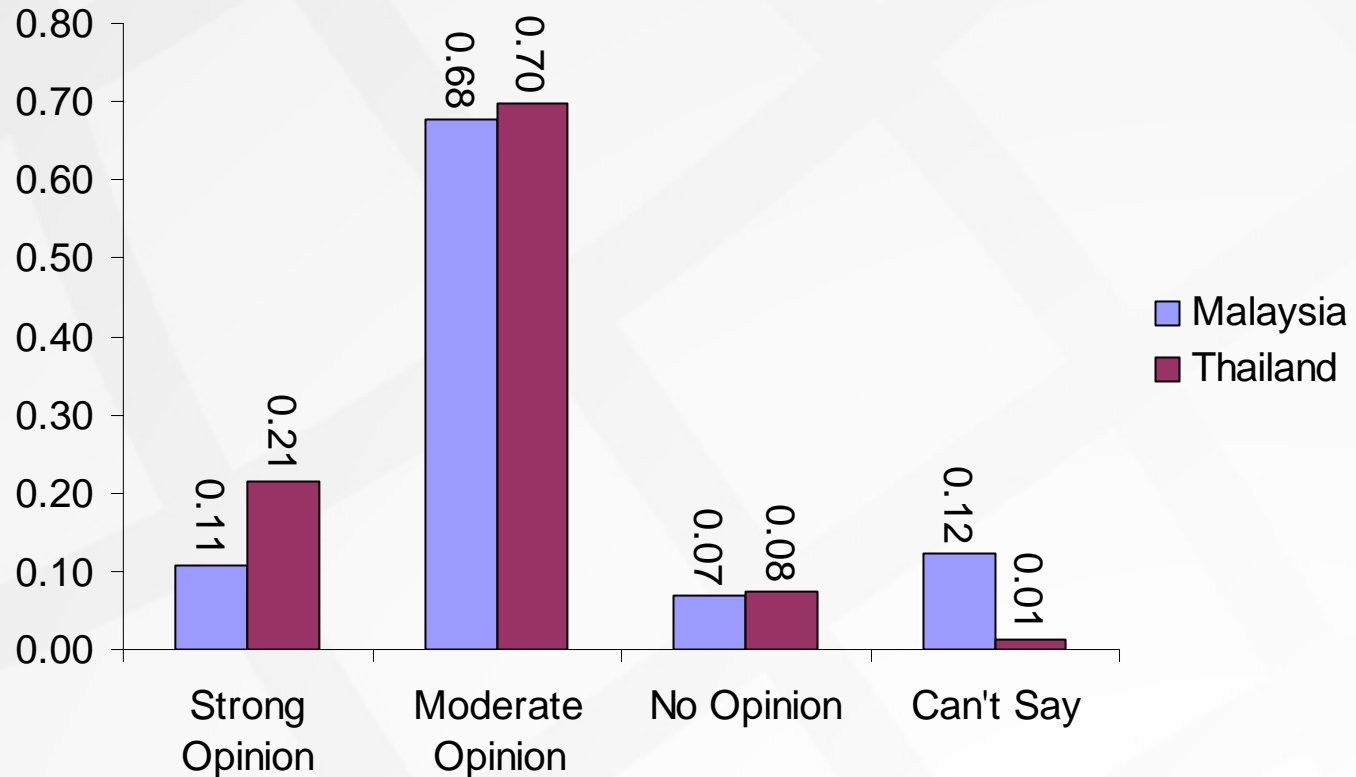
- **Thai smokers see smoking as less socially accepted and much stronger negative attitudes to smoking than Malaysians**
- **Thai efforts to eliminate promotion of tobacco products have been largely successful**
- **Thai warning labels (old ones) were more effective than the weaker Malaysian ones**
 - **The new ones are even more so**
- **Thai smokers are not systematically more likely to support smoke free places (compared to Malaysia)**

ITEM: I spend time thinking about how what I do today will affect my future

- **Time perspective: conceived to measure thought about how consequences of behavior can affect future**
 - Rational frame
- **In 4-countries, predicts quitting**
- **In SEA, endorsed more**
- **Doesn't predict quitting, esp Thailand**
- **WHY?**
 - ? Religious vs rational causal reasoning

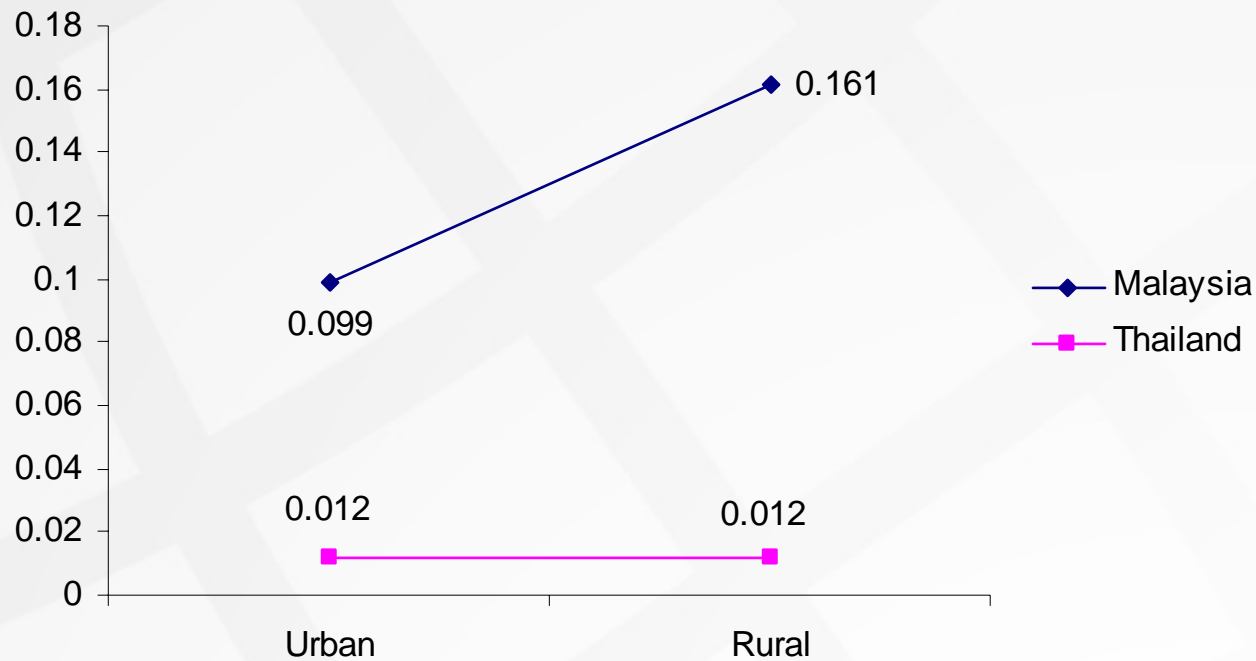
ITC-SEA: Response style differences

- Mean proportions of response type (based on 25 Agree/Disagree questions)



ITC-SEA: Response style differences

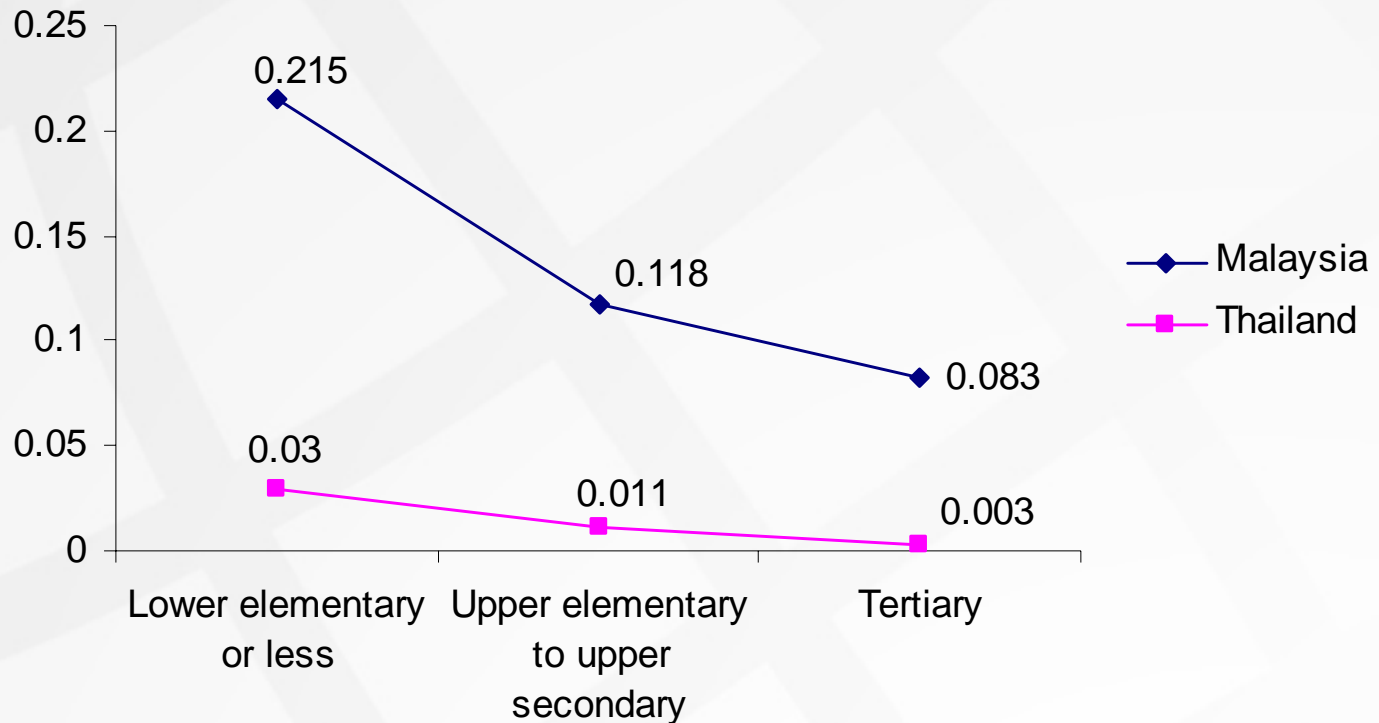
- Mean proportions of “Can’t Say” responses - Country x Urban/Rural



Interaction: $F(1,4002) = 57.731, p < .001$

ITC-SEA: Response style differences

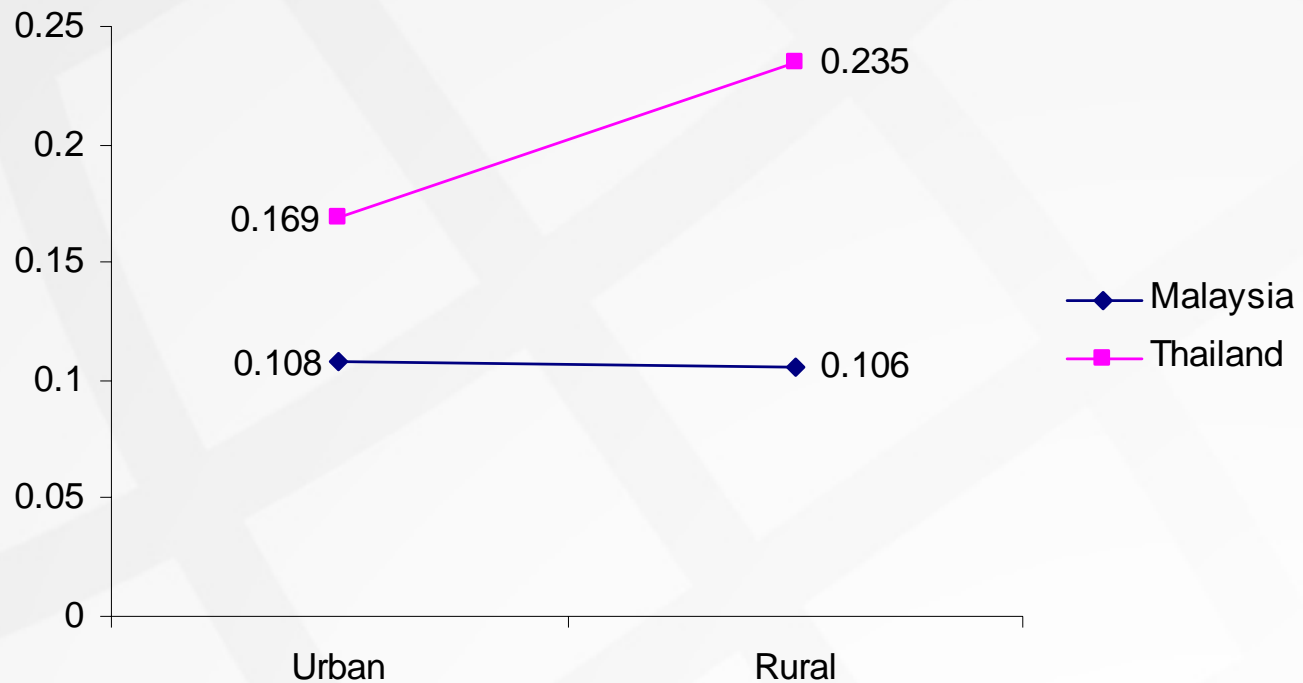
- Mean proportions of “Can’t Say” responses: Country x Education Level



Interaction: $F(2,3948) = 21.262, p < .001$

ITC-SEA: Response style differences

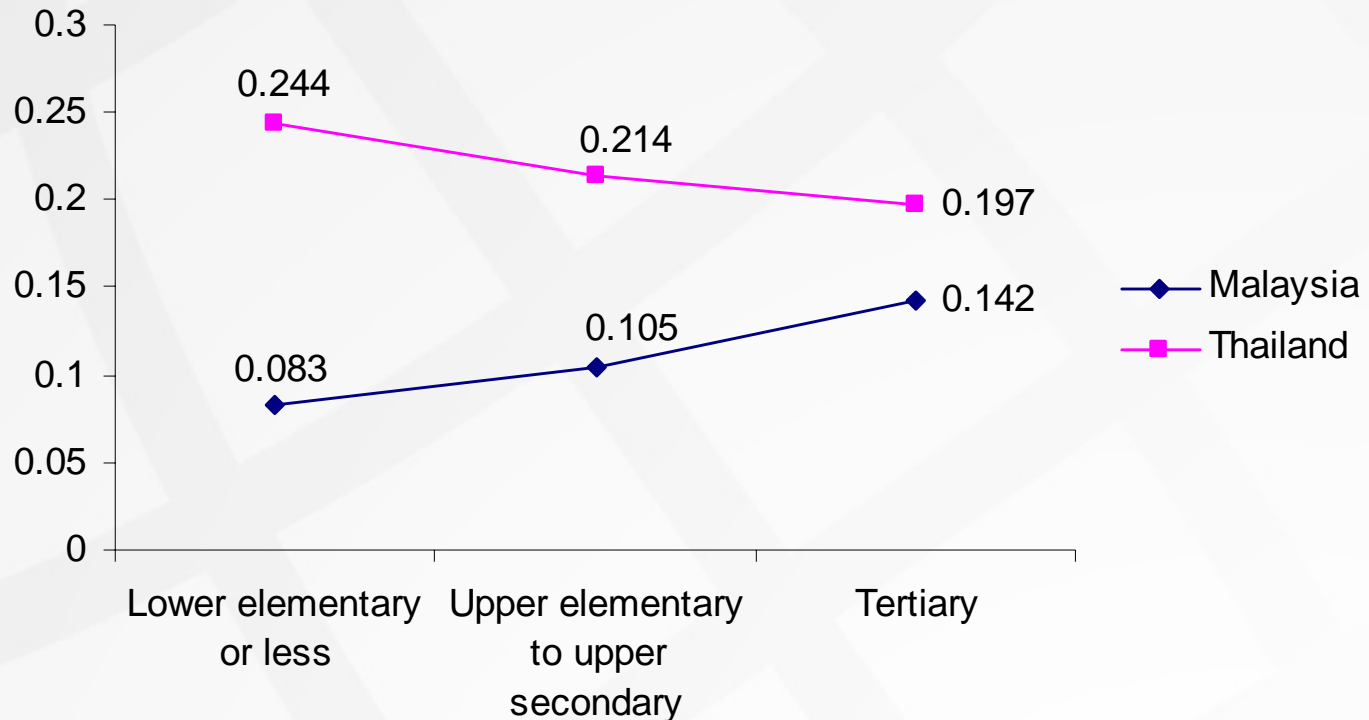
- Mean proportions of “Strong” opinion responses:
Country x Urban/Rural



Interaction: $F(1,4002) = 23.822, p < .001$

ITC-SEA: Response style differences

- Mean proportions of “Strong” opinion responses:
Country x Education Level



Interaction: $F(2,3948) = 6.185, p = .002$

Conclusions

- **Culture matters when surveying**
 - **Must be sensitive to cultural differences and expectations**
- **Grounding an understanding of cultural differences in responses to key questions may be a useful strategy**
- **Working with different cultures is a challenge**
 - **But it brings huge rewards**

International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project

<http://www.itcproject.org>



Research Support



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