



Health-Risk Perception and Attitude toward Walking and Bicycling among the Urbanized Population, Thailand

Nakornkhet , Kasem

Physical Activity Program

Thai Health Promotion Foundation, Thailand



Introduction

Currently, Alcohol used, smoking, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity, in Thai adult, explain the high prevalence of NCD, namely; hypertension, diabetes, hypercholesterolemia, leading to cardiovascular diseases (CVD). Particularly, those who are living in the urban areas around the country, and has been identified as middle-low to low income, pay no attention on supplementary exercise in day-to-day basis. Physical activity in daily routine, therefore, play a major roles to promote health and prevention of NCD/CVD risk factors among the urbanized people. Walking and bicycling has become best-recommended and been practiced in the large city over the world. To introduce walking and bicycling to Thai context , one need to aware of a public's responses on the matter.

Purposes: 1) to explore NCD/CVD risk perception and attitude toward walking, bicycling, as well as helmet used among the people in the inner city areas. 2) to investigate an opinion toward policy enhancement among the high level administrators at GO, NGO, and local government regarding to walking and bicycling operation in the inner city areas.

Methods

Health risk-perceptions and attitude toward walking and bicycling has been applied to explore a public's responses if pedestrians, handicap persons, and bikers are sharing traffic space along with the car. Structured interview were also utilized to figure out the administrators' response to the movement to promote walking and bicycling in the city. Sample size of 1000 of the resident , and 100 of policy maker at the local government, from 5 majors city around the country has been participated in the study. Survey data were analyzed using SPSS, while interview information has been submitted to an interpretative content analysis .

Results

1..Most of the sample group response that they are aware of susceptibility and severity of obesity , hypertension , diabetes , cardiovascular diseases , and stroke. They are also perceived that walking and bicycling would be beneficial for NCD prevention, and strongly agree to wear helmet when biking as most of them prefer to pay 500 baht for the standard products. They perceived lack of time available, no partner, and un-safe bike lane are among the significant barriers of going out for biking.

Figure 1 Perceive Susceptibility for Obesity

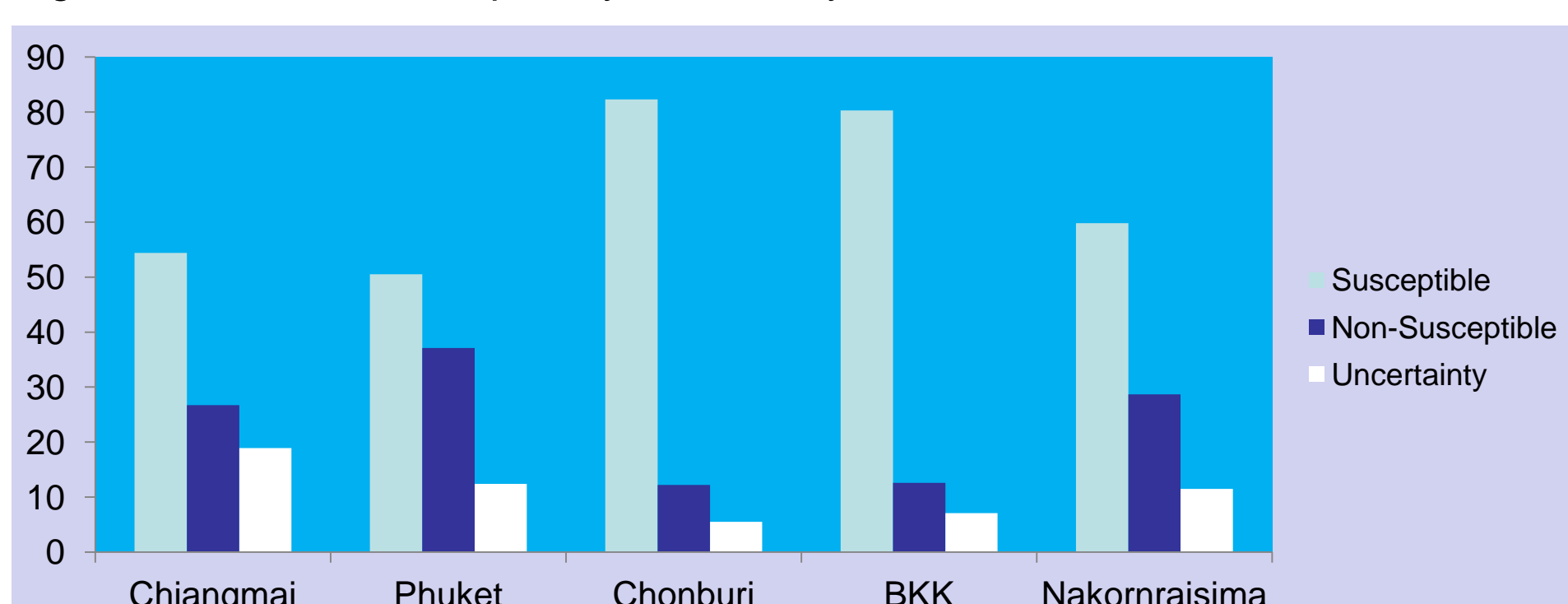


Figure 2 Perceive Susceptibility for Diabetes

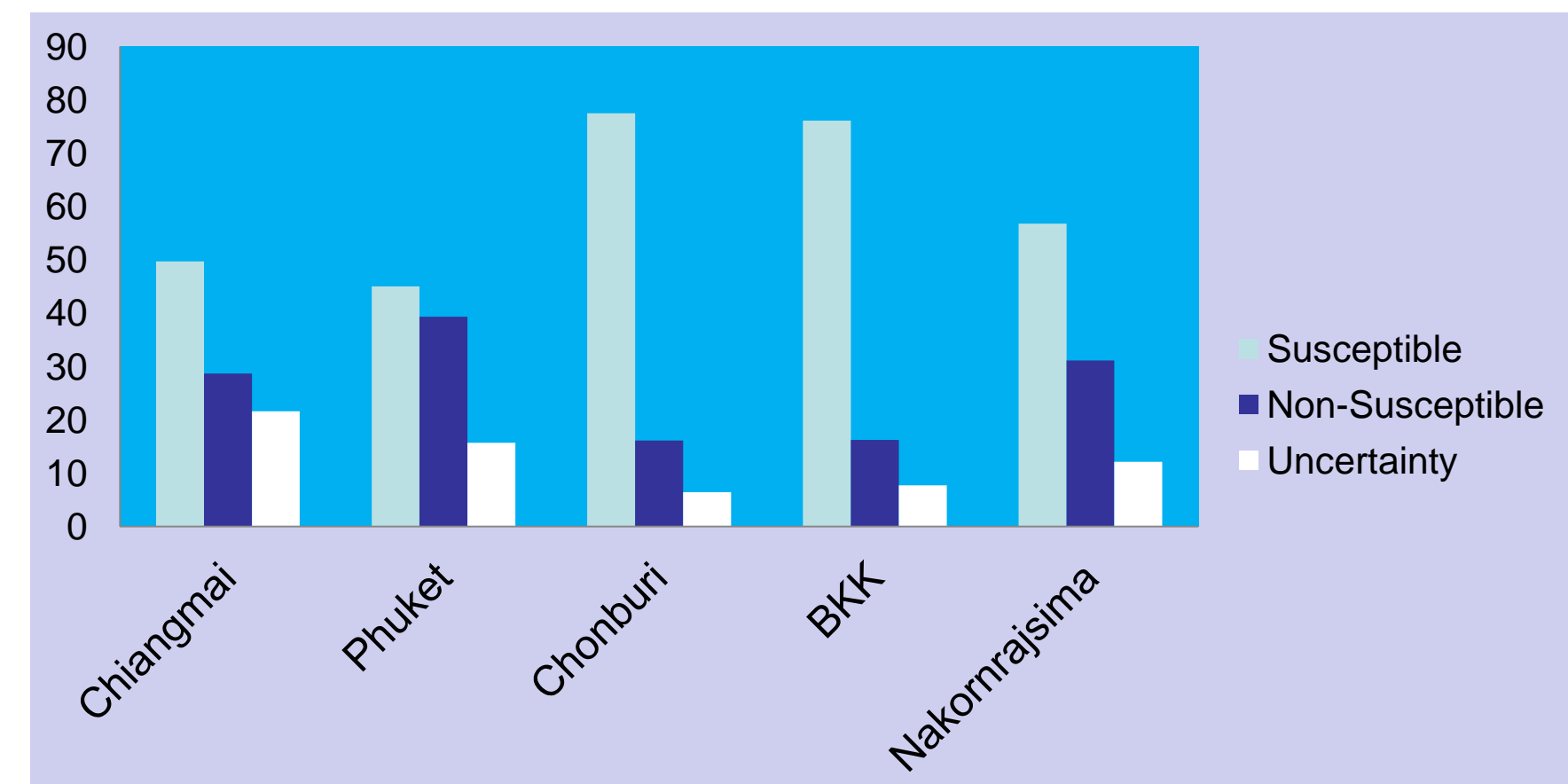
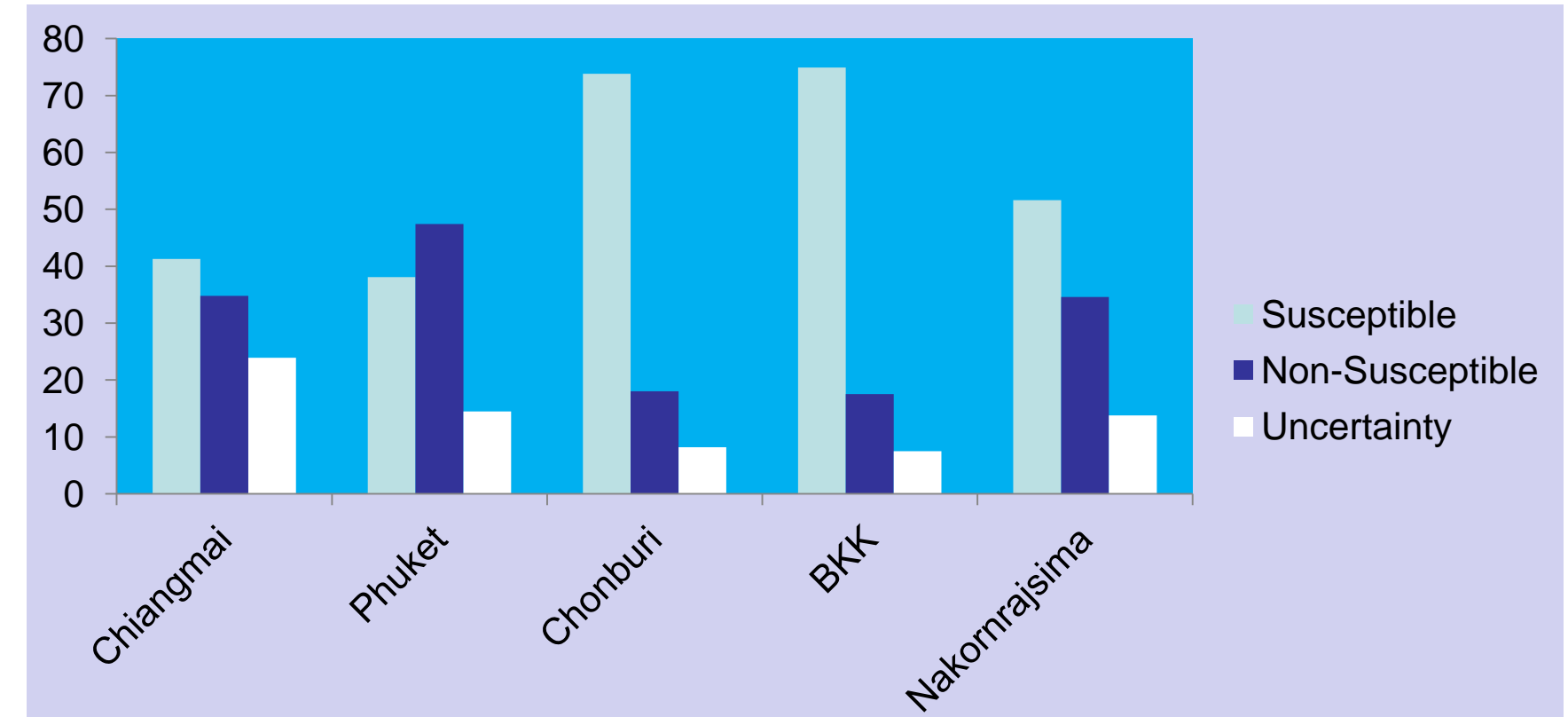
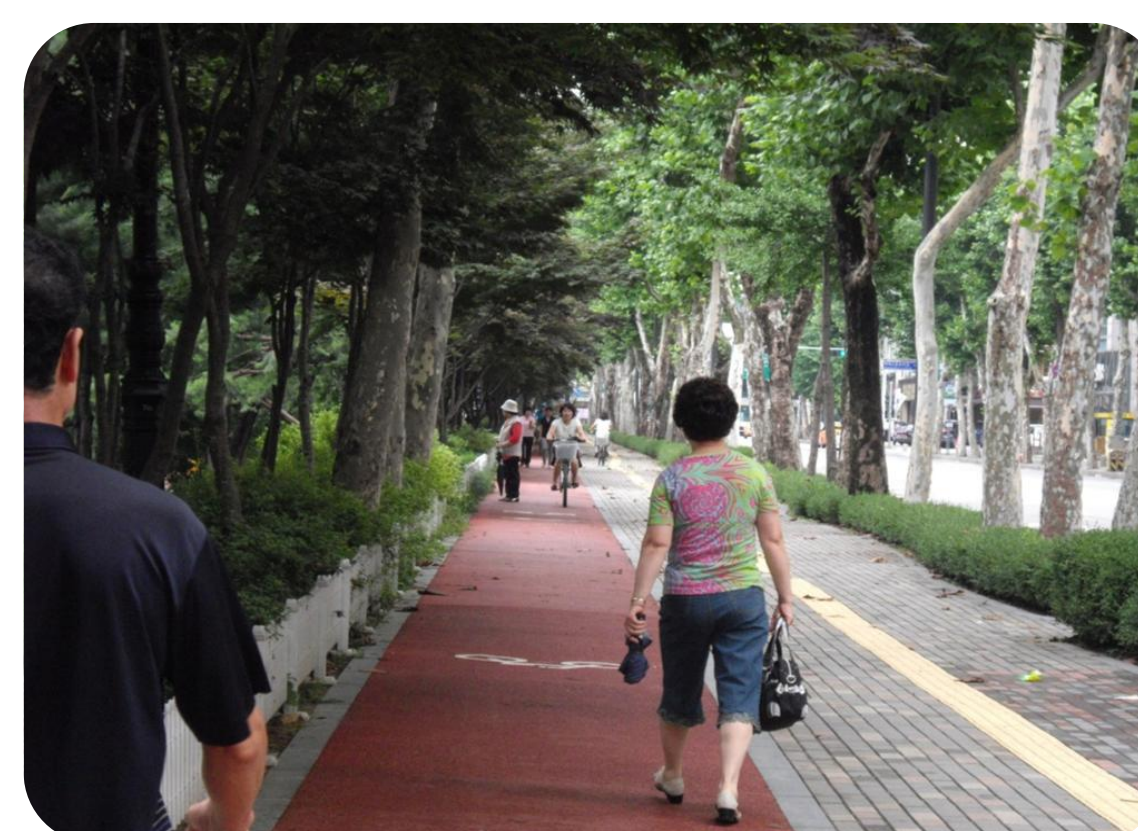


Figure 3 Perceive Susceptibility for Cardiovascular Disease



2.Regarding to attitude toward walking and bicycling, the sample group perceive that people walking or bicycling on the road are being obstruct, cause of traffic congestion, and car accident.

3.Policy maker at the local government mostly agree to promote walking and use of bicycles for short distance travelling and also well aware of safety environment. They expect to see an initiative policy from the central government and ready to practice promptly.



Conclusions

The finding showed significant health risk-perception among the inner city resident as they well aware that they are susceptible to NCD , and perceive the beneficial of physical activity, through walking and bicycling, as a preventive mean to the diseases . They are also agree to do bicycling with standard helmet on. Apparently, the sample group holding negative attitude toward walking and bicycling on the road as a potential causes of car accident .Meanwhile, the policy maker at the local level express their well support to the issues, but the policy should be initiated by the central government. The results of this study serve as a ground root information for further policy advocacy in walking and bicycling movement in Thai context.