

Examining the Impacts of the Gutka Bans in Selected States in India Fact Sheet

A study was conducted by the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health and the World Health Organization Country Office for India to understand the impacts of state laws that ban the sale and distribution of gutka.

Surveys were conducted with 1,001 current and former gutka users and 458 tobacco product retailers to gain insight into the effect of the bans on consumer use and product availability in seven states (Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya, Maharashtra, Orissa and Pradesh) and the National Capital Territory. Observations of 450 retail environments and 54 in-depth interviews with government officials, enforcement officials and citizens working with civil society groups were also conducted to the same end.



Summary Findings:

- Support for gutka bans is very high (92%) across the studied jurisdictions
- Almost universal agreement (99%) that gutka bans are good for the health of India's youth
- Product bans did impact use. Of the respondents who continue to use pre-packaged gutka, half (49%) reported they consume less since the bans
- Ninety percent of respondents agreed that the government should ban the manufacturing, sale and distribution of other forms of smokeless tobacco
- Post-bans, most gutka users report purchasing ingredients separately and combining/mixing their own gutka. However, 15 percent of respondents continue to purchase pre-packaged gutka
- Interest in quitting is high—approximately half of respondents reported attempting to stop using gutka in the last year. Approximately 80 percent of respondents agree that the gutka bans will help people to quit
- Of the respondents that quit since the bans, a substantial proportion in each state (from 41- 88%) reported that they “quit using gutka because of the ban”
- The cost of pre-packaged gutka increased following the bans
- There was virtually no retail outlet where pre-packaged gutka was on display
- More than one-quarter of tobacco product retailers interviewed reported that they had been approached post-ban by a supplier to continue selling pre-packaged gutka

Limitations:

- Sample is not nationally representative
- Sample only includes adults
- Responses are self-reported and are not corroborated with any biological measures to confirm gutka or tobacco use

