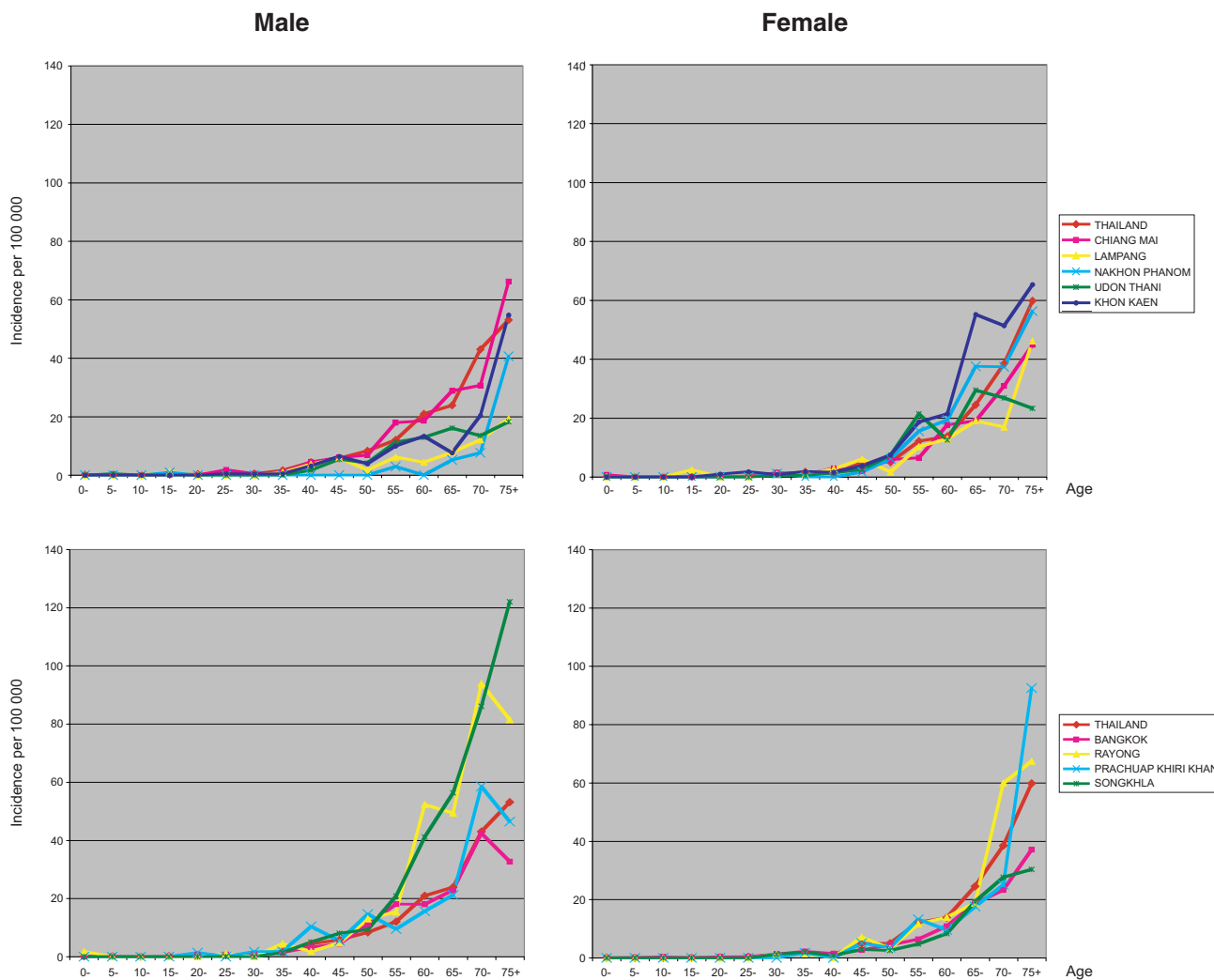


Figure 2.2.2 Age-specific incidence rates of oral cavity cancer, 1998-2000



Thailand also found a similar result with RR of 12.5. A recent population-based case-control study (Hirunwatthanakul *et al.*, 2006) in Na Mom, Songkhla demonstrated a relationship of radium contaminated well water consumption and cancer of the upper digestive tract including oral cavity. This finding may explain the exceptionally high incidence of oral cancer in the southern part of the country where uranium and its daughter el-

ement, radium, are common in the underground granite rock. However, the evidence has to be confirmed by other studies and the reason behind the high incidence rate of the cancer on the eastern part of the country should also be investigated.

A number of molecular studies have been done on oral cancer cases. Betel quid chewing and tobacco smoking habit (Kerdpon *et al.*, 2001) showed a trend of de-

creasing risk of p53 expression with lifetime exposure (OR = 0.62 and 0.50 respectively). There were also other studies on p53 mutation and risk factors of oral cancer (Thongsuksai *et al.*, 2001; Thongsuksai *et al.*, 2003), however, the evidences were not conclusive. Studies have been done on a group of genes involving in metabolizing enzymes and DNA repair (Kietthubthew *et al.*, 2001; Kietthubthew *et al.*, 2003; Kietthubthew *et al.*, 2005).