

# Research Report

January 2019



## NO MORE BOUNDARIES Baseline Survey Narrative Analysis



## **Executive Summary**

#NoMoreBoundaries is a holistic programme being implemented by Participatory Research in Asia and Martha Farrell Foundation which aims to not only create awareness about **Violence Against Women in Public Places among youth but also address pertinent issues such as Adolescent Health** pertaining to Menstrual Hygiene and facilitating the participation of young girls in Technical Fields in Educational Schools and Institutions around Sonapat Haryana.

Under the #NoMoreBoundaries, a baseline survey was conducted in October, 2018 where students from 10 schools in Rajlugarhi, Murthal, Bhogipur, Kami, Rajpur, Bhigan, Mahara, Rehmana, Sandal Nevadya, Shahzadpur and 5 Industrial Training Institute (ITIs) including ITI Sonipat (Girls and Boys), ITI Purkhas, ITI Gannaur and ITI Rajlugarhi were surveyed. A total of 1225 participants participated in the study including 641 Young Boys and 584 young girls. In schools, students from classes 9-12<sup>th</sup> participated in the programme where as in the ITIs both young girls and boys pursuing various courses took the survey.

The Research study focuses on exploring the perceptions of young people in the broad context of young women's safety in public spaces and within their own communities. This is significant as safety is looked at in the light of aspects such as access to health and Livelihood facilities including perceptions about deterrents such as harassment and violence both in public and domestic spaces. During the survey, it was found that young boys and girls may initially demarcate their identities on the basis of their physical attributes, but one of the major determinants of their respective gender roles includes the spaces they can respectively access. It was stated that young boys cannot assume domestic responsibilities as it's not suitable for them while young girls cannot take up tasks or jobs which requires exposure to public spaces, for instance agriculture. A major reason is the presence of violence in public spaces in various forms.

Young Boys in the study have stated that boys are capable and responsible for perpetrating gruesome crimes unto women in the community. Further, a majority of young girls and boys believe that harassment in public spaces such as winking and whistling at women is a harmless part of boys growing up process. A large number of participants have stated that women are themselves responsible for the violence perpetrated towards them, for instance, the belief that harassment only happens to women who dress provocatively.

Violence extends unto women even in the domestic spaces in a patriarchal society where the former is closely tied up with norms and customary practices. A majority of participants (girls and boys) have agreed that women's greatest happiness lies in taking care of her family, further relegating women to the domestic space. If the woman fails to fulfil her familial responsibilities she can be disciplined by being beaten, to which a substantial number of participants have agreed. This is also linked to the participation of women in employment avenues. A large number of participants have indicated that girls should become 'home makers' followed by the choice of becoming a 'beautician' or 'tailor'. All of the above professions ensure that women need not necessarily travel and access public spaces.

Such perceptions existing among the youth have been further explored in the given report.

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## 1. Introduction

Following the Delhi gang rape case of December 2012, public safety for girls and women has increasingly become a policy issue worthy of concern. Public spaces like schools, colleges, parks and market places have been envisioned as spaces of liberation, social interaction and ideas. But for many girls and women, public spaces are spaces of fear, which they access while having to constantly look over their shoulders.

The United Nation's 'Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces' programme, which started in 2010, recognized that public places all around the world are becoming unsafe for girls and women. From unwanted sexual remarks to rape, they experience various forms of sexual violence in public spaces. It happens to them on the streets, in lanes outside their homes, at schools, workplaces, recreational spots, public transportation and even public sanitation facilities. This limits women's mobility which further inhibits their participation in educational and work opportunities. This everyday violence impedes their freedom and mobility access to political and cultural life, while negatively impacting their health and well-being. (PRIA, 2015)

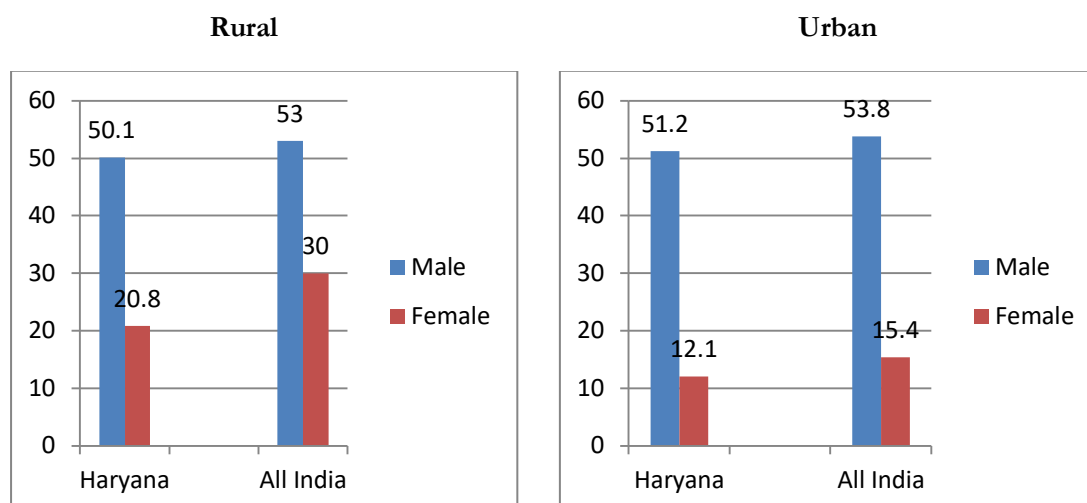
### 1.1 Context of Haryana

Haryana is a state where patriarchy is prevalent to the extent of almost being systematically institutionalised. Its infamous khap panchayats – or caste councils – routinely make the news for issuing diktats on what girls may or may not wear and who they may or may not marry. Haryana is also known for female foeticide and declining sex ratio and its hostile environment and Violence Against women in Public spaces. The assumption is not unfounded as in 2015, for instance, Haryana reported the country's highest number of gang-rapes – 1.6 for every one lakh women – according to National Crime Records Bureau.(NCRB, 2015) It had the second-highest rate of dowry deaths at 1.9 per lakh population and the third-highest rate in stalking women at 2.7 cases per lakh population. However, on the parameter of Female Literacy, Haryana has 75.4% female literacy faring better than the national average of 68.4%. (NFHS, 2015-16)

This depicts that women are encouraged to participate in Education process themselves and both by the community and the state as well which has launched schemes promoting Girl Child's Education.

Even though there is increasing emphasis on prevention of female foeticide and enabling the education of girls given the abundance of programmes run in schools by the government, it remains to be seen whether these young girls acquiring education are allowed to participate in the labour force. Due to restrictive social norms a lot of girls have to drop out of the education process at some point due to various factors such as restricted mobility and expectation to fulfil familial roles. (PRIA, 2015) The figures below elucidate on the workforce participation of women in Haryana in comparison with the rest of India.

## How does Haryana fares versus the rest of India when it comes to Labour Force Participation?



Labour Force Participation % (Source: NSS- 68<sup>th</sup> round)<sup>1</sup>

But, when it comes to employment, the figures falter. Just 17.6% of women in Haryana reported being paid cash for work in the preceding 12 months, below the Indian average of 24.6%, states National Family Health Survey 2015-'16. (NFHS, 2015) Women's restricted mobility and access to public places especially in rural Haryana is one of the major factors affecting their participation in the workforce.

Unsafe public spaces restrict the freedom of movement of women and girls to participate in school, work and recreational activities including access to essential services such as water and health services.

As a first step to engaging with the youths on the issue of violence against women in Sonapat, it was important to understand their perceptions about the subject and its manifestations in various aspects of life including access to education, Livelihoods and Health services.

<sup>1</sup>[http://www.mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/reports\\_and\\_publication/statistical\\_publication/social\\_statistics/Chapter\\_4.pdf](http://www.mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/reports_and_publication/statistical_publication/social_statistics/Chapter_4.pdf)

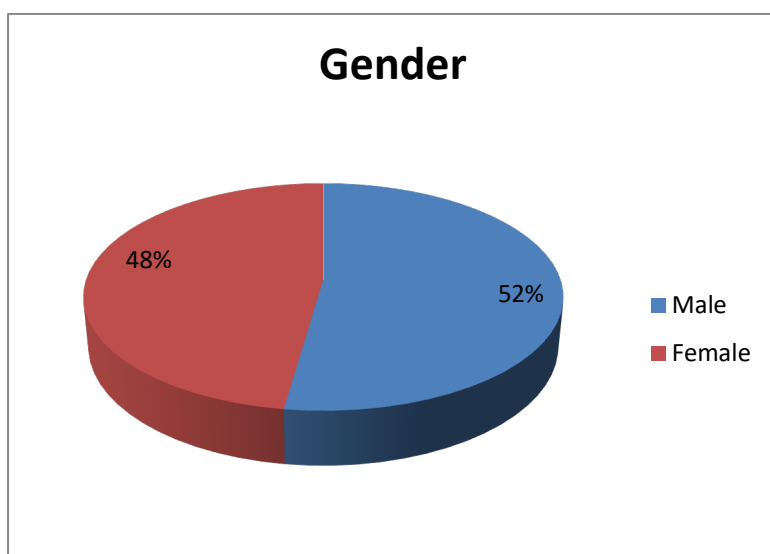
## 2. Objectives:

- To determine the underlying attitudes and mind sets of youths around the issues of women's safety and violence against women.
- To understand the perceptions of youths on Patriarchal Practices in the community which further propagate Violence Against Women.
- To understand the awareness of youths on Adolescent Health and Hygiene.
- To understand the perceptions of youth on livelihood opportunities available to young girls and the factors affecting it.

### 3. Key Characteristics of the Participants Surveyed

The baseline survey was conducted with 1225 participants in 10 schools and 5 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) of Sonapat, Haryana. In schools, students from classes 9-12<sup>th</sup> participated in the programme where as in the ITIs both young girls and boys pursuing various courses took the survey.

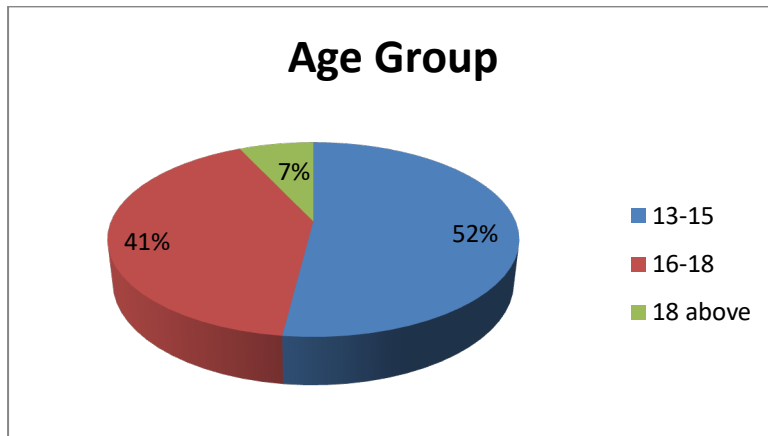
#### 3.1 Gender Distribution



- 641(52%) Young Boys and 584 (48%) young girls in total participated in the survey.

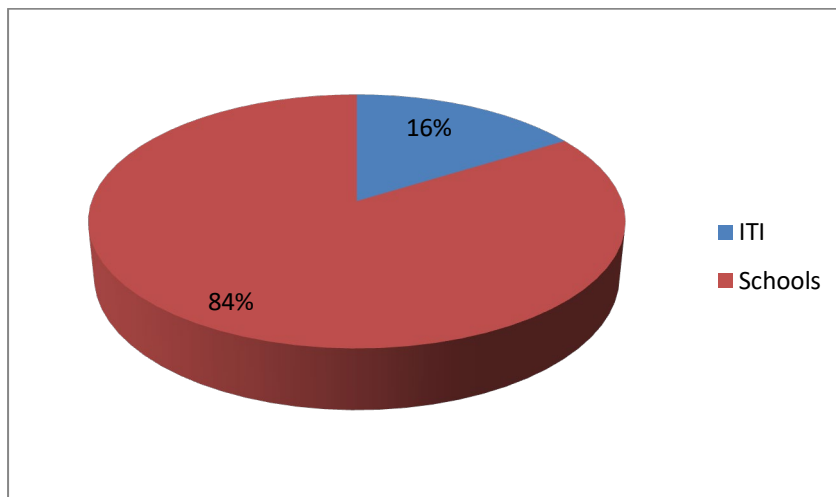
#### 3.2 Age Wise Distribution

Age Group	Number	Percent
13-15	637	52%
16-18	512	41%
18 Above	90	7%



- It is observed that a majority of participants were from the age group of 13-15 years whereas the lowest percentage of participants is in the 18 above age group at 7%. Therefore, more number of school going students than the ITIs participated in the survey.

### 3.3 Schools and Industrial Training Institute Representation



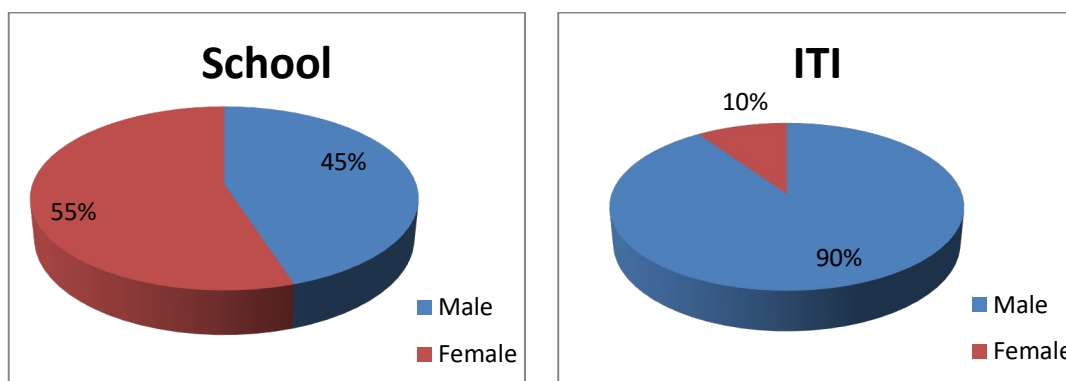
### 3.4 Gender Wise Distribution in Schools and Industrial Training Institutes

Gender	School	ITI
Male	462	179
Female	565	19
Total	1027	198

- It is evident the majority of participants were from school at 84% and 16% of the participants were from the ITIs.



- In schools, the representation of girl participants at 55% were more than that of boys at 45% where at the ITIs there were 90% boy participants as compared to 10% girl participants.



#### 4. KEY FINDINGS:

##### 4.1 Perceptions on Violence Against Women in Public spaces

In a Safety audit conducted by PRIA in the enlisted villages in Sonepat, (PRIA, 2015) it was found that participants (especially young boys) felt that behaviour such as whistling and winking was very natural to boys who were growing up and that girls are meant to be stared at. Harassment and violence experienced by women was found to be one of the prime factors impeding the participation of women in public spaces. Therefore, it is of prime importance that the attitudes of young people around the above be taken into cognizance.

The youth participating in the intervention were asked to respond on the following statement:

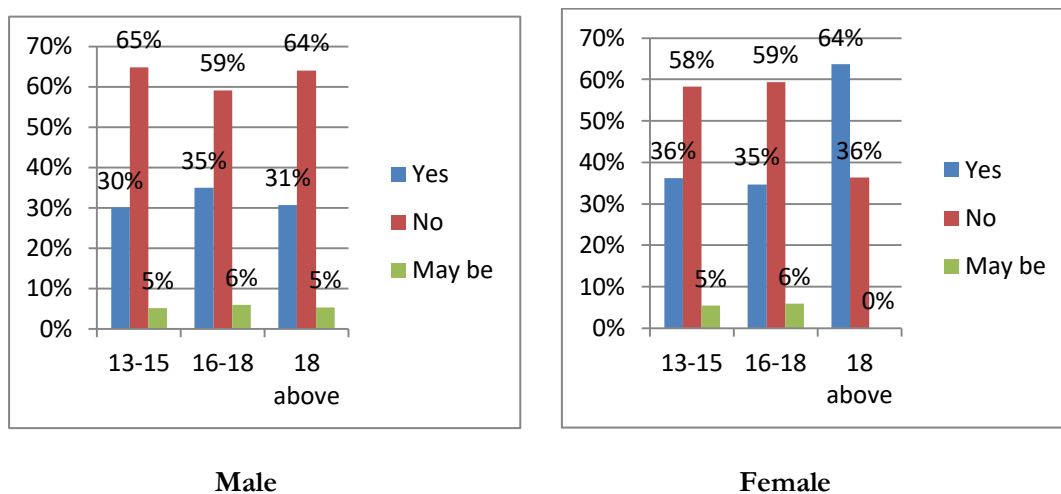
##### 4.1.1 Winking, whistling, passing comments at girls are harmless and a part of teenage boy's growing up process.

Entity	Yes	No	May be
Male	33%	62%	6%
Female	36%	58%	5%
Overall	34%	60%	6%

- It was found that 60% of total participants said “No” to the above statement. This is a positive indication that majority of participants interestingly composed of more males at 62% than females at 58% said No. This again points towards a majority of youths being aware and proactive towards their behaviour. However, it is still a matter of concern that a considerable percentage responded with yes (34%).
- Additionally, it is interesting that more young girls around 41% have agreed to the given statement which is considerably higher than the percentage of their male counterparts who have agreed at 39%. This depicts that harassment from boys is normalized in the

minds of the youth in the society. When the young girls cannot recognize such behaviour as harassment, this cycle will continue unchecked and severely diminish girl's participation in public life. The study conducted in Haryana by PRIA further suggests that it is due to the fear of Harassment that a lot of guardians do not allow further education opportunities for girls. (PRIA, 2015)

- In the Age Group Analysis, it is shown that same or more number of young girls as compared to boys believe the above statement to be true especially in the age group above 18, where 64% young girls who are also enrolled in the ITIs. This also indicates that as the children grow up to become young adults the acquired beliefs and ideas solidifies in their mind.



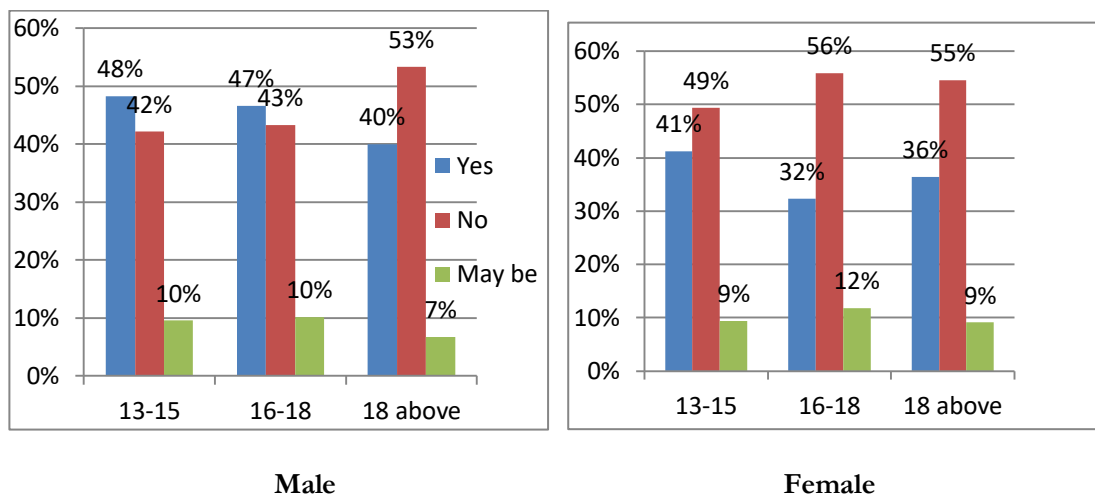
#### 4.1.2 A girl invites eve teasing by man and boys only because of their provocative dress or behaviour

A common myth surrounding the act of harassment is that harassment only happens to indecently dressed women and that women who dress respectably do not get harassed. In Haryana, women are rarely seen in public spaces without a male escort or with their faces uncovered. Yet, according to a report tabled in the state assembly in February 2013; 5,955 cases related to crime against women were registered in 2012. Molestation cases in Haryana had jumped to 521 from 474 and 534 eve-teasing cases were registered in 2012 against 490 in the previous year. (Times of India, 2013)

When the youth was asked to respond to the above statement, they expressed the following responses:

Entity	Yes	No	May be
Male	46%	44%	10%
Female	39%	51%	10%
Overall	43%	48%	10%

- An overall majority of 53% answered affirming the above statement which is worrisome.
- Majority of young boys at 56% have also agreed that provocative clothing is responsible for women’s harassment. This characterizes the stereotypes about women’s bodies and code of conduct in different spaces. Any woman who is not conforming to the expectation of the societal norms is more likely to be harassed.
- More young girls, a majority of 51%, do not support the above statement but this is countered by the substantial percentage of young girls who agree at 49%. The former depicts that the particular belief surrounding the norms about conduct of women are perceived differently by both boys and girls. Such difference of perspectives among boys and girls may lead to further increase in crimes against women ultimately leading to a loss of young girl’s agency to express their individuality in the society.



- Within the younger age groups, that of 13-15 and 16-18, more boys have agreed to the above statement whereas majority of girls have negated it. In the above 18 age group, both girls and boys have said no with a majority of 55% and 53% respectively which indicates the already existing awareness on this aspect in the older groups.

**4.1.3 Pooja is teased by a group of boys every day on her way to the school. She doesn't tell her family as she fears they will stop sending her to school. Do you think Pooja is right in doing so?**

Entity	Yes	No	May be
Male	12%	84%	4%
Female	11%	87%	2%
Overall	12%	85%	3%

This statement directly depicts the dilemma of young girls facing harassment while making attempts to access public spaces to avail opportunities.

- 13% young girls said “yes” to the statement which means that they support Pooja’s position of not sharing the information of her harassment with her family. Pooja’s fears and that of other young girls like her are not unfounded. A study conducted by Vikalp<sup>2</sup> in rural communities of Rajasthan indicates that reasons such as safety and security reasons accompanied by the fear of tainting the honour of the family are one of the major factors limiting young girl’s education and leading to early marriage often witnessed in the community.
- 85% youths interviewed in Sonapat, Haryana believe that Pooja should tell her parents about the harassment that she is facing. More young girls with 87%, than young boys at 84% are of this perception. This depicts two major things, that the rural youth in Haryana sees its family members as a “support system” who they can rely on and also showcases the willingness in young girls to report such instances of harassment to an institution they trust.
- Additionally, from these responses of the boys and girls, it could also be deduced that the boys may have not experienced this phenomena and therefore do not fully understand the impact of it. It could be further explored if the girls who affirmed to reporting the incident would still insist upon reporting it to their families if it was them at the receiving end.

#### 4.2. Perceptions about Customary Practices in the Community and the household

Violence Against Women in different spaces is the impact of different customs and practices which are deeply rooted in a culture of patriarchy that leads to rampant power imbalance between the genders. Young women and men are taught and conditioned from an early age to observe traditional practices and gender roles within the household and the community. It is important then to trace the beliefs and barriers that restrict the agency of young women within their households and the community so that we are able to gauge the level of engagement required by them.

##### 4.2.1 It is okay for the man’s family to charge dowry from the girl

Entity	Yes	No	May be
Male	14%	80%	6%
Female	13%	82%	4%
Overall	14%	81%	5%

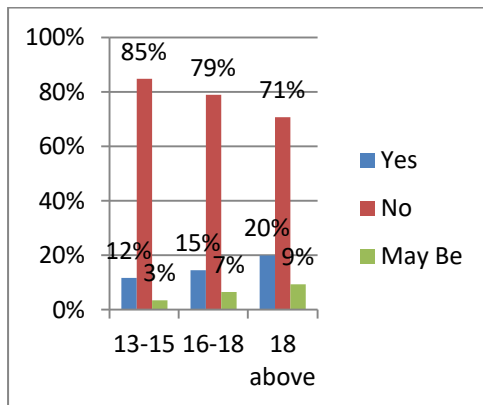
One of the age old traditions in India is that of girl’s parents providing dowry at the time of marriage.

- 20% of young boys and 17% of young girls have agreed with the above statement.
- However, it is noteworthy that a majority of both girls and boys at 81% did not agree with the practice of dowry and that this opinion is in the minority. It represents a

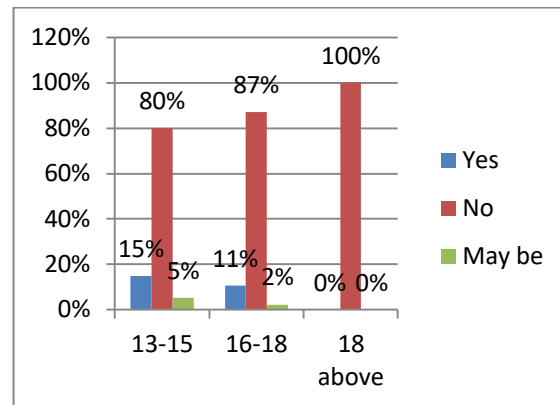
<sup>2</sup> “Working with Young Child Brides” <http://vikalpindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Working-With-Young-Child-Brides.pdf>

transition from the mind sets of older people in the community to altered perceptions when it comes to youth in the context of traditional practices.

- In the graphs below we see that as the age group increases in males, there is rise in the number of young boys who agreed with the practice of dowry. It could be that as the boys grow up and become of marriageable age, they may be okay with accepting dowry as it benefits them, while 100% girls in the above 18 age group have said No as they may be feeling the pressure of it.



Male

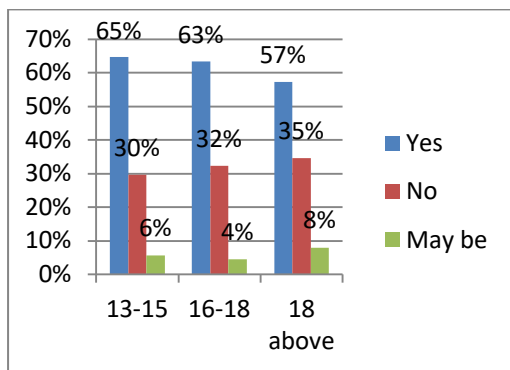


Female

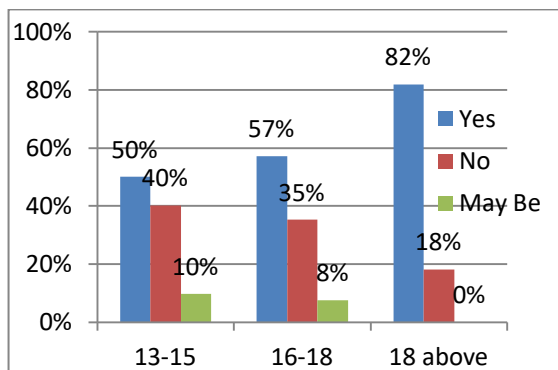
#### 4.2.2 A man has the right to tell his wife what she can do and what she cannot?

In a patriarchal family system, the oldest male member of the household usually controls all members of the family, property, and all economic and other major decisions. This is based on the assumption that men are superior to women, and that women should be controlled by men and are part of a man’s property. Therefore, it is assumed that men have the right and authority to direct women within the household. The statement in the light of the above looks at the power imbalance which establishes the cultural acceptance towards a man directing a woman in the household and completely dictating her actions.

Entity	Yes	No	May be
Male	63%	32%	5%
Female	53%	38%	9%
Total	58%	35%	7%



Male

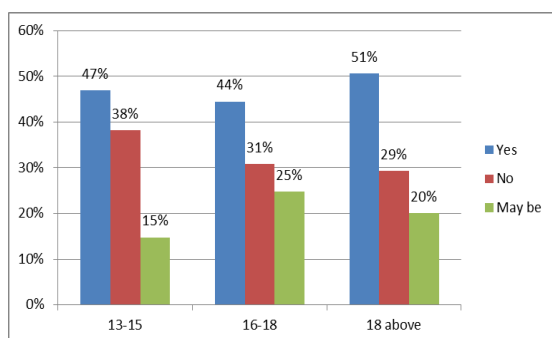


Female

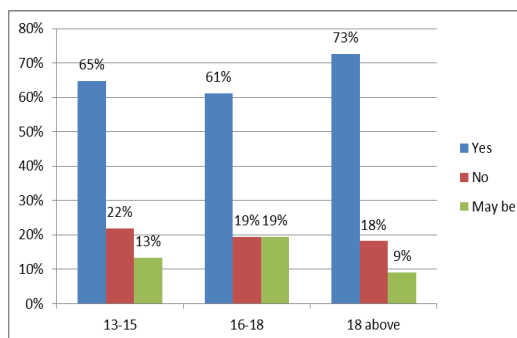
- A majority of 58% agree with the statement. Additionally, more young boys than young girls have shown their acceptance towards the defined gender role.
- 35% of young girls and boys disagreed with the statement which also showcases changing perceptions existing among the youth, where young boys and girls could be moving towards more equal partnerships within the household.
- The number of women who responded with a yes to the statement shows an increasing trend in the females. It starts from 50% in the lower age group, 57% in the middle age group and ultimately reaches 82% in the age group of 18 above. Young girls are taught to be quiet, invisible and mostly subordinate to men in the house from the very beginning. These attitudes are slowly adopted and then solidify within the young girls. This is clearly seen in the given statistics. Failing to confirm to the ascribed gender roles may lead to violence against them at home. This also means that as women are conditioned to listen to the men in the house, they simultaneously lose the autonomy to take their own decisions

4.2.3 It is okay for the wife to earn more than the husband

Entity	Yes	No	May be
Male	46%	33%	21%
Female	64%	21%	15%
Overall	55%	27%	18%



Male

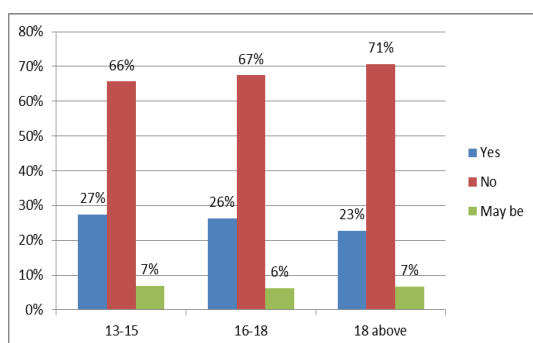


Female

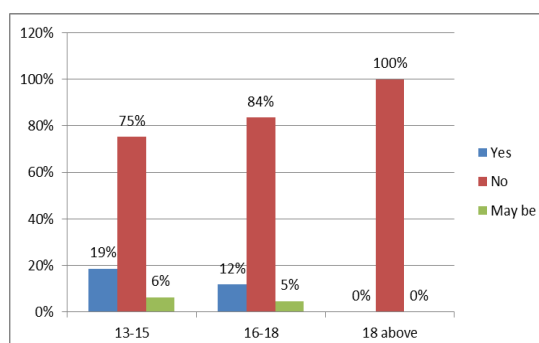
- Majority of young boys 54% have agreed (yes and maybe) that it was not okay for the wife to earn more than the husband.
- 79% of the females agreed that it was okay for the wife to earn more which shows their aspiration for equal partnerships within the household, where they could step out of stereotypically gender defined roles and can access public spaces and resources.
- The overall affirmative (55%) looks very promising. But on a closer glance, one could interpret the results to understand that the pre-existing practice of men having more control over the resources in the household remains even if the wife is earning more than him. Even if the above statement was true, women seldom have control over their own earning within the household. A similar trend is observed across different age groups.

**4.2.4 It is okay for the husband to hit his wife to discipline her if the dinner is served a little late or if the food doesn't have salt.**

Entity	Yes	No	May be
Male	26%	67%	7%
Female	16%	78%	6%
Overall	21%	72%	6%



Male



Female

- 67% of young boys and 78% of all young girls interviewed have answered in negative to the question. In a previous survey conducted by PRIA, it was found that 90% of boys and girls did not agree with the statement, and of these, 88% were the opinion of boys and 90% was the opinion of the girls. (PRIA, 2015) This shows that cultural acceptance towards violence against women has increased. It could be deduced that as more women are being encouraged to participate in public life, they may be experiencing a backlash in the form of violence within the household on defying traditional patriarchal familial roles.
- **1/5<sup>th</sup> of the total participants surveyed have answered yes to the given statement** including 33% male and 22% females. This points to the extent to which the society has normalized domestic violence to manifest itself in everyday situations. It could be that children in the age group 13-15 are being exposed to episodes of domestic violence in

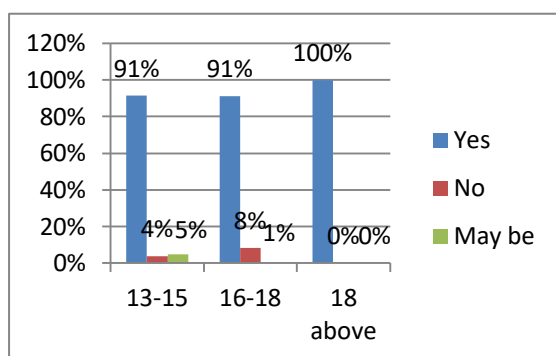
their households and community in everyday life, especially girls who witness their mothers beaten up and therefore, adopt such beliefs.

**4.2.5 A woman’s greatest happiness lies in taking care of her family.**

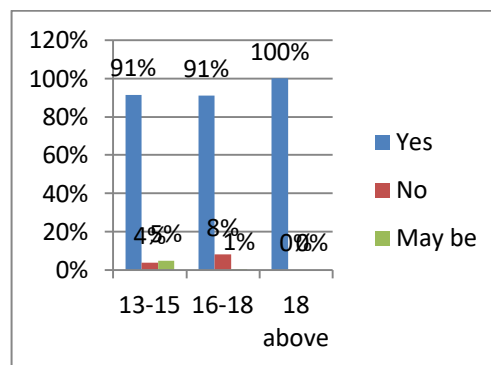
Entity	Yes	No	May be
Male	85%	9%	6%
Female	91%	5%	3%
Overall	88%	7%	5%

The statement mentioned above is an attempt to understand the established gender roles for women and how in villages around Sonapat Haryana, their role is nurturing and ensuring the happiness of their family.

- 85% of young boys and 91% of young girls have agreed to this indicating they adhere to the gender roles ascribed to the woman within the household



**Male**



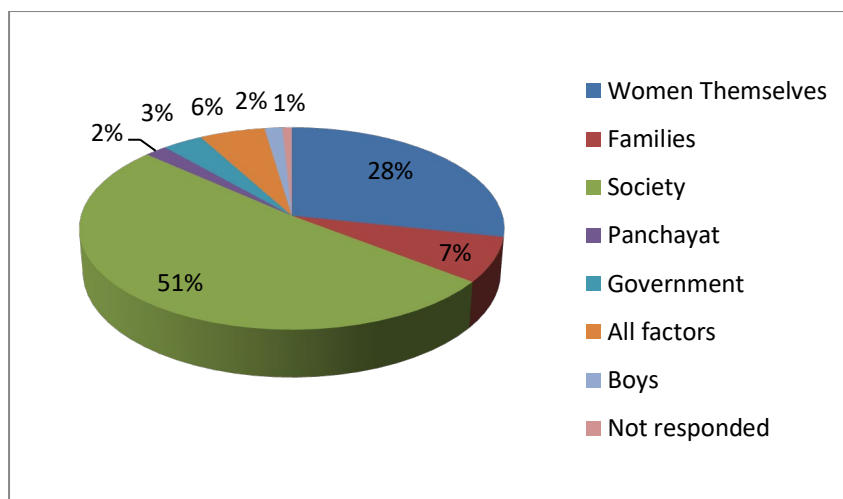
**Female**

- 100% young girls in the age group above 18 as compared to lower age groups have agreed with the statement. It could be deduced that the aspiration of catering to their familial responsibilities may limit young girl’s participation in Education and Employment.



4.2.6. Who is responsible for Violence Against women in the society?

Age			Women	Families	Society	Panchayat	Government	All of the above	Boys	Not responded
13-15	Institute	School	28%	7%	52%	2%	4%	4%	2%	0%
		ITI	29%	0%	43%	0%	0%	14%	0%	14%
	Total		28%	7%	52%	2%	4%	4%	2%	1%
16-18	Institute	School	27%	9%	51%	2%	3%	6%	1%	1%
		ITI	24%	4%	51%	2%	4%	12%	1%	2%
	Total		27%	8%	51%	2%	4%	7%	1%	1%
18 above	Institute	School	0%	13%	63%	0%	13%	0%	0%	13%
		ITI	43%	5%	44%	0%	1%	6%	0%	1%
	Total		39%	6%	46%	0%	2%	6%	0%	2%
Total	Institute	School	28%	8%	52%	2%	4%	5%	2%	1%
		ITI	32%	4%	48%	1%	3%	10%	0%	2%
	Total		28%	7%	51%	2%	3%	6%	2%	1%



As children grow up amidst acts of violence in domestic life, they become increasingly aware of the society being the chief reason for violence against women. But are they sensitised enough to work towards changing the statuesque attitudes they find themselves in? Additionally, the second largest group (28%) feels that women themselves are responsible for being subjected to acts of violence. This points towards the theme of victim blaming and how violence is normalized within the minds of young men and women that they are, rather, pointing to women being responsible for violence perpetrated against themselves.

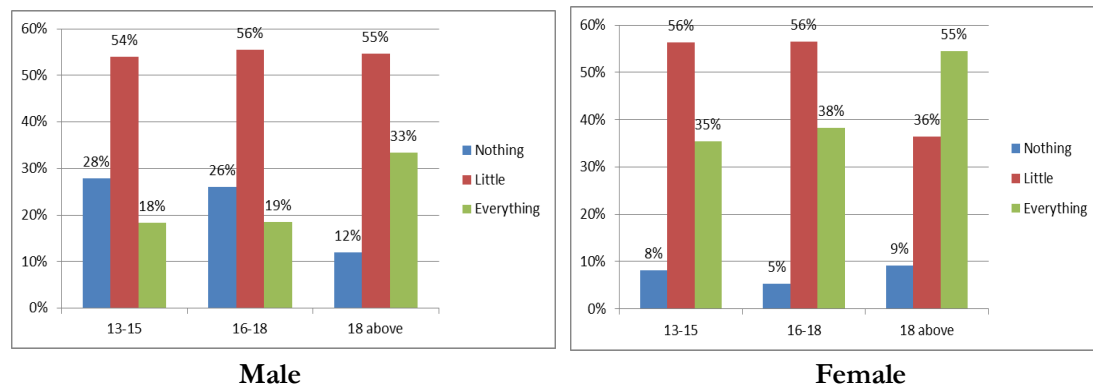
The subordination that women experience on a daily basis, regardless of the socio-economic class they might belong to, takes various forms – discrimination, disregard, insult, control, exploitation, oppression, violence – within the family, at the place of work, or in society. The details may be different, but the theme is the same. The patriarchal view stresses dichotomy and hierarchy, where one is superior over the other, and hence, domination, discrimination and exploitation. Violence against women is rooted in the view that men are superior to women and therefore have the power and the right to exert control over all aspects of her life.

At the same time, discriminatory attitudes towards women and girls also results in the lack of food, medical care, educational opportunities and the perpetuation of age old customs such as female foeticide and infanticide, child marriage and premature child bearing.

### 4.3 Awareness on Adolescent Health

#### What do you know about menstruation in women?

Entity	Nothing	Little	Know Everything
Male	25%	55%	20%
Female	7%	56%	37%
Overall	17%	55%	28%



This question pertains to the issues of adolescent health and well-being among young girls and boys.

- The fact that the majority of the population (72%) answered “nothing” or “little” with girls performing just a few percentage points better than boys (63% vs 80%) points out to the lack of adolescent sex education and reproductive health awareness in the school. Additionally, there may be rarely any conversation about the given subject at home for these youths.
- It is alarming that in the age group where the adolescent girls are menstruating ‘13-15’ at 64% and ‘16-18’ at 56%, majority of girls have little or no information about menstruation. With the little information they have, along with the lack of conversation

around adolescent health in the community, young girls may have no one to share their concerns with as they could be further discriminated at the time of menstruation. This is very similar to the case of Pooja, where she hesitated to speak of being harassed to parents. This depicts that not finding an eco-system to share concerns around the period of adolescence may severely impede the healthy growth and development of young girls.

- It is noteworthy that in the age group of 18 above in females, 55% young girls are aware about menstruation which is the highest among all age groups. It could be deduced that as girls become marriageable age this information is discussed with them in the community.

#### 4.4. Perceptions about Gender Roles

All the participants including young boys and young girls were asked to list down the things that both of the genders can't do. Majority of the boys responded with saying that "boys can do anything".

The following findings emerged from the above:

- **Boys can do anything but domestic chores**

“सारे घर वाले कार्य में सक्षम हैं, पर उन्हें लगता है कि घर के काम करेंगे तो छोटे हो जायेंगे | “  
“अपना सामान खुद नहीं उठा सकते |”

There were responses which expressed that boys can only do the work which is suitable for them. Some said that, even if they can, they won't help in the domestic space

On being asked to list down the things that boys can't do, a majority of population answered that "boys can do everything". This points towards the socialization men receive that they can and should be able to do all tasks, handle any situation. Therefore, it seems hypocritical that a substantial number of responses expressed that boys cannot do household chores such as cleaning utensils and the house, sweeping, cooking, disposing of garbage, taking care of the house and children. Therefore, there is a distinction in terms of space in which young boys are located. They can and should be able to do all tasks within their sphere and the public space but not in the domestic space.

- **Differences Biological and Acquired**

“लड़को को माहवारी नहीं आती |”

“ लड़के बच्चे पैदा नहीं कर सकते|”

“लड़कियों का लिंग नहीं होता|”

“ लड़के दूध नहीं पिला सकते |”

“लड़की दूसरी लड़की को प्रेग्नेंट नहीं कर सकती|”

In young boys and girls, the initial level of identification with gender norms includes distinctions established across biological functions. In accordance, both young boys and girls listed their responses. Physical power is another aspect which is associated with gender, as it was mentioned that girls can't lift heavy objects or do work which requires physical labour

**“जानदार कार्य नहीं कर सकती |”**

along with protecting themselves in times of need. Some of them also mentioned that girls can't play sports such as kabaddi and wrestling. Ironically, wrestling for women is a sport that has stemmed in the Haryana soil.

Other socially acquired differences were mentioned such as clothing, boys can't wear dupattas or saris while for girls they cannot wear dress like boys or get their heads shaved.

- **Access to Public Space**

**“लड़कियां नौकरी के लिये बहार नहीं जा सकती |”**

Young girls in Sonapat Haryana can't go out alone, bathe in open, loiter around anywhere, stand on roads, or get required “groceries”. This emphasizes women's limited mobility in various public spaces, be it nearby or far from their houses. Furthermore, the quote corroborates that a woman's inability to venture out freely in public areas due to social restrictions and fear of violence limits their education and employment avenues. While boys can do most things but not domestic chores according to a considerable number of youths, young girls can do everything, yet a majority said that they can't access public spaces for various purposes.

Shilpa Phadke, in her work, “Why Loiter?” reached the conclusion that in the North Indian context, 80% women go out of their homes only for a predetermined purpose, but never for any recreational reasons; such is the hold of patriarchy on women's movement and mobility. (Phadke, 2011) Accessing public spaces is seen as a deviance from the norm and women are often punished for it even if they have plausible reason and purpose. One of Nirbhaya's rapists in India's Daughter said that, “No respectable woman goes around at night.”

- **Harassment, Violence and Power**

**“लड़कियां रेप नहीं कर सकती |”**

**“लड़कियां लड़के नहीं छेड़ सकती |”**

This was expressed by boys in their responses which hint at the perception that only boys are capable of perpetrating gruesome crimes such as committing rapes.

Furthermore, a substantial number of youths expressed that girls can't abuse, eve tease, harass, have alcohol on the roads or be capable of raping another individual. It is evident from the above, that boys in this society have normalized violence against women in the form of such crimes and offences and that girls should be relegated to their homes to escape this.

These responses are directly associated with the sense of power which is internalized by the young boys. It can be clearly inferred from the above that these young boys think that they can do everything including crimes except for assuming domestic responsibilities while women should avoid being seen in public spaces, they need to be protected as lack “power”.

“लड़कियों में चौधर नहीं होता |” stated one of the participants. With an assumed sense of internalized power due to socialization comes an idea of entitlement and perpetration of violence upon others.

#### 4.5. Access to Livelihood Opportunities:

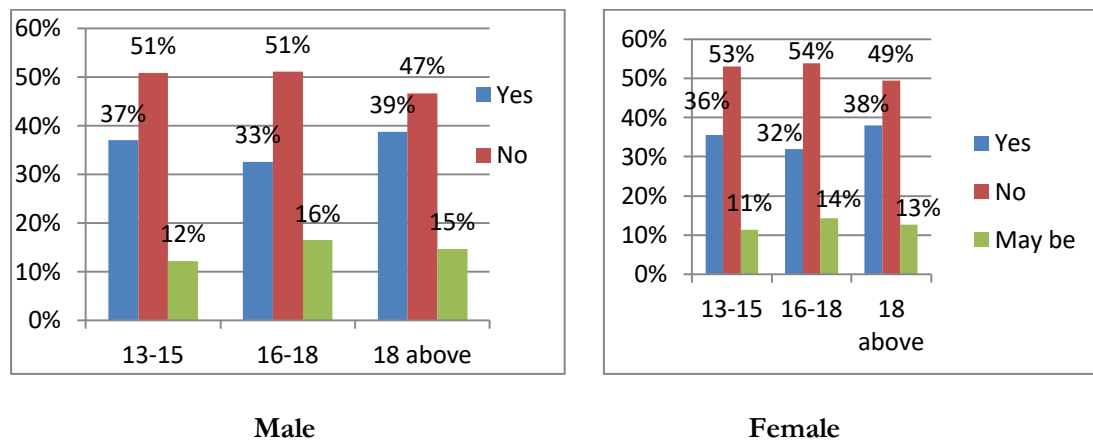
##### 4.5.1 Attitudes around Women’s Accessibility to Public spaces for Work

In the above section, young people have stated in their narratives that women can’t easily access public areas for different purposes and especially can’t pursue employment opportunities which entail going out in public areas. Therefore, the youths were asked to respond to the following statement:

**Women should not take up jobs which involves Travelling**

Entity	Yes	No	May be
Male (641)	35%	50%	15%
Female (584)	34%	56%	10%
Overall (1225)	34%	53%	13%

##### Age Group Analysis

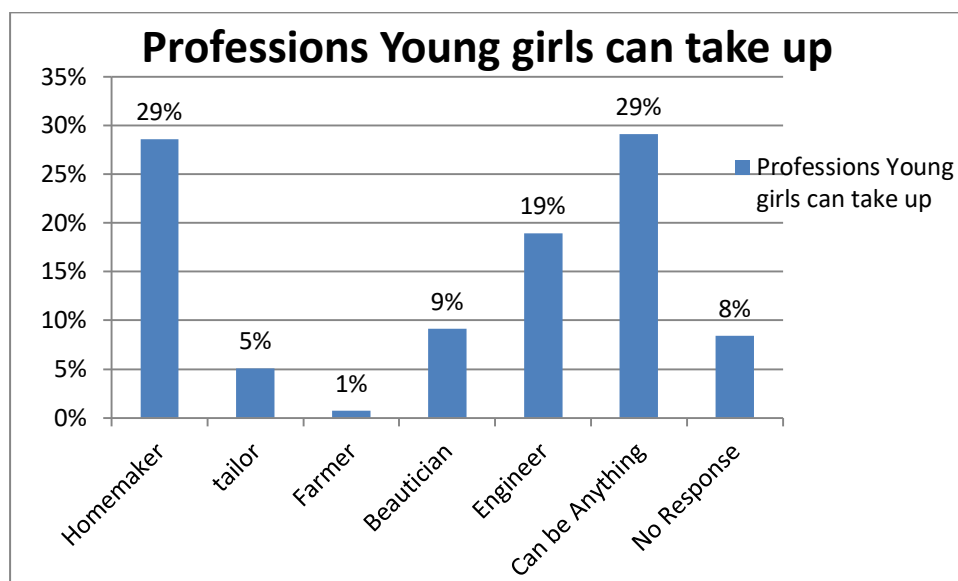


The above statement helps to understand the attitudes and behaviours of young people around the issue of women accessing public spaces to avail of employment and education opportunities.

- 53% of the youth answered No to the above statement indicating that women should avail of employment opportunities which involve travelling and accessing Public spaces. This indicates a shift in the attitudes of young people who are influenced by the increasing participation of women in public life while women are aspiring for more and

are ready to come out of their houses, even a significant percentage of young boys, 53% have indicated that they support it.

- 47% overall have agreed to the above statement including 35% Male and 34% females. This reflects the mind set of society where a majority of girls and boys have agreed that the “a woman’s greatest happiness lies in taking care of her family” demarcating her space in the domestic arena. Furthermore, the largest number of youth at 29%, think that home maker is the best profession for girls. When these girls start to get out of the house to access an education or employment which requires long travelling hours, concerns may be raised regarding how the responsibilities within the household be fulfilled such as daily chores, taking care of the children. This could be one of the major reasons for agreement to the given statement from the above participants.
- In the ‘18 above’ category, youths mostly enrolled in the ITIs, agreed to the above statement, the break-up being “54%” male and “51%” female. A majority of females agreed to the statement that women should not go out far to seek employment opportunities. Interestingly, most of them are themselves engaged in vocational programmes at the ITI and will be expected to take up employment. Such beliefs in this group may be detrimental to their enrolment in further job opportunities.



#### 4.5.2 Implications for Livelihoods:

- Beliefs about participation in Stereotypical Career choices.**  
 Out of the 92% youth who have answered the survey, **43% youths** feel that young girls can only take up jobs as **Homemaker, Tailor and Beautician**. The latter two are the stereotypical work opportunities that the youth may see around them. All of the above choices are seen to be befitting young girls so that women stay within the bounds of the respective households and avoid accessing public places. The categories of being a “beautician” and “tailor” fall into the category of own account work under self-

employment as defined by the International Labour Organization.<sup>3</sup> One of the major critiques of self-employment in the context of women's work is that, though it may lead to a certain kind of resource creation for the woman but it limits her mobility in a lot of cases especially in the above professions. This may lead to limited exposure for women in the public arena and therefore, limited growth, independence and confidence building among women. Additionally, women themselves opt for own account work such as Beautician and tailoring as it does not necessarily involve travelling.

The option of being the 'home maker' received a majority of responses among the above. While it reinforces the role of a woman as a 'nurturer', it is also a type of unrecognized and unpaid labour. In the above context, it may also make sure that women only have limited access and control over resources.

- **Limited Access to Public spaces impeding participation in employment opportunities.**

Only 1 % of the participants who took the survey agreed that women could be farmers. Interestingly, participation of women in the agriculture sector has been increasing in the rural space due to migration of men to cities in order to pursue different employment opportunities.(Ghosh, 2014) But in the context of Haryana, only 1% of the youth surveyed can perceive young girls to participate in agriculture due to the fact that it is an activity conducted in the public space which is not readily accessible by women.

The youths have themselves stated in the qualitative answers to the survey that "farming" and "irrigation in farms" are activities that girls can't do since they can't be present for longer durations in public spaces. It's for the same reason that **50% youths** agreed that women should not take up work that involves travelling. This kind of mind set and violence against women in public spaces deters them from taking jobs.

- **Openness to embrace diversified career opportunities for young Girls.**

While interacting with some girls in rural areas of Haryana in the schools, some of them convey that they want to drive tractors and are in the process of learning boxing. 29% youths agreed that girls can be anything that they want to become, also, 19% youth have expressed that girls can become "engineers". This could signify a transition in the perceptions of a substantial percentage of youth where they have become accepting towards girls availing diversified career choices. Some young girls also expressed that they are ambitious and want to avail jobs but lack guidance as to what to further pursue further.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.ilo.org/ilostat-files/Documents/description\\_STE\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat-files/Documents/description_STE_EN.pdf)

## 5. Conclusion

This study explores the attitudes and perceptions of youths in the context of Violence Against women in public places affecting the lives of young girls by curtailing their participation in public spaces which in turn, denies them access to Health care, Education and Livelihood avenues along with their social and political mobilization. The findings suggest that inequalities of gender and sex are systematically perpetuated and reinforced, at home, in society, at work, in the world of these young people. Socialisation from infancy further instils values and attitudes which make them take these systems for granted as those aspects of reality which cannot be changed. It starts at the stage of biological differences which slowly extend into the differences of gender defined roles. While some of the young people asserted that “boys are physically more powerful than girls”, a lot of them stated “women can’t do jobs extending in public spaces and boys can’t perform domestic chores”.

These differences even extend to harassment and violence oriented behaviour such as winking and whistling, which is considered natural for young boys by a significant number of participants. It is noteworthy that both young girls and boys have agreed on the above statement. This indicates that young boys and girls have similar conditioning from the society around them and therefore, may grow up with similar beliefs regarding gender injustice and Violence. It was also seen that as they grow up, a higher number of boys and girls believe that “a man possessed the right to tell his wife what she can do and what she cannot”. Similar ideas such as perception acquired through socialization tend to solidify in the mind of young adults whereas the younger ones may be more open and receptive. In the case of prevalence of customary practices in the society, a majority of young people believe that practices such as dowry should not be practised which shows a positive change in the perceptions of young people but they may still believe that a woman’s greatest happiness lies in tending to her family. A considerable percentage of the participants have stated that it is okay for the wife to be punished by the husband if she doesn’t fulfil her responsibilities and therefore relegated to the domestic space, any breach of responsibilities may result in Violence. Young people increasingly witness such violence in their households and therefore find its manifestations normalized in their lives both in the household and public spaces.

Rural Haryana is a society where spaces for young boys and girls are specifically demarcated according to their gender as is evident by their perceptions and beliefs. There is a constant emphasis on girl’s education and participation in the labour force. Programmes such as Skill India by the Government of India and Disha programme by the United Nations development Programme (UNDP) have been operational in the state with the objective of imparting relevant skill sets to young girls. One of the biggest challenges here has been ensuring that women are able to access public spaces and they are able to commute to their relevant institutions and workplaces. It is of utmost importance to create safe spaces for women and young girls, and at its core, it can begin with transforming the existing attitudes and behaviours of young people in the society, along with an active participation between the community and the government.



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