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# EMPIRICAL STUDY ON PUBLIC AWARENESS AND COMPLIANCE WITH PLASTIC BAN POLICY: A NON-DOCTRINAL STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

While plastic, which was once thought to be a revolutionary invention owing to its flexibility, strength, and cost-effectiveness, has today turned out to be one of the major threats to the environment, which the world is presently facing, owing to the fact that plastic is not biodegradable and hence causes great harm to the environment. In this context, many countries around the world, including India, have framed laws prohibiting the use of plastic in the environment. However, while it is important to frame the laws, it is equally important to implement the same, which can only be done with the involvement of the people at large.

This research paper is a socio-legal study, and the socio-legal study, in particular, is focused on the importance of awareness and attitude in the implementation of the plastic ban in India. In this context, it can be said that the major aim of this study is to understand the level of awareness and attitude in the implementation of the plastic ban in India and the level of contribution made by the people in the implementation of the plastic ban in India. In this context, the non-doctrinal method is used to obtain the required information, and the Google survey form is designed to obtain the required information.

In this study, the stratified sampling technique is also used to analyze the gathered information and understand the opinions of the people in the context of the use of plastics in the country. It is expected that the findings of this study would reveal the discrepancies between the legal measures and the contributions made by the people, the factors influencing the implementation of the plastic ban in India, and the effectiveness of environmental laws in the context of the use of plastics in the country. This research, in general, is focused on the importance.

**Keywords:** Plastic ban, plastic awareness, environmental compliance, single use plastics and sustainable alternatives.

## **CHAPTER - I**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION:**

The biggest issue faced by our generation regarding our environment is the plastic pollution issue. This is because our environment has been negatively impacted by the use of plastic. Plastic is a product with a number of positive attributes. For instance, it is cheap, long-lasting, and easy to use. However, as a result of the negative impacts of plastic on our environment, plastic has come to symbolize unsustainable consumerism. Millions of tons of plastic are produced in our country, India.

The government has taken a number of steps in addressing the plastic pollution issue by bringing a number of laws into effect, encouraging people to use alternatives that are environmentally friendly, and restricting the use of plastic. Some of the objectives of the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, and changes made in 2021 and 2022 include improving waste management, encouraging people to use recyclable products, and banning the use of plastic. However, as a result of the passing of the rules, one of the most important factors is the knowledge of people.

Public awareness is a term used to define the information that individuals have concerning the negative impacts of plastic pollution, the plastic ban, and the regulations that they are expected to comply with. On the other hand, the concept of compliance refers to the degree to which individuals or societies comply with the rules and regulations set by the government. Among the arguments that come up from this concept is whether the ordinary people are aware of the significance of the plastic ban and are willing to comply with the regulations in their daily lives.

This, therefore, will require the people to take an active part in the implementation of the plastic ban in order to make it a success. The contribution will be based not only on the exchange of information but also the creation of a mindset that will help them to implement the regulations concerning the use of plastics. The studies indicate that the regulations are not enough to bring a change in the behavior of individuals. The lack of public awareness, the availability of alternatives made of plastics, and the influence of socioeconomic factors on the behavior of individuals are some of the reasons that lead.

This paper seeks to investigate the factors that affect the level of compliance of the masses in

India regarding the plastic ban laws and the knowledge of the masses regarding the restriction. The attitudes of the masses in India regarding the plastic ban, their knowledge, and their level of compliance regarding the issue would be the subject of investigation in this paper, and the method of conducting a survey would be employed in the research. It is the aim of this study to find out the knowledge of the masses regarding the plastic ban in India, the level of support for the issue, and the level at which the opinions of the masses are translated into action.

The results of the study will be useful in understanding the disparities between the legal theory and the common practice of law and identifying how these disparities can be used to enhance the future compliance levels. This study will help to make effective plastic waste management policies in India even more effective by revealing the connection between public awareness and the effectiveness of the policy, and recommendations on how to increase the involvement of people in environmental protection.

## **1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM:**

Although the government undertakes the plastic ban regulations, there is a lack of awareness and actual compliance among the citizens even though it continues to be uneven. Many individuals continue to use single-use plastics due to convenience, or even the lack of enforcement. This paper aims to investigate the reasons why the laws against plastic bans are not followed and the challenges of enforcing the rule, the disconnect between the level of sensitisation and behavioural change.

## **1.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

1. **IN 2021, a study by S.S.R.K.PRASAD AND A.K.SINGH Titled “Plastic bans in India”: Addressing the socio-economic and environmental complexities”<sup>1</sup>** this paper discusses the challenges in implementation plastic bans in India, focusing on the socio-economic and environmental impacts. It highlight the need for contextual consideration when promoting sustainable alternatives and the importance of stakeholder engagement of effective policy implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> S.S.R.K. Prasad & A.K. Singh, Plastic Bans in India – Addressing the Socio-Economic and Environmental Complexities, 33 Waste Mgmt. & Research 1234 (2021).

2. **IN 2022, a study by R.K.VERMA, “plastic waste management in India: challenges and opportunities”**<sup>2</sup> this article explores the challenges and opportunities in managing plastic waste in India. It discusses the effectiveness of current policies, the role of public awareness, and the need for improved infrastructure and enforcement mechanisms to enhance compliance with plastic ban regulations.

3. **IN 2020,A study by A.K.SHARMA AND P.GUPTA, “ evaluating plastic waste disposal options in Delhi to arrest soil contamination using multicriteria decision analysis”**<sup>3</sup>, this study uses a multi-criteria decision analysis approach to evaluate different plastic waste disposal option in Delhi. It aims to identify the most effective strategies to mitigate soil contamination caused by plastic waste, considering various environmental and socio-economic factors.

#### **1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY:**

The core aim of the study is to evaluate the level of knowledge among the population and its influence on the level of compliance with the laws on plastic bans in India. The objective of the survey is to establish the amount of knowledge held by people of the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 and the numerous revisions that have been done to reduce plastic consumption. It will also attempt to establish whether increased awareness leads to compliance with such rules.

The study will also seek to establish socio-demographic factors (age, education, income, and geographic location) affecting the compliance of the people and the nature of the obstacles that may prevent the full compliance, including the presence of plastic alternatives, cost, and accessibility of the appropriate waste disposal system. Through the understanding of awareness and compliance relationship, this research will make a valuable contribution which will help in designing more effective policies, awareness programs as well as waste management strategies to be implemented by the society. In the end, it is aimed to give recommendations on how the people can be made more engaged in environmental protection activities so that plastic ban policies are not merely enacted but the masses are adhering to them to achieve a

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<sup>2</sup> R.K. Verma, Plastic Waste Management in India: Challenges and Opportunities, 14 Sustainability 4425 (2022).

<sup>3</sup> A.K. Sharma & P. Gupta, Evaluating Plastic Waste Disposal Options in Delhi to Arrest Soil Contamination Using Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis, 45 Env'tl. Monitoring & Assessment 789 (2020).

cleaner and more sustainable environment.

### **1.5 HYPOTHESIS:**

The compliance with the policies against plastic bans and the level of public awareness concerning these policies have a positive relationship. This is the hypothesis, according to which people more conscious about the regulations of the plastic ban will be more inclined to adhere to it. Greater compliance can be achieved due to more awareness regarding the environmental effects of plastic, the rules and fines. The correlation between the two will be done through the comparison of the knowledge level of the respondents about the ban and their actual practices in the use of plastics on the assumption that, the higher the knowledge levels the higher the responses would be in regard to the policy.

### **1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY:**

Being focused both on urban and rural population of a specific area of India, the research will examine the relationship between communal knowledge and compliance to the plastic ban laws. It aims at assessing the level of awareness among the different groups of people, the way they understand the existing legislation, the repercussions of not adhering to it, and the harmful impact of plastic waste on the environment. The authors will also examine how the public knowledge and compliance behaviours are affected by a set of variables such as education, socioeconomic level and media or community outreach access to information. The information concerning the knowledge of people and their attitudes towards plastic ban laws and their actual behavior, including the reduction of plastic consumption or compliance with the applicable rules, will be gathered with the help of surveys.

### **1.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:**

This research has various weaknesses that can limit the generalization and richness of the results. To start with, the study is restricted to a certain geographic area (e.g., a city or a state in India), thus the findings could not be generalized to other geographic areas, where the socio-economic status, cultural norms, and enforcement might be quite different. The emphasis on the social consciousness of the population and the effectiveness of personal behavior in the context of the study also predetermines the lack of consideration of the role of the enforcement bodies, the governmental actions, and the institutional assistance, which can also play a

significant role in the effectiveness of plastic ban policies. The other disadvantage is that the self-reported responses of the survey respondents are used to collect data and this may have some drawbacks such as social desirability bias where individuals report on behaviours they believe to be socially acceptable and not necessarily the actual behaviour they exhibit. Moreover, the research only examines the relationship between awareness and compliance; it does not consider any other issues such as financial benefits or the presence of the substitute green products that can influence the compliance. Lastly, due to time and resource constraints, the sample size may be small and this may affect the thoroughness of the results.

## **CHAPTER - II**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION:**

Research methodology is the systematic, theoretical study of the techniques used to a specific study. It gives an organized framework that will help the researcher to carry out the study in a scientific and efficient manner. It entails the use and choice of numerous tools and methods which include sampling methods, data collection procedures, data analysis strategies and interpretation models. The research design provides the study with validity, reliability and accuracy in the research findings through a clear research methodology. It also assists the researcher in making decisions on whether to pursue qualitative, quantitative, or mixed approach depending on the nature and the purpose of the research. An effective methodology does not only enhance the credibility of the research but also enables others to replicate the study in other studies to be carried out in the future. At the end of the day, methodology in research is the cornerstone of any academic or scientific study, and makes sure that the findings are worthwhile and obtained in a systematic manner.

#### **2.2 RESEARCH APPROACH:**

The research methodology in this study is empirical and quantitative. To understand real dynamics on individual knowledge and adherence behaviour, an empirical method requires the collection of first-hand data in terms of direct observation and a converse with the participants. Using quantitative method, numerical data that could be statistically analyzed is gathered due to the primary goal of the study to measure and analyze the responses of the population towards

the plastic ban policies. It is a way of identifying specific factors that influence the compliance with environmental policies and ensures impartial evidence of the influence of awareness on behaviour. This method is the suitable because the research aims at showing the important interference using measurable data.

### **2.3 DATA COLLECTING INSTRUMENTS:**

The data collection will rely on interviews conducted in person or by telephone.

The most important tool of data collection, which is going to be used in this study, is a structured questionnaire. The structured questionnaire was designed in a way that it was clear and easy to comprehend for the respondents, in order to reach as much of the population as possible. The structured questionnaire included some open-ended questions in order to get a deeper thought or experience, as well as some closed-ended questions in order to get a precise and quantified data.

The questions included in the structured questionnaire were subdivided into a number of areas, which included demographic questions, level of compliance, information sources, behavior change, and awareness of the legislation of plastic ban. Before conducting the actual survey, a pilot test of the structured questionnaire was conducted on a sample of respondents in order to test its validity and comprehensibility, with some changes made accordingly.

### **2.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD:**

Data was collected through online distribution methods, and the questionnaires were sent to social media platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, emails, etc. It was a helpful method to the researcher as he was able to reach a large number of people within a short period of time. It was a helpful method in the context of the research as it helped in overcoming the time, financial, and physical hurdles. The time for which the poll was kept open for results was fixed in a manner that results had to be generated, thus encouraging people to take part voluntarily. As per the environment focus of the research, it helped in reducing the use of paper.

### **2.5 VARIABLES**

In this case, both the independent and the dependent variables have been used in the study. In this study, the independent variable is the level of knowledge among the public regarding the

laws on the ban of plastics. This includes the sources of information, the level of understanding regarding plastic pollution, the laws regarding the prohibition of plastics, and the consequences of not abiding by the laws. On the other hand, the dependent variable is the level of compliance with the laws, which is shown by the avoidance of the use of plastic bags, the use of cloth bags, and the encouragement of others to use the same. In order to understand the moderating effects of these factors, other moderating factors such as age, gender, education level, and place of residence, whether urban or rural, were also used.

## **2.6 POPULATION:**

Population for the study would be the people of different backgrounds living in a particular geographical area. The geographical area would include both rural and urban areas. The population would be diverse in terms of age, education, profession, etc. As the plastic ban laws are applicable to every aspect of the population, the study would be conducted in a way that it covers the beliefs and attitudes of a wide variety of people. A better understanding of the responses of different groups of people regarding the plastic ban laws would be achieved by choosing a diverse population, which would also help in making the results reliable.

## **2.7 SAMPLE AND SIZE:**

All the individuals who volunteered to take part in answering the questionnaire formed the sample of the research. This is because the poll was open to any willing individual who was willing to take the questionnaire, and a specific number of individuals was not required. Hence, the total number of individuals who responded to the questions formed the sample.

Though the actual number of individuals who could respond to the questions could be determined based on the actual responses obtained, the researcher was able to obtain a wide range of data with the help of this method. This was because the method was adaptive in nature.

## **2.8 SAMPLING:**

The study employed the convenience sampling, which is a non-probability sampling method. The questionnaire was distributed among a big number of people through internet sites and those people who were available and willing to take part were requested to answer. This method was chosen because of time, resource and participant accessibility problems. Convenience sampling applies to a study like this one which is exploratory research, especially when the

goal is to achieve preliminary understanding and identify trends in the behaviour of the population in regard to a ban on plastics although it may not be as representative of the entire population.

## **2.9 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE:**

The information collected by using surveys were constructed and analysed by using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages, pie charts and bar graphs were used to sum the knowledge levels and compliance behaviours of the respondents. These facilitated the observation of the general trends in the data.

Also, the comparison of awareness and compliance was performed among different demographic groups through cross- tabulation. To test the research hypothesis, the direction and strength of the relationship between the awareness and compliance was determined through correlation analysis. All the data was processed with the help of the tools of Google Sheets and Microsoft Excel, where their usability and availability were considered.

## **CHAPTER III**

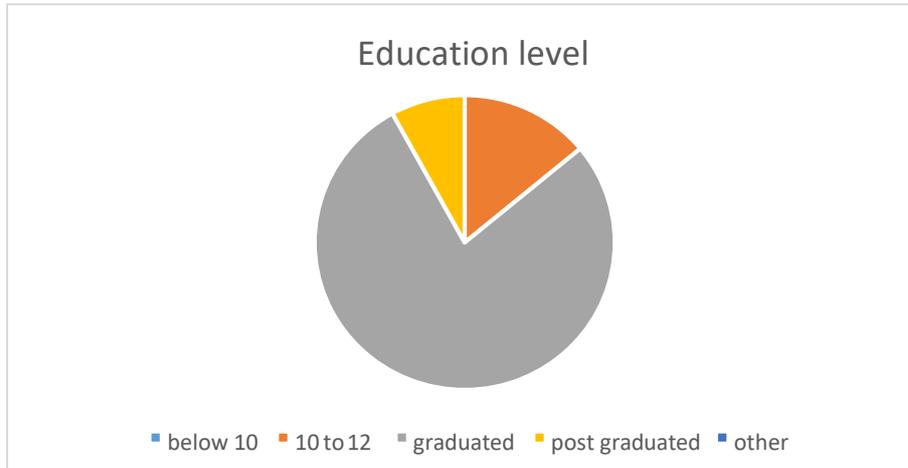
### **FINDINGS AND INTERFERENCES**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the author has provided an in-depth analysis of the data that was collected based on the awareness, behavior, and perception of 50 people concerning the plastic ban policies. The analysis provided by the author in this chapter is a mixture of both qualitative data and trends, as it can be used to understand the actual impact of the plastic ban policy. The analysis provided by the author in this chapter is practical, as it can be used to make inferences concerning the behavior of people concerning the plastic ban policies.

## 3.2 ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESPONSES

### 1. Qualification of sample taken



#### Purpose

This question was asked with the aim of obtaining information with regards to the educational background of the respondents. The educational background of individuals plays a vital role as it has a direct impact on the degree of awareness, understanding, and compliance with regards to a number of regulations concerning the environment, including plastics.

#### Findings

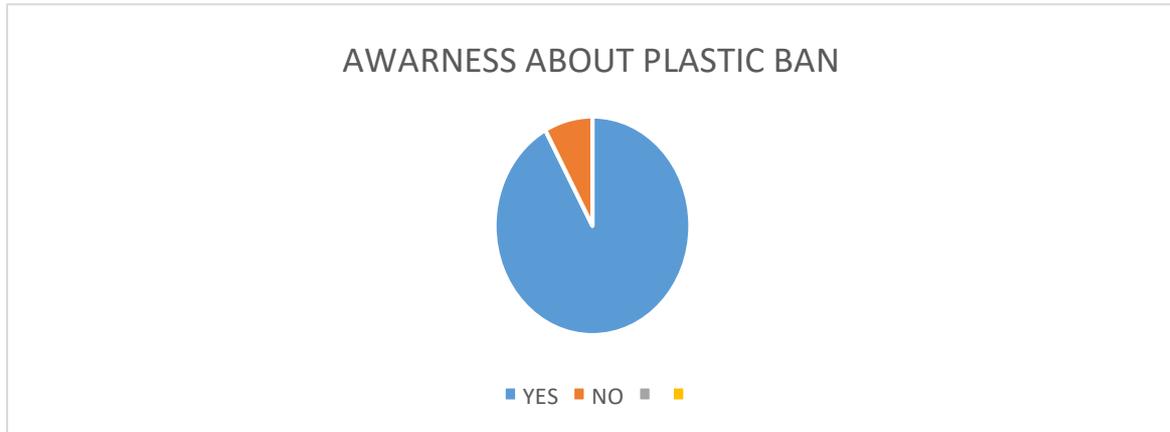
As per the responses obtained, 46% of the total respondents were graduates, 28% of the total respondents had completed their post-graduation, 16% of the total respondents had completed their higher secondary, and 10% of the total respondents were professional degree holders. None of the total respondents were uneducated, which implies that all of them were educated with a degree of some sort.

#### Inference

As inferred from the responses, it is quite clear that most of the total respondents were highly educated, i.e., a number of the total respondents were graduates and post-graduates. As inferred from a number of previous studies, it has been observed that individuals who are highly educated are also highly conscious with regards to the environment, which implies that this group of individuals would be highly aware of the usage of plastics and the need to ban the

same.

**2. Did you know that the government has banned some forms of plastic?**



**Purpose**

The purpose of this question was to find the level of awareness of the respondents regarding the plastic ban by the government.

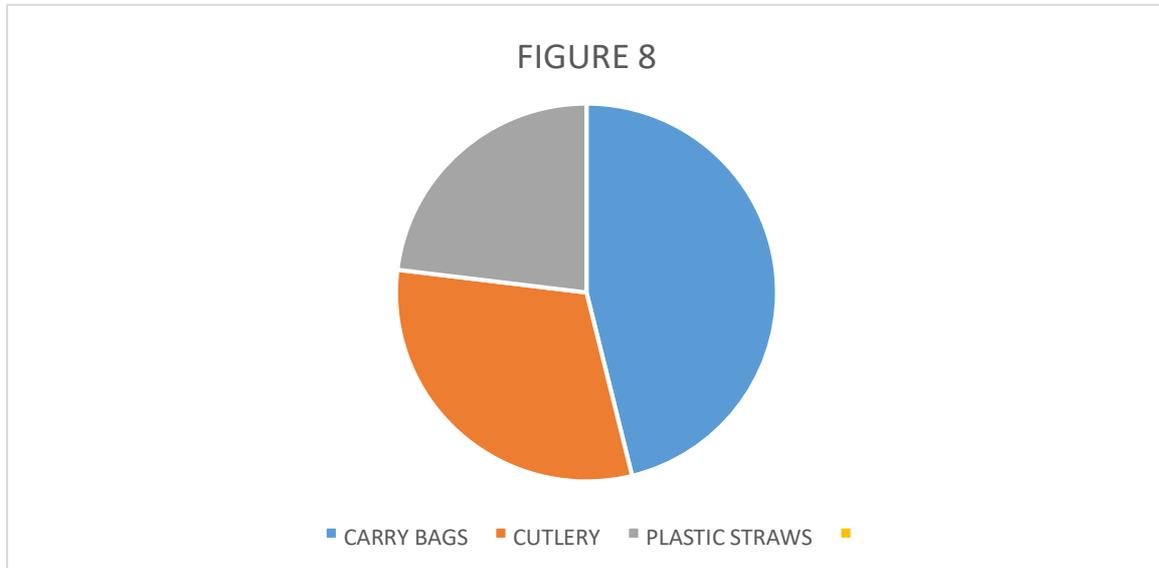
**Findings**

An overwhelming number of 92% of the respondents were aware of the plastic ban, and 8% of the respondents were unaware of the plastic ban.

**Inference**

A high level of awareness of the population regarding the plastic ban indicates that the government, along with other stakeholders, especially the media, has effectively communicated the plastic ban to the population. 8% of the population was unaware of the plastic ban, and this indicates that some information is missing, which has not been communicated to the population.

**3. Which of the following items are you aware are banned?**



**Purpose**

The aim of this question was to identify the type of plastic products the respondents were aware had been banned, hence the effectiveness of the information communicated concerning the ban.

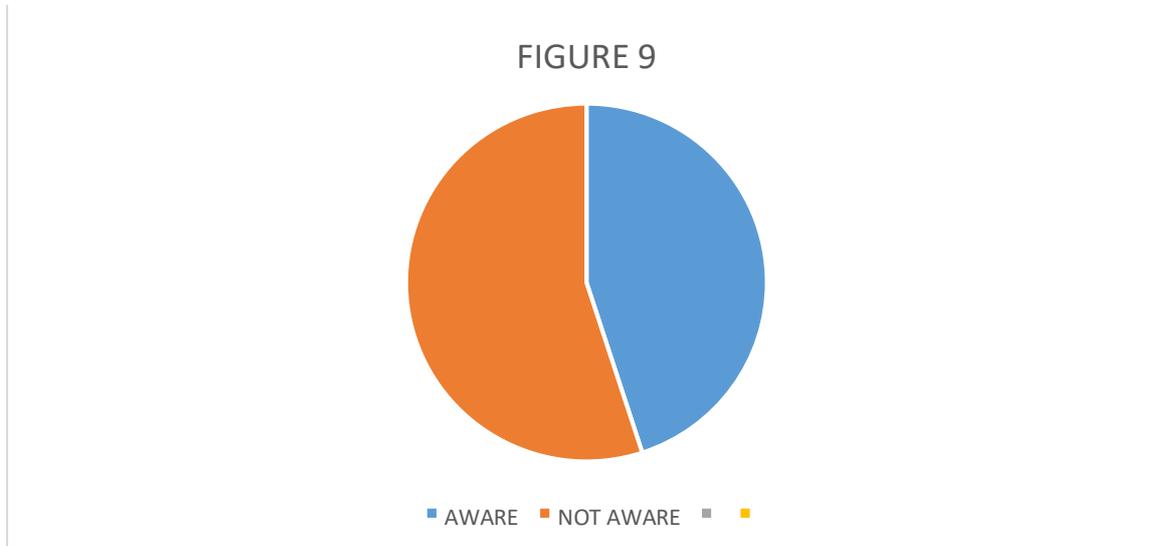
**Findings**

60% of the respondents were aware of the ban concerning single-use plastic bags, while 40% were aware of the ban concerning plastic cutlery. Additionally, 30% of the respondents were aware of the ban concerning single-use plastic straws. Fewer numbers were aware of plastic packaging and polystyrene.

**Inference**

The high number of people who are aware of the ban concerning single-use plastic bags and plastic cutlery implies that the information communicated to them concerning the ban is effective. The few numbers of people who are aware of plastic packaging and polystyrene imply that the information communicated to them concerning the ban is low.

**4. Do you know the penalties for violating the plastic ban?**



**Purpose**

The purpose behind this question was to understand what the knowledge level of the respondents was regarding the consequences of violating the plastic ban, which is an important factor in determining the level of compliance.

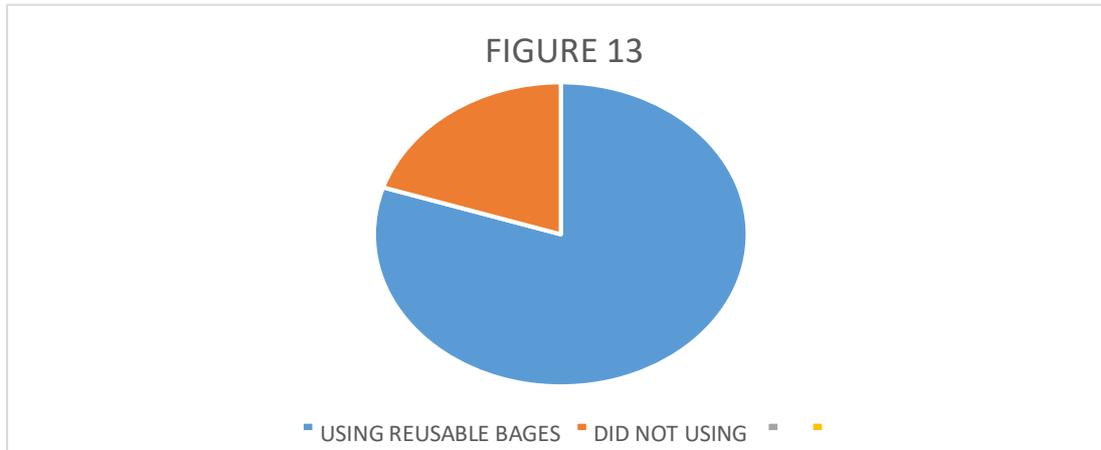
**Findings**

Out of the total number of respondents, only 45% of the respondents knew the consequences of violating the plastic ban, whereas 55% of the respondents did not know.

**Inference**

The inference that can be drawn from the above finding is that the plastic ban has not been implemented in the country by including one of the most important factors, i.e., the consequences of violating the plastic ban. It is quite possible that people in the country might be aware of the plastic ban, but without the consequences of violating the plastic ban, the plastic ban might not be effective.

## 5. Do you use reusable bags or containers when shopping?



### Purpose

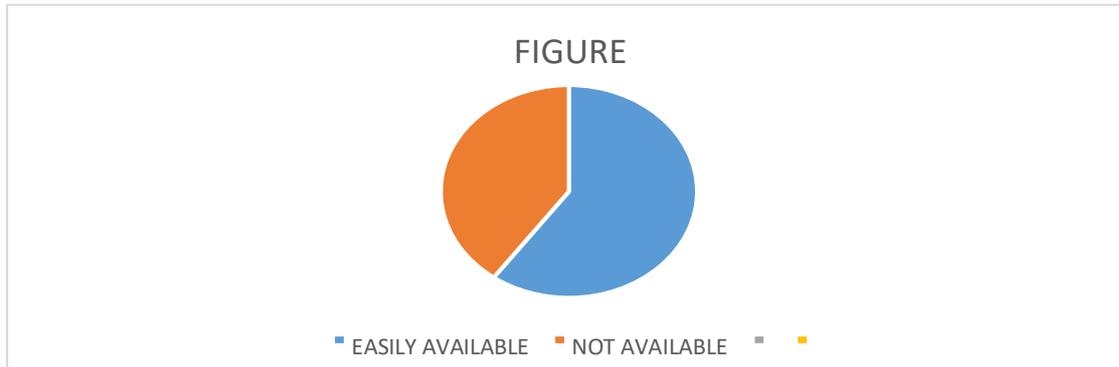
This question was aimed at finding out the level of adoption of eco-friendly practices among the respondents. This is a vital aspect in the reduction of plastic waste in the environment.

### Findings

80% of the respondents used reusable bags or containers in their shopping, but 20% of the respondents did not use reusable bags or containers in their shopping.

### Inference

This is a huge number of people already using reusable bags in their shopping. This is a good trend in society, and eco-friendly activities are on the increase in the country. The 20% of the respondents who did not use reusable bags in their shopping might also be inclined towards eco-friendly activities. However, the problem might come in the aspect of awareness.

**6. Are eco-friendly alternatives (cloth/jute/paper bags) easily available in your area?****Purpose**

This is a question that was targeted at finding out whether the availability of alternatives has any effect on the willingness to stop using plastics.

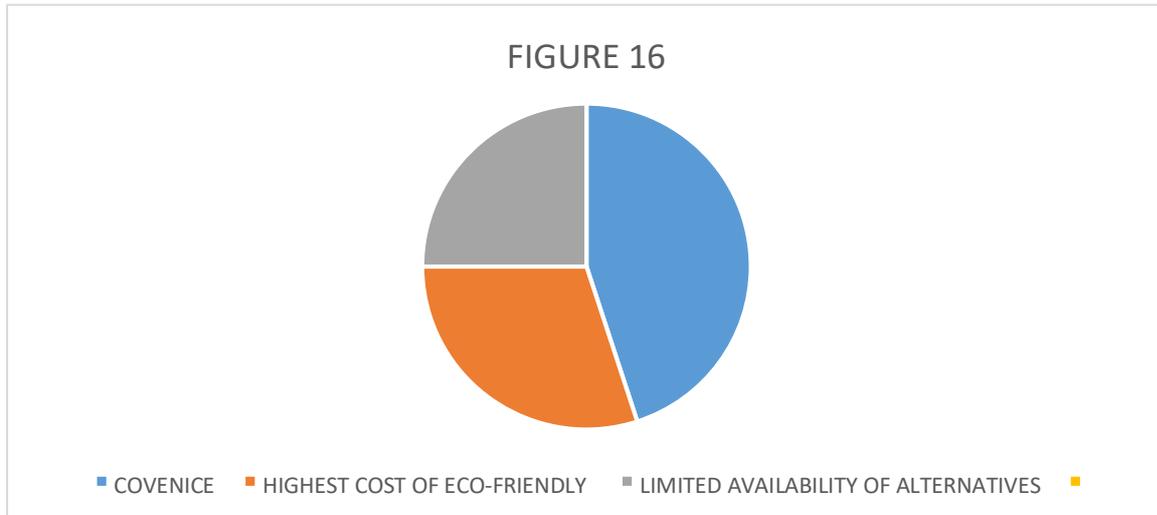
**Findings**

60% of respondents reported that the alternatives were readily available, while 40% reported that they were not.

**Inference**

This is an inference of the findings. The fact that the majority of the people have access to alternatives suggests that it is inferred that the issue of the availability of alternatives is not a problem in the reduction of the use of plastics. The fact that 40% of the people claimed that the alternatives were not easily available could be a problem in the adoption of alternatives.

**7. What difficulties do you face in avoiding plastic use?**



**Purpose**

The purpose of this question was to find out the specific problems faced by the respondents in the management of their plastic consumption.

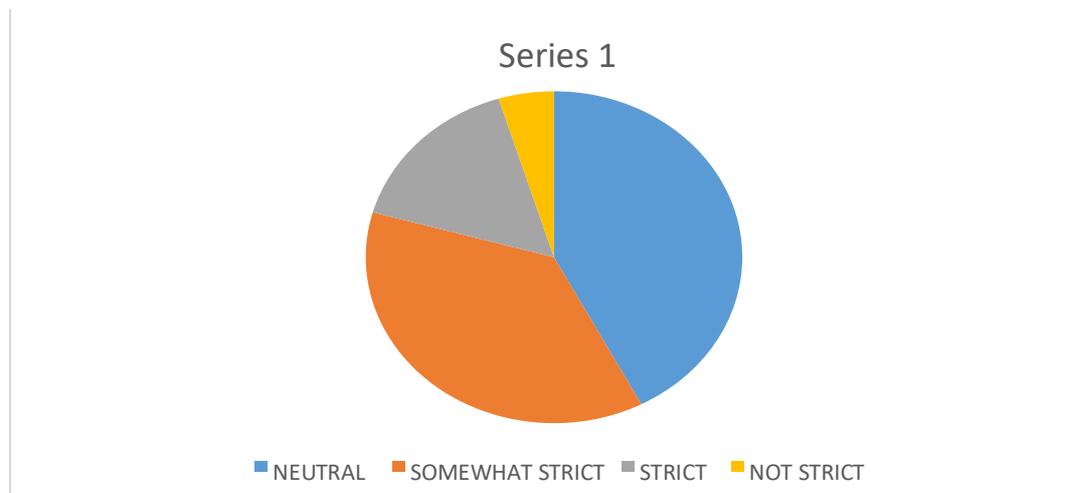
**Findings**

45% of the respondents agreed that the main problem was the issue of convenience. Then, 30% of the respondents agreed that the main problem was the high cost of alternatives. At last, 25% of the respondents agreed that the main problem was the limited alternatives.

**Inference**

From the findings of this question, it was inferred that the issue of convenience is a problem. This is because the general public is in a habit of using plastics because of the issue of convenience. The other two factors indicate that these two factors have to be taken into consideration in order to impose a ban on the use of plastics.

**8. How do you rate the rigidity of the ban enforcement in your locality on a scale of 1 to 5?**



**Purpose**

This is a question meant to evaluate the respondents' perception on the implementation of the plastic ban.

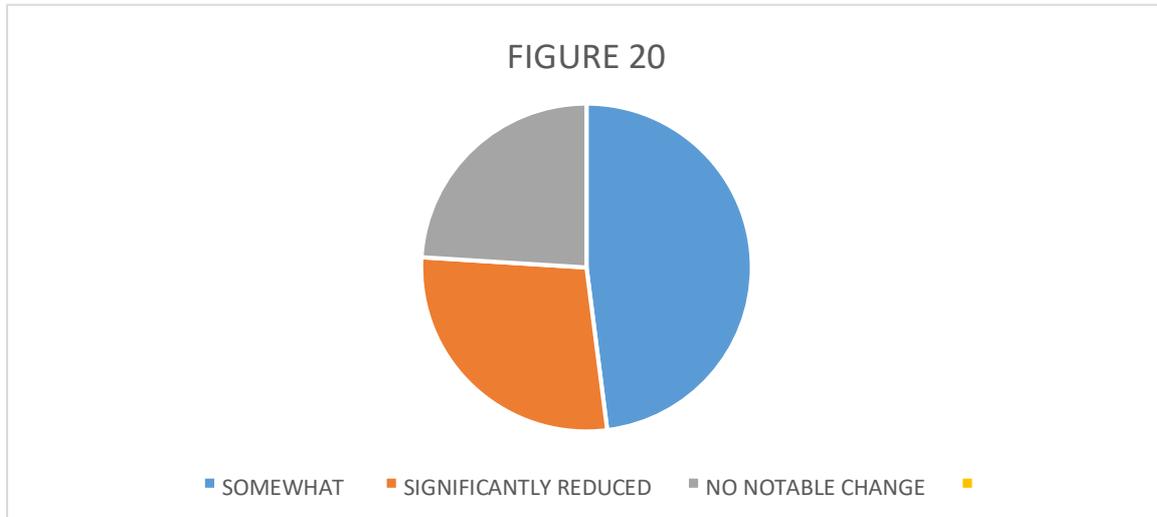
**Findings**

40% of them rated it 3, somewhat neutral. 35% of them rated it 4, somewhat strict. 15% of them rated it 5, very strict. 10% of them rated it 1 or 2, not strict.

**Inference**

Most of the respondents rated it somewhat strict and somewhat neutral. There are still concerns on its effectiveness. Some of them think it should still be even stricter.

**9. Do you think the plastic ban has reduced visible plastic waste?**



**Purpose:**

This question has been designed in a way that it can be used to gauge whether people are able to notice any changes in the environment as a result of the plastic ban. In a way, this question can be used to gauge the effectiveness of the plastic ban.

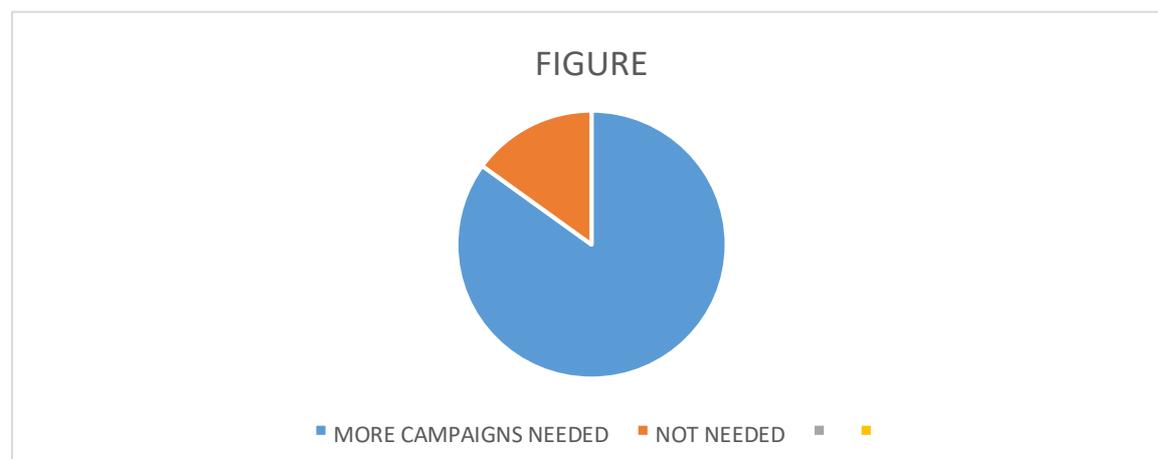
**Findings:**

Out of the 50 people interviewed, 48% of the people interviewed felt that the plastic ban has resulted in a reduction of plastic waste. On the other hand, 28% of people interviewed felt that the plastic ban has significantly reduced plastic waste in the area. Moreover, 24% of people interviewed felt that there has been no change in the area as a result of the plastic ban.

**Inference:**

The inference that has been derived from the results of the interview is that the plastic ban has resulted in a moderate level of success in reducing plastic waste in the area, as a majority of people interviewed felt that the plastic ban has reduced plastic waste in the area, whereas a section of people interviewed felt that the plastic ban has significantly reduced plastic waste in the area.

10. Do you think it should be increased through more awareness campaigns?



**Purpose**

This question aimed at identifying the opinion of the respondents on whether there was a need to do more to create awareness regarding the plastic ban.

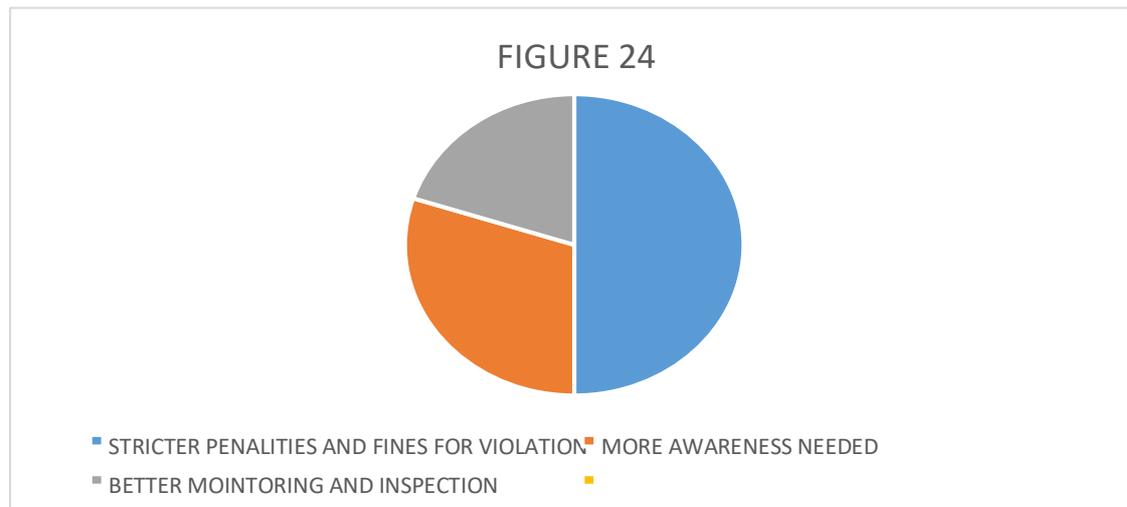
**Findings**

A majority of 85% of the people said they should carry out more awareness campaigns with just 15 percent saying otherwise.

**Inference**

The fact that people have high demands regarding the more awareness campaigns shows that regardless of all the efforts that have been taken, there is still a high demand of a constant and targeted public education. This is particularly necessary in order to be sure that every group of the population will be covered and made aware of the specifics of the ban and its advantages.

**11. What additional measures should the government take to enforce the plastic ban?**



**Purpose**

This question aimed to gather suggestions on how the government could improve enforcement of the plastic ban.

**Findings**

Half of the respondents, recommended that stiffer penalties and fines be imposed on violators, 30 percent were of the view that more awareness campaigns should be ensured and a minority one-fifth recommended stricter monitoring and inspections.

**Inference**

The recommendations on harsher punishment indicate a need to have stricter enforcement. The rise in awareness and enhancements in monitoring proves that the citizens desire a multi-level solution to the problem to make the ban successful, focusing on education and deterrence.

**12. What are your ideas or remarks regarding the better implementation of plastic bans?**

**Purpose**

The open-ended question was used in order to get more feedback on the implementation of the plastic ban by the respondents.

## **Findings**

The list of reactions was different but some of the widespread ideas were more public education, improved access to more environmentally friendly options, and tougher punishments to those who break the rules.

## **Inference**

The recommendations show that the interviewees see the necessity to keep enhancing the adoption of the plastic ban. The emphasis on education and the availability of alternatives are indicative of the wish of the population to have a set of solutions that would be more practical and help them reduce the number of plastics.

### **3.3 OVERALL INTERFERENCE (With Literature Review Integration):**

This study provides an overall inference with an integrated literature review. This research paper was done to evaluate the level of awareness and the adherence to the plastic ban policies in India, through a survey of 50 participants. The results show that there is a positive but demanding situation of awareness, behaviors, and compliance with plastic ban policies. A combination of these findings and the literature allows us to develop a better understanding of the intersection between public awareness and regulatory measures, which supports the prior studies in this topic.

### **Key Inferences:**

#### **1. Awareness of Plastic Ban:**

Most of the respondents knew about the plastic ban, the most prevalent channels of information being the media campaigns. However, there was a gap in respondents' knowledge of specific banned plastic items, which aligns with findings<sup>4</sup> who pointed out that general awareness campaigns often fail to detail the specifics of what is banned. Thus, it is clear that while broad awareness exists, more targeted communication regarding banned plastic items is required.

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<sup>4</sup> Ruksana Saikia, Role of Mass Media in Creating Environmental Awareness, 2 Nat'l J. Multidiscip. Res. & Dev. 1 (2017)

## 2. Demographics and Behavioral Insights:

Further, individuals with a higher educational attainment were also aware of the plastic ban. This is in line with the conclusion of , who posited that individuals with a higher educational attainment are more inclined to participate in various environmental policies. Further, individuals who were between 18-30 years of age were also inclined to participate in behaviors aimed at reducing plastic usage. This is in line with the conclusion of Kumar and Singh (2021), who posited that individuals who are between 18-30 years of age are more inclined to participate in behaviors aimed at reducing environmental degradation since they have a higher level of digital literacy.<sup>5</sup>

## 3. Compliance with Plastic Ban:

Most of the participants claimed that they have made efforts in reducing plastic usage. This is in line with the conclusion of , who posited that a strong positive correlation exists between the awareness of the public and their efforts in reducing plastic usage. The fact that most of the participants still used single-use plastics, however, suggests that reducing plastic usage is a slow process, as concluded by, who posited that changing one's behavior in reducing plastic usage is a slow and arduous process.

## 4. Availability of Eco-friendly Alternatives:

This aspect of the problem, where it was pointed out that there is a problem with regards to the availability of alternatives in some parts of the country, has been further emphasized in consideration of the findings of the study. <sup>6</sup>The findings of their study have pointed to the importance of the issue of availability of alternatives such as the use of jute bags or cloth bags.

## 5. Enforcement and Regional Inequality:

The study established that there exist certain variations in the execution of the plastic ban in different region and they observed that there is no uniformity where enforcing plastic bans is an eminent barrier in the success of plastic bans in India. The variance in the implementation of the practices underscores the applicability of the homogenous regulations and enhancement

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<sup>5</sup> Shiksha Anveshika, A Study of Awareness about Hazards of Plastic Bags Among the People, 27 (2015)

<sup>6</sup> Meera Iyer, Community – Driven Plastic Waste Management: Local Innovations in India, 16 ENV,T & SOC,Y J. 77, 82 (2020).

of monitoring systems to offer compliance.

#### **6. Community and Social Influence:**

The study indicated that many of the respondents had been proactive in motivating others (friends/family) to reduce the consumption of plastics, who highlighted that social influence is a relevant factor in the determination to engage in the practice of sustainability. This means that community based campaigns could be more beneficial to the development of the plastic ban.

#### **7. The created Action of Government and popular feeling:**

The respondents indicated that the government can do more to ensure that there is enhanced implementation of the plastic ban. This is connected to the work, which might have thought that regardless of enormous advances made by campaigns organized on awareness, more enforcing and controlling the environmental policy is the key step to success.

#### **8. Environmental Report and Social Acceptability:**

The majority of the respondents were in agreement concerning the point that the policy of banning plastics has led to a decrease in the amount of waste, although there were some concerns regarding the fact that more campaigns had to be conducted for the public to be aware of the plastic ban policy. The long-term effects of the policy will be achieved through campaigns, and individuals and organizations have to sustain the campaigns.

In conclusion, it is imperative to note that the study has offered a critical insight into the awareness of the public concerning the plastic ban policy and their compliance. It is also imperative to note that although there are positive trends, it is a challenge for the public to change their behavior, especially concerning the use of plastics. The research and literature review conducted indicated that improving the plastic ban policy, the alternatives, and the public education are factors that, as suggested by Bansal, if taken into consideration comprehensively, will improve the public's compliance with the plastic ban policy.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

#### 4.1. CONCLUSION

This study, which is based on the level of awareness among the general public on the enforcement of the plastic ban policy, is an empirical study, and it has shown that although the level of awareness is moderate regarding the government's decision to impose a ban on the use of plastic, the level of understanding is still low among the general public. There is a desire to adapt to environmental-friendly changes, especially in the aspect of less use of plastic in their respective social groups. However, this is still a challenge in the successful enforcement of the policy. This study has shown that although the general public is in favor of the policy, it can only be done through a collective effort and the enforcement of the public policy.

#### 4.2 SUGGESTIONS:

##### 4.2.1 Strengthening Awareness Campaigns

The awareness campaigns conducted in semi-urban and rural areas should be strengthened. The use of regional languages and visual media would help in making the information easily available, which would in turn increase the effectiveness of the awareness campaigns. The participation of the people, through the help of NGOs, educational institutions, and local governments, has great potential for bringing a positive change in the behavior of the people.<sup>7</sup>

##### 4.2.2 Improve Accessibility to Eco-Friendly Alternatives

For the effective implementation of the ban, it is also important for the government to ensure the availability of alternatives for single-use plastics, such as jute and cotton bags, at reasonable prices for the consumers. The government may also provide a subsidy for the local producers of eco-friendly alternatives, which would help in the increased usage of these alternatives.

##### 4.2.3 Strengthen Enforcement and Monitoring:

For the enforcement of the ban, it is important for local governments to be empowered for the

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<sup>7</sup> Nilofur Banu, Single-Use Plastic Ban and Its Public Health Impacts: A Narrative Review, 8(1) Annals of SBV 13 (2019)

same. The use of technology, such as the use of mobile applications and the installation of CCTV cameras in markets, would also be helpful for the enforcement of the ban.

#### **4.2.4 Promote Citizen Engagement**

The engagement of the people in the implementation Integrate.<sup>8</sup>

#### **4.2.5 Environmental Education**

It is important to educate the youth in schools and colleges about plastic pollution and waste management. The youth are going to be the leaders of our country. It is important to educate the youth for a brighter future.

#### **4.2.6 Educate and Empower Vendors**

Vendors on the street and shop owners are also responsible for plastic pollution. They are still using banned plastics. They are not aware of the consequences. It is a must to educate vendors. The government can give certificates to vendors who use eco-friendly plastics.

#### **4.2.7 Institutional and Policy Measures**

Reviewing the policies and the implementation is a must. It is a must to work hand-in-hand with local bodies for transparency.

**4.2.8 Promote Technological Intervention** Mobile applications can be created to spread awareness among people. They can use it to report people who are violating the laws using a user-friendly interface. They can also use it to find vendors who use eco-friendly plastics.<sup>9</sup>

#### **4.3 Closing Statement**

Plastic Ban policies can be implemented with the help and support of the government. This study has proved that people are aware of plastic pollution. It is the government's responsibility to fix loopholes for a brighter future

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<sup>8</sup> Barbara Bokor, Corporate Engagement in Mitigating Plastic Pollution: Examining Voluntary Initiatives and EU Regulations, 5 *Frontiers in Sustainable Waste Management* 1 (2024).

<sup>9</sup> Swapnil Singh, A Study on Consumer Awareness of the Harmful Effects of Plastic Bags, *AATCC J.* (2023).

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## APPENDIX

1. What is your age group?

- a. Below 18
- b. 18-25
- c. 26-35
- d. 36-45
- e. 46 and above

2. What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Other
- d. Prefer not to say

3. What is your Highest level of education?

- a. Below 10th
- b. 10th-12th
- c. Graduated
- d. Postgraduate
- e. Other

4. What is your current occupation?

- a. Student
- b. Working professional
- c. Home maker
- d. Self employed
- e. Unemployed

5. Where do you live?

- a. Urban area
- b. Rural area

6. Did you know that the government has prohibited some forms of plastic?

- a. Yes
- b. No

7. How did you first come to know about the plastic Ban?

- a. Tv/News
- b. Social media
- c. Government circular
- d. Friends/family
- e. I'm not aware

8. Which of the following item's are you aware are banned?

- a. Plastic carry bags
- b. Plastic straws
- c. Plastic cups and plates
- d. Styrofoam items
- e. I'm not sure

9. Do you know the penalties for violating the plastic Ban?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I've heard of it but not sure

10. What is your frequency of use of single-use plastic products?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely Never

11 . Have you made any attempt to minimize the use of plastics since the ban?

- a. Yes, significantly
- b. Yes, slightly
- c. No change
- d. I already avoided plastic

- 12 . Have you noticed products of local stores / sellers with prohibited plastic? a. Yes, frequently
- b. Occasionally
  - c. Rarely
  - d. Never
13. Do you use reusable bags or containers when shopping?
- a. Always
  - b. Sometimes
  - c. Rarely
  - d. Never
14. Have you encouraged others (friends/family) to avoid plastic use?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Sometimes
  - d. Availability and challenges
15. Are eco-friendly alternatives ( cloth/jute/paper bags) easily available in your area?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Somewhat
16. What difficulties do you face in avoiding plastic use?
- a. Lack of awareness
  - b. Lack of alternatives
  - c. High cost of alternatives
  - d. Habit/convenience
  - e. No difficulty
17. Do you think businesses and vendors are aware of the ban?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Some of them

18. Have you ever reported any breach of the plastic ban?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I wasn't aware that I could

19. How do you rate the rigidity of the ban enforcement in your locality on a scale of 1 to 5?

Not at all

0

1

2

3

4

5

Very strictly

20. Do you think the plastic Ban has reduced visible plastic waste?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. A little

21. Do you think it should be increased through more awareness campaigns?

- a. Yes
- b. No

22. Who is supposed to make the largest contribution to the reduction of plastic use?
- a. Government
  - b. Public
  - c. Business
  - d. Educational institutions
  - e. All of the above
23. Do you think the plastic Ban affects your daily life?
- a. Yes, a lot
  - b. Yes, a little
  - c. No, not really
  - d. Not at all
24. What additional measures should the government take to enforce the plastic ban?
25. What are your ideas or remarks regarding the better implementation of plastic bans?