

# COMPLIANCE WITH A BAN ON THE OPEN DISPLAY OF TOBACCO PACKAGING AND SINGLE CIGARETTES: AN OBSERVATION STUDY OF POINTS OF SALE IN MEXICO

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## BACKGROUND

Points of Sale (POS) play a vital role in tobacco promotion in Latin America. In Mexico, in 2023 the General Law for Tobacco Control prohibited the open display of tobacco products, as well as advertising, promotions and sponsorship. Since 1999, the sale of single cigarettes has been banned at POS. **We examined compliance with these laws at POS near schools in Mexico.**

## METHODS

Between May and June 2023, POS were monitored in four cities: 15 municipalities in Mexico City; Guadalajara in Jalisco; Monterrey in Nuevo Leon; and Juchitan in Oaxaca. Different neighborhoods were randomly selected in each city based on their socio-economic status (SES). An adaptation of the ‘Tobacco Packaging Surveillance System’ (TPackSS) protocol was used to define walking routes, using schools as starting points, and to evaluate the display of tobacco products at POS (street vendors, kiosks, neighborhood stores, convenience stores, and supermarkets) on these routes.

## RESULTS

A total of 504 POS were visited across the four cities. Of these, **245 (48.6%) did not comply with the law that bans the open display of tobacco products.** 138 POS (27.4%) displayed only single cigarettes. Among them, 63.8% were neighborhood stores, 23.2% street vendors, and 12.3% kiosks (Fig.1), with these POS concentrated in Mexico City (42.8%) and Oaxaca (49.3%) (Fig.2). Additionally, 95 POS (18.8%) displayed only cigarette packs, with non-compliance highest in convenience stores (65.3%) and neighborhood stores (30.5%) (Fig.1). The display of cigarette packs was found in all cities: Monterrey (38.9%), Mexico City (30.5%), Oaxaca (17.9%), and Guadalajara (12.6%) (Fig.1). In 12 POS, both packs and single cigarettes were displayed (2.4%), mainly in Oaxaca (66.7%) (Fig.2) and predominantly in neighborhood stores (83.3%) (Fig.1). 259 POS did not display any tobacco products.



Image 1. Convenience store example

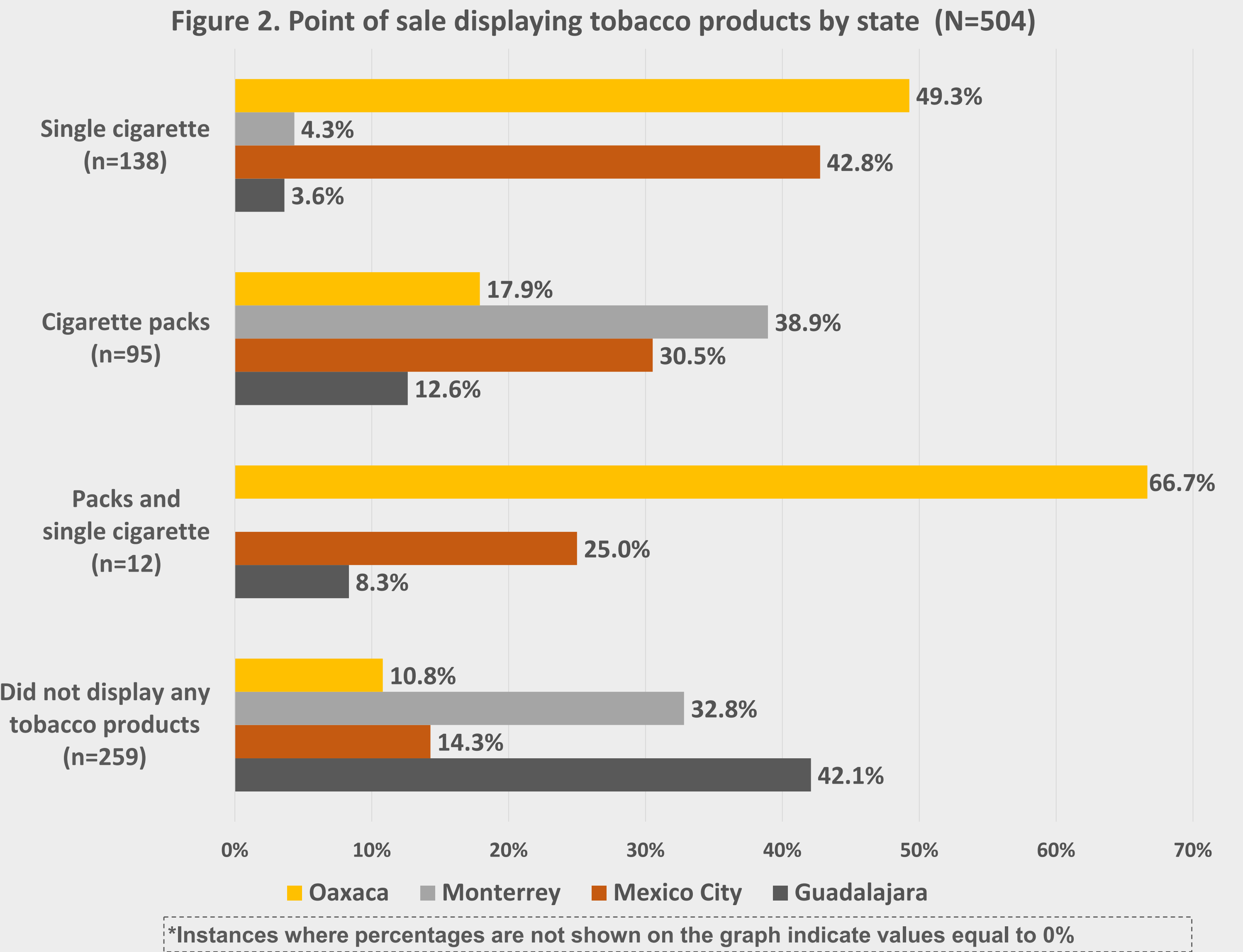
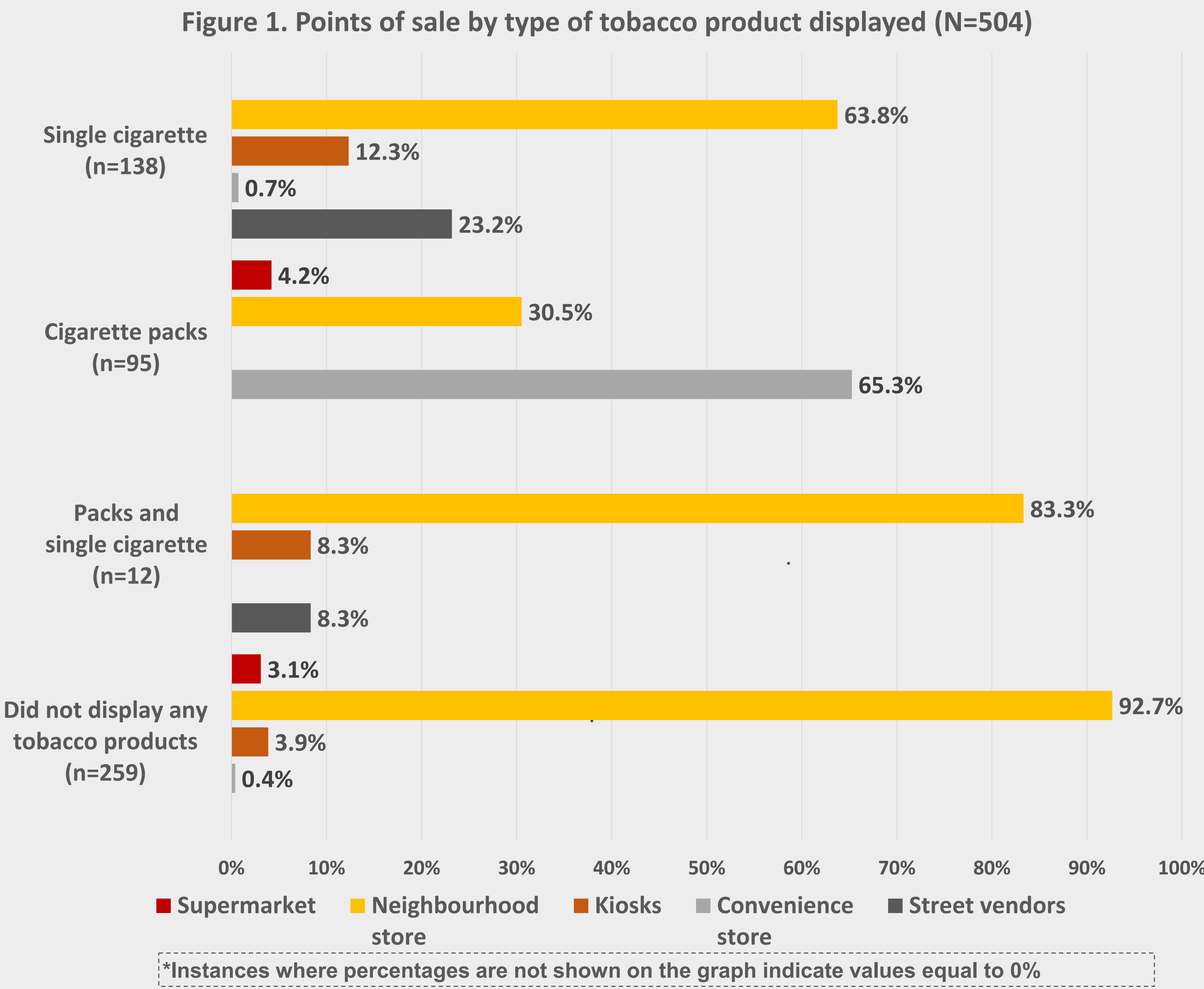


Image 2. Neighborhood store example



Image 3. Street vendors example

The association between socioeconomic status (SES) and the exclusive display of individual cigarettes was noted across all SES categories, with a higher prevalence in the low (42.8%) and medium (34.1%) SES levels. Meanwhile, the exclusive display of cigarette packages was more common in low (28.4%) and high (32.6%) SES neighborhoods. Combined displays were equally distributed in low- and middle-SES neighborhoods (41.7% each).



## CONCLUSION

**Our study revealed non-compliance with the tobacco product display law in just under half of the points of sale in the four cities of Mexico.** These findings underscore the need for enhanced monitoring of law enforcement and compliance, as well as implementation of stricter measures to ensure execution.



### Conflict of interest disclosure

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