

PERCEPTION OF CYCLISTS IN KOLKATA

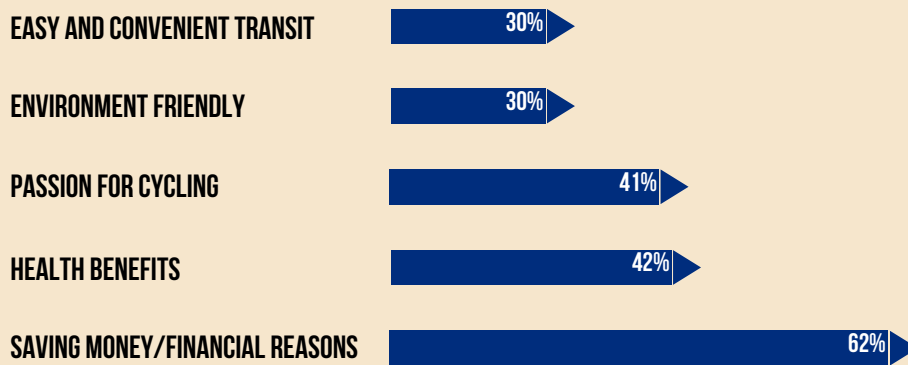
A SURVEY IN KOLKATA BOOK FAIR 2023



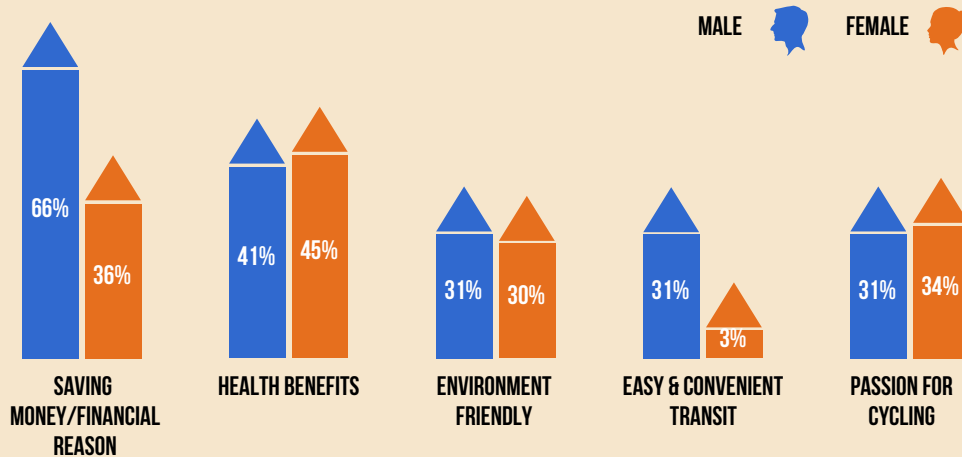
INTRODUCTION

From the shrinking space for cyclists to the partial restriction on bicycles on the main arterial roads of Kolkata, it is to enlighten the thought process of the residents of the city over the needs, motivations, and issues of cycling. In this scenario, a survey on the perceptions of cycling of 4882 visitors was carried out at Kolkata Book Fair in 2023. Based on that survey, this report aims to inculcate the cycling experience of the people of Kolkata and to find out the economic, social, and environmental perspectives of cycling in this city.

MOST VOTED REASONS FOR CHOOSING CYCLE

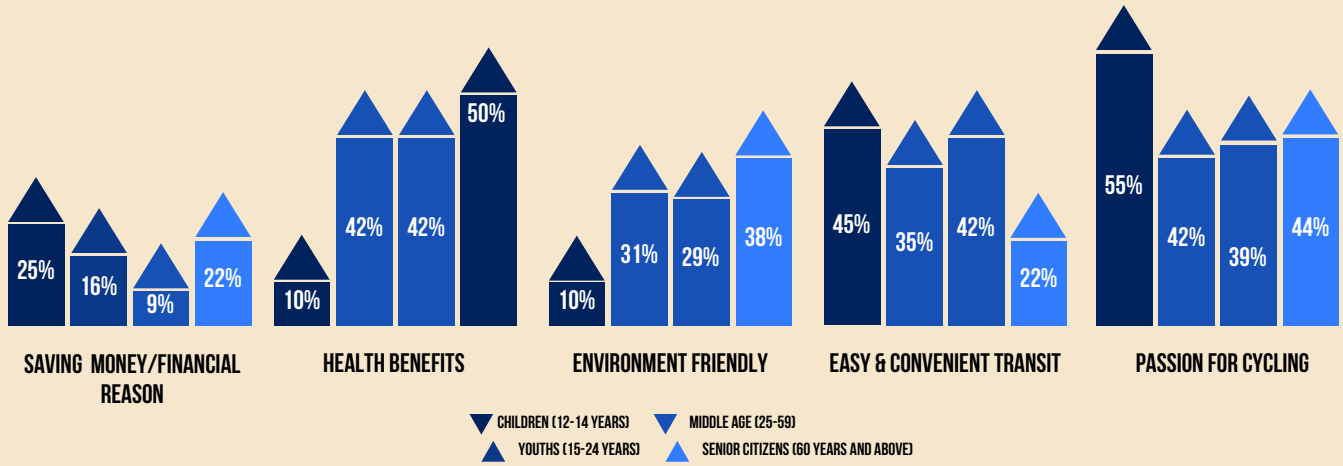


MOST VOTED REASONS FOR CHOOSING CYCLE-ACROSS GENDER

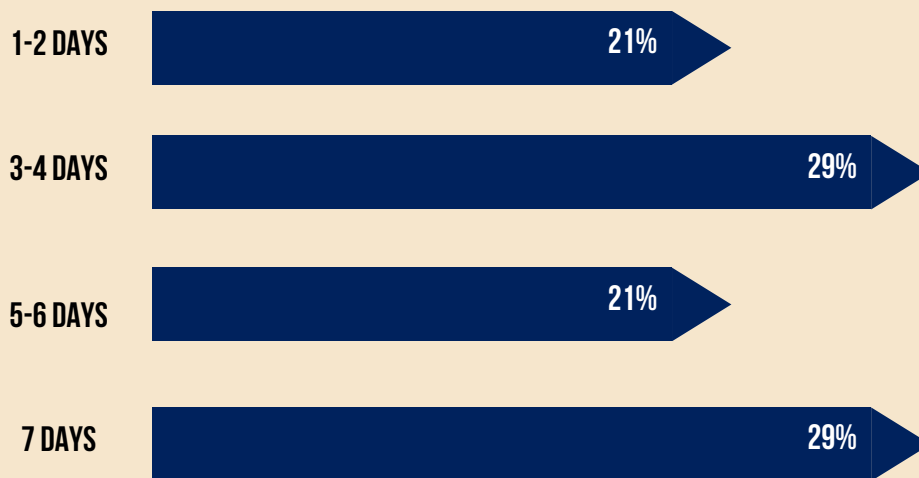


- Cycles are cited as a pocket friendly mode of transport by 62% of the respondents, and 42% of people responded that they prefer cycling as it is beneficial to health.
- Female population of Kolkata prefers cycling for their health benefits mostly, but it is the financial budget which was the prime reason to choose cycling for their male counterparts.
- Except these two reasons, passion for cycling is an important factor to choose cycling in Kolkata irrespective of gender.

MOST VOTED REASONS FOR CHOOSING CYCLE-ACROSS VARIOUS AGE GROUPS



WEEKLY RIDING FREQUENCY IN THE STREETS OF KOLKATA

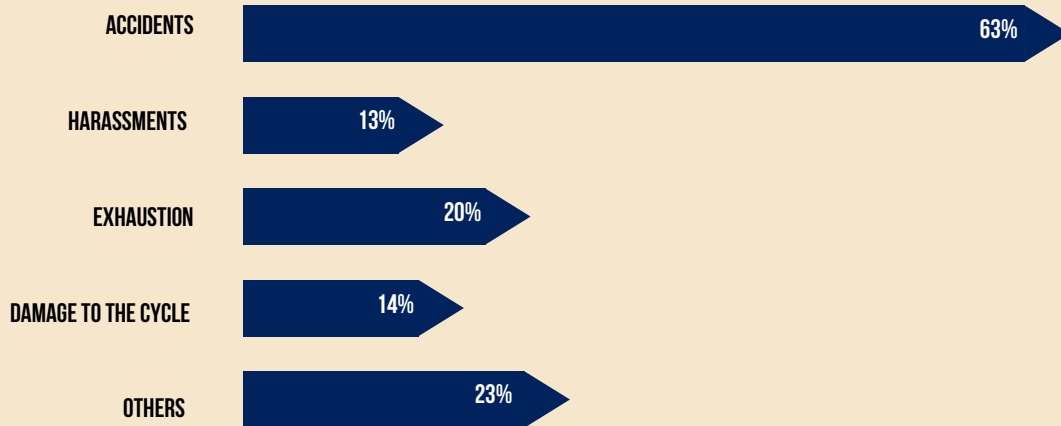


- Cyclists of Kolkata mostly cycle every single day or 3 to 4 days a week.

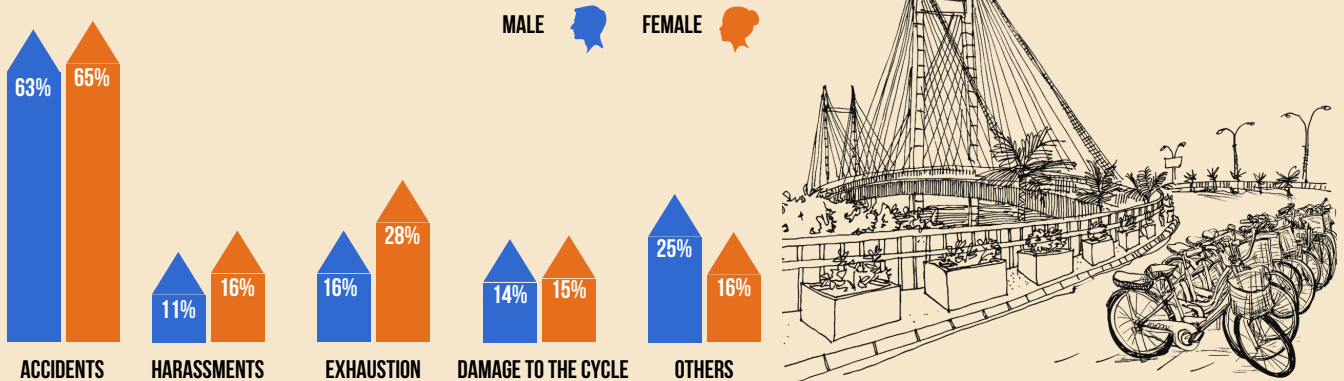
CONCERN OF CYCLISTS

- **Fear of accidents** is one of the major concern of the cyclists of Kolkata.
- **Harassment** is the least concern of the cyclists followed by damage to the cycle.

GREATEST CONCERN OF CYCLISTS

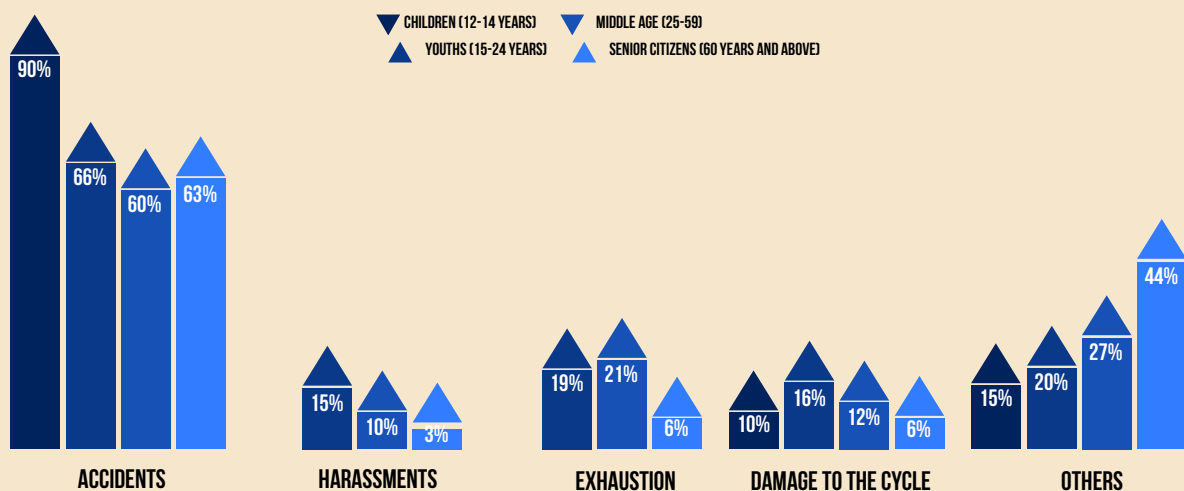


GREATEST CONCERN OF CYCLISTS- ACROSS GENDER



- The survey results show that the percentage share of female cyclists is more concerned over accidents, harassment, exhaustion, and damage to the cycle.

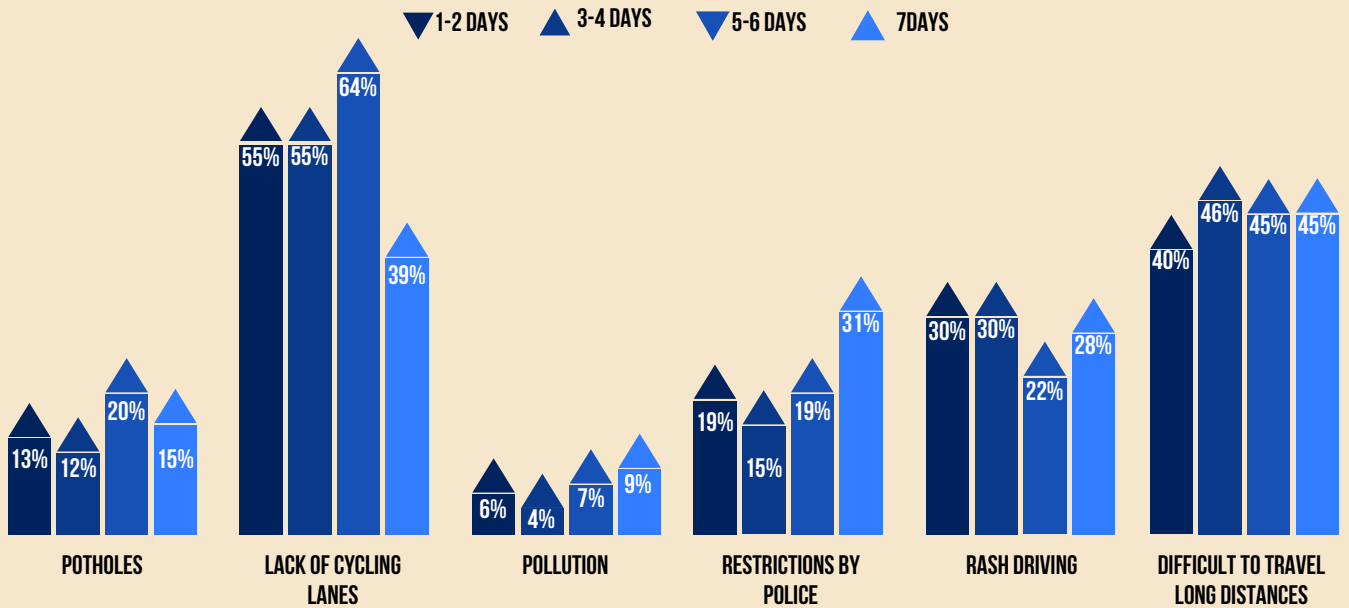
GREATEST CONCERN OF CYCLISTS- ACROSS AGE GROUPS



- Among all the respondents children reported accident as their greatest concern mostly in the roads of Kolkata

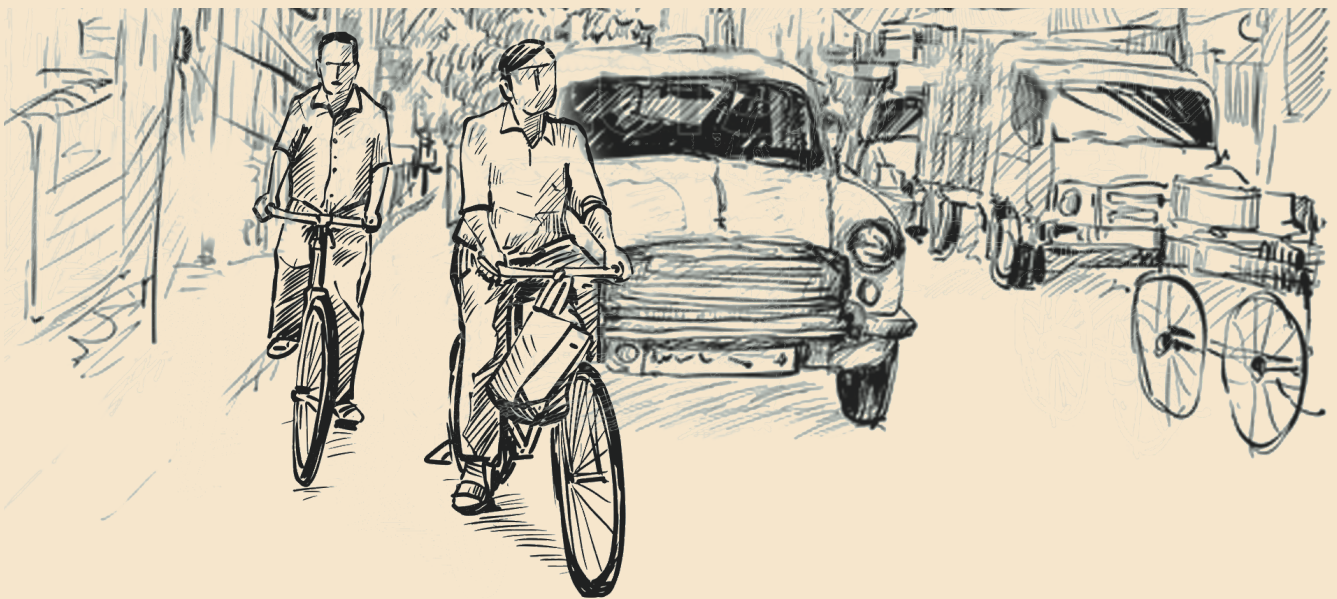
PERCEPTION OF CHALLENGES

PERCEPTION OF CHALLENGES AMONG PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT RIDING FREQUENCIES



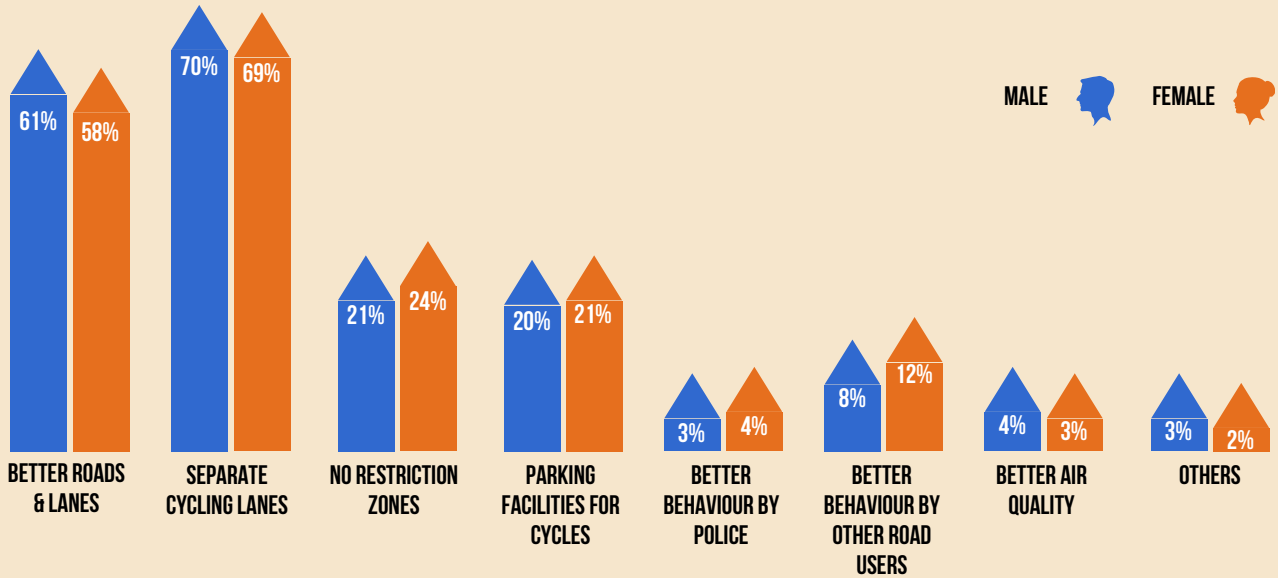
- People irrespective of different riding frequencies, perceive the lack of cycling lanes in Kolkata as one of the significant challenges.
- With the gradual expansion of the city, it is getting increasingly difficult for cyclists to cycle long distances.
- Cyclists do not find pollution in the city a major challenge for cycling.

Lack of Cycling Lanes, Rash Driving and Difficult to Travel Long Distances are major challenges faced by cycle users.



MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS TO START USING CYCLES

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS TO START USING CYCLES-ACROSS GENDER



- Across different age groups and genders, better roads and lanes, and specific infrastructure like separate cycling lanes are primary motivations for the people of Kolkata to start cycling.

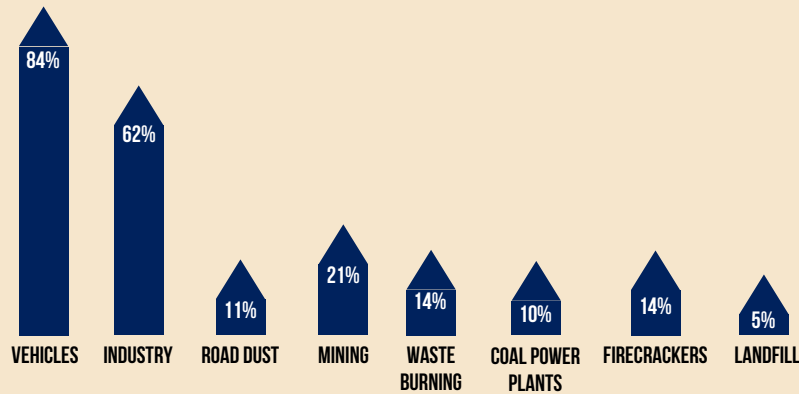
MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS TO START USING CYCLES-ACROSS VARIOUS AGE GROUPS



PERCEPTION OF VISITORS ON AIR POLLUTION

Both males & females, across all ages, have unanimously said that separate cycling lanes will motivate them to cycle in the streets of Kolkata

PERCEPTIONS OF VISITORS IN KOLKATA BOOK FAIR ON LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR OF AIR POLLUTION

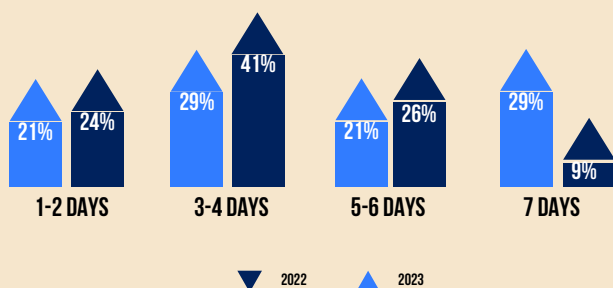


84% visitor's consistently mentioned Vehicles (using fossil fuels) as "biggest" contributor to pollution, followed by Industry as the next highest contributor.

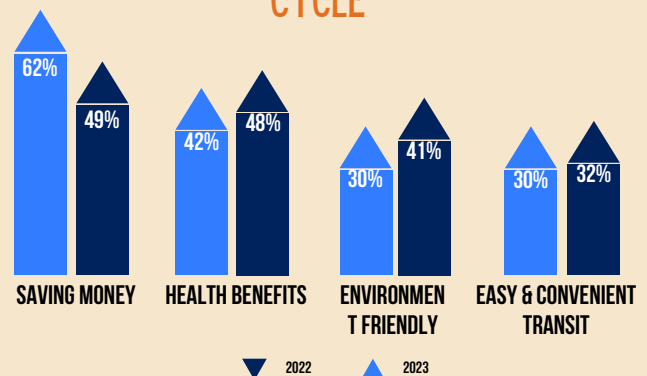
COMPARATIVE STATISTICS ON PERCEPTION ON CYCLING BY VISITORS AT KOLKATA BOOK FAIR- 2022 AND 2023

A similar study was conducted in 2022 at the Kolkata Book Fair Ground on 1546 visitors of the book fair. A comparison between two times has been presented and comparison has been done only for similar indicators in both surveys.

PEOPLES WITH DIFFERENT RIDING FREQUENCIES (WEEKLY)



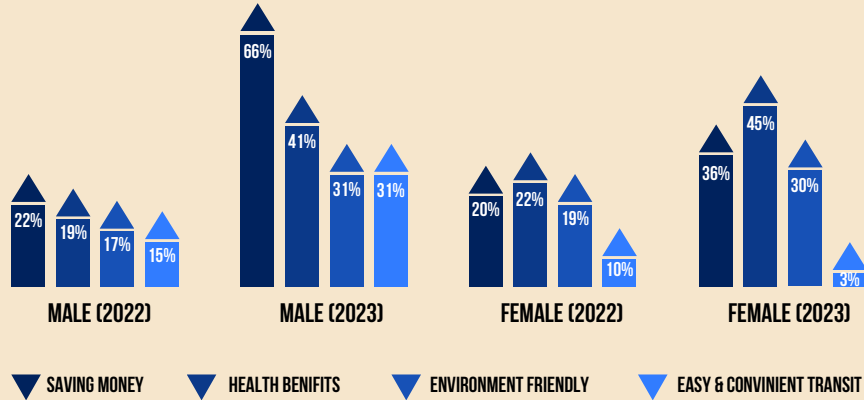
MOST VOTED REASONS FOR CHOOSING CYCLE



Key Observations:

- An increasing trend has been found for "people riding for 7 days" in 2023 from preceding year.
- There has been a 20% increase in people who are using cycle for all round 7 days.
- Saving money remains the top most priority for choosing cycle in both surveys. There has also been an increasing in trend by 13% for choosing cycling due to financial reason.
- Health benefits remains as the second-best reason to choose cycle.
- Being environment friendly as well as easy and convenient transit share equal percentages in 2023 and has declined from the previous year.

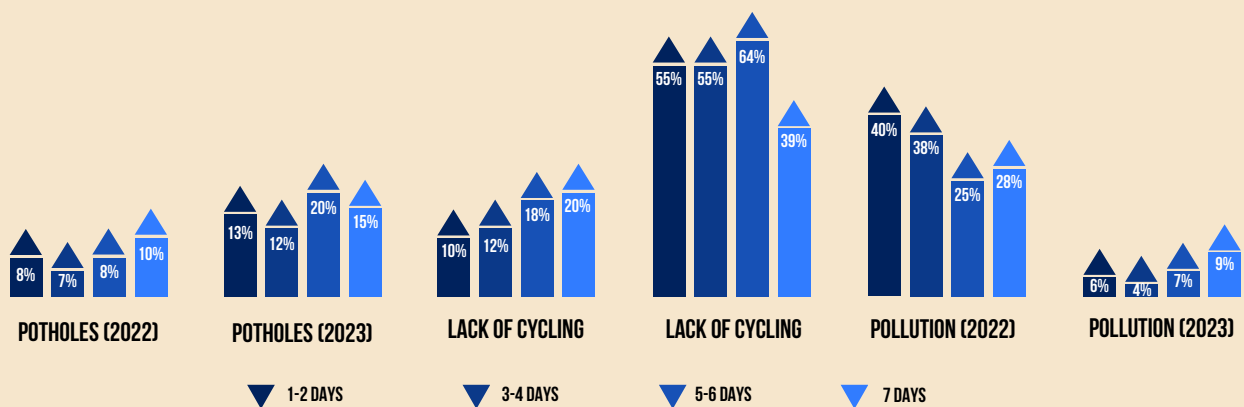
MOST VOTED REASONS FOR CHOOSING CYCLE-ACROSS GENDER



Key Observations:

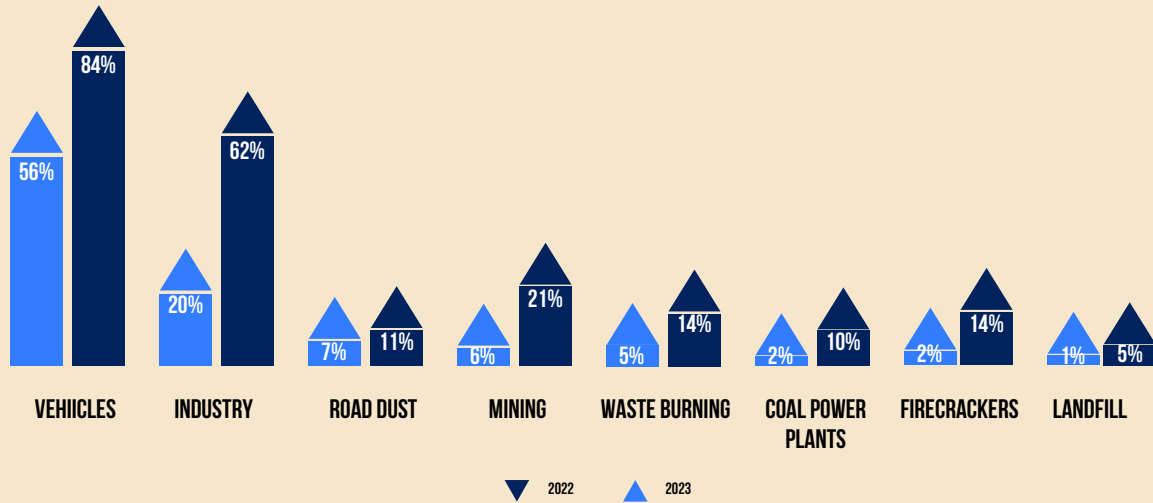
- Saving money has emerged as the top most reason to cycle for men whereas health reasons remain as the crucial reason to cycle.
- Similar pattern has been found for men to choose cycling across four key reasons in both surveys.
- The environment reason has increased sharply among women to choose cycling, which has escalated by 11% in 2023 from the preceding year.

PERCEPTION OF CHALLENGES AMONG PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT RIDING FREQUENCIES (WEEKLY)



- Cyclists of Kolkata, irrespective of different weekly riding frequencies, have perceived the lack of infrastructure for cycling like cycling lanes as the main challenge in 2023, while it was pollution in 2022.
- Pollution has become insignificant to the cyclists of all riding frequencies than the other challenges in the recent year.

PERCEPTIONS OF VISTORS IN KOLKATA BOOK FAIR ON LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR OF AIR POLLUTION (GENERAL POPULATION)

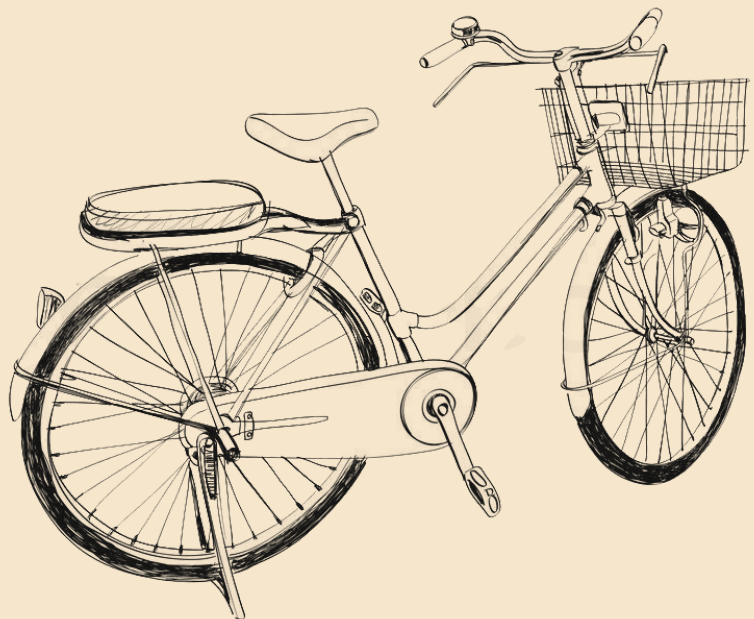


- Visitor's perception over vehicles and industries as two largest contributors of air pollution have remained same over the time period.
- From the changing trend of response, it is evident that the people think the city air has been polluted by mining, waste burning and firecrackers more prominently than the previous year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Promoting/ Incentivizing cycling and sustainable mobility:

- **Awareness generation and sensitization programs should be organized:** Kolkata residents must realize that use of cycle lanes in the city will not only reduce the city's air pollution problems and its adverse health impacts but also decongest the city. **The urban authorities should organize and drive campaigns to enhance the residents' awareness levels about the proper use of cycle lanes, the health benefits of cycling, and the adverse effects of air pollution.**
- **Ramp up protection for women cyclists and night-time riders:** Women's safety on the streets of Kolkata (especially after dark) remains a major challenge, and women cyclists are no exception. **Appropriate monitoring and law enforcement measures for the protection of women cyclists, besides extending protection to night-time cyclists, will attract a faster transition to sustainable mobility.**



- More cycle parking spaces should be created:** To popularize cycling, infrastructural supports such as cycle parking spaces and cycle racks should be built in prominent and centralized places in the city as a part of Kolkata's cycling infrastructure. While making the parking completely free may not be a sustainable model in the long run, nominal parking fees on weekdays and free parking over the weekends will enhance the number of cyclists in Kolkata.



- Reward programs should be designed:** Since cycling for many in the city may be a lifestyle change, reward programs encouraging it will make it look attractive. For example, Kolkata can celebrate “cycle to work” days. **Cyclists on these special days will be offered simple gifts such as T-Shirts and messaging on cycling as an appropriate habit, water bottles, helmets, and caps. Similarly, there could be slogan contests or other promotional and marketing activities, with the help of corporate sponsors,** held in different Kolkata communities and neighborhoods over the weekends to encourage cyclists and potential cyclists of different SES and mixed demographics.
- City nonprofits, celebrities, cyclists, and enthusiasts should drive advocacy campaigns for more cycling and cycle-related infrastructure:** Leveraging the people-connect that city-based celebrities have in Kolkata, the government can use them as **brand ambassadors to promote cycling in particular and healthy lifestyles in general.**
- Smart cycling: The city should promote “smart” cycling** and innovations in the manufacture of cycles to avoid accidents and improve end-user experience.
- Disincentivize fossil fuel vehicles:** Levy substantial Annual Tax/Fines on polluting vehicles and industries and have strict parking policies.



Cities with cycle lanes:

- **Monitoring and vigilance to act as deterrence:** The government's efforts in constructing cycle lanes in Kolkata will be better rewarded if they are actively used by citizens. For example, removing street hawkers, pedestrians, and parked vehicles from these lanes will improve their usability and boost sustainable mobility in the city. **Monitoring mechanisms and strict vigilance by the city police department will deter these undesirable practices.**
- **Regulations:** Cycle lanes must be kept for the usage of bicycles only. **The usage of these lanes by other vehicles such as motorbikes, and by pedestrians should be banned.** Offenders must be fined heavily to discourage the misappropriation of cycle lanes. **Strict penalties will assure both safety of cyclists and the free flow of traffic.**

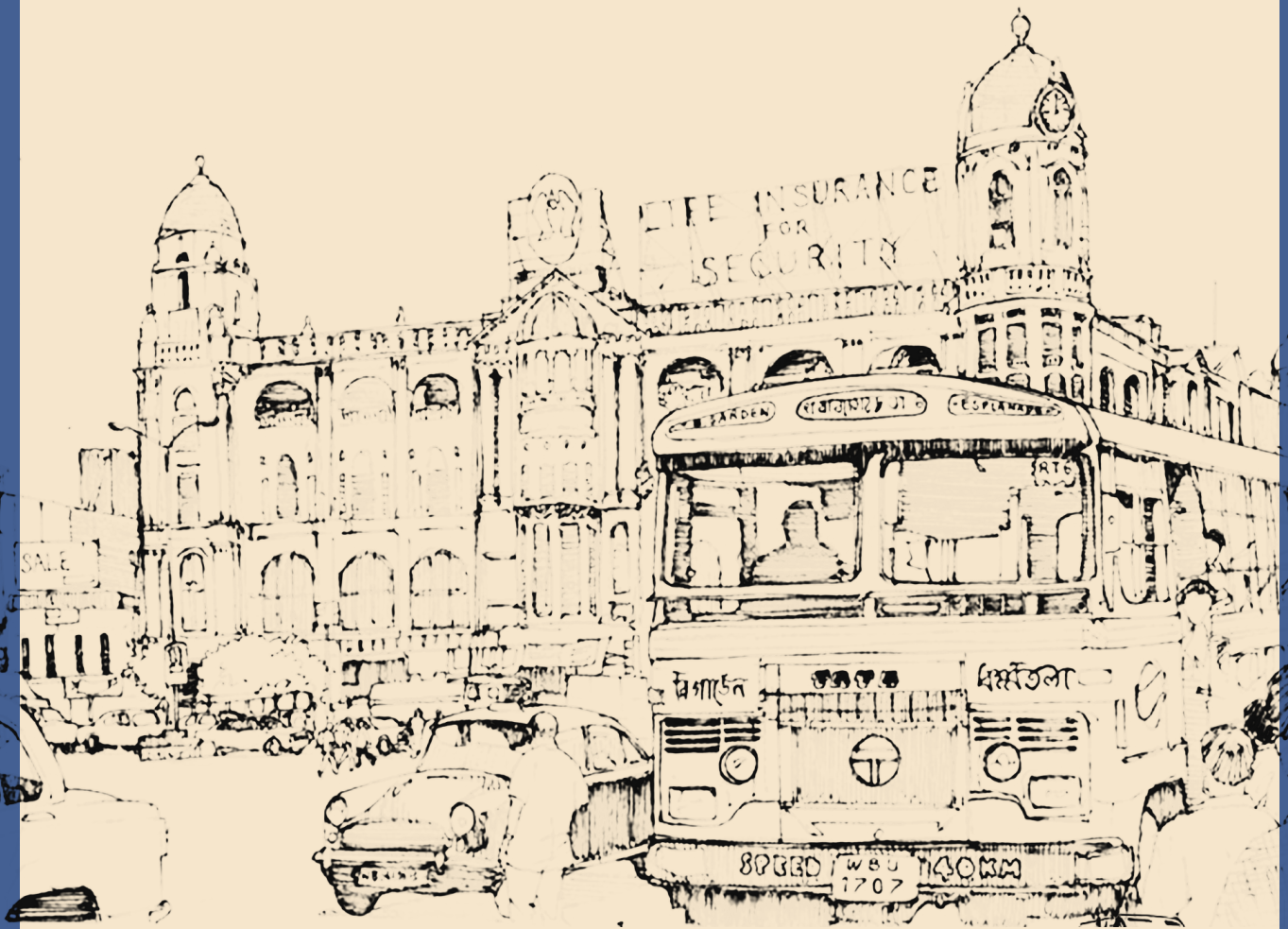
Cities without cycle lanes:






- **Set up pop-up lanes to encourage cycling:** Bengaluru has experienced success by building pop-up cycling lanes. Kolkata should follow Bengaluru's example and set up pop-up cycling lanes **to test whether permanent cycling lanes in those areas will add value to the city.**
- **Build alternate routes for cyclists:** Where arrangement for separate cycle lanes is impossible, build alternate routes along the **Major Arterial roads** of the city.





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