

## A Study on Risk-Taking Behaviour of Youth: The Future Workforce

Mamta Chauhan<sup>1</sup>, Tripti Bisawa<sup>2</sup>, Yashaswani Chauhan<sup>3</sup>, Ajapa A Chomal<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Professor, IIHMR University, Jaipur

<sup>2</sup>Professor, IIHMR University, Jaipur

<sup>3</sup>Data Journalist, The Hindu, Chennai

<sup>4</sup>Senior Research Officer, State Institute of Health and Family Welfare, Rajasthan

### Abstract

Youth risk-taking behaviour is a growing concern worldwide. In India, risk-taking behaviour among youth has increased dramatically in recent years. Risky behaviours such as substance abuse, reckless driving, unprotected sex, and extreme sports have become more prevalent among Indian youth.

**Objectives:** The study aimed to evaluate and comprehend the risks that young people in Jaipur city, Rajasthan, are taking.

**Method:** The study was conducted with a sample of 100 youth aged between 16 and 21 years from different socio-economic backgrounds. The data was collected through a questionnaire, and 10 in-depth interviews were conducted.

**Results:** The results showed the gender disparities in youth behaviour, with males more likely to engage in physical fights (76.9%) and less likely to be bullied (28.2%), while 26.2% females experience electronic bullying. Males demonstrate higher engagement in bike riding but lower helmet usage, while seat belt usage is generally high among both genders, with slightly higher consistency among males. The concerning issue of suicidal thoughts and planning, particularly among females, emphasizes the need for mental health support and intervention to address these serious concerns.

### Keywords:

Youth, Risk-taking behaviour, Gender disparity

### Introduction

India has the youngest population in the world, as the working-age population is more than the non-working-age population. This is an opportunity for the young population with high potential to lead the world, but what is necessary for this is the efficient utilization of this demographic dividend. There is a need to develop an understanding of preferences and perceptions of the youth to formulate and establish policies and programmes that can facilitate and create an environment for the young generation to lead the country's development activities. It has been observed that adolescents, during this crucial phase of life, undergo several biological, psychological, and social changes and indulge in risk-taking behaviour that may lead to adverse outcomes on their mental and physical health. It is very necessary to understand the risk-taking behaviours of the country's future workforce. If a youth's psychological and physical state is sound, they can only contribute to the nation's growth.

Jaipur, a city in North-West India, has seen an increase in youth risk-taking behaviour in recent years. Therefore, this study intends to explore the various forms of risk-taking behaviours prevalent among youth in Jaipur and their potential consequences.

Recent studies have reported high rates of risky behaviour among youth in Jaipur. To ascertain the proportion of teenagers who drive any vehicle and engage in risk-taking behavior, Dobhal, Kashyap, and Bhadoria (2019) carried out an observational, cross-sectional study using the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) questionnaire to assess the road traffic behavior of school-going adolescents in Jaipur, Rajasthan. (Dobhal et al., 2019). According to Dobhal, Kashyap, and Bhadoria's (2019) research, 88% of teenage drivers show risk-taking behavior when driving, indicating that most adolescent drivers put themselves in danger when driving. The two most significant risk factors are using a cell phone while driving and driving without a license or a helmet. (Dobhal et al., 2019, 2022).

In a study on N.C.C. cadets in Jaipur, Saxena and Puri (2013) investigated the relationship between personality, risk-taking behavior, and sensation-seeking tendencies. They discovered cadets enjoy experiencing new sensations because of their personality traits, which incite the youth's desire for sensation seeking. (Saxena, 2013). In their study on risk-taking behavior among secondary and higher secondary school students, Kansara and Makvana (2020) found that gender, area (rural/urban), and school type (secondary/Higher secondary) did not significantly interact with risk-taking behavior. (Kansara & Makvana, 2020).

According to National Crime Bureau data, 31,170 complaints were filed against juveniles in 2021 (a) 4.7% rise from the 29,768 cases filed in 2020. The crime rate rose from 6.7% in 2020 to 7.0% in 2021. Approximately 76.2 percent of minors who are apprehended for violating the IPC and SLL charges are within the 16–18 age range. (Crime in India -2021, 2021; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare & IIPS, 2019). This shows that the cadets like to experience new sensations around them because of their personality traits. We can infer that their personality traits trigger the sensation-seeking tendencies accordingly. The more outgoing person would have a higher sensation-seeking tendency, as the correlation in the result is positive.

## Methodology

**Aims and Objectives of the study:** The study aimed to gather a comprehensive understanding of several aspects related to risk-taking behaviour in the youth of Jaipur city, including involvement in physical fights, experiences of bullying, bike riding habits, seat belt usage, alcohol-related behaviours, and suicidal thoughts. The main objective of this study is to assess and understand the diverse behavioural patterns and experiences exhibited by youth in the city of Jaipur, Rajasthan.

**Research Design:** An observational descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted from December 2022 to March 2023 in Jaipur City.

Inclusion Criteria for the youth were as follows

1. Undergraduate college students.
2. Regular college-going students.

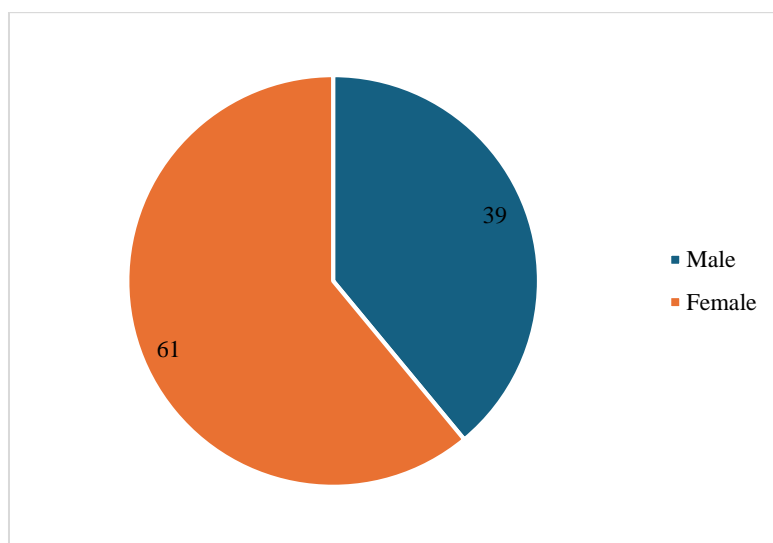
Exclusion criteria for the youth were as follows

1. Youth who did not give consent.
2. PG students
3. Students attending online classes.

**Sample Size:** One hundred college-going students of Jaipur were part of this study. Ten in-depth interviews were conducted with young people in Jaipur who engaged in risk behaviours.

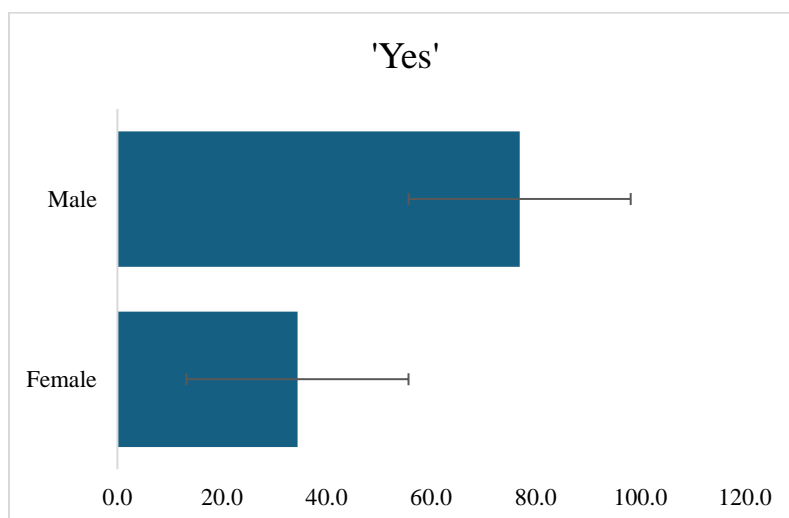
**Tools:** The study used a questionnaire adapted and designed according to the standardized questionnaire used in the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) as the primary data collection tool. YRBSS is a national surveillance system developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in collaboration with state and local education and health agencies in the United States to monitor the health-risk behaviours, including drug and alcohol use, sexual behaviour, violence, and mental health among youth and young adults. The questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended questions,

## Results:



*Figure 1 Respondents: Male and Female.*

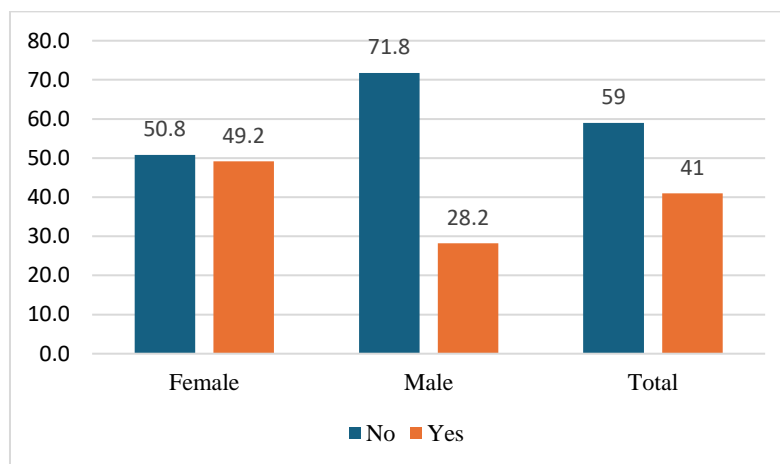
Out of 100 youth who participated in the survey, 61 were female and 39 were Male.



*Figure 2 Involvement in the fight*

When enquired about Involvement in physical fights, 65.6% of female participants indicated that they have not been involved in a physical battle, while 34.4% reported having engaged in such altercations. On the other hand, a significantly higher percentage of male participants, 76.9%, claimed to have been involved in physical fights, with only 23.1% stating that they have not.

These findings highlight a gender disparity in the prevalence of physical fights among the surveyed population. The higher percentage of male participants reporting involvement in physical altercations suggests that males may be more prone to engage in such confrontations compared to females. This observation aligns with societal stereotypes and cultural expectations regarding male aggression and confrontational behaviour.



*Figure 3 Bullied at School Property*

The graph shows the percentage of respondents who reported being bullied or not. In the female group, 50.8% stated that they have not been bullied on school property, while 49.2% shared that they have experienced bullying. On the other hand, among male participants, 71.8% reported not being bullied, whereas 28.2% mentioned having been bullied. Overall, 59% of all respondents indicated they have not experienced bullying, while 41% reported being victims of bullying.

Have you ever been electronically bullied?	Female	Male	Total
Maybe	34.4	41.0	37.0
No	39.3	48.7	43.0
Yes	26.2	10.3	20.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Table 1 Male and Female participants' experiences regarding electronic bullying.*

The data suggests that a significant proportion of both male and female participants have experienced uncertainty regarding electronic bullying, with 37.0% responding "Maybe" to the question. However, 43.0% of all participants reported not experiencing electronic bullying, while 20.0% confirmed being victims of such behavior. This indicates a noteworthy occurrence of electronic bullying among the surveyed population, particularly among females (26.2%)

compared to males (10.3%). It is important to note that the category "Maybe" suggests uncertainty or a lack of clear distinction in the participants' experiences. This could indicate that they are unsure about whether they have encountered electronic bullying or have not fully defined their experiences as such.

The age for getting a valid vehicle license is 18 in India, but for a gearless car, it is 16. When enquired about their behaviour while driving, there are noticeable variations in bike riding habits between genders. Among females, a significant proportion of 42.6% reported not riding bikes at all. This could indicate personal preference, cultural norms, safety concerns, or limited bicycle access. In comparison, only 12.8% of males mentioned not riding a bike, suggesting that a larger percentage of males engage in cycling activities.

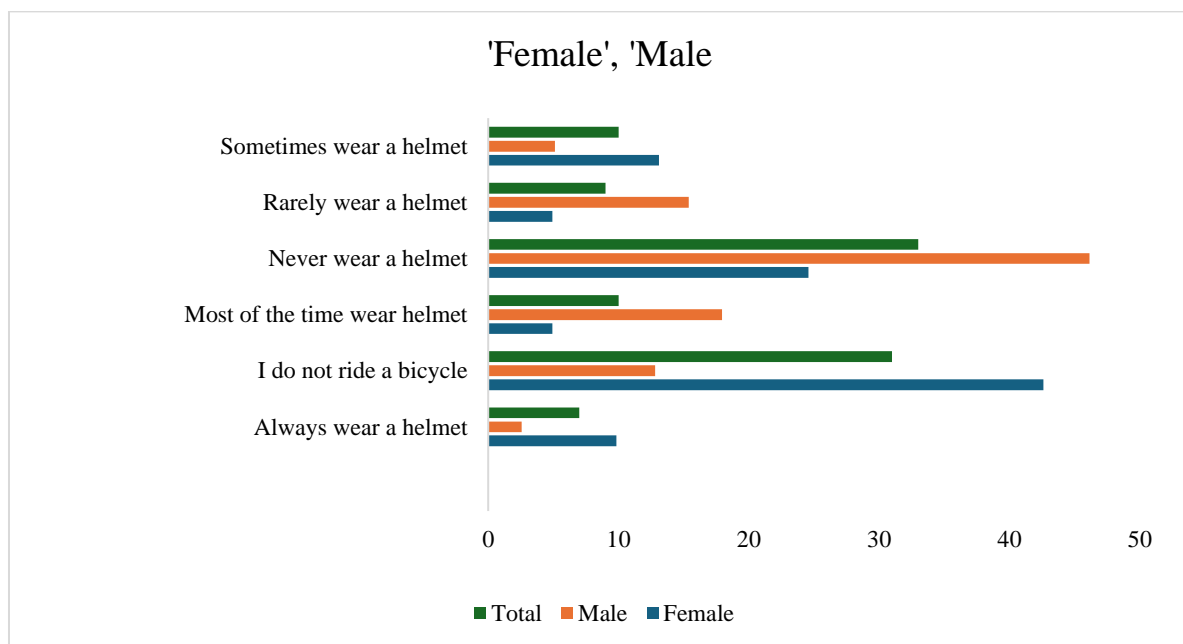


Figure 4 Frequency of helmet usage

Furthermore, when considering the frequency of helmet usage, the data reveals differences between male and female respondents. Females appear more conscientious about wearing helmets, with 9.8% reporting always wearing one, compared to only 2.6% of males. This suggests that females may prioritize safety and adhere to helmet-wearing guidelines more consistently than males. On the other hand, when examining those who never wear helmets, the data depicts that a higher percentage of males (46.2%) fall into this category than females (24.6%). This could be attributed to risk-taking behavior, perception of helmet necessity, or cultural attitudes towards helmet usage.

Overall, the data highlights gender disparities in bicycle riding habits. More females reported not riding bicycles, while more males engage in cycling activities. Females tend to demonstrate a higher inclination towards wearing helmets, while males have a higher proportion of non-helmet users. Understanding these differences can help inform strategies to promote bicycle riding and safety measures, aiming for a more inclusive and responsible biking culture for all genders. However, this behaviour was the opposite of wearing a seat belt while driving; approximately 71.8% of males mentioned that they always wear a seat belt, showing a firm

adherence to safety measures. Around 18.0% mentioned wearing a seat belt most of the time. A small percentage of 7.7% admitted to rarely wearing a seat belt, and only 2.6% mentioned wearing one sometimes. For males, the data demonstrate a higher rate of seat belt usage.

Among females, approximately 39.3% said they always wear a seat belt while riding in a car. A significant majority (54.1%) mentioned that they, most of the time, wear a seat belt. Only a small percentage, 3.3% admitted to rarely wearing a seat belt, while another 3.3% mentioned wearing one sometimes. When considering the data collectively, approximately 52.0% of all respondents across genders claimed always to wear a seat belt while riding in a car. A significant portion of 40.0% mentioned that they usually wear a seat belt, emphasizing the importance of wearing a seat belt. A small percentage of 5.0% admitted to rarely wearing a seat belt, while only 3.0% mentioned wearing one sometimes.

These statistics highlight a generally positive trend in seat belt usage, with most respondents emphasizing the importance of wearing seat belts for safety while riding in cars. Males appear to demonstrate a higher rate of consistent seat belt usage, with a significant majority reporting consistently wearing one. Females, although slightly lower in seat belt usage than males, still adhere to seat belt usage overall.

The data indicates that most respondents prioritize seat belt usage, demonstrating a responsible approach to car safety. These findings underscore the importance of ongoing awareness campaigns and education to encourage seat belt usage for all individuals, regardless of gender, to promote safer journeys on the road.

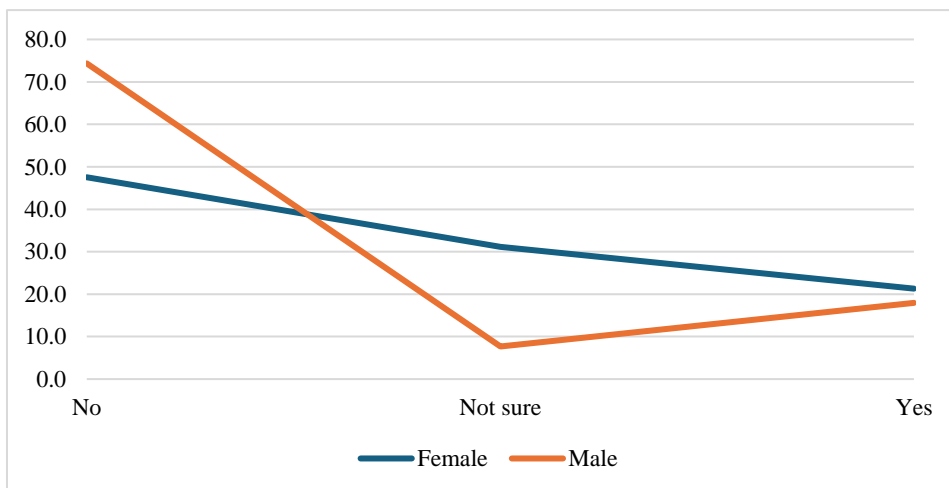


Figure 5 Have you ever taken a ride in a car driven by someone who had consumed alcohol?'

When asked about riding in a car driven by someone who had consumed alcohol, approximately 58% of all respondents across both genders answered "No," stating that they have never taken a ride in a car driven by someone who had consumed alcohol. A smaller percentage of 22.0% responded "Not sure," indicating uncertainty about their experiences. Only around 20% of respondents answered "Yes," acknowledging that they have taken a ride in a car driven by someone who had consumed alcohol.

These statistics highlight that a majority of respondents, regardless of gender, have not experienced a ride in a car driven by someone who had consumed alcohol. However, a notable percentage of individuals expressed uncertainty about their experiences, suggesting a lack of clarity or recall. A smaller proportion of respondents admitted taking a ride in such a situation.

It is important to note that riding in a car driven by someone under the influence of alcohol is highly dangerous and increases the risk of accidents. The data underscores the need for continued education and awareness campaigns to promote responsible behavior and discourage driving while intoxicated.

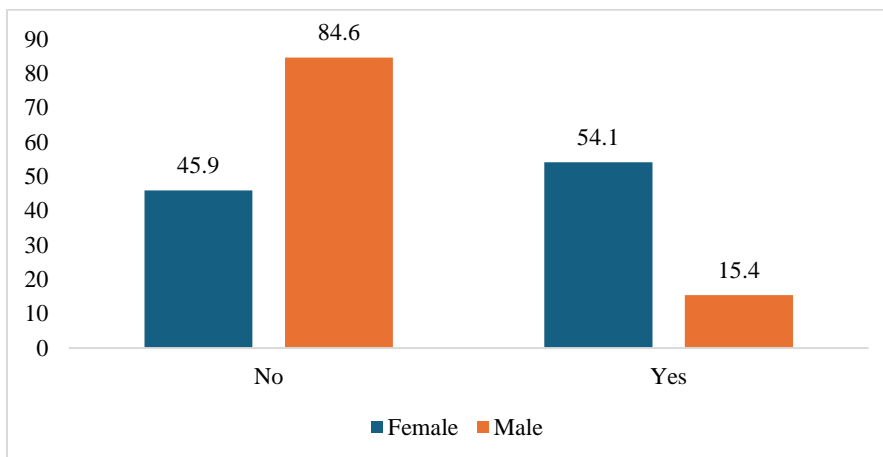


Figure 6 Have you ever seriously thought about killing yourself?

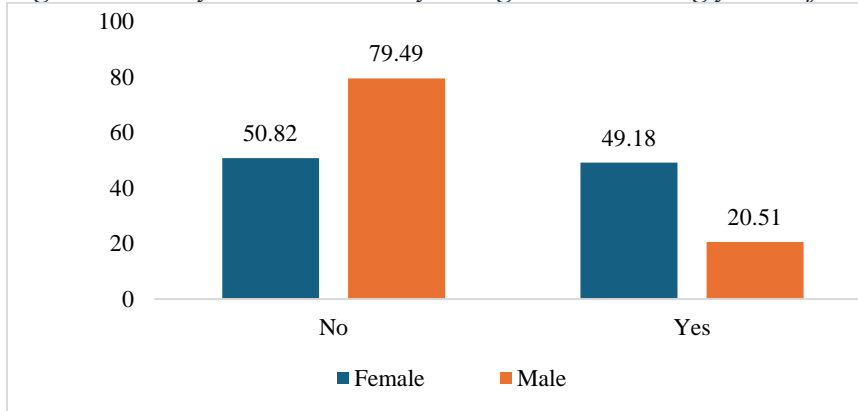


Figure 7 Have you ever made a plan about how you would kill yourself?

When they were asked about having a serious thought of killing themselves, data suggests that a higher percentage of females (54.1%) have had serious thoughts about suicide compared to males (15.4%). However, it is essential to note that these numbers are just statistics and do not capture the complexity of individual experiences or the reasons behind these thoughts. When asked about whether they had planned for killing themselves, 20.51% boys and 49.18% girls reported having made a plan for killing themselves.

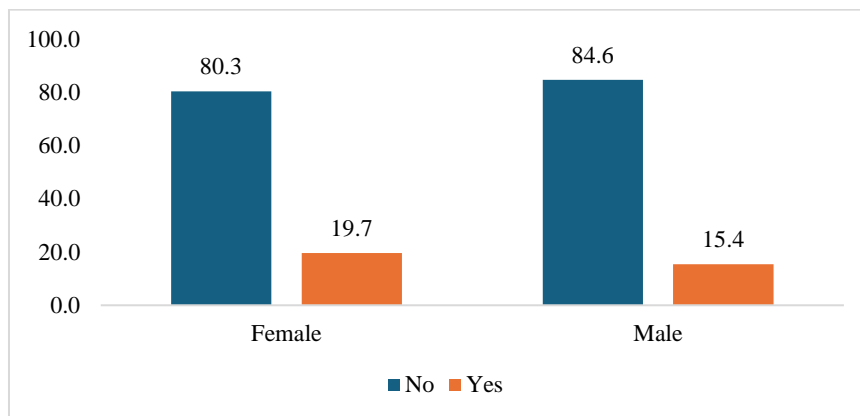


Figure 8 Have you ever smoked a cigarette, even one or two puffs?

The data presented in the table reveals the prevalence of cigarette experimentation among individuals based on their gender. The results demonstrate that a majority of the respondents, approximately 82%, reported that they have never smoked a cigarette, even just one or two puffs. This finding indicates a relatively low level of initial engagement with smoking among the surveyed population.

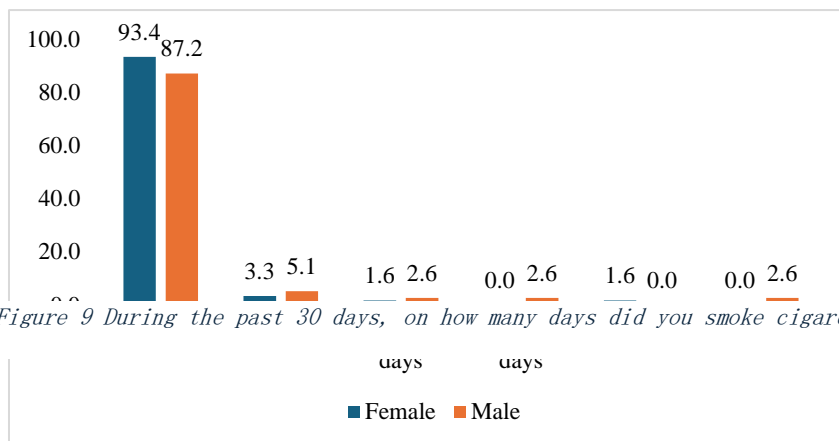


Figure 9 During the past 30 days, on how many days did you smoke cigarettes?

When examining the data by gender, it is observed that a slightly higher proportion of males (84.6%) than females (80.3%) reported abstaining from smoking. Conversely, the data indicates that a minority of respondents, constituting approximately 18%, acknowledged having tried smoking, even if it was only for a brief period, with slightly higher percentages among females (19.7%) compared to males (15.4%).

The data suggests that most females (91%) and males (87.2%) did not smoke cigarettes in the past 30 days. However, there is a small percentage of individuals who reported smoking on certain days, with varying frequencies ranging from 1 or 2 days to 10 to 19 days. The data also indicates that a tiny proportion of males (2.6%) smoked cigarettes for the majority of the month, either 20 to 29 days or all 30 days.

## Conclusion

Gender disparities exist in various aspects of youth behavior and experiences. For instance, males are more likely to be involved in physical fights and less likely to be bullied on school property compared to females. Females, on the other hand, tend to experience higher rates of electronic bullying.



There are variations in bike riding habits between genders, with a larger percentage of males engaging in cycling activities than females. Females demonstrate higher levels of helmet usage, while males have a higher proportion of non-helmet users.

Seat belt usage is generally high among both genders, with males exhibiting a slightly higher rate of consistent seat belt usage than females.

Riding in a car driven by someone who has consumed alcohol is a concerning behavior reported by a significant percentage of respondents, emphasizing the need for continued efforts to discourage driving under the influence.

The data highlights a concerning issue of suicidal thoughts, particularly among females, with a significant proportion reporting serious thoughts of self-harm. Additionally, a considerable percentage of females and males have reported planning for suicide, indicating a need for mental health support and intervention.

### **Recommendations**

Implement targeted interventions to address the gender disparities observed in physical fights and bullying experiences, providing support and resources to both females and males.

Promote inclusive bike riding initiatives, encouraging more females to engage in cycling through bike-sharing programs and promoting safety measures like helmet usage.

Continue educational campaigns to promote seat belt usage among both genders, focusing on increasing awareness among males and encouraging consistent usage.

Strengthen efforts to discourage driving under the influence of alcohol, including stricter enforcement, public awareness campaigns, and education on the potential risks and consequences.

Prioritize mental health support and intervention programs, particularly targeting females who report higher rates of suicidal thoughts and planning. Provide accessible resources, counseling services, and raise awareness about mental health issues.

Implementing these recommendations has the potential to address the observed gender disparities and improve overall well-being and safety among youth.

### **Presentation or awards at a meeting**

No presentations or awards have been given.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

### **Ethical Approval**

Ethical approval for this study is not required.

### **Participant consent.**

This article contains no studies performed by the authors with human participants or animals.

### Sources of support and funding

No support or funding was given to the study.

### Ethical Approval or Institutional Review Board Approval

No ethical approval or institutional board review approval is required for the said research paper.

### References:

1. Crime in India -2021. (2021). *The National Crime Bureau report of 2021*. <https://ncrb.gov.in/en/Crime-in-India-2021>
2. Dobhal, P., Dobhal, A., Kashyap, A., & Bhadoria, A. (2019). Assessment of road traffic behavior using Youth Risk Behavior Survey questionnaire among school-going adolescents of Jaipur city, Rajasthan: An observational analysis. *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care*, 8(11), 3595. [https://doi.org/10.4103/jfmmpc.jfmmpc\\_494\\_19](https://doi.org/10.4103/jfmmpc.jfmmpc_494_19)
3. Dobhal, P., Kashyap, A., Dobhal, A., & Mattas, S. (2022). Substance abuse – An emerging problem among school-going adolescents of Jaipur, Rajasthan. *Asian Journal of Medical Sciences*, 13(9), 156–163. <https://doi.org/10.3126/ajms.v13i9.44381>
4. Kansara, P. H., & Makvana, S. M. (2020). A study of risk taking behaviour among secondary and higher secondary school students. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 20(3), 1869–1875. <https://doi.org/10.25215/0803.193>
5. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, G., & IIPS. (2019). *Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS-4) India 2019: Report*. International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai. [https://ntcp.mohfw.gov.in/assets/document/surveys-reports-publications/GYTS\\_4\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://ntcp.mohfw.gov.in/assets/document/surveys-reports-publications/GYTS_4_Final_Report.pdf)
6. Saxena, N. (2013). Relationship between Risk Taking Behaviour, Personality and Sensation Seeking Tendencies among N.C.C cadets. *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science*, 18(3), 01–06. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-1830106>