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**A Study on Government Regulation Banning Polythene Gutkha Sachets: Empirical
Research on People Perception**

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Abstract

Pan masala is very popular in India and many Asian countries like Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Middle east etc. It is being chewing some times on occasions, some time due to traditional heritage, some times as fashion and sometimes people are addicted. The study explains various hazardous dimensions of pan masala and polythene sachets on the environment as well as human health. Research studied the intention of government banning polythene sachets and measuring people perception towards these ban. 200 respondents were asked to respond on self designed questionnaire and found out how people respond on such initiatives taken by government.

Keywords: Human Health, Environment Degradation, Polythene Sachets, Alternatives to polythene sachets, Non smoking tobacco/chewing tobacco.

Introduction

Today, polythene is a standard means of packaging whether it is for consumer use or for industrial use. Packaging in its diversified nature carries end number of business activities such as protecting product, displaying, communicating, transporting/logistics, warehousing etc. Packaging solves various purposes like: Physical protection, Information transmission, Convenience, Security, Containment or agglomeration

Packaging technique is becoming challenging to the companies since the environmental protection regulation came into force. Ever growing importance and use of polythene has become a big challenge to the environment. Non smoking tobacco companies are at the verge of experiencing tough time to explore their business opportunities with small-small polythene gutkha sachet. Plastic is one of the major toxic pollutants of our time. Being a non-biodegradable substance, composed of toxic chemicals, plastic pollutes earth, air and water. There is no way whatsoever you can safely dispose of plastic waste.

Plastic is a serious threat to the environment at all stages whether while manufacturing or while disposing off it. The best possible way to reduce the hazards of plastic is to minimize the use of plastic.

Legal bodies along with many NGOs are throwing pressure on non smoking tobacco companies to replace their polythene sachet with any packing material which is environment friendly. This

is a kind of indirect restriction in a view to protect society at a large from the disease disaster.

On the other hand if we see the tobacco scenario in India it is highly demanded. Chewing of non smoking tobacco impressing end number of people including kids, college students, industry professional etc. The demand for chewing tobacco has gone up since last two decades. Study had proved that college and school students are more prone to consume tobacco. Thirty per cent of the population 15 years or older—47% men and 14% of women—either smoked or chewed tobacco, which translates to almost 195 million people—154 million men and 41million women in India.

Review of Literature

20 October 2011 Supreme Court has released the order to the government to ban the use of polythene sachet for packaging pan Gutkha. The court deliberately wants to impose such restriction because to protect the society from cancer & environmental pollution. It is a strategic decision taken in the welfare of human health and environment. The legal bodies are very specific at this decision. This ban is keeping in view the environmental hazards of plastic sachets, and is not something that comes straight against the Gutkha industry. The ban does not say that tobacco will not be sold at all,' Bhavna Mukhopadhyay, executive director of Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI), told IANS.

Gutkha and other non-smoking tobacco products being sold in plastic packages have been the major cause behind India's increasing mouth cancer cases. The recent adult tobacco use survey in India showed a tremendous rise in non-smoking tobacco use. The latest order may now cut down on chewing tobacco use by rendering Gutkha and other chewable tobacco products costlier for addicts. The order will also make logistics more difficult for tobacco manufacturers.

Article Alley(2009) discussed in their article about the ease and convenience of using polythene for carrying products. Also, propounded the advantages of polythene carry bags, but pinpointed that for a long term it is hazardous for environment and is dangerous for animal life. Through this study various dimensions of killing effects of polythene were came in light.

CNS tobacco control initiative (2011) in their one of the articles encouraged the legal clause on using polythene sachets for storing, carrying and packaging goods. Article, also elaborated the responsibility of various authorities to control polythene waste through various practices. Government showed their concern for recycled packaging material for longer age of environment and other living things.

Plastic at Peril (2007) explained the deadliest impact of non-biodegradable toxic chemical on earth, air and water. Through detailed discussion on killing effect of polythene the study tried to make the people awaken for stop using such material. The study deeply touched the unseen facts of polythene for polluting environment.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the awareness of new regulation on polythene gutkha sachets.
2. To study the awareness and perception of people towards new government regulation.

3. To study post implementation impact of new regulation.
4. To study the impact of new regulation on tobacco consumption among people.

Research Methodology

The Study:

The study undertaken was exploratory in nature that has provided insights into social concern of government. For this empirical research work, 'Survey' method had been chosen to systematically gather information from the respondents (both from tobacco users and nonusers).

The Sample:

The present research was conducted on a sample of 200 customers from various geographical locations of Indore. The respondents were selected on a convenience sampling basis.

The Tools:

The Tools for Data Collection:

The research was carried out through survey method. A well structured, close ended and well designed questionnaire was utilized to get clear idea of respondents' perception. The respondents were asked to respond on interval scale including Yes=1, No=2 & Don't Know=3. Cronbach's Alpha Test (Cronbach, 1951) was applied to check reliability before the questionnaire was administered for the final survey. An Alpha Coefficient of 0.60 is considered to be good reliability estimate of the instrument. In the present study, the Alpha Coefficient Value is found to be 0.88. (Refer annexure – 1)

The Tools for Data Analysis:

The analysis of collected data was carried out using MS Excel and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 12.0).

Results & Discussions**Descriptive statistics**

Question	Chi-square	df	sig.	Frequency		
				Yes	No	Don't know
Do you eat pouches?	92.48	1	0.00	32	168	0
Do you smoke?	124.82	1	0.00	21	179	0
Do you know that government had put ban on selling gutkha pouches in polythene sachets	154.88	1	0.00	188	12	0
After ban people health will improve?	98.00	1	0.00	170	21	9
Did government have taken the freedom of tobacco pouches eaters?	16.82	1	0.00	71	120	9
The addiction of gutka pouches will reduce?	103.68	1	0.00	172	23	5
The rehab centers should be there for people who want to get cured?	128.00	1	0.00	180	18	2
After ban you saw someone eating pouches?	67.28	1	0.00	158	32	10
Government should do something to cover the loss from gutka pouch?	162.00	1	0.00	190	5	5
After ban to gutka pouches children will be safe?	158.42	1	0.00	189	4	7
Did you saw selling of gutka pouches even after the ban?	19.22	1	0.00	131	48	21
There should be always ban kept to gutka pouches?	169.28	1	0.00	192	5	3

Hypothesis Testing

Null Hypotheses	Chi-square	df	sig.	Frequency			Result
				Yes	No	Don't know	
There is no significant difference in responses to usage of tobacco	92.48	1	0.00	32	168	0	Rejected
There is no significant difference in responses to usage of smoking	124.82	1	0.00	21	179	0	Rejected
People are not known about the ban on gutkha pouches	154.88	1	0.00	188	12	0	Rejected
people do not think that human health will improve if there is a ban on gutkha pouches	98.00	1	0.00	170	21	9	Rejected
people are not agree that the government had taken the freedom of eaters	16.82	1	0.00	71	120	9	Rejected
If there is a ban on pouches people health will not improve much	103.68	1	0.00	172	23	5	Rejected
people do not think that rehab centers should be there for those who want to get cured	128.00	1	0.00	180	18	2	Rejected
After ban people have not seen any one eating pouches	67.28	1	0.00	158	32	10	Rejected
Government should not do anything to cover the losses from banning pouches	162.00	1	0.00	190	5	5	Rejected
children health will not improve due to banning pouches	158.42	1	0.00	189	4	7	Rejected
people have not seen selling of pouches after ban	19.22	1	0.00	131	48	21	Rejected
The ban should always be kept on gutkha pouches	169.28	1	0.00	192	5	3	Rejected

Discussions

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in responses to usage of tobacco

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 168 respondents do not use tobacco as compare to 32 respondents who are the tobacco users out of total respondents.

Significant difference was found in the responses to usage of tobacco.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₀₁ stands rejected**

There is enormous disparity among the respondents' view towards usage of tobacco between the users and non users. During the research it was observed that people are well aware and concern about the

hazardous effect of such products on health and environment. Views are found positive in every question even the respondent is addicted of gutkha pouches. All the respondents were at support to government steps irrespective they are addicted or not.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in responses to usage of smoking

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 179 respondents do not smoke as compare to 21 respondents who are the smokers out of total respondents.

Significant difference was found in the responses to smoking.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₀₂ stands rejected**

The responses were found as similar as responses collected on using gutkha pouches. But it was realized that users were reluctant to leave this habit.

H₀₃: People are not known about ban on gutkha pouches

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 188 respondents are aware of ban on gutkha pouches as compare to 12 respondents who are who are not aware out of total 200 respondents.

Significant difference was found in the responses to awareness of ban on gutkha pouches. Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₀₃ stands rejected**

While talking to the respondents it was observed that the awareness towards ban on gutkha pouches is there among the people and they are well known about the bad effects of these products.

H₀₄: People do not think that human health will improve if there is a ban on gutkha pouches

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 170 respondents are in favor of banning such products for social welfare and for the wellbeing of human health as compare to 21 respondents who are not agree that human health will improve from such ban out of total respondents.

Significant difference was found in the responses on improved human health if there is a ban on gutkha pouches.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₀₄ stands rejected**

H₀₅: People are not agree that the government had taken the freedom of pouches eaters

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 120 respondents says no government had not taken the freedom of gutkha eaters as compare to 9 respondents who says yes the government had taken the freedom of gutkha eaters. Significant difference was found in the opinion of respondents on freedom of gutkha pouches eaters that is being restricted through government.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₀₅ stands rejected**

When respondents were asked that whether the government action on gutkha pouches had taken the freedom of pouches eaters, maximum responses were 'no' it is not like that. Out of 200 responses collected 120 responses were stating 'no' the ban is good initiative and collectively favored by the respondents.

H₀₆: If there is a ban on gutkha pouches people health will not improve much

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 172 respondents think in positive way that yes such ban have considerable

contribution towards improving human health if people are restricted to consume such products that are banned by government as compare to 23 respondents who are not agree that human health will be improved if ban is kept on gutkha pouches.

Significant difference was found in the views of respondents towards improved health of people if bans are kept on gutkha pouches.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₀₆ stands rejected**

H₀₇: People do not think that the rehab centers should be there for those who want to get cured

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 180 respondents say rehab centers are needed for those who want to come up from this bad habit as compare to 18 respondents who don't feel such centers can help them and should be there.

Significant difference was found in the views of respondents on whether rehab centers can help the addicted people and should be there in the society for those who really want to get cured.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₀₇ stands rejected**

H₀₈: After ban people have not seen anybody consuming gutkha pouches

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 158 respondents says there is no result of government ban on gutkha pouches they have seen many people consuming pouches even after the ban as compare to 32 respondents who respond negatively.

Significant difference was found in the views of respondents on government ban has stooped the consumption of gutkha pouches.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₀₈ stands rejected**

With a lot of efforts government had come up with a regulation which bans selling gutkha pouches in polythene sachets. It was a strategic decision to protect environment as well as human health from the tobacco. But, it was observed that successful implementation could not see during research. People are still consuming pouches though on increased price because now it is selling in paper pouches. This shows regulation had no effect on consumption.

H₀₉: Government should not do anything to cover the losses from the ban

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 190 respondents think that yes government should make another way to

compensate the losses as compare to 5 respondents who are not agree with that.

Significant difference was found in the views of respondents towards loss compensating through alternative sources.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₀₉ stands rejected**

Sources of income reflect the best financial planning for nation's development and social welfare. After ban on gutkha pouches the government is facing loss from this source. When the respondents were asked whether government should search for another sources of income to compensate the losses incurred from this ban, maximum number of respondents say yes because with shortage of finance government may face several problems in making and implementing various plans for economic development.

H₁₀: Children will not be safe if there is a ban on gutkha pouches

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 189 respondents think in positive way that yes due ban on gutkha pouches children will be safe from consuming such health hazardous products as compare to 4 respondents who are not.

Significant difference was found in the views of respondents towards children safety from gutkha pouches.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₁₀ stands rejected**

H₁₁: People have not seen gutkha pouches selling after ban

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 131 respondents say yes that they have seen many places selling gutkha pouches after ban as compare to 48 respondents who says no.

Significant difference was found in the views of respondents towards selling of gutkha pouches after ban.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₁₁ stands rejected**

H₁₂: The ban should not kept on, on gutkha pouches

The chi-value was found significant at 95% level of confidence, result indicate that 192 respondents are in favor of this ban on gutkha pouches as compare to 5 respondents who are not agree.

Significant difference was found in the views of respondents on ban should kept on for forever on gutkha pouches.

Significance value $0.00 < 0.05$ at 5% level of significance.

Thus, null hypothesis **H₁₂ stands rejected**

1. Use of tobacco/sachets

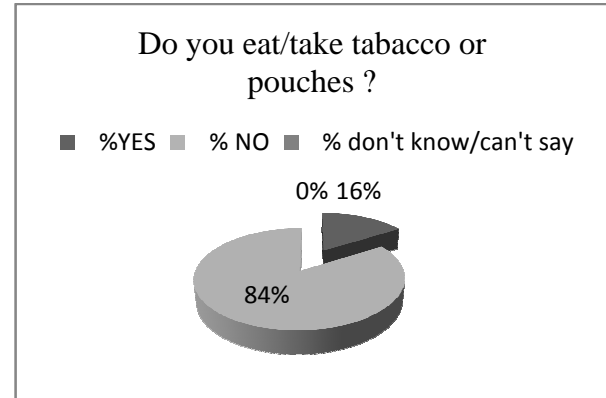


Table: 1

Out of the total respondents it was observed that 84% people are tobacco users and 16% are not. The research conducted by 'Ministry of Health and Family Welfare' on tobacco control in India display that 55-72% of male in India are addicted whereas, women varies from 15-60% at various demographic variables and school going children 3.3 to 62.8%

It shows that despite of continuous efforts of government and various non government organizations people are still consuming tobacco. This poison is killing young bloods of our country which we have to pay in the near future.

Government must look into the matter where successful implementation of such effective regulation take place and people must trail them.

2. Do you know that the government had restricted tobacco pouches?

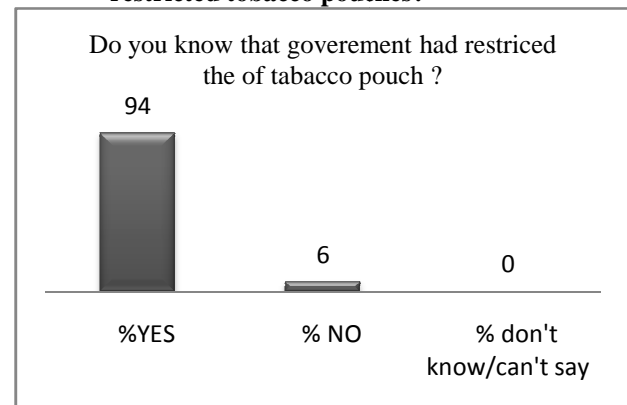


Table: 2

When respondents were asked are they aware of tobacco pouch restriction?, it was found that 94% respondents were aware.

The Union Environment Ministry had notified a rule for plastic waste management and with regulation banned polythene gutkha sachets for inside and outside trade. Petition had been sanctioned by supreme court with immediate effect.

3. With this restriction people health will improve?

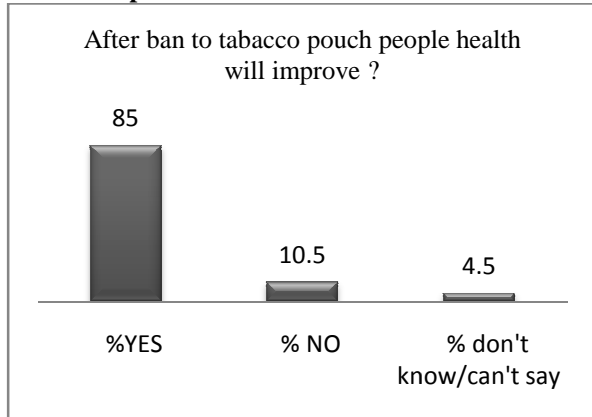


Table: 3

It can be concluded from the above chart that respondents are agree with that the human health will improve if such types of regulation will be implied. 85% respondents are sure whereas, 10.5% are not sure and rest 4.5% doesn't know.

Article (Life & Health Library) New York Times had discussed the deadly effects of tobacco addiction. If government put ban on such items it is for sure that people health will improve.

4. Did government have taken the freedom of pouches eaters?

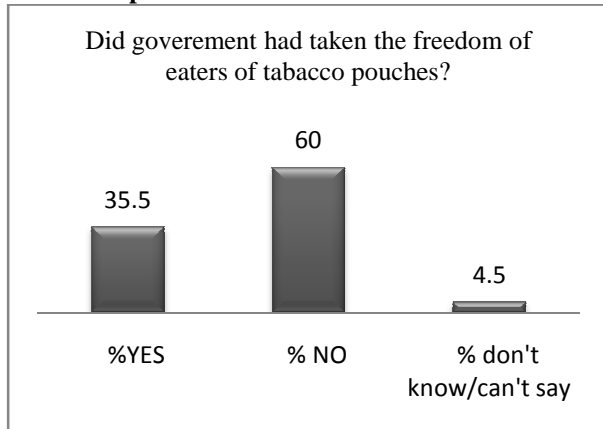


Table: 4

The result shows that 35.5% respondents think that yes the government have taken the freedom of eaters of pouches, whereas, 60% people think no and 4.5% respondents doesn't know.

Here, most of the tobacco users were unhappy due to regulation and feel that government had restrict their freedom to eat tobacco. But, maximum people think that the decision is quite appreciable and in the welfare of humanity. Government with such efforts can change the tobacco scenario in India though it is the highest revenue earned sector.

5. Addition of gutkha pouches will reduce?

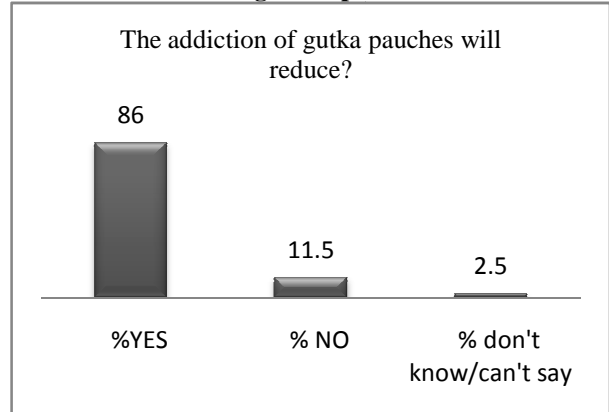


Table: 5

From the above table we can conclude that with the implementation of government regulation on gutkha pouches will help to reduce human addiction towards tobacco that will result in healthy mind. Here, 86% respondents were agree with concept and 11.5% were not, whereas, 2.5% were at dilemma whether it is right or wrong.

6. After ban you saw someone eating pouches?

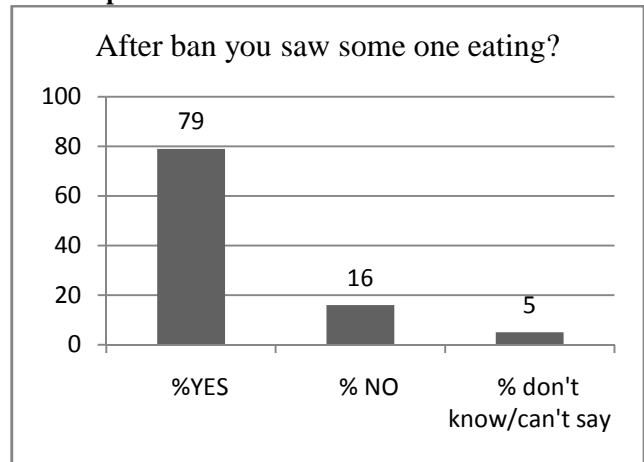


Table: 6

From the above table we can conclude that the regulation could not meet its objective because it was observed that 79% respondents saw people eating tobacco ever after it is banned. The same,

pouches are being sold still at every where even on increased price.

7. Rehab centers should be there for people who want to get cured?

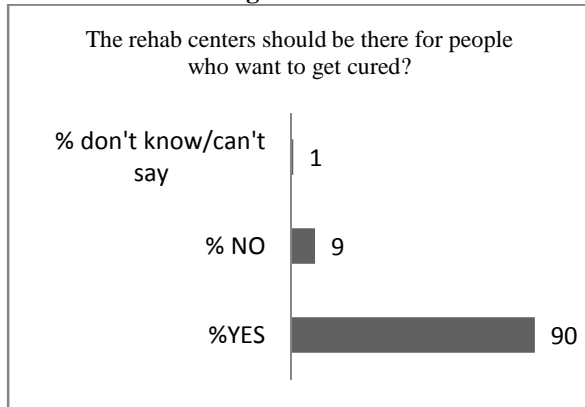


Table: 7

Rehab centers must be there for those who want to get cured from tobacco addiction. 90% respondents say yes it is must and 9% people say no to rehab centers. During the survey while discussion we came to know that respondents are bit confused about the rehab centers because the person who wish to leave tobacco can leave himself with his will power. No rehab centers can help them, but many of respondents are agree that the rehab centers really a positive step towards curing people who really want to come up from such a bad habit. While studying table: 6 where 79% respondents saw people consuming pouches after ban, it look valid to have such centers.

8. After ban children will be safe?

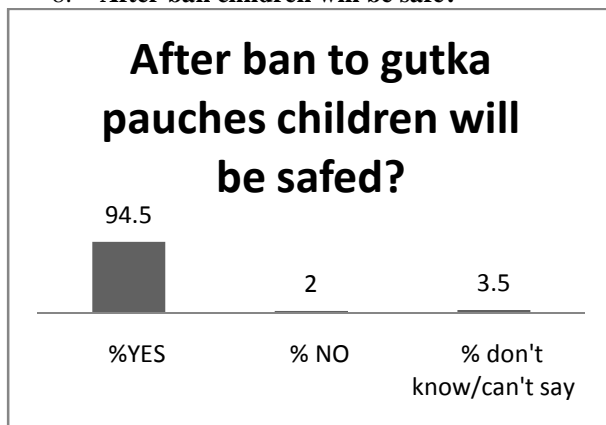


Table: 8

The study conducted by 'Ministry of Health and Family Welfare' revealed that 3.3%-62.8% school going children are tobacco users. If such regulation come into force strictly the children will be safe. As per the survey report 94.5% respondents feel that

after banning such products children will be safe, 2% respondents says no and 3.5% respondents are confused or can't say whether it will work or not.

9. Did you saw selling gutkha pouches even after the ban?

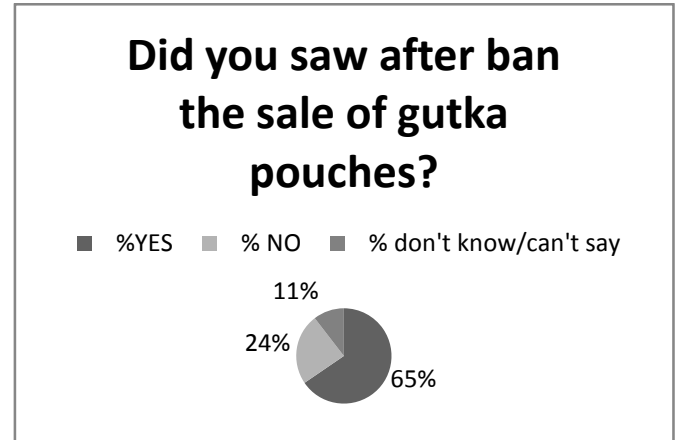


Table: 9

The result shows that the effect of government regulation could not work as per the expectation because while surveying 65% respondents saw gutkha pouches selling in the market. Only 24% respondents saw the effect of banning gutkha pouches whereas 11% don't know.

10. Ban should always be kept on gutkha pouches?

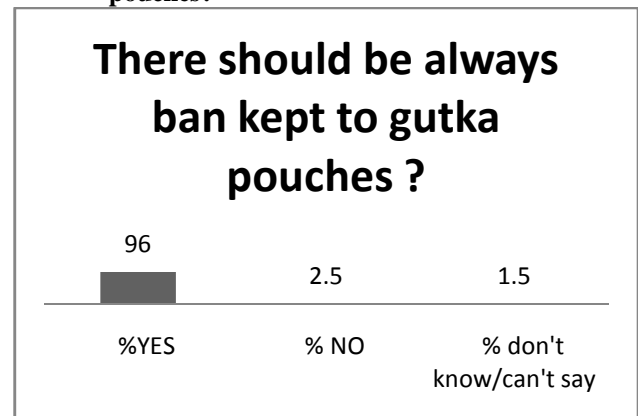


Table: 10

Respondents were responded very positively on banning gutkha pouches for forever. They feel such products not only harmful for human body but a threat to human generation. 96% respondents were on support to such regulation. It shows that people are very much conscious about these health hazardous products. Out of this response we can draw a conclusion that people are at support to government to reduce or completely ban these products to safeguard the future generation.

Conclusion

The above discussed parameters on polythene sachets and banning Gutkha in India explain strong platform to stop delivering such hazardous contents into the society. The reasons state by the ‘Supreme Court’ is valid in general interest and for the welfare of the society as a whole. The study strongly support to the petition of Supreme Court to ban such polythene sachets with the immediate effects. The study conclude that due to consumption of chewing tobacco the mouth cancer in generation “Y” is increasing rapidly which not only hitting the young force of the country but also affecting the overall growth of the nation. Through this study we have reached up to where people perception towards such regulation can be displayed. Respondents were very much supported to banning pouches and keep the ban for forever.

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Annexure 1: Reliability Test

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***** Method 1 (space saver) will be used for this analysis *****
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R E L I A B I L I T Y   A N A L Y S I S   -   S C A L E   ( A L P H A )

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases =      200.0                      N of Items = 12

Alpha =      0.8897

Reliability Coefficients

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