

The Sale and Marketing of Cigarettes, E-cigarettes, and Heated Tobacco Products Near Schools in Vietnam: Tactics that Target Youth



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Backgrounds and Methods

Bans on point-of-sale (POS) tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS) can reduce experimental smoking and tobacco use initiation in youth.

Vietnam's Tobacco Prevention and Control Law:

- Bans POS cigarette advertising and promotion and limits product displays to one unit per brand.
- Prohibits sale, advertising, and promotion of cigarettes within 100 meters of schools.

E-cigarettes and heated tobacco products (HTPs) are unregulated.

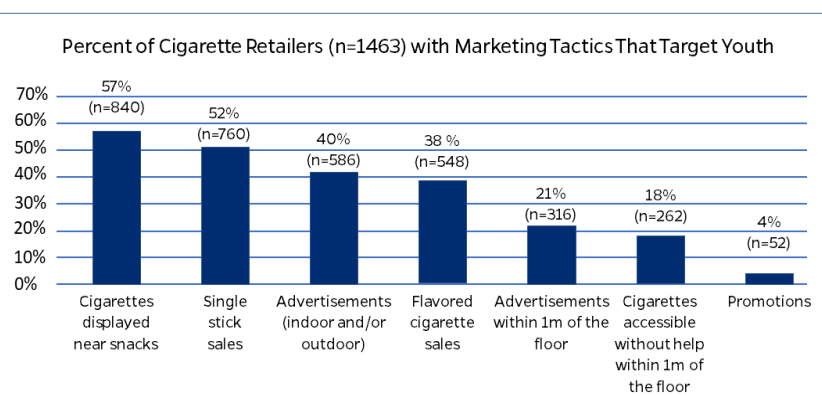
An observational study in urban and rural areas of ten Vietnamese cities (Ho Chi Minh City, Ha Noi, Da Nang, Hai Pho, Can Tho, Ha Tinh, Cam Pha, Tay Ninh, Hoa Binh, Buon Ho) assessed compliance with legislation and monitored the sale of cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and HTPs. From December 2021 to January 2022, all retailers (n=1470) within 100 meters of a school (n=371) or post office (n= 325) were observed for product displays, advertisements, and promotions.



Advertisement signage for cigarettes outside a retailer in Ha Noi.

Key Findings

- Almost all retailers sold cigarettes (n=1463), 12 sold e-cigarettes, and none sold HTPs.
- 69% (n=255) of schools had retailers (n=712) selling cigarettes within 100m.
- Retailers displayed more than one cigarette unit per brand (n=1081, 74%) and advertisements (n=586, 40%).
- Marketing tactics targeting youth were common at cigarette retailers. Signage prohibiting sales to youth was uncommon (n=174, 12%).



Conclusions

Cigarettes

- Youth are being targeted through point-of-sale cigarette displays and advertising in Vietnam.
- Bans on cigarette sales and advertising near schools and restrictions on POS displays are being violated. These regulations must be more strictly enforced.

E-cigarettes & HTPs

- Our sample had only 12 e-cigarette retailers. No HTP retailers were found.
- Researchers and regulators should consider other potential sales outlets, such as online sales, individuals (typically on streets) selling from trays/containers, or retailers further from schools.