



The Effectiveness of Tobacco Disclaimers on OTT Content Services

A Behavioural Appraisal

May 2023

KOAN ADVISORY GROUP



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Koan Advisory Group is a New Delhi-based public policy consultancy. It specializes in policy and regulatory analysis in both traditional and emergent sectors and markets. For more information, please visit: www.koanadvisory.com

Authors

Shweta Venkatesan, Tamanna Sharma, Niharika

Survey Partner



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contactus@koanadvisory.com | www.koanadvisory.com

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GLOSSARY

Over-the-top (OTT): OTT refers to all applications transmitting content over the internet and on top of telecom operator networks that offer internet access. OTT includes social networks, message applications, video-sharing and aggregation services, and others.

OTT Content Services: These are the services that play a significant role in determining the online, curated content made available to internet users. They are termed publishers of online curated content in the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Meaning
AVMSD	Audio-Visual Media Services Directive
DMCRC	Digital Media Content Regulatory Council (DMCRC)
DPCGC	Digital Publishers' Content Grievances Council
EU	European Union
IAMAI	Internet and Mobile Association of India
IBDF	Indian Broadcasting and Digital Foundation
ICO	Information Commissioner's Office
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)
NIMHANS	National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences
ODPS	On-Demand Programme Services
OFCOM	Office of Communications
PTW	Pictorial and threatening warnings
SRB	Self-regulatory body
TII	Tobacco Intervention Initiative
TV	Television
UHD	Ultra-High Definition
UK	United Kingdom
USPSTF	United States Preventive Services Taskforce



SUMMARY

Reports suggest¹ that over-the-top (OTT) content services may soon be required to show health warnings for scenes that depict smoking, by being brought in the purview of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act of 2003. If effective, this change may have a chilling effect on tobacco-use behaviour of viewers of online content. Conversely, it may also have a negative effect on the content consuming experience of a growing base of OTT viewers in India. And so, the efficacy of such a regulatory mandate will need careful assessment, more so as OTT content services in India are regulated already under the Information Technology or IT Act of 2000 and the IT Rules of 2021 thereunder, and already comply with disclosure requirements such as age-ratings and content descriptors to guide consumer choices.

Our report examines the trade-offs of mandatory health warnings during smoking scenes, with data from a primary survey of about 1,900 OTT viewers. While other studies have examined the relationship between people's cinema or television viewing and smoking habits, ours is one of the few to focus on the effects of OTT content consumption on smoking. Additionally, we examine the regulatory regime in India and global best practices in this regard. The report offers three key insights to help inform future policy.

- There is high user awareness of the prevalence of content descriptors and age-ratings in OTT content services, and exposure to scenes showing tobacco use is also high. **Approximately 78% of the respondents are aware of age-ratings, while 68% know about content descriptors.**
- This enhanced user agency was seen also in the negligible effect of OTT content consumption on smoking behaviour. **Two in every three respondents are indifferent to the smoking or vaping scenes they see on OTT content services, which suggests these have a low degree of influence, if any, on users' smoking habits or choices.** Notably, a higher share of respondents (72%) who voiced such indifference were non-smokers.
- **The influence of peers and friends, and of mental stress was positive and statistically significant, implying that these are key drivers of smoking uptake in India.** In this regard, many studies suggest that OTT content services help reduce mental stress by offering use for leisure and entertainment.²
- **A majority of viewers feel that additional disclaimers for the content that they watch on OTT services are unwarranted, given that descriptors and age-ratings are already in place.**

Our results suggest that adding a disclaimer on top of the current content descriptors and age-ratings is unlikely to fulfil the policy objectives. It may be more effective to ensure a better standardised industry response to the provisions of the IT Rules, 2021. This is especially important as the younger cohorts are more likely to watch content on OTT services online.

We propose instead three measures to address stakeholder concerns in a calibrated manner. First, to strengthen enforcement of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules of 2021 by bringing all domestic OTT content service providers into the ambit of existing self-regulatory bodies or SRBs. Second, to strengthen the measures taken by OTT content services for age-gating and age verification, including by studying the global practices and their feasibility in India. Third, to improve the institutional support made available for addressing the health concerns around smoking by deploying trained mental health professionals and establishing counselling offices in public colleges and schools.



INTRODUCTION: TOBACCO CONSUMPTION AND OTT CONTENT REGULATION LANDSCAPE

Tobacco Consumption in India

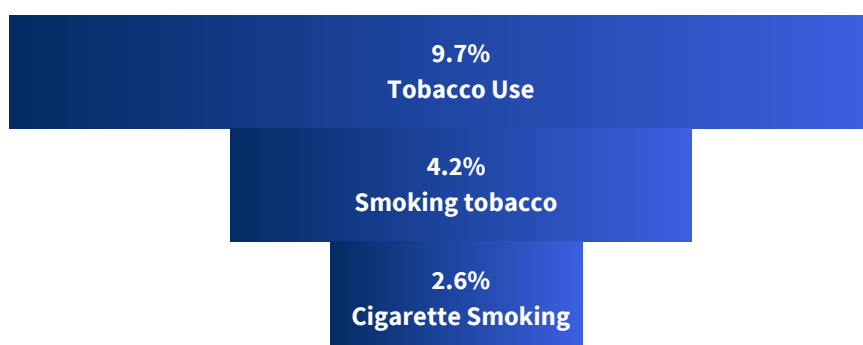
The 4th Global Youth Tobacco Survey India 2019,³ and the Global Adult Tobacco Survey 2016-17⁴ offer several important trends linked to smoking habits in India. They find that 8.5% of Indian youth use tobacco in some form, of whom 9.6% are boys and 7.4% are girls. A higher share of tobacco consumers come from rural areas. Further, 7.3% of young people consume tobacco by smoking it while only 2.6% use cigarettes. In both cases, a similar demographic trend is observed where tobacco smoking is more prevalent amongst boys and in rural areas.

Figure 1 Tobacco consumption among the youth (age 13-15 years)



The extent of tobacco use (smoked and smokeless) among Indian adults is 9.7%, which translates to 15.3% men and 4% women in the country.⁵ 15.4% of the tobacco use population resides in rural areas, while 6.6% comes from urban areas. The prevalence of tobacco smoking among adults is 4.2%, and of cigarette smoking 2.6%. The pattern of smoking among adults resembles the prevalence among younger cohorts, as a higher share of adult men from rural areas also engage in smoking.

Figure 2 Tobacco consumption among adults



OTT Content Regulation in India

The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules of 2021⁶ (IT Rules, 2021) regulate the OTT services that deliver curated content in India. The Rules require these services to adhere to a Code of Ethics (Code) which is implemented through a co-regulatory mechanism.

The Code highlights the government's intention to ensure that users of OTT content services can make informed decisions about the content they watch, rather than following an overly prescriptive approach. For instance, OTT services are required to classify content into various categories based on the nature and type of content (e.g. U, U/A 7, U/A 13+ etc.) This helps users understand the age-appropriateness of the content they are about to watch. The Code also requires OTT content services to provide content descriptors such as violence, nudity, sex, language, and substance and drug abuse, among others. These requirements ensure that users exposed to smoking scenes are sufficiently mature to independently assess any harms or risks associated with smoking.

The Code also addresses aspects relating to tobacco depiction. It states that films or serials that portray smoking or tobacco consumption must have a higher degree of age-classification, though it refrains from prohibiting depictions of tobacco-use or prescribing how it should be depicted.

The Global Experience

India's approach to regulating tobacco depiction on OTT content services is aligned with global practices on content regulation. The table below examines whether and how the countries with laws regulating OTT services have addressed these concerns. Most countries that address tobacco depiction in these laws appear to have adopted a moderate approach, by relying on technical measures such as age-rating and content descriptors, rather than more prescriptive solutions.

Country	Law	Provisions Regulating Tobacco Depiction	Comments
Singapore	Content Code for Over-the-Top, Video-on-Demand, and Niche Services ⁷	The Code requires OTT content services to comply with age-classification guidelines and offers guidance on seven major content concerns (violence, sex, language and drug use, among others). It addresses tobacco depiction briefly while providing guidance on content concerns relating to drug and substance abuse. It states that G-rated titles (the lowest age-rating for content within the Code) cannot contain content promoting the consumption of tobacco	Like the IT Rules, it does not prohibit depictions of tobacco use or lay down prescriptive mandates for the same
EU	Audio-Visual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) ⁸	Under the AVMSD, EU member states must ensure that media service providers providing content which may 'impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors' (which could be interpreted as	Like the IT Rules 2021, the EU AVMSD aims to ensure that users to make informed viewing decisions.

		<p>including content depicting tobacco consumption) ensure that minors will not normally hear or see it, such as through age verification or other technical measures. These measures must be proportionate to the potential harm of any such content.</p> <p>Media service providers must also provide users with sufficient information about any content which may impair the physical, mental, or moral development of minors.</p> <p>While the AVMSD prohibits audio-visual commercial communications and sponsored content for cigarettes or other tobacco products, e-cigarettes or refill containers, it does not restrict or prescribe conditions for tobacco depiction on OTT platforms.</p>	
UK	Statutory Rules and Non-Binding Guidance for Providers of On-Demand Programme Services (ODPS) ⁹	The UK's current approach largely reflects that of the EU AVMSD. The country is considering a Draft Media Bill ¹⁰ under which the larger OTT content services will be subject ¹¹ to similar content standards and requirements as broadcast services. This will be a more stringent framework than the existing rules for ODPS.	<p>The UK's Statutory Rules for ODPS also reflect an ethos of ensuring that users make informed viewing decisions.</p> <p>While the Draft Media Bill is under consideration, in its current form it does not propose to regulate tobacco depiction on OTT platforms.</p>
Kenya	Proposed Co-Regulation Framework for Broadcast, Video-on-Demand, and Over-the-top (OTT) Services (2022) ¹²	<p>In 2022, the Kenya Film Classification Board released a proposed co-regulatory framework which extends to broadcasters and OTT content services. The Framework identifies certain classifiable elements that can influence age-rating or classification of content if it is present.¹³</p> <p>The use of tobacco or tobacco products is listed as a classifiable element under the proposed framework. This means that the way tobacco is depicted will influence the age-rating of the title concerned.</p>	Thus, like the IT Rules 2021, the proposed framework aims to ensure that users make informed viewing decisions.

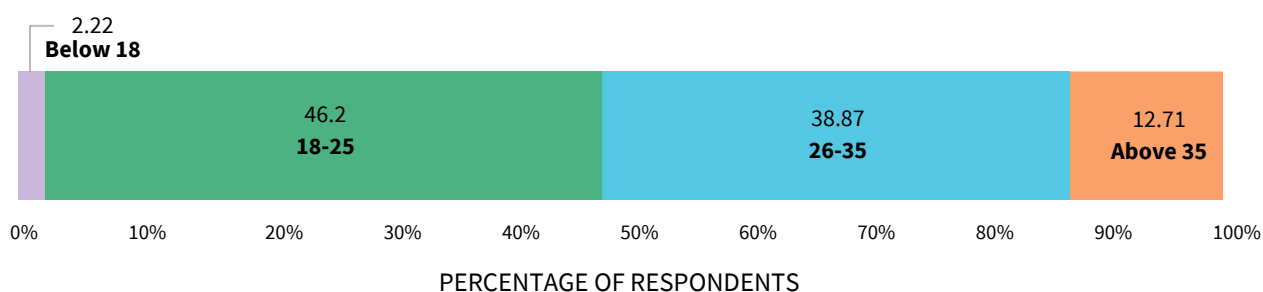
Turkey	2019 Regulation on the Provision of Radio, Television and On-Demand Broadcasts on Internet Medium; and Audio-Visual Law (2011) ¹⁴	Turkey regulates content on OTT services via the 2019 regulation, which requires such services to adhere to principles for content under the Audio-Visual Law, 2011. This law states that media services 'should not encourage the use of addictive substances like tobacco'.	Turkey's laws seek to impose restrictions on tobacco depiction, without accounting for any user agency. They depart from the ethos of user empowerment in the IT Rules 2021.
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USER PERCEPTIONS OF DISCLAIMERS

We conducted an online survey of 1,896 users from 10 March to 13 April 2023 across 350 locations in the country to assess the likely effectiveness of smoking disclaimers on OTT content services, when mechanisms of content description and age-rating are already in place.¹⁵ Majority of survey respondents were men in the age group 18-35 years (Figure 1), representative of the smoking population in India.¹⁶

Figure 1 User Demographics

AGE



GENDER

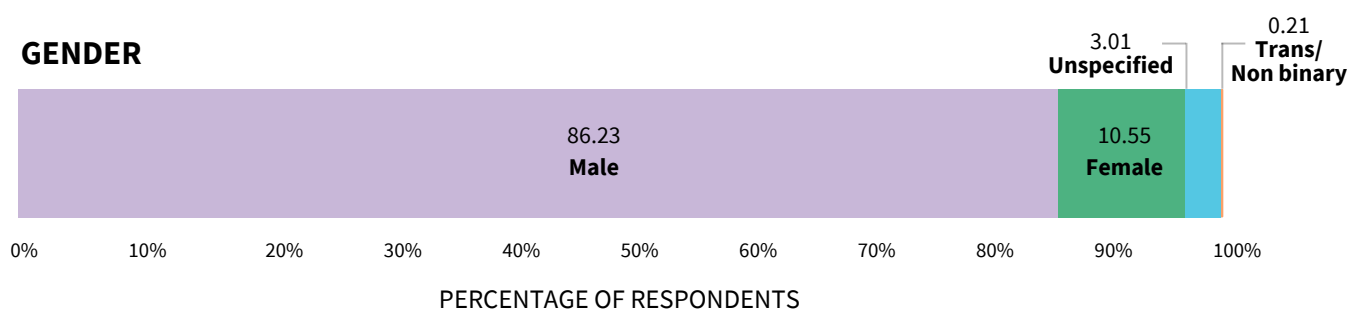
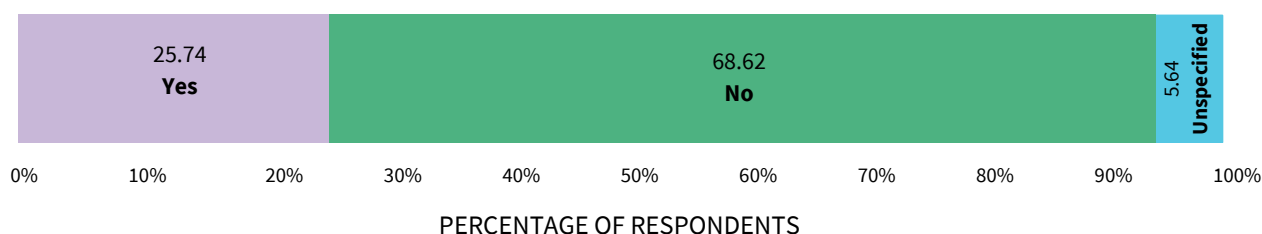
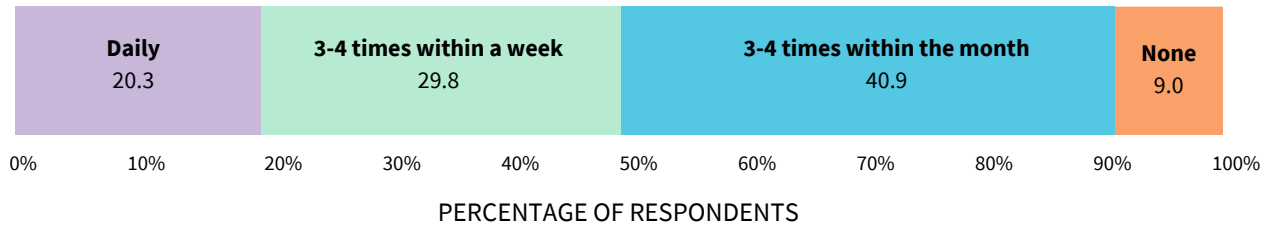


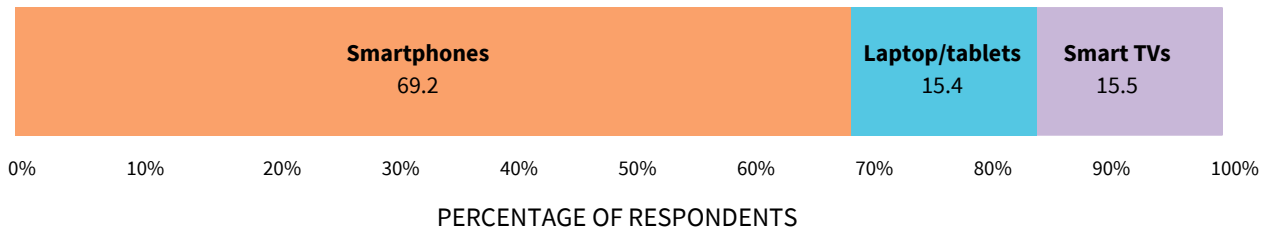
Figure 2 Users' Smoking Habits



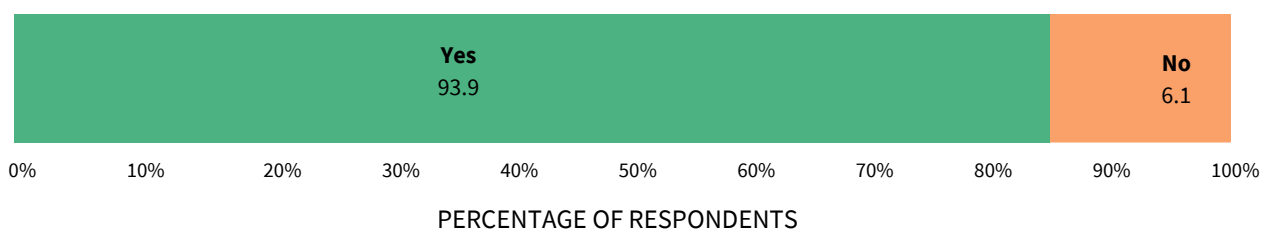
25.7% of the respondents were smokers (Figure 2), similar to the population-wise estimates of tobacco use in India at 28-29%.¹⁷ At the same time, users' content consumption patterns revealed that OTT services form an integral part of their regular routines. 20.3% consume OTT content daily, while nearly 70% watch such content at least once a week. These patterns resemble the existing estimates that peg the time spent on consuming OTT services at 70 minutes a day.¹⁸

Figure 3 User frequency of watching OTT content in the past month

Watching content on OTT services is typically an individual, single-user oriented activity, as seen in the nearly 70% of respondents who reported consuming such content on their personal device or devices such as smartphones (Figure 4). This is because of the prevalence of faster and lower-priced internet connections, coupled with substantial enhancements in smartphone features that enable users to stream high-quality video content in resolutions including 4K and Ultra High Definition. As a result, OTT content services have become outlets for users to tailor their own unique viewing experience without sacrificing quality. The many studies on OTT content adoption also find that the quality of audio and video content, convenience, availability across many age groups and genres, and in multiple languages, are the key factors driving the growth of OTT content consumption (Saha and Prasad 2021, Parihar and Kant 2021).¹⁹

Figure 4 Primary device used to watch OTT content

Viewership of OTT content that depicts smoking/vaping is high (as shown in figure 5). At the same time, there is a corresponding high level of awareness among viewers regarding content descriptors and age ratings associated with such content. This indicates that viewers are mindful of their consumption of OTT content, a pattern which aligns with policy objectives to enhance user agency via informed choice.

Figure 5 Viewed smoking or vaping scenes on OTT platforms

Measures to achieve informed choice are prescribed under the IT Rules, 2021, wherein OTT services that curate content must classify it into categories such as U, U/A 7, U/A 13+, etc. to establish its age-appropriateness. Further, content descriptors inform users of the nature of the content they are about to watch (including violence, nudity, sex, language, substance, and drug abuse among others). As mentioned above, movies or series that depict smoking or tobacco use already receive a higher degree of classification. Figures 6 and 7 show a large majority of users are already aware of such precautionary measures (i.e., age-ratings and content descriptors and tags).

Figure 6 Awareness of age-ratings on OTT platforms

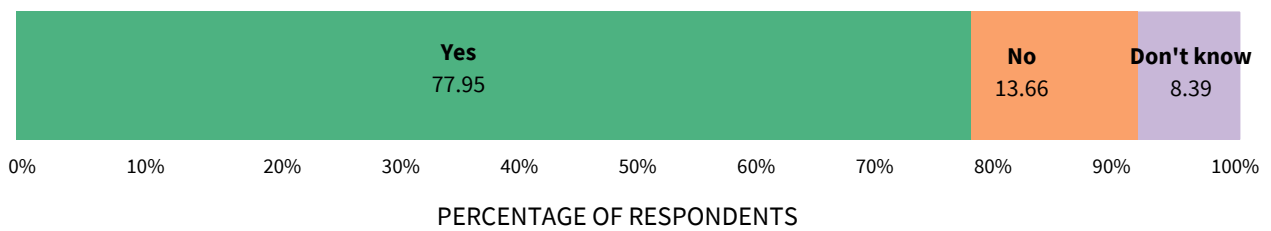
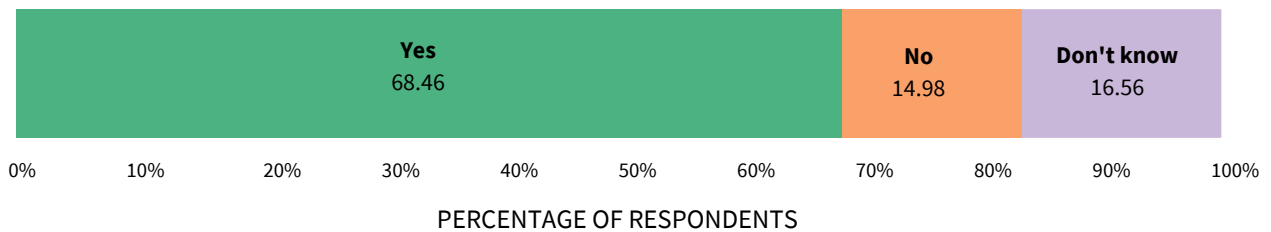


Figure 7 Awareness of content descriptors and tags on OTT platforms



Further, users feel that the depiction of smoking content on TV or OTT has an insignificant impact on smoking uptake. The influence of friends or peers and mental stress are among the most influential factors when it comes to smoking, while family, neighbourhood, and warnings at points of sale such as cigarette packs are the deterrents.

Figure 8 Factors that encourage smoking uptake

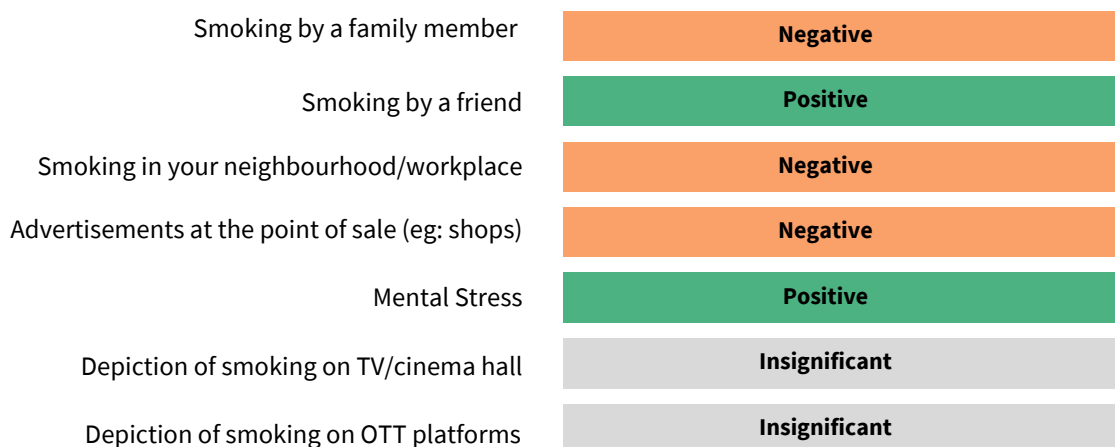
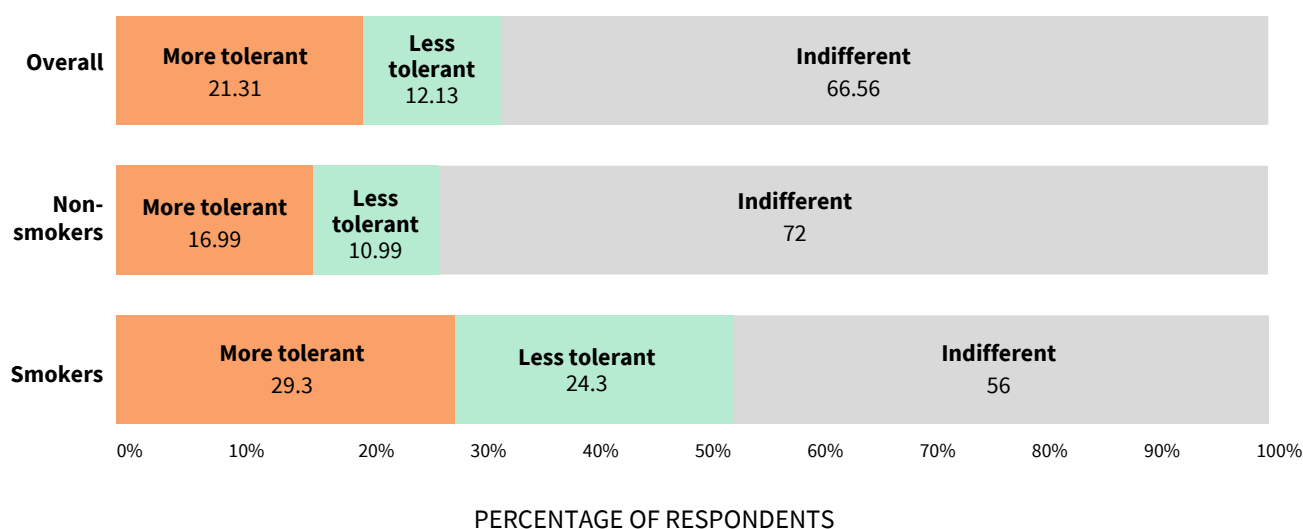


Figure 9 also shows how two in every three respondents were indifferent to the depictions of smoking in OTT content. This is largely because people engage with this content for recreation or leisure, and evidence of any change in their behaviour or actions due to OTT content consumption remains scant. There is no direct investigation or empirical research into this relationship, though research in related fields, such as on the impact of alcohol consumption and its portrayal in television or cinema, reveals that the causal effects of such factors on people's choices are inconclusive (Bonnie and O'Connell, 2004).²⁰

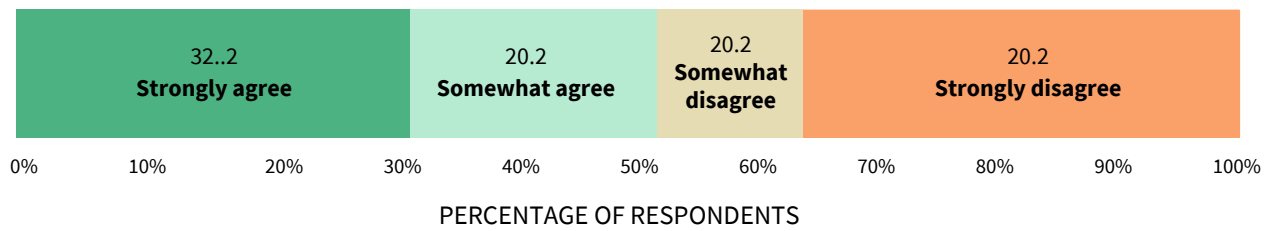
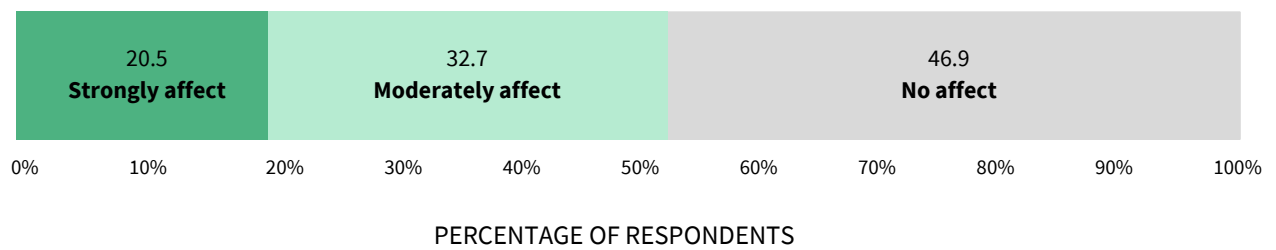
Figure 9 Impact of watching OTT content on smoking habits



It is important to consider that the global literature on smoking or vaping initiation has largely centred on peer-group influences. For instance, al-Kubaisy et al. (2012)²¹ and Koushki and Bustan (2006)²² highlight the 'theory of triadic influence', arguing that (a) individual characteristics such as age or gender, (b) factors in the immediate social environment such as family or friends, and (c) characteristics in the broader social environment, such as school or community, are the three main points of contact that influence young people to take up smoking.

Further, research that examined the effect of repeated exposure to the pictorial and threatening warnings (PTW) associated with tobacco has found that repetition may decrease emotions such as fear or disgust, and that the warnings have no effect on people's intention to quit or reduce cigarette consumption (Badie et al 2019).²³ As the effects of immediate strong emotions fade away over time, they cannot be a quick fix to achieve smoking cessation (Bogliciano et al, 2015).²⁴

Finally, majority of respondents in our survey questioned the need for additional text disclaimers, given that most of them are aware of the content descriptors and age-ratings already in place (Figure 10). Over 50% agreed that additional text disclaimers would negatively impact their viewing experience (Figure 11). This could be because most consumers watch OTT content on their smartphones, whose screen size ranges from six to seven inches. Therefore, any supplementary text disclaimers might be a source of distraction and disrupt the overall viewing experience.

Figure 10 User perception of the need for added disclaimers in OTT content**Figure 11** Negative effect of text disclaimers on viewing experience

RECOMMENDATIONS



① Strengthen enforcement of the IT Rules, 2021

The IT Rules, 2021 contain sufficient measures to address concerns relating to tobacco depiction, and it is important to ensure they are properly enforced. There are over 50 OTT services in India, according to a list on the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting website,²⁵ but not all of them appear to be affiliated with either of the self-regulatory bodies for OTT services under the IT Rules: the Digital Publishers' Content Grievances Council (DPCGC) under the Internet and Mobile Association of India, and the Digital Media Content Regulatory Council (DMCRC) under the Indian Broadcasting and Digital Foundation.

For instance, while the Ministry lists entities such as AirtelXStream, YuppTV and Watcho, they do not appear to be part of either the DPCGC or the DMCRC,²⁶ a vacuum that may affect the consistency of user experience across the OTT services curating content. It may also pose hurdles to enforcing requirements relating to tobacco depiction under the IT Rules. Thus it is important to ensure that all OTT content services operating in India are affiliated to either of the two existing self-regulatory bodies or SRBs.

② Ensure high standards of age-gating and age verification

It is important for OTT content services to ensure that their mechanisms for age-gating and age verification consistently reflect the global best practices. This will ensure their adherence in spirit to the IT Rules. Some examples of age-gating and verification mechanisms in other countries are given below, and are not meant to suggest that India should follow any of these approaches blindly, but rather to outline the global developments on this front.

For instance, in December 2021 the UK's Office of Communications (Ofcom) released a guidance paper on protecting users of On-Demand Programme Services (ODPS) from harm.²⁷ Its guidance cautions ODPS providers against relying on methods such as self-declaration or tickbox systems, or general disclaimers that require users to be above 18, as protection against specially restricted content.²⁸ In its consultation paper on the issue,²⁹ the Ofcom argued that effective age verification measures can include systems to verify whether the user is 18 years or older, as well as access systems that mandatorily use technical tools for age verification. It added that if age verification does not take place each time a user returns to a service, their access to specially restricted material should be controlled by mandatory security measures (such as PINs or passwords).

In its Age-Appropriate Design Code, the UK's Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has also suggested ways for digital businesses to determine the age of their users with appropriate certainty.³⁰ These include the use of third-party verification services, artificial intelligence to analyse how users interact with the business, and technical measures such as the neutral presentation of age declaration screens, or by preventing users from accessing a service if they are denied access when they first declare their age.

And in 2022, the state of California enacted the Age-Appropriate Design Code Act that will come into effect in July 2024.³¹ The Act states that online services in its ambit may look to the UK's Age-Appropriate Design Code when developing online services, products or features likely to be accessed by children. It adds that any age-assurance methods used by these services must be risk-proportionate, privacy-preserving, and minimally invasive.

Strengthen institutional support to address the health concerns of young people

Any efforts to prevent or reduce tobacco use, especially amongst young people, must acknowledge that factors such as peer pressure and mental ill-health lie at the core of smoking initiation. Research also shows³² that tail events such as the Covid pandemic may have further exacerbated the problem. The post-pandemic lockdowns and distancing norms that led to forced isolation have had a significant impact on people's mental and physical health. Social isolation is also linked to changes in people's actions and choices resulting in unhealthy lifestyles including the uptake of smoking. In the wake of these transformations, it becomes even more important for India to put in place a framework to deal with such unprecedented events.

The available research indicates that interventions such as education or counselling can be effective in preventing the initiation of smoking. The United States Preventive Service Task Force (USPSTF) recommends behavioural counselling, including face-to-face sessions, telephonic counselling, and computer and print-based interventions as effective measures to address this issue.

These recommendations align with India's National Mental Health Policy of 2014, which seeks to mitigate the negative impacts of mental health problems, including stress, disability, exclusion, morbidity and premature mortality, across individual lifespans. As part of the policy, the government must prioritise improved access to prevention, treatment and care support services, and focus on strengthening institutional support in public schools and colleges, where the risk of being initiated into smoking is likely higher. As per industry estimates from 2019, only 3% of privately owned schools in India have hired counsellors for their students, while the situation in public schools is even worse.³⁴ The reason for these shortcomings is likely (a) the dearth of qualified counsellors³⁵ and (b) insufficient funding. Achieving the goal of smoking cessation will therefore require the support of governments to deploy trained mental health professionals and to establish counselling offices in these institutions.

The government can also collaborate with non-government organisations such as the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) or the Tobacco Intervention Initiative (TII) led by the Indian Dental Association to help provide free or subsidised counselling services to students from economically poorer backgrounds.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Money Control ([2023](#))
- 2 Patnaik et al. ([2022](#))
- 3 The [World Health Organization's Global Youth Tobacco Survey](#) (GYTS) is a self-administered, school-based survey of students in grades associated with 13 to 15 years of age that is designed to enhance the capacity of countries to monitor tobacco use amongst youth and to guide the implementation and evaluation of tobacco prevention and control programs. The GYTS 2019 has the most recent information about youth tobacco consumption in India.
- 4 The Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) is a global standard for systematically monitoring adult tobacco use (smoking and smokeless) and tracking key tobacco control indicators. GATS is a nationally representative survey, using a consistent and standard protocol across countries. GATS enhances countries' capacity to design, implement and evaluate tobacco control programs. It will also help countries fulfil their obligations under the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). The GATS 2016-17 has the most recent information on adult tobacco consumption in India.
- 5 GATS-2, Fact Sheet – India ([2016-17](#))
- 6 Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Feb, [2021](#))
- 7 Infocomm Media Development Authority ([2019](#))
- 8 Directive (EU, [2018](#))
- 9 Ofcom.org.uk ([2021](#))
- 10 Draft Media Bill ([2023](#))
- 11 Memorandum from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to the Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee ([Media Bill](#))
- 12 Proposed Co-Regulation Framework for Broadcast, Video-on-Demand, and Over-the-top (OTT) Services ([2022](#))
- 13 The Guidelines appended to the Framework specify certain kinds of 'restricted films', or films not permitted to be distributed, exhibited or broadcast. These include films that 'erode the moral fabric of society', 'undermine the national interest', or 'promote or glamorize homosexuality', among others. Thus, although it does not have a prescriptive approach to tobacco depiction, it is generally more restrictive than the IT Rules, 2021.
- 14 Audio-visual media law ([2011](#))
- 15 A total of 2,856 users approached the survey, of whom 33.8% had seen content on OTT services in the last three months or dropped out, making the effective sample size 1,896. The survey meets the requirement for a statistically robust sample size design, with a minimum effect size of 20%, a level of significance (or p-value) of 5% and a power of 80%.

- 15 Tobaccofreekids.org (n.d.). [The Toll of Tobacco in India](#).
- 16 WHO (n.d.), [Macrotrends](#) (n.d.).
- 17 [Hindustan Times](#) (2022)
- 18 Saha, S., & Prasad, V. (2021). [Consumption Pattern of OTT Platforms in India](#). *International Journal of Modern Agriculture*, 2305-7246.
- 19 Parihar, S., & Kant, K. (2021). [Impact of Marketing Mix on Consumers Satisfaction-A Study of Consumers of OTT Platforms in India](#). [ResearchGate](#).
- 20 Bonnie R., J., O'Connell, M., E., (2004). [Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility](#). National Research Council (US) and Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Developing a Strategy to Reduce and Prevent Underage Drinking. National Academies Press (US).
- 21 Al-Kubaisy, W., Abdullah, N. R., Al-Nuaimy, H., Kahn, S. M., Halawany, G., & Kurdy, S. (2012). [Factors Associated with Smoking Behaviour among University Students in Syria](#). *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 38, 59–65.
- 22 Koushki, P. A., & Bustan, M. A. (2006). [Smoking, belt use, and road accidents of youth in Kuwait](#). *Safety Science*, 44(8), 733–746.
- 23 Badie, L., Sophie & Morvan, G., Karine & Droulers, Olivier & Lajante, Mathieu. (2019). [How do smokers respond to pictorial and threatening tobacco warnings?](#) *Journal of Consumer Marketing*.
- 24 Bogliacino, F, Codagnone, C, Veltri, G., A., Chakravarti, A., Ortoleva, P., and Gaskell, G., Ivchenko, A., Lupiáñez-Villanueva, F., Mureddu, F., and Rudisill, C. (2015). [Pathos & Ethos: Emotions and Willingness to Pay for Tobacco Products](#). *PLoS ONE* 10(10).
- 25 Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, List of OTT Platforms.
- 26 The membership list of the DPCGC is accessible [here](#), and of the DMCRG [here](#).
- 27 'On-Demand Programme Services Guidance: Guidance for ODPS Providers on Measures to Protect Users from Harmful Material' (2021).
- 28 'Specially restricted content' is defined under Section 368E (5) of the UK's Communications Act, 2003. It includes: a) a video work in respect of which the Video Works Authority has issued a R18 classification certificate, b) material whose nature is such that it is reasonable to expect that, if the material were contained in a video work submitted to the Video Works Authority for a classification certificate, the Video Works Authority would issue a R18 classification certificate, and c) other material that might impair the physical, mental or moral development of persons under the age of 18.
- 29 'On-Demand Programme Services Guidance: Consultation on Guidance for ODPS Providers on Measures to Protect Users from Harmful Material' (2021)
- 30 Age-Appropriate Design Code (2020)

- 31 Age-Appropriate Design Code Act ([2022](#))
- 32 Hwang, T.J., Rabheru, K., Peisah, C., Reichman, W., Ikeda, M. (2020). [Loneliness, and social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). International Psychogeriatrics. 1217-1220.
- 33 USPSTF ([2021](#))
- 34 India Times ([2019](#))
- 35 The median number of psychiatrists in India is a mere 0.2 per one lakh people, much lower than the global median of 3 per one lakh people. Further, the estimates for psychologists, social workers, and nurses working for mental health are 0.03, 0.03, and 0.05 per one lakh population. (Money Control, [2020](#))

ANNEXURE

Table 1 Logistic Regression Result on Smoking Behaviour

Dependent Variable: Smoker (Yes: 1, No: 0)	Coefficient	95% Confidence Interval	
Family	-0.136**	0.2366	0.0345
Friends	0.338***	0.2143	0.4611
Neighbour	-0.120*	-0.2385	-0.0023
Point-of-Sale Ads	-0.113*	-0.2208	-0.0054
Mental Stress	0.203***	0.0884	0.3183
Television	-0.126	-0.1663	0.1411
OTT Content	0.031	-0.1169	0.1783

Notes: * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$.



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contactus@koanadvisory.com | www.koanadvisory.com