

Circulation of Fake News through Social Media amid pandemic



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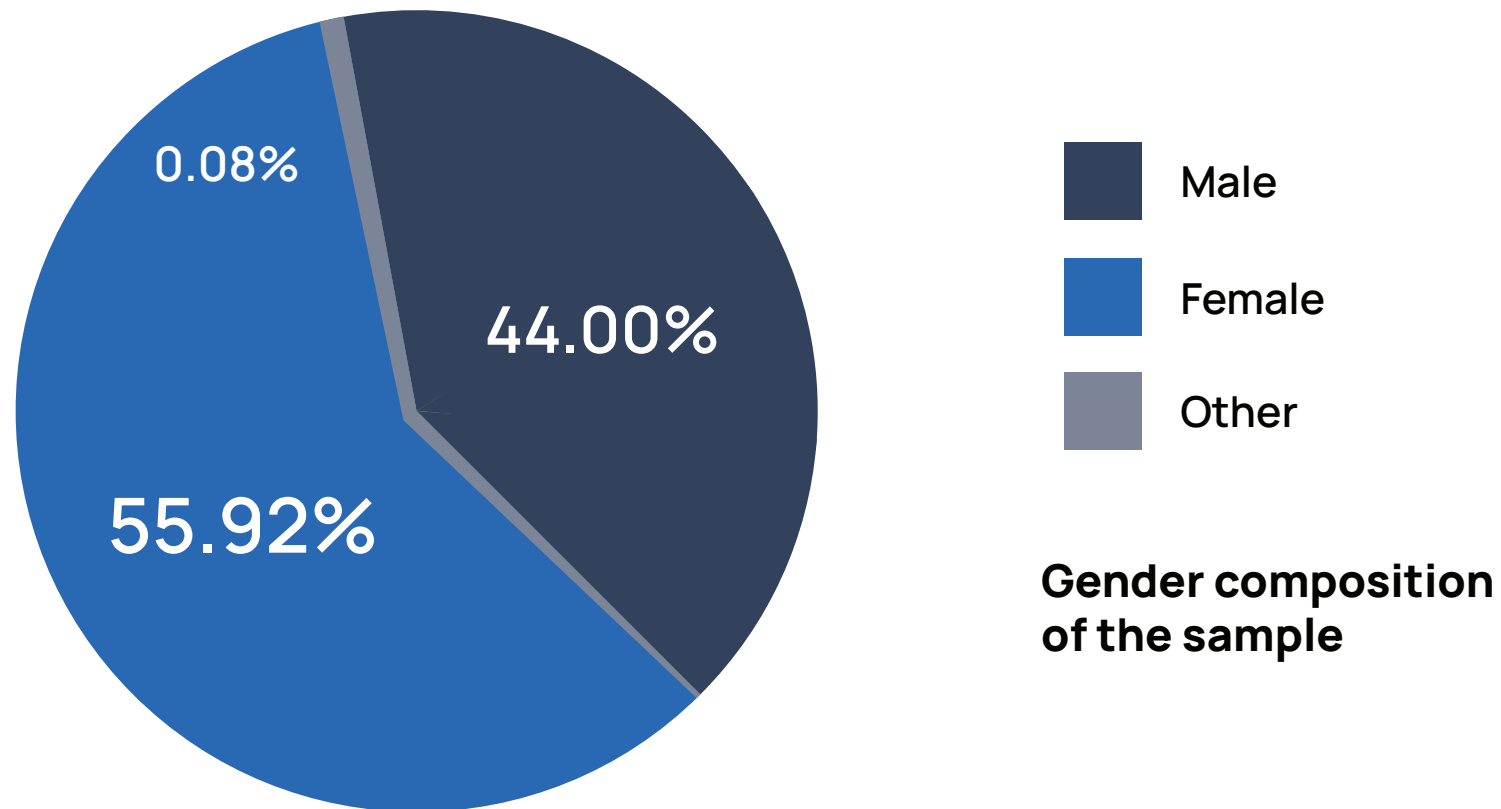
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Major Sources of Fake News

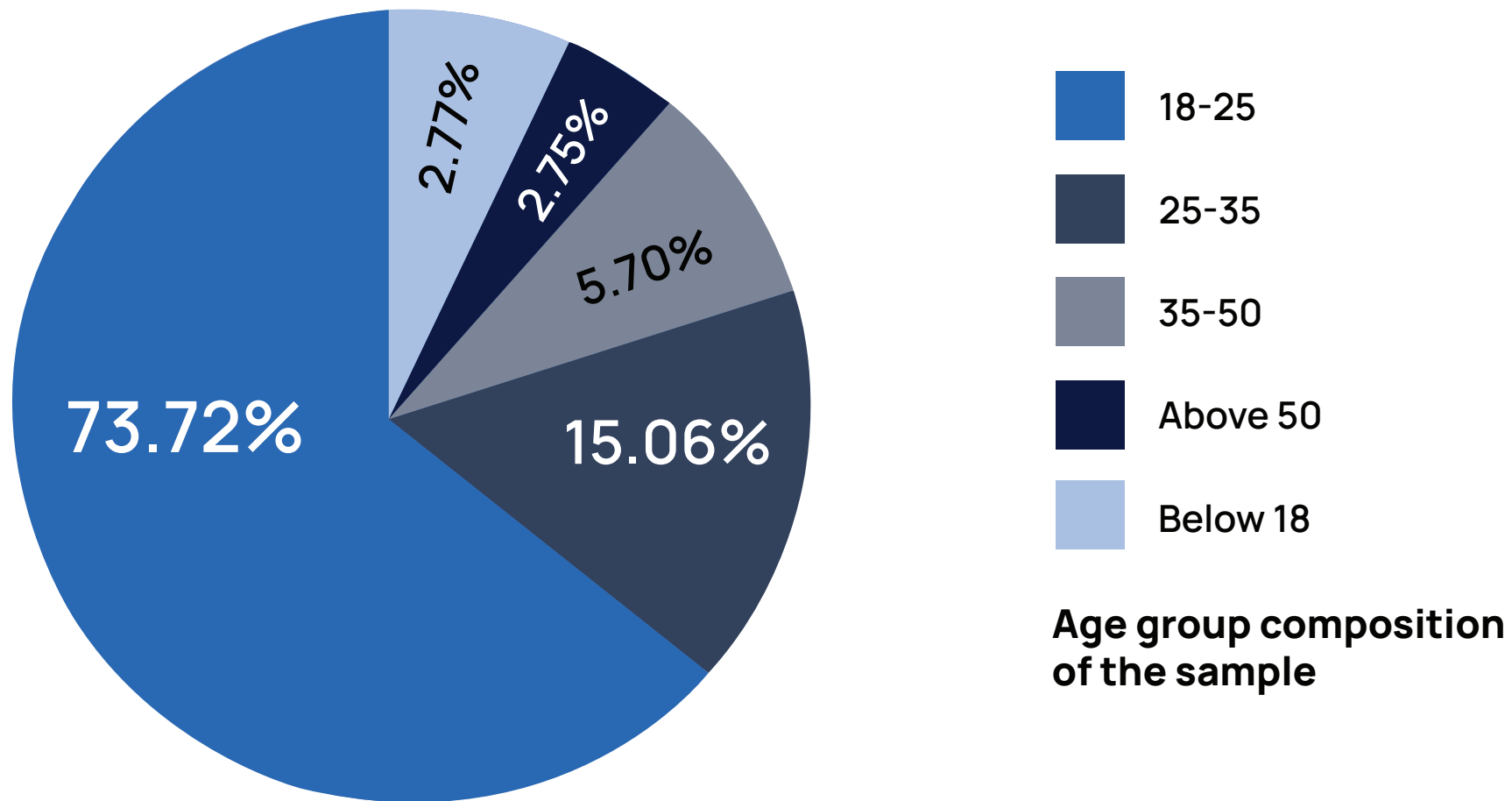
Overview

A survey was conducted on COVID-19 and Fake News in the month of May 2020 by IGPP & SMM. A total of 3752 questionnaire were filled in English and Hindi medium across India. Most of the respondents were from Delhi (15.09%), Uttar Pradesh (9.54%), and Maharashtra (9.04%) followed by Rajasthan (7.76%), Tamil Nadu (6.16%), Haryana (5.52%), and also significant participation were from Kerala (4.74%), West Bengal (4.61%), Madhya Pradesh (3.94%), and Karnataka (3.84%). The largest age-group of this survey lies between 18 to 25 (2766 respondents) followed by the age-group 25 to 35 having 565 respondents. In terms of gender composition, it has 55.92% male and 44% female along with the very few i.e. 0.08% beyond the gender binary (Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3 and Table 1).

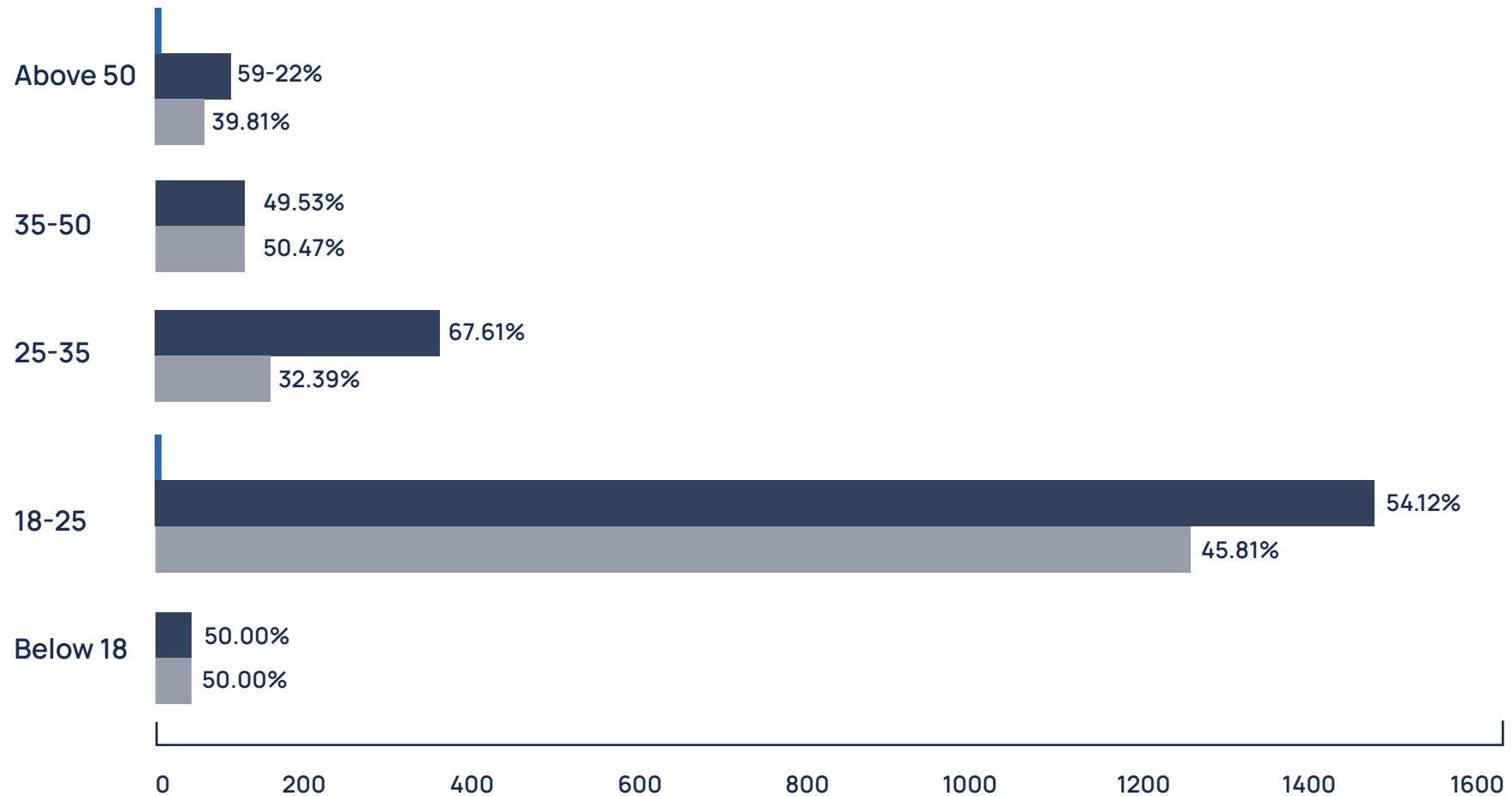
General description of the sample



General description of the sample






General description of the sample






Age group wise gender decomposition of the sample



State/UT Wise Distribution of Response

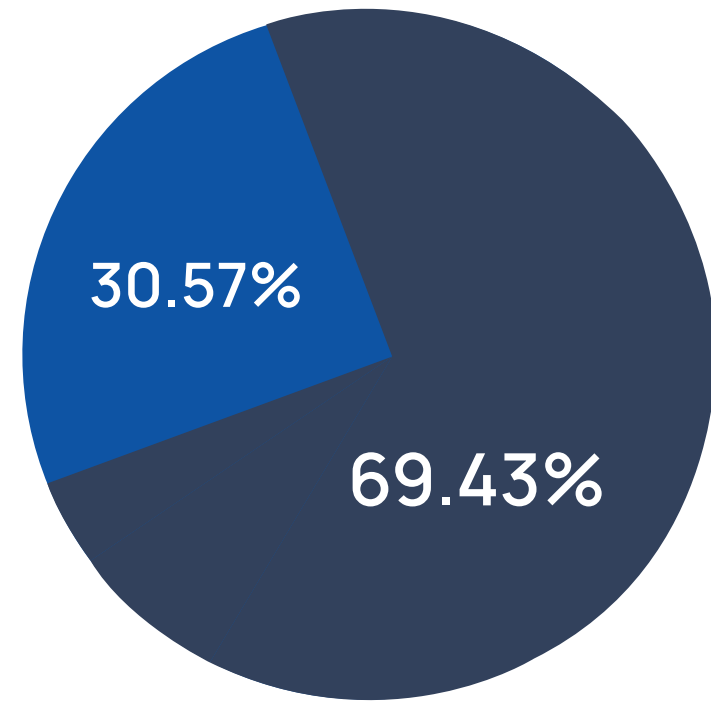
 State/UT	 Number of responses	 Percentage of responses
Andra Pradesh	132	3.52
Assam	95	2.53
Bihar	107	2.85
Chhattisgarh	41	1.09
Delhi	566	15.09
Goa	1	0.03
Gujarat	126	3.36
Haryana	207	5.52
Himachal Pradesh	29	0.07
Jammu & kashmir	107	2.85
Jharkhand	95	2.53
Karnataka	144	3.84
Kerala	178	4.74
Madhya Pradesh	148	3.94

State/UT Wise Distribution of Response

 State/UT	 Number of responses	 Percentage of responses
Maharashtra	339	9.04
Odisha	110	2.93
Punjab	39	1.04
Rajasthan	291	7.76
Tamil nadu	231	6.16
Telangana	124	3.3
Uttar Pradesh	358	9.54
Uttarakhand	41	1.09
West Bengal	173	4.61
Union Territories	63	1.67
North eastern States	7	0.19
Total	3752	

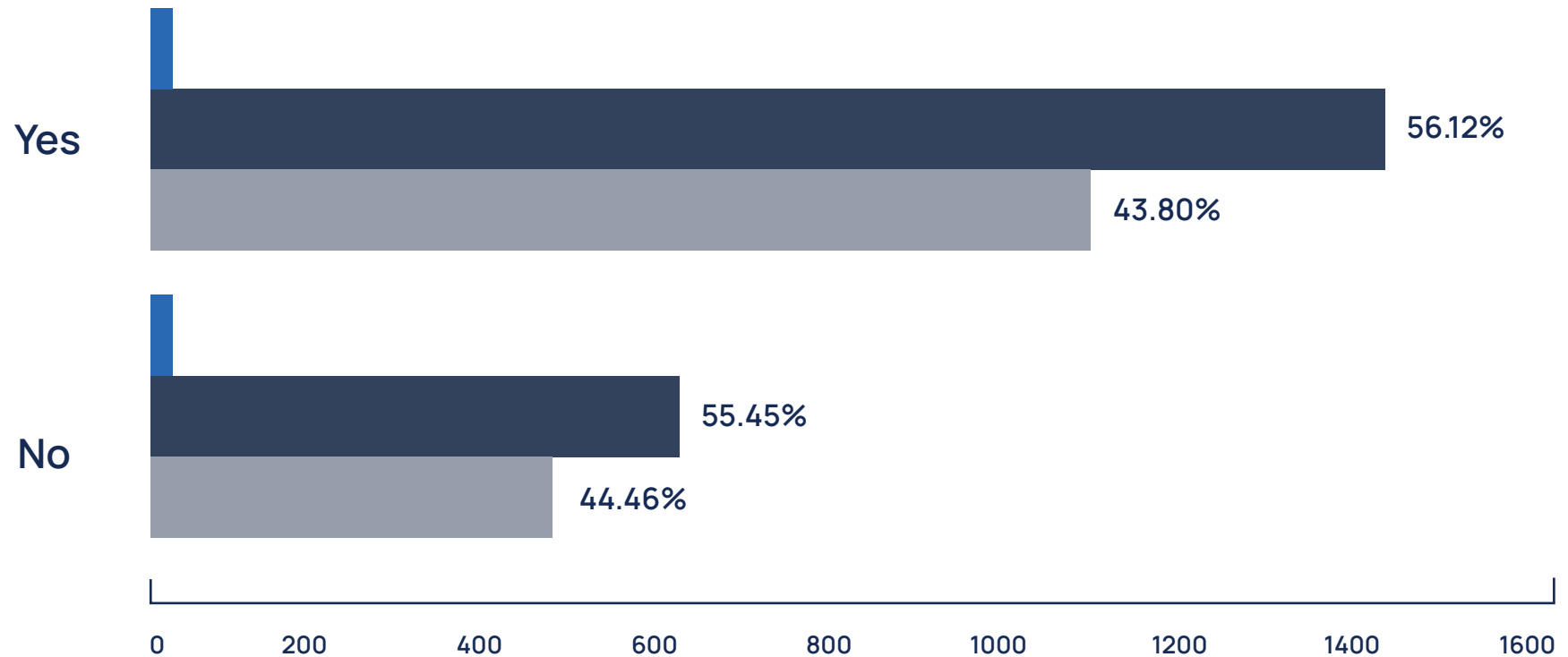
Spread and Sources of Fake News

As far as spread and sources of fake news is concern, 69.43 % respondents said that they received fake news about COVID-19 of which 56% are male and 44% are female whereas 30.57% did not receive any fake news in recent times. It is also interesting to note that the maximum number of those who have receive any fake news are among the age-group of 18 to 25 total 74% (Fig. 4-6).



**Received Fake news
regarding COVID-19**

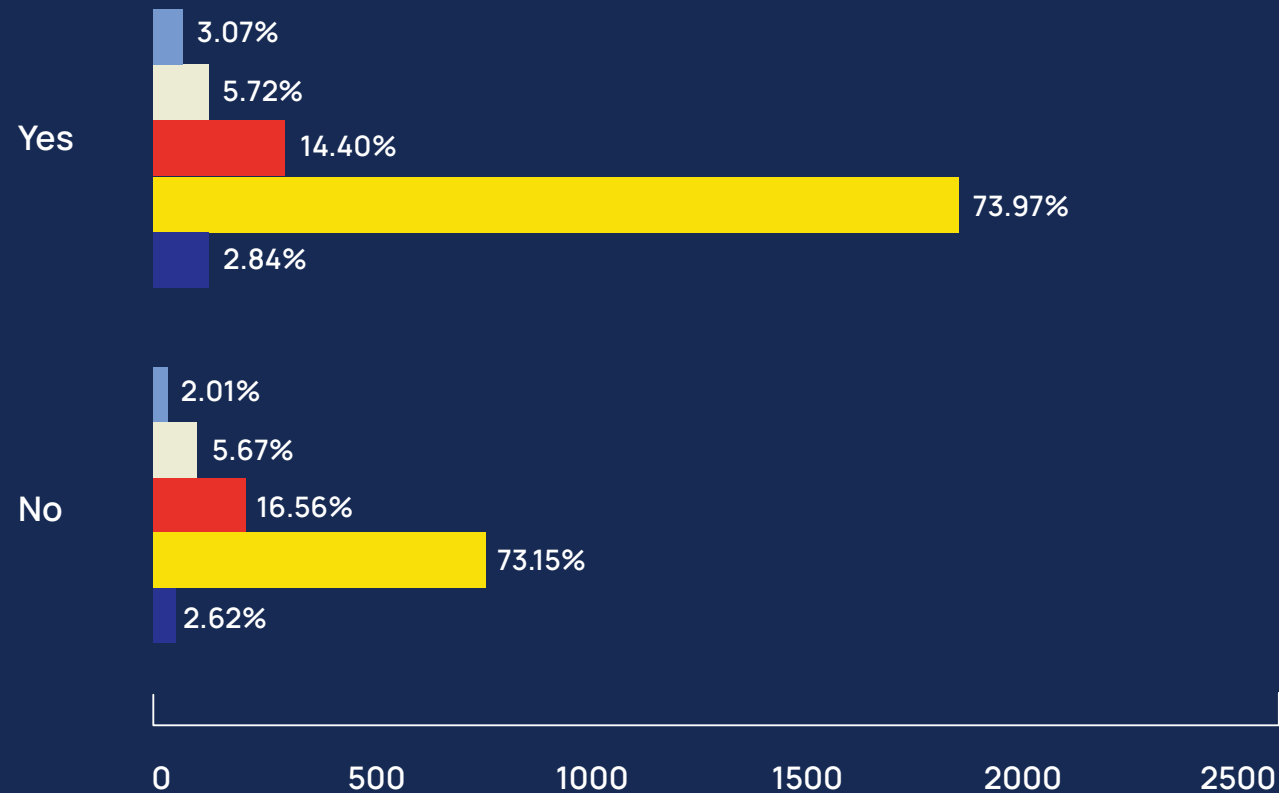
Spread and Sources of Fake News



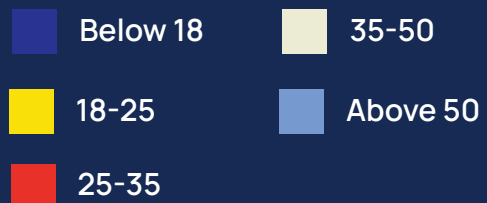
Gender decomposition vis-a-vis receiving fake news

Male Female Other

Spread and Sources of Fake News



Age decomposition vis-a-vis receiving fake news






Spread and Sources of Fake News

The major sources of fake news are

- 1) WhatsApp asclaimed by 88.41 % of the population which recieved fake news, followed by
- 2) Facebook (42.53%) and
- 3) Instagram (21.96%)

(Table 2).

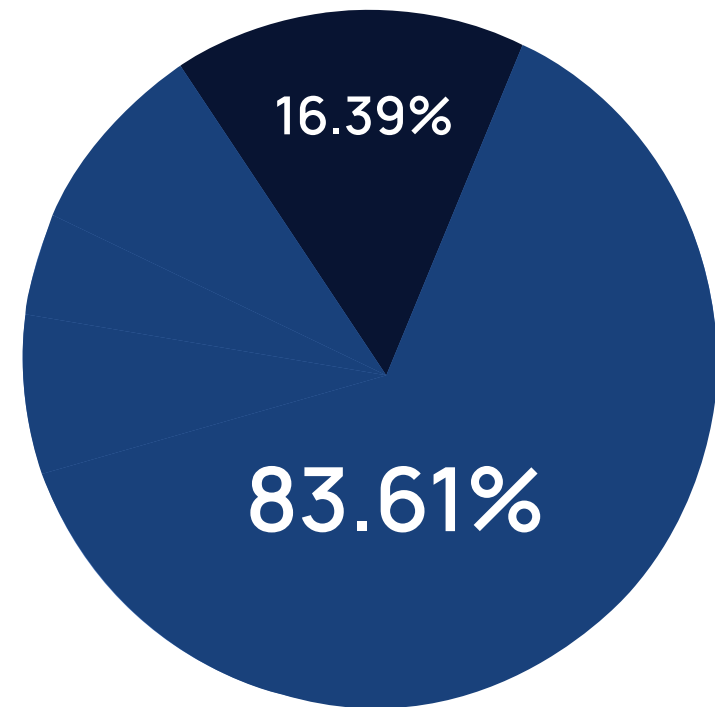
Major Sources of Fake News

 Main sources of fake news	 % of those who received any kind of fake news (2605)	 % of the total sample (3752)
Whatsapp	88.41	61.38
Facebook	42.53	29.53
Instagram	21.96	15.25
TikTok	10.48	7.28
Twitter	7.14	4.96
Messenger	4.11	2.85
Snapchat	1.65	1.15
Share Chat	1.31	0.91

Trust in Fake News

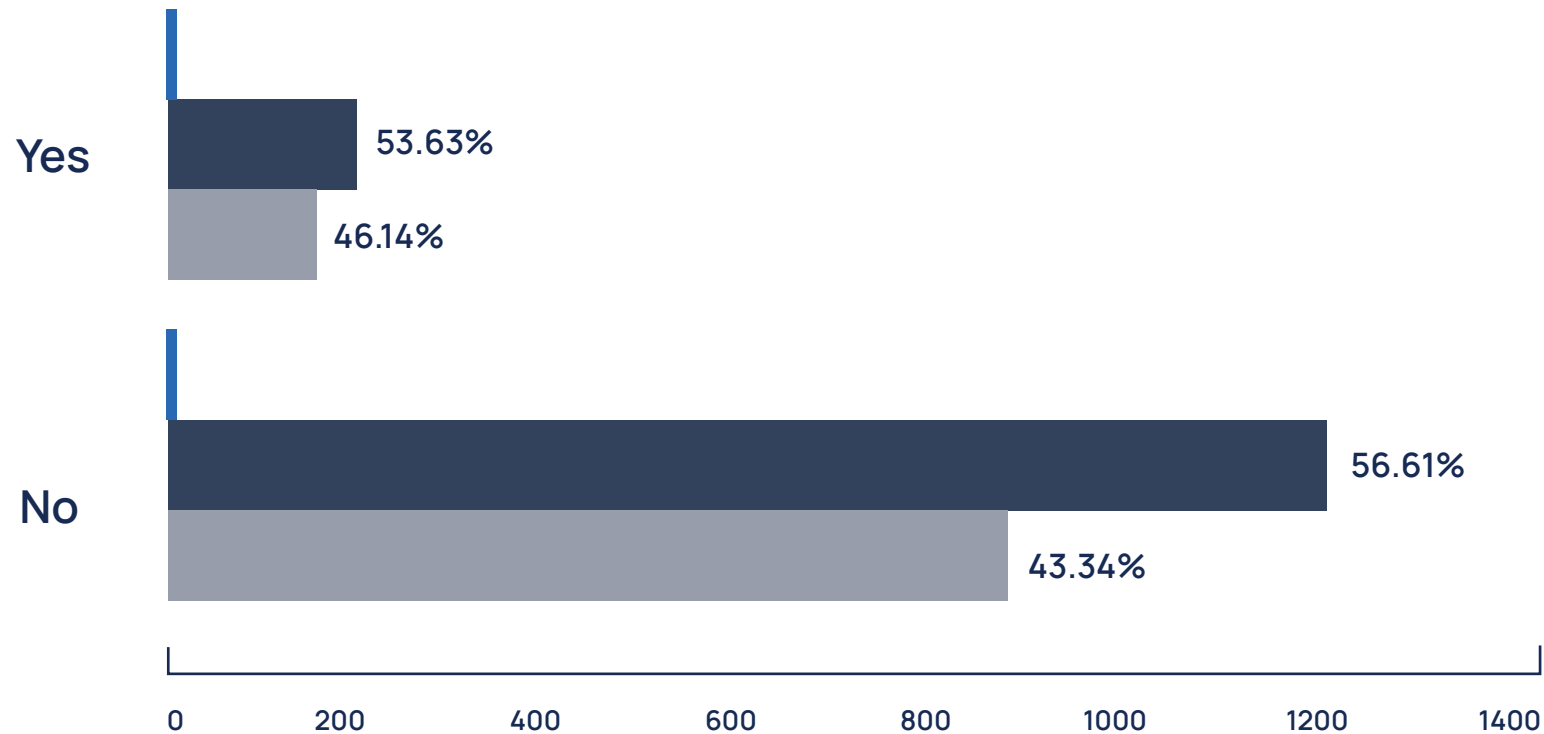
(for this section, we would use 2605 as total respondents, as that is the numbers of respondents who had confirmed to have received fake news)

However, most of them i.e. 83.61% hardly believed in the fake news circulated on those platforms whereas only 16.39% out of those who received fake news believed it to be true. And in terms of age and gender break up, the pattern and percentage are corresponding to the number of respondents and those who received any fake news in the respective age-bracket and gender composition (Fig. 7-9).



Respondents who had believed in the fake news

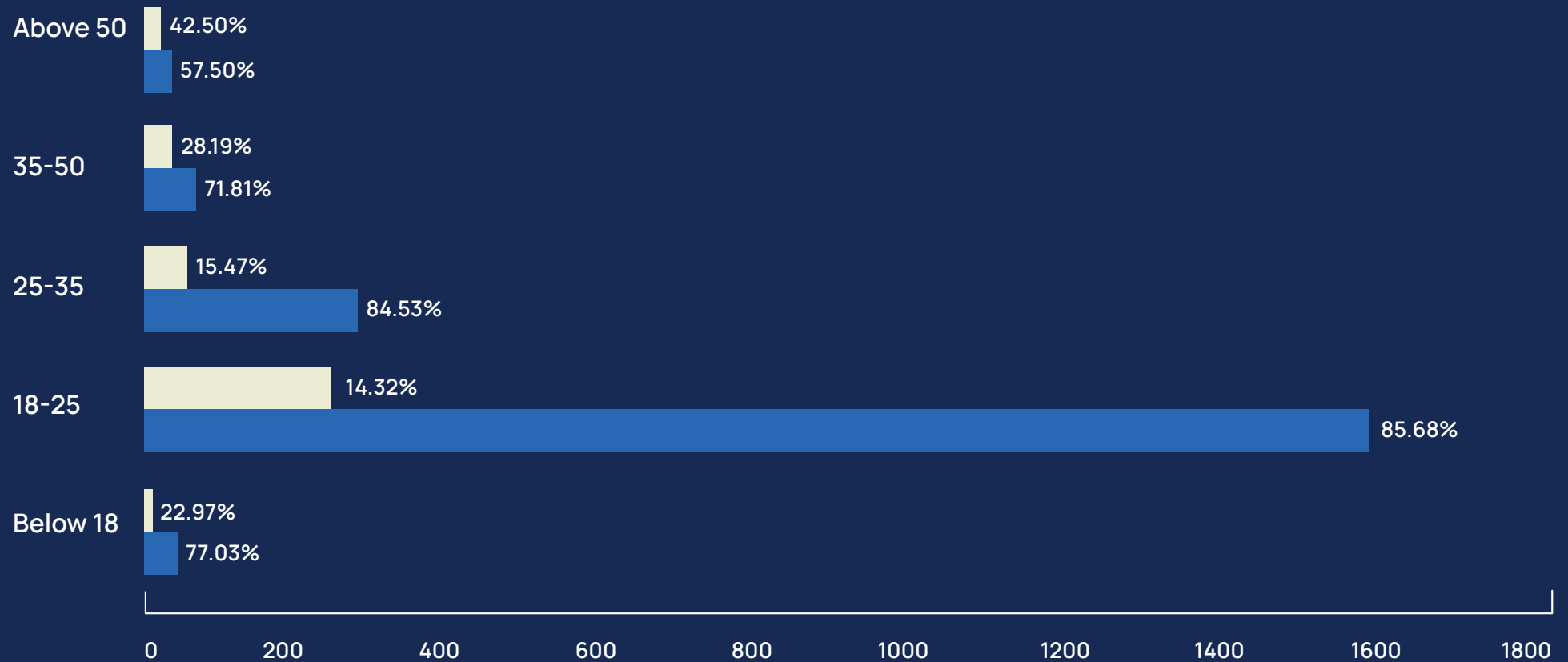
Trust in Fake News



Gender Break up of those who believed in the fake news they received

Male Female Other

Trust in Fake News



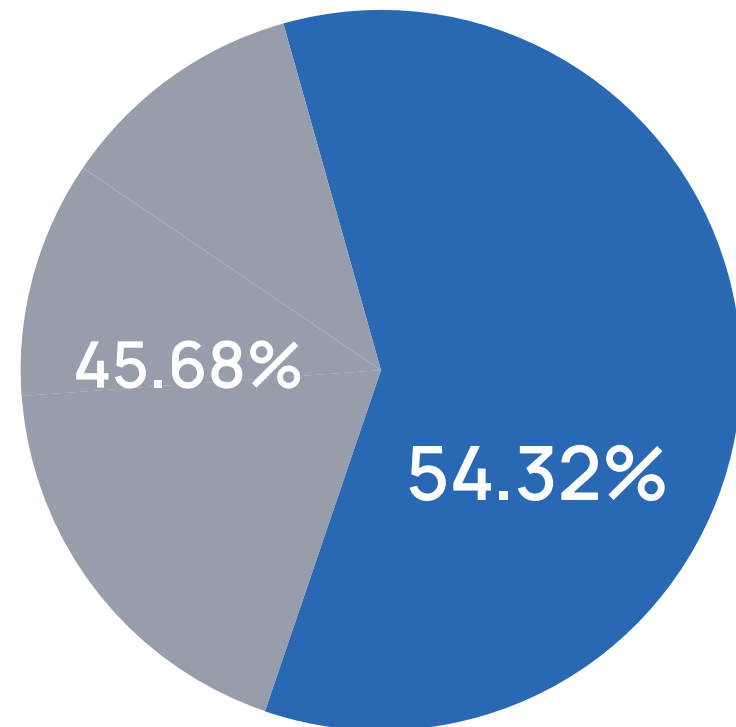
Age Break up of those who believed in the fake news they received

Yes No

Trust in Fake News

On the other hand, more than half of the respondents (54.32%) are of the opinion that they know others who believed in fake news (Fig. 10).

(For this section, we would use 2605 as total respondents, as that is the numbers of respondents who had confirmed to have received fake news)



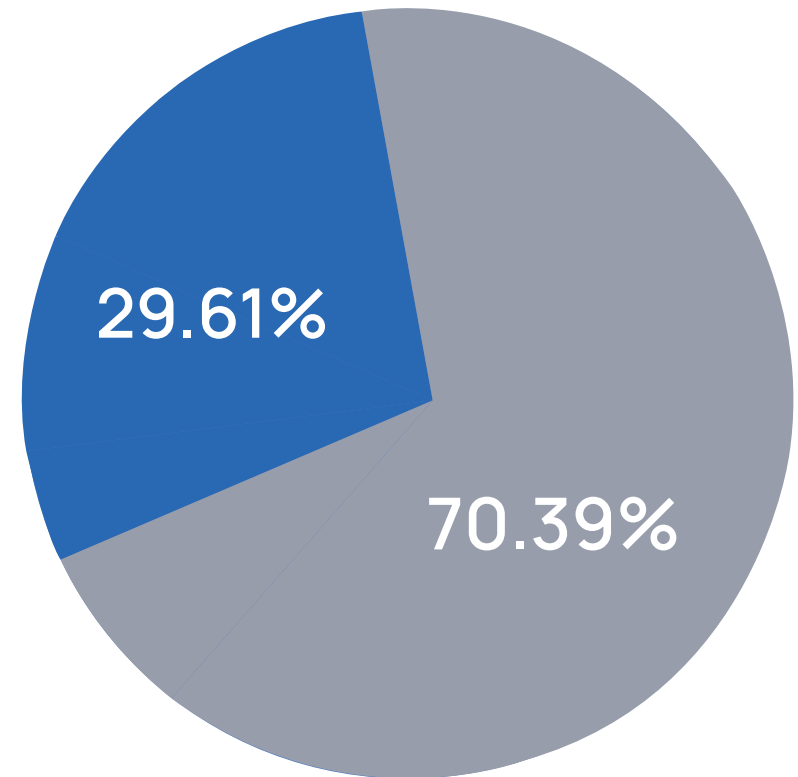
Yes

No

People who knew about others who had trusted in fake news

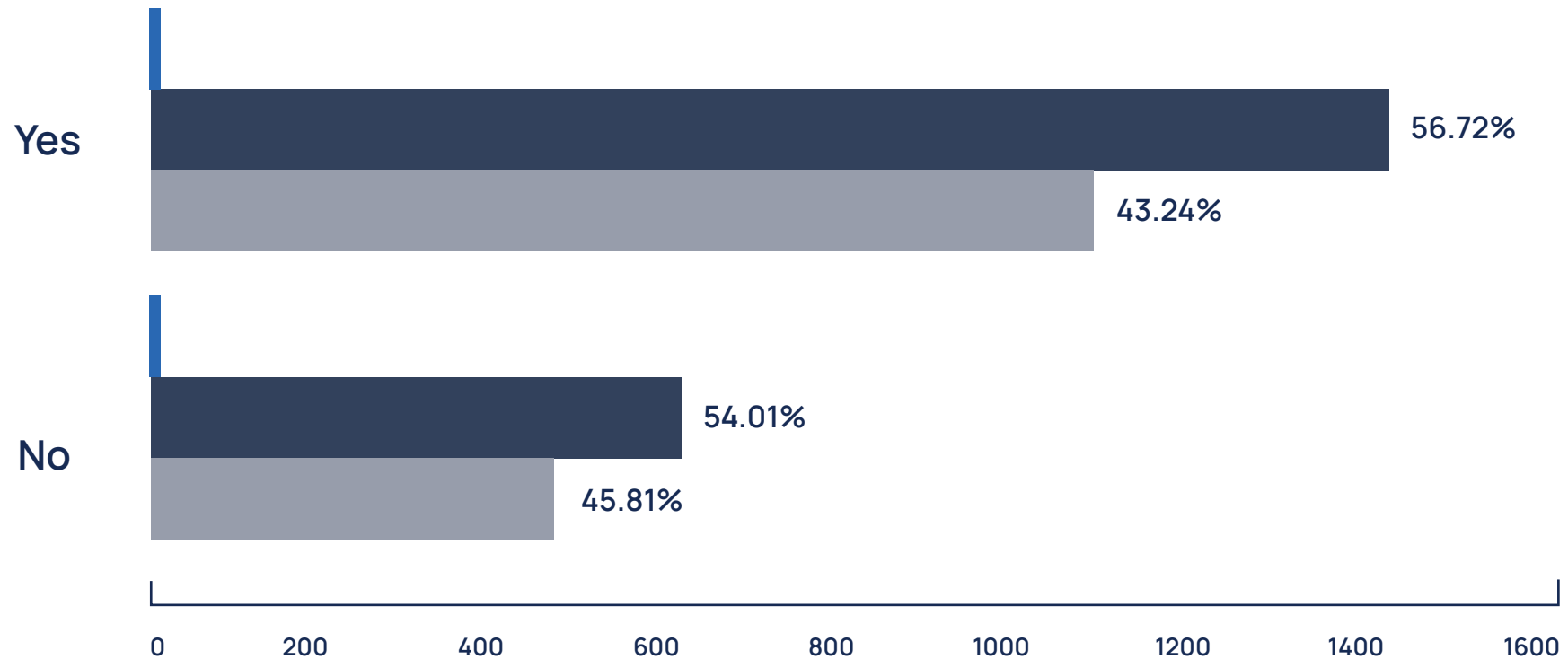
Fact Checking by the respondents

Most of the respondents (70.39%) stated that they - verify the information to check if any fake news is being circulated and this number is interestingly bit higher than those who actually received fake news i.e. 2605 (69.43 %) of the total respondents (Figure 4 and Figure 11). Further, the age and gender break up also correspond to the figure accordingly (Figure 12 and Figure 13).



People who Cross-checked their news

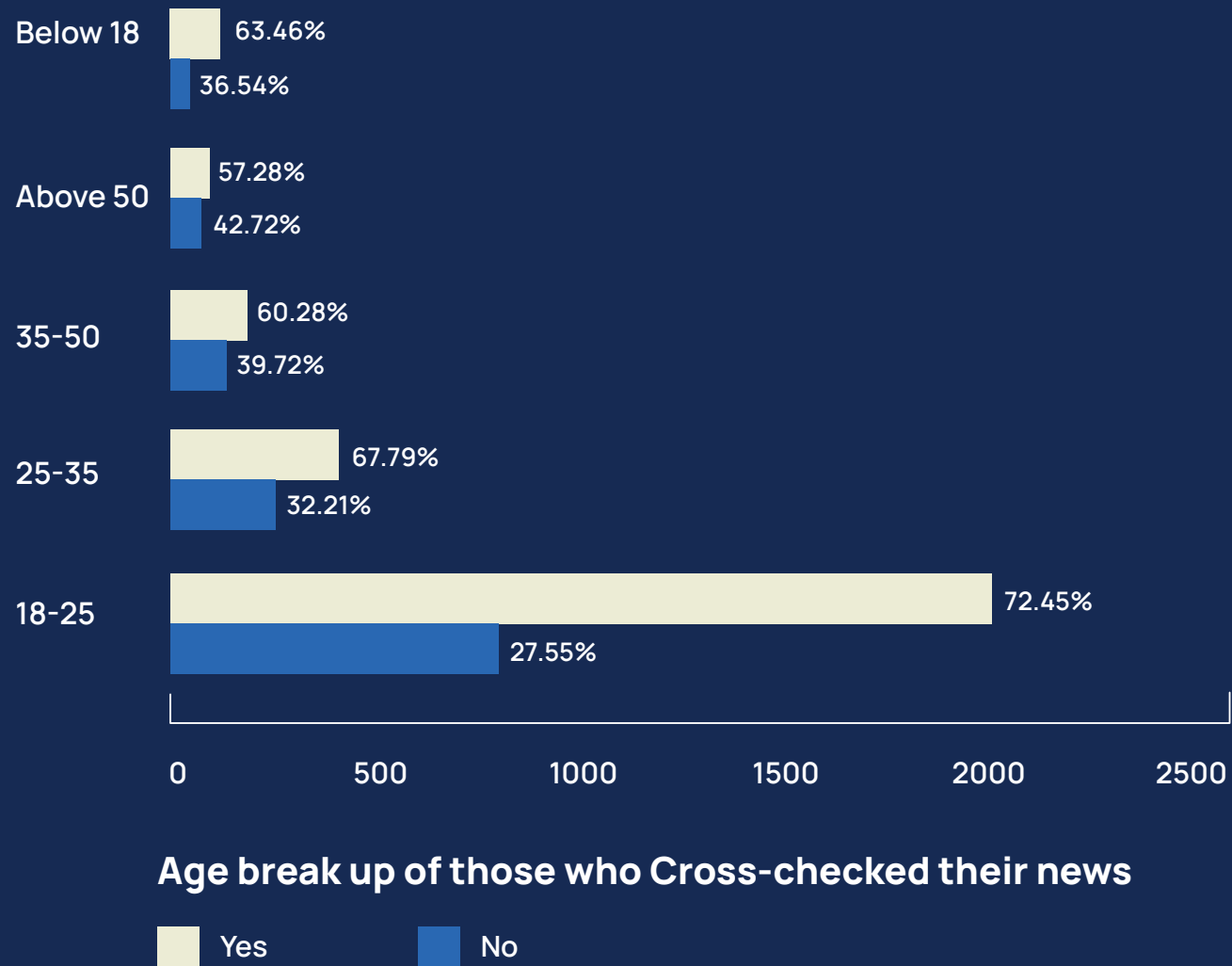
Fact Checking by the respondents



Gender break up of those who Cross-checked their news



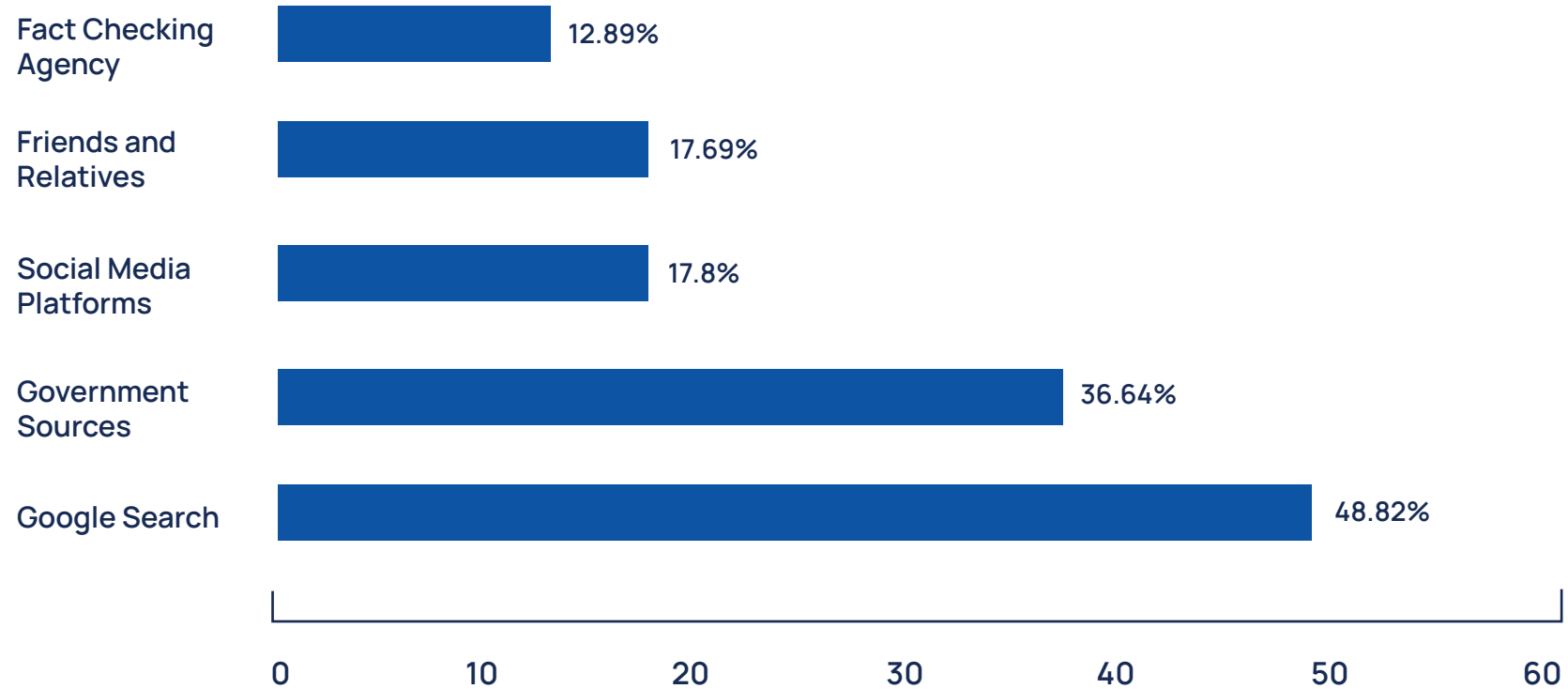
Fact Checking by the respondents



Major Sources of Fact checking

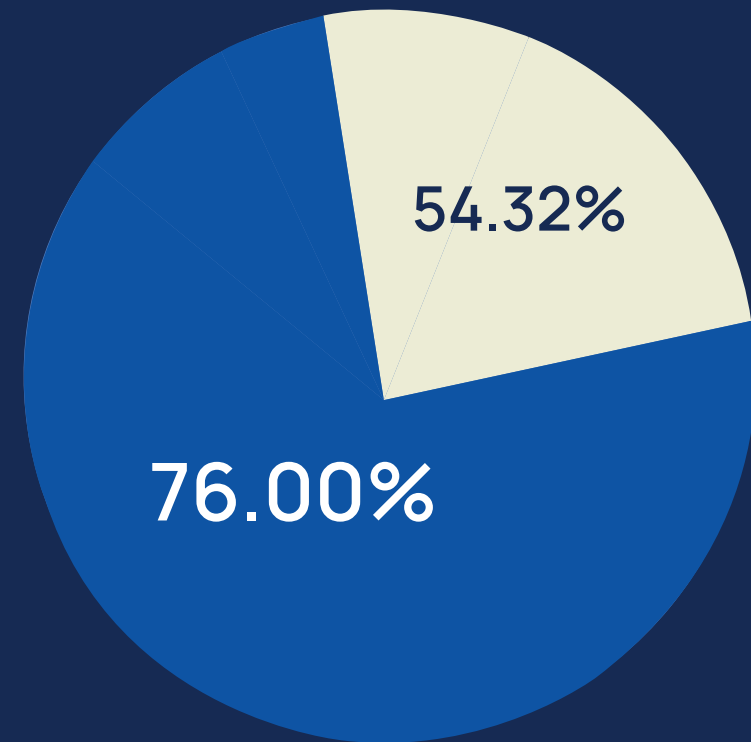
The two major sources of fact checking one opts for are Google Search and the Government Sources as per the 48.82% and 36.64% respondents respectively. Some also do fact check on Social Media Platforms (17.8%) and with the help of Friends & Relatives (17.69%). But the number is relatively less i.e. 12.89% of the total respondents of those who look for fact checking agency (Figure 14).

Sources of Fact checking (in percentage)



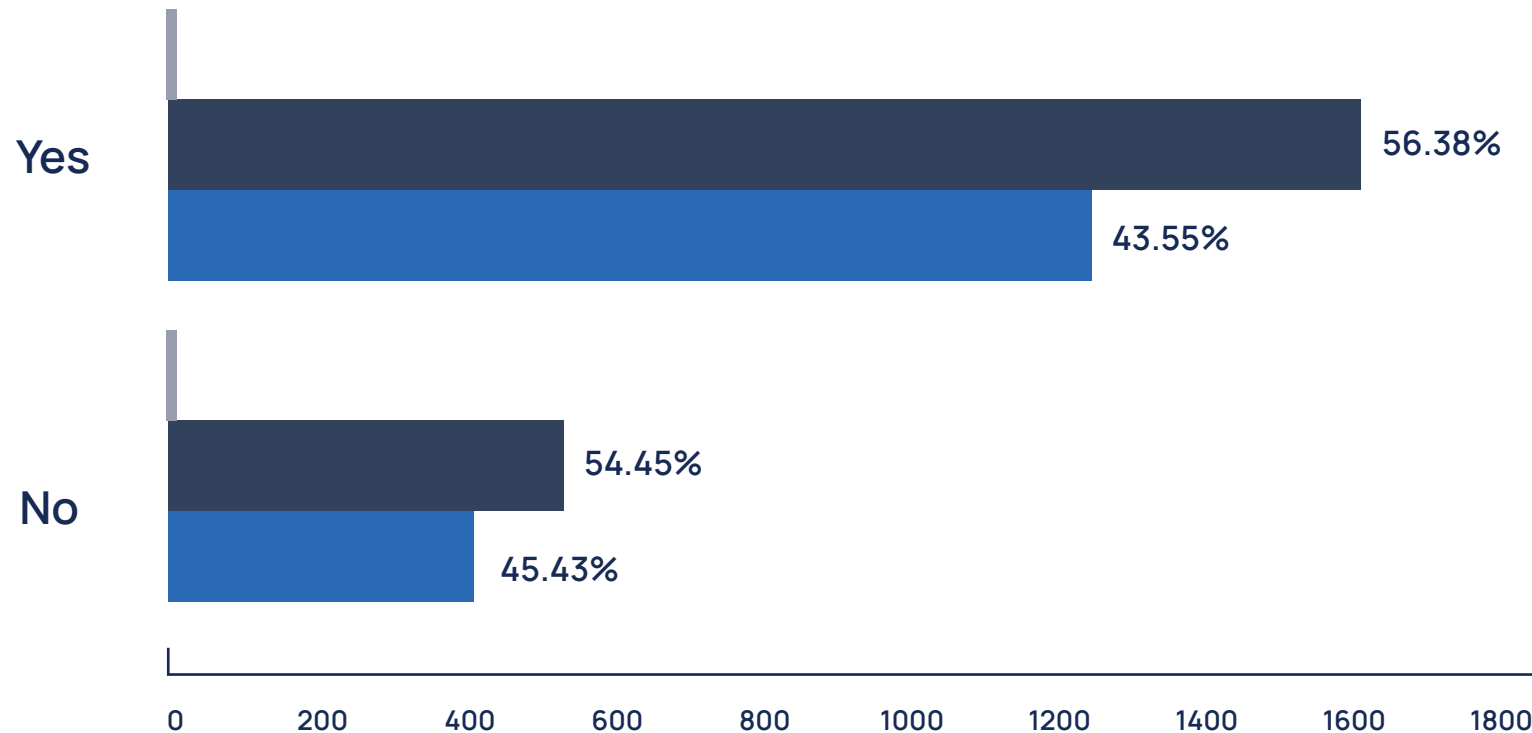
People who inform about spreading of the fake news after recognizing it

Awareness: There is also high number of active respondents (76 %) who inform others about the spread of fake news once they recognize it (Figure 15). Correspondingly, the age & gender break up also looks fair (Figure 16 and Figure 17).



People who inform about spreading of the fake news after recognising it

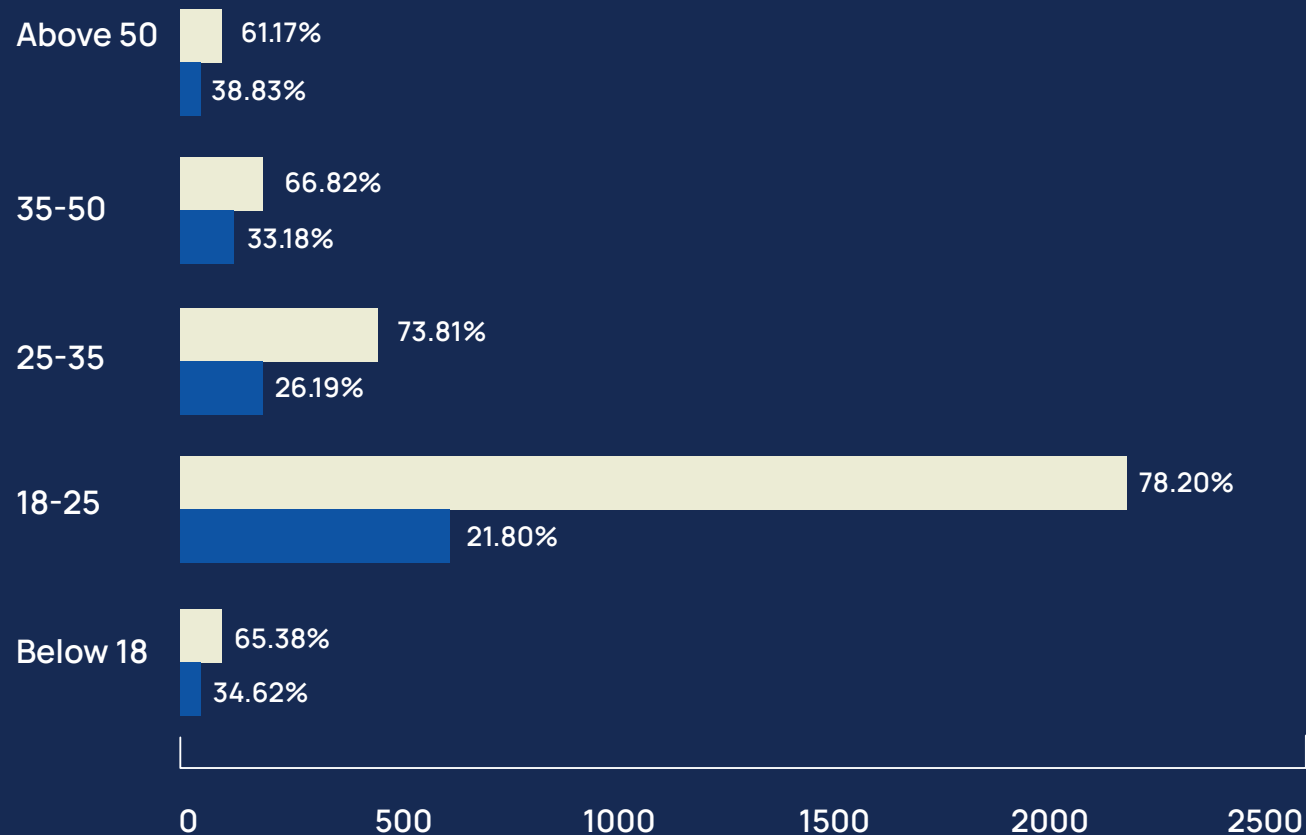
People who inform about spreading of the fake news after recognizing it



Gender breakup of those who would inform about fake news after recognising it

Male Female Other

People who inform about spreading of the fake news after recognizing it

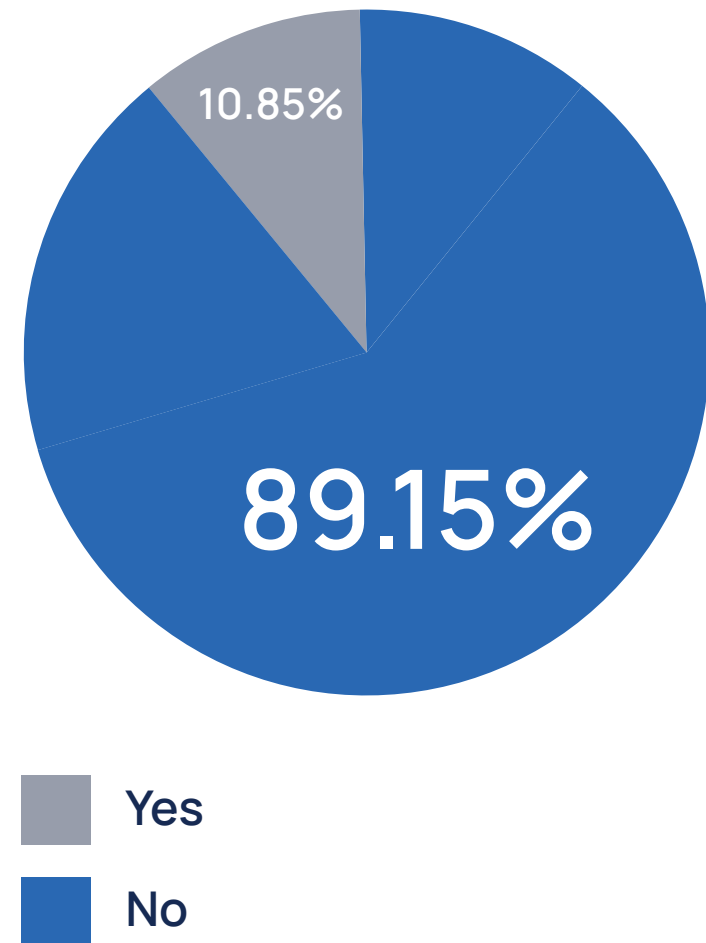


Age breakup of those who would inform about fake news after recognising it

Yes No

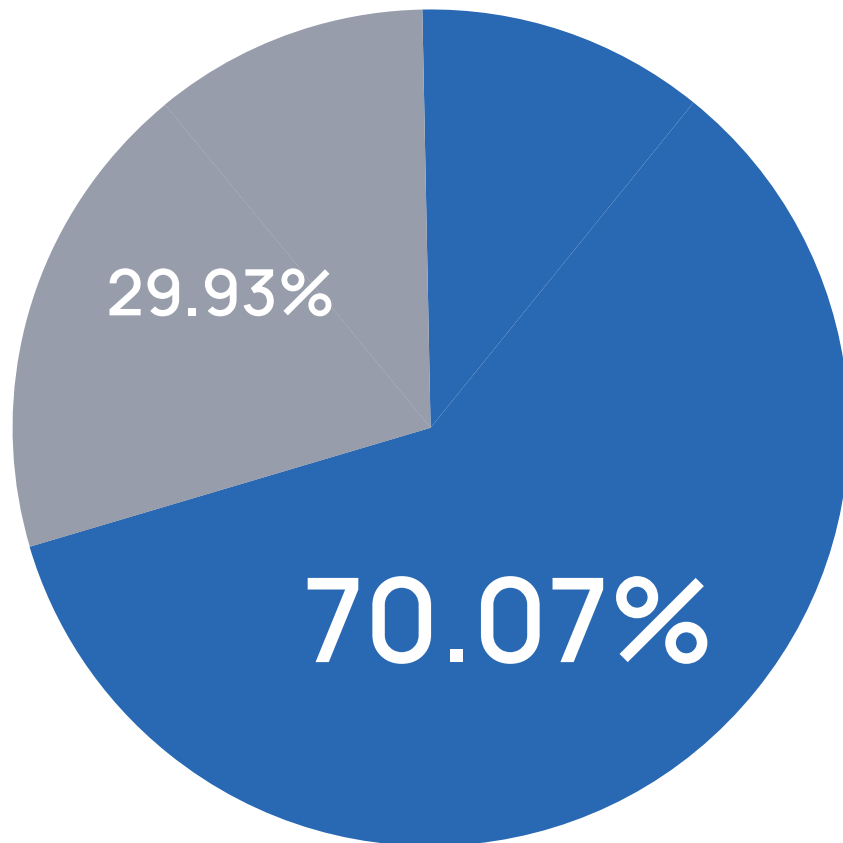
Awareness about fake news

Majority of them i.e. 89% are aware of the fact that spreading fake news is a crime by law of the land (Figure 18). However, 70% of the total respondents never reported case of fake news and only 30% did so (Figure 19). It is important to note here that only 32% know about the online mechanism of reporting fake news whereas 68% do not know even the reporting mechanism (Figure 21) and 95% people who think that there is a need to raise more awareness about fake news and its reporting mechanism (Fig. 21).



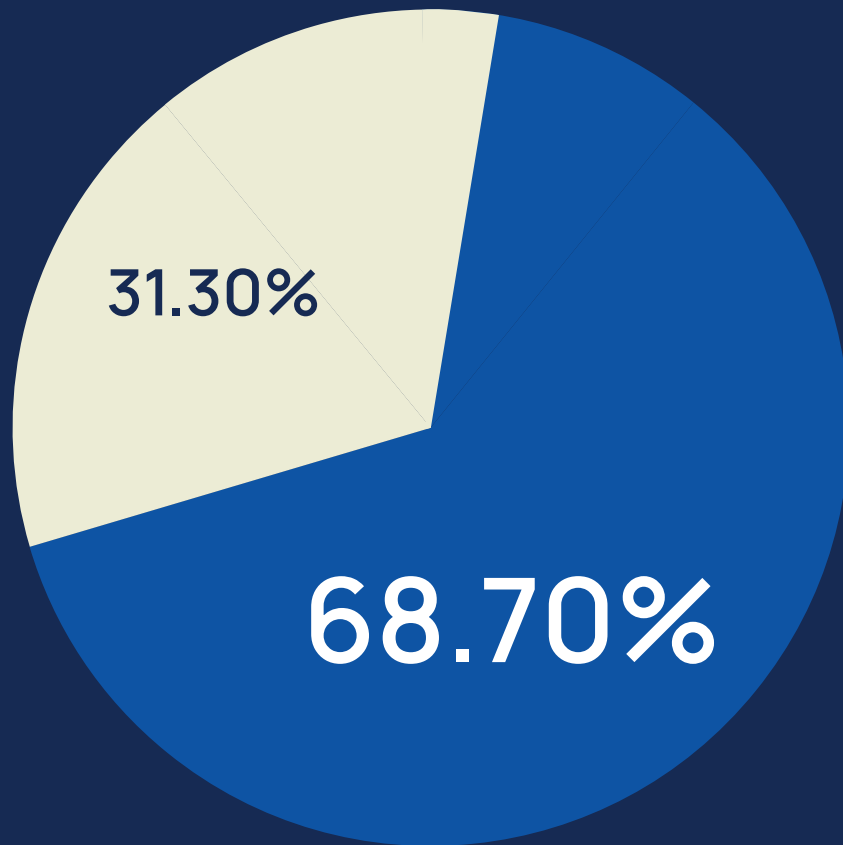
People who are aware that spreading Fake News is a crime

Awareness about fake news



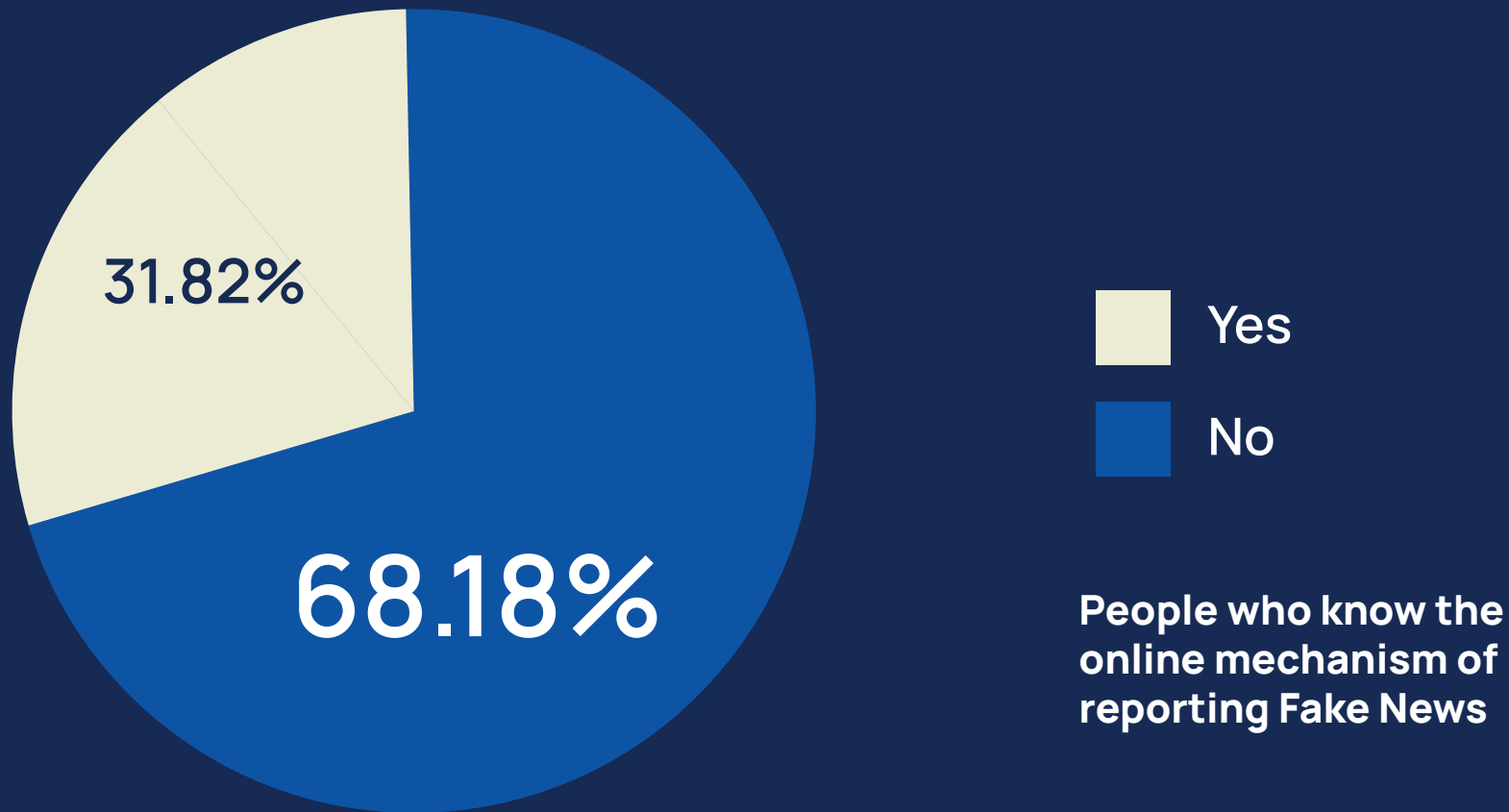
**People who ever reported
Fake News**

Awareness about fake news

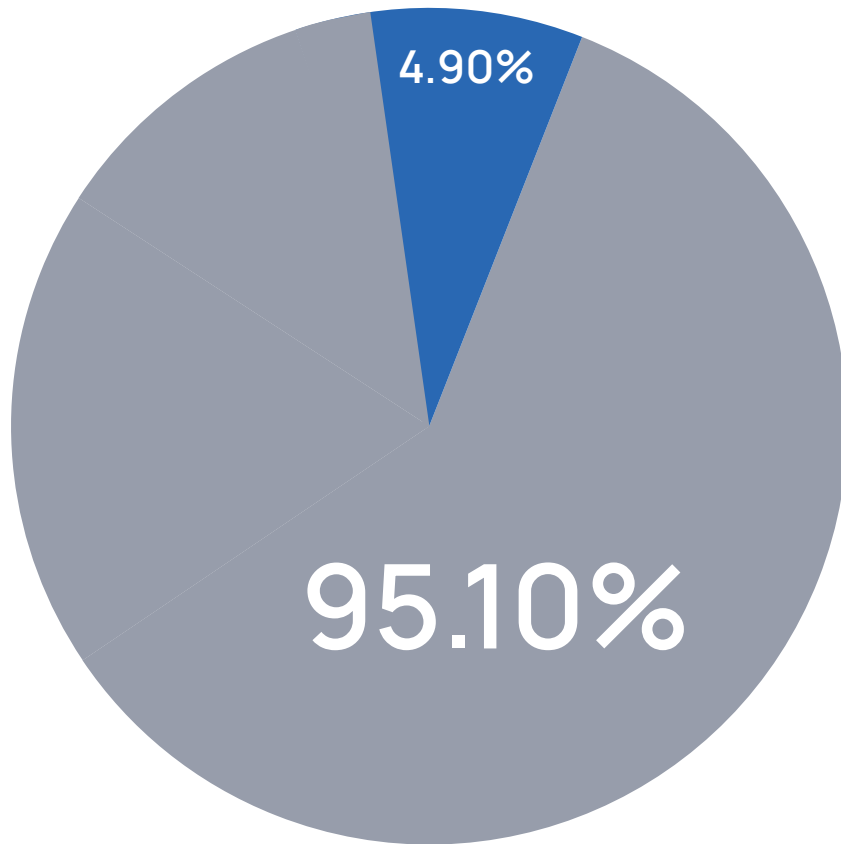


People who ever reported
Fake News (as a share of
those, who think spreading
fake news is a crime)

Awareness about fake news



Awareness about fake news



People who think that there is a need to raise more awareness about Fake News and its reporting mechanism

The survey was carried out by the Institute for Governance, Policies & Politics in collaboration with Social Media Matters.

Institute for Governance, Policies & Politics (IGPP)

Institute for Governance, Policies & Politics (IGPP) is a think tank initiative of Vivek Manthana Foundation (VMF) which is dedicated for public policy research and analysis. IGPP plays a critical role in governance and policy arena at local and national level. It has been operating independently and it is committed to providing public policy research, analysis and advice. The institute intends to develop initiatives to help government understand various issues and challenges and make informed choices for better policy and governance. As IGPP is envisaged as a research and policy focused institution. It engages with different stakeholders like academic, civil society, government, industry and international development agencies to pursue its objective of high-quality interdisciplinary research on different issues of governance and public policy. The prime goal of the institute is to contribute towards effective policy design, implementation and governance mechanism with respective to focus areas on specific issues.

Social Media Matters

Team of Young, Feminist, Social Media Ninjas, working for Social change. True believers in technology, the SMM team have been working for empowering diverse groups. The SMM team is specialize in all aspects of Online safety, from policy to capacity building. The team have done Internet safety workshops across India and the globe, created innovative tech solutions for positive use of social media.