Attitudes and Beliefs about Tobacco Smoke Pollution and Smoke-free Policies in Four Countries: Findings from the ITC Four-Country Collaboration

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for the ITC Collaboration

Background

- Ireland became the first nation to implement smoke-free worksite regulations that include bars and restaurants in March 2004.
- Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, Scotland, England and others have also passed similar regulations.

- Smoking in indoor public places is still the norm in the vast majority of nations worldwide.
- Little is known about the level of smoke-free policies in different countries, for different types of workplaces, or how policy adoption is related to knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about secondhand smoke (SHS).

Objective

To describe the varying levels of smoking policies in four countries in nationally representative samples of smokers, how these have changed since 2002, and how policy changes are related to SHS attitudes.

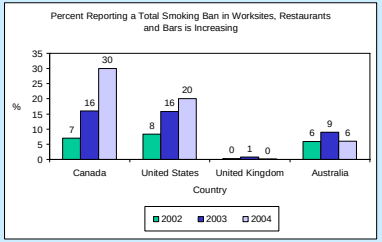
Methods

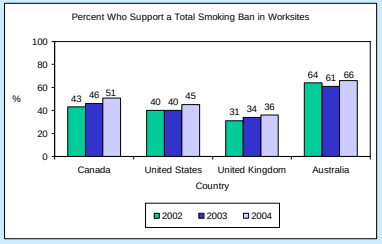
- The ITC-4 Survey
- Conducted ~annually since 2002 with a representative sample of adult smokers from four countries – Canada, United States, United Kingdom, and Australia
- Cohort and cross-sectional surveys
- Data included: 5,788 smokers in the 2002 International Tobacco Control 4-Country Survey (ITC-4) conducted in 2002 and resurveyed in 2003 (n=3,948) and 2004 (n=4,803) are also included.
- Cross-sectional data from 2002 (n=5,788), 2003 (n=5,049) and 2004 (n=4,803) are also included.
- Assessed in all three waves were…
  - –smoking behavior
  - –attitudes and beliefs about secondhand smoke
  - –smoking policies in worksites, restaurants and bars
- Smoking policy measures

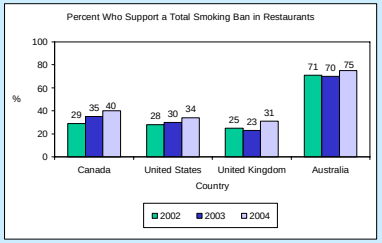
  Level of smoking policy was created as the sum of three measures:
  - – Presence of a Total Smoking Ban in Worksites
  - – Presence of a Total Smoking Ban in Restaurants
  - – Presence of a Total Smoking Ban in Bars

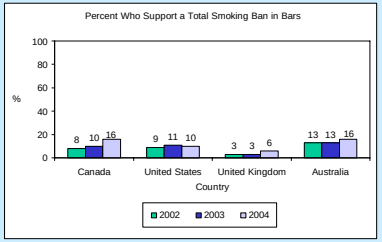
Results

Policy Levels and Support in 2002-2004

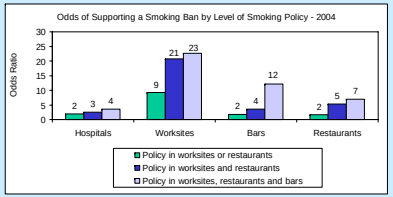


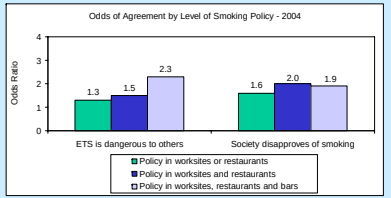






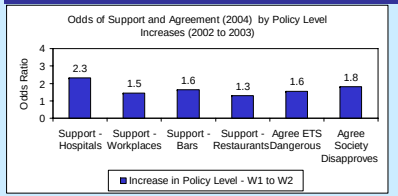
How SHS Policy is Associated with Changes in Beliefs – Cross-Sectional Look



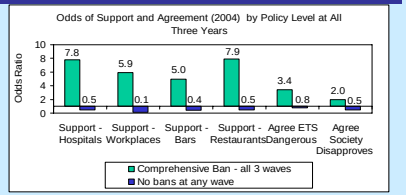


Reference category is the group who reported no policies in any of these places.

How SHS Policy is Associated with Changes in Beliefs – Prospective Look



Reference Category is no increase in policy level between Waves 1 and 2.



Reference category is the group who reported any change in policy level at any wave.

Note: Logistic Regression models control for policy level, age, gender, income, ethnicity, country, and heaviness of smoking index. Underlined odds ratios are statistically significant (p<0.05).

Summary

- More smokers are reporting smoke-free air rules in worksites, restaurants and bars across all four countries.
- Those who report stronger smoking policies in their worksites, restaurants and bars are more likely to support smoke-free air laws, both cross-sectionally and prospectively.
- Possible “Snowball Effect”.
  - – Those who become accustomed to a smoke-free worksites, restaurants, and other public places become less tolerant of secondhand smoke.

ITC Project Research Support