SaveLIFE FOUNDATION
IMPROVING ROAD SAFETY AND EMERGENCY CARE ACROSS INDIA

NATIONAL STUDY ON SAFE COMMUTE TO SCHOOL

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Executive Summary

India is home to over 500 million children under the age of 18 years (Census, 2011). Road crashes are the leading cause of deaths and unintentional injuries amongst children, making them one of the most high-risk vulnerable sections of the population on Indian roads. Children are exposed to the risk of road crashes on multiple occasions while commuting to schools - in school affiliated vehicles, in private vehicles, as pedestrians, and on public transport. The latest data from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) reveals that 11,168 children below the age of 18 lose their lives to road crashes, contributing to 7.4% of all crash deaths. In addition, 13,185 people die near schools/colleges/educational institution areas[1]. What adds complexity to these disturbing trends is the fact that for over 26 crore students enrolled in school between 2015-16 (26,05,97,000) (HRD Ministry, 2018)[2], little is known about their commute to school. There are no existing uniform legal guidelines that ensure the safety of children during their school commute. Factors like poor road infrastructure, relatively unsafe vehicles, limited enforcement, and bad road-user behaviour contribute to the everyday risks faced by school children while commuting. Such risks are faced in both school affiliated and private transport. In 2019, 362 people including children lost their lives in road crashes involving school buses. There is documented proof also to show non-compliance on part of school vehicles. For example, a total of 482 challans were issued for school bus drivers and school van drivers just in the city of Delhi between 1st April 2019 and 22nd March 2020[3], implying cases of non-compliance every single day of the year. Right to safe access to educational institutions is an integral part of Right to Education. Thus, there is a need for all stakeholders to come together and ensure safe commute to school for all children in the country.

In January and February 2021, schools had briefly reopened as cases were reducing, however with the spread of the delta variant of the Coronavirus, cases surged exponentially throughout the country, thus causing schools to shut down again. However, as cases have receded again, State Administrations across the country are gradually reopening schools. With the unlocking of COVID-19 restrictions, there are additional risks that children will be exposed to, as they prepare to travel to schools for their new academic cycle[4]. Once schools reopen, all stakeholders need to be vigilant to ensure that children are safe from the risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the risk of road traffic injury. In its endeavour to develop strategic solutions to this complex problem, SaveLIFE Foundation, an independent, nongovernmental organisation committed to improving road safety and emergency medical care across India, entered into a partnership with Mercedes-Benz Research and Development

1 *https://ncrb.gov.in/sites/default/files/ADSI_2019_FULL%20REPORT_updated.pdf*

2 *https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics-new/ESAG-2018.pdf*

3 *https://pqars.nic.in/annex/254/Au778.pdf*

4 *The Goverment of India issued guidelines for re-opening of schools in the country in September 2020.*

India (MBRDI), the largest R&D centre for Daimler outside of Germany. Headquartered in Bengaluru, India, MBRDI has extensively worked on promoting road safety in India. In 2018, MBRDI launched the MobileKids initiative in Bangalore and Pune, reaching over 15000 children in 100 schools.

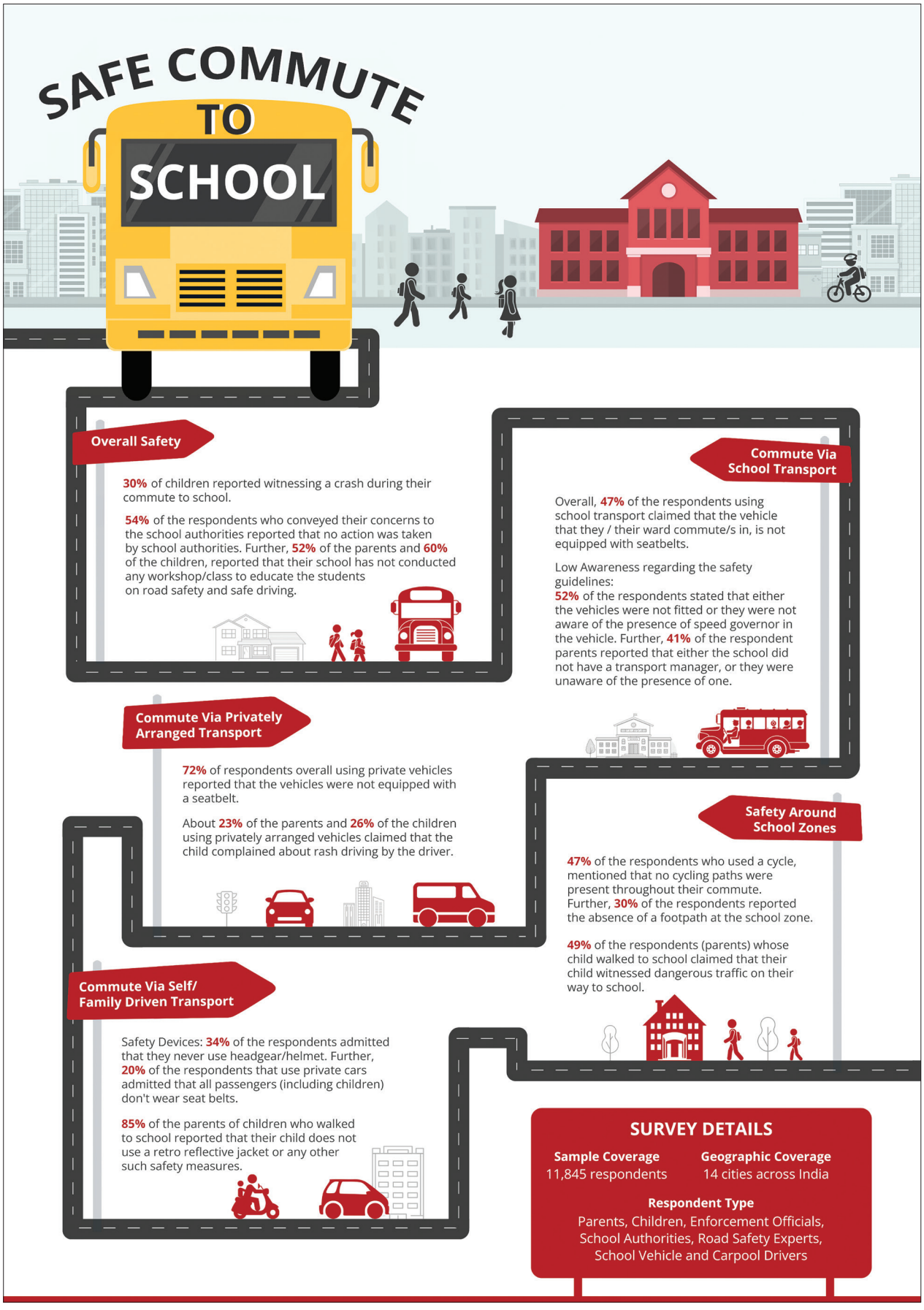
A pan- India multi- city study was commissioned to the Public Division, Kantar to analyse the issue of child road safety in the country. The study titled "National Study on Safe Commute to School" reviews the existing status of school transport and identifies gaps and challenges and offers suggestions to make the commute safer. The study was conducted in a total of 14 cities with high road crash fatality rates including 5 Tier -1 (Bengaluru, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata) and 9 Tier-2 cities (Pune, Bhopal, Patna, Jamshedpur, Lucknow, Kanpur, Vijayawada, Ahmedabad, Jaipur).

A mixed methodology design was utilised for the study covering both quantitative and qualitative research. The quantitative surveys comprised of a sample of 11,845 respondents including parents of school going children (Class 1 to 12) and children (class 6 to 12) to understand the nature and magnitude of the issue. Additionally, In-depth interviews were conducted with child road safety experts, traffic police officials, school authorities, parents of school going children and children themselves to better understand the existing scenario of school commute and the gaps in regulatory reform and practice.

In light of the first national lockdown (25th March 2020 - 31st May 2020) imposed by the Central Government due to COVID-19 and its arising restrictions, training and interviews were conducted telephonically.

While holistically assessing the prevailing ground situation and the policy landscape around school commute, this study offers many recommendations for effective action to improve road safety for school children on Indian roads. This entails improved and sustained enforcement of comprehensive road safety laws in conjunction with government-backed public awareness campaigns and civil society participation. Implementing the child road safety related provisions under the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 and formulating guidelines for improving safety standards of vehicles and school zones can go a long way in saving the lives of young commuters. We hope that this study will initiate a dialogue among policymakers and citizens on the existing status and challenges of school commute in India and the recommendations offered will help make the journey of children safer on the roads.

Key Findings



Chapter 1:
Introduction

1.1. BACKGROUND:

Every day around the world, the lives of more than 2000 families are torn apart by the loss of a child to an unintentional injury or accident that could have been prevented[5]. The grief that these families suffer – mothers, fathers, siblings, grandparents and friends – is immeasurable. For India, with a population of 548 million children under the age of 18 years[6], road safety becomes a high-priority. However, despite the fact that children use roads as pedestrians, cyclists, pillion-riders, vehicle passengers, etc., the road environment is rarely developed to consider their needs.

With COVID-19 cases declining, states are considering reopening schools for physical classes. With the reopening of schools, when children commute, it needs to be ensured that they are protected from the dual risks of COVID-19 and road traffic injury. Stakeholders will need to be vigilant and ensure that all COVID-19 safety protocols as well as all road safety measures are taken across all modes of transport.

Road traffic injuries (RTIs) account for nearly 37-38% of deaths among children of ages 0-14 years, and 62-64% among 14-18-years-old children. It accounted for 11% of all trauma admissions and 42% of hospitalisations as per select studies[7]. With RTIs being the most common type of injuries, safe transport to school is a serious concern. The 2019 data from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) revealed that the number of deaths of children aged below 18 years was 11,168 a 7.4% increase from 2018. The NCRB figures for the same stood at 15,533 deaths, with 4,079 deaths of children aged below 14 years. Further, it was revealed that 13,185 people died near schools/ colleges/ educational institution areas. Recent data also reveals that 85 challans were issued for school bus drivers, and 397 challans were issued for school van drivers in Delhi between 1st April 2019 and 22nd March 2020[8]. A study by NIMHANS India reported that about 2% of injured children were likely to become permanently disabled. The study indicated a strong association between road injuries among children, mode of travel, and distance to school.[9] With one of the highest shares in road crash deaths all over the world, children in India are exposed to the risk of road crashes on multiple occasions. There are no existing standard guidelines for modes of transport such as privately rented cabs, auto-rickshaws etc. creating a gap in ensuring safety of children in these vehicles. While there are state policies that have listed standards for school vehicles, there is neither a comprehensive national nor a state school transport policy in place to ensure that children travel safely to and from schools throughout all modes of transport. Thus, there is a need for drastic improvement in child safety w.r.t. school commute.

5 *Child injuries: the stories behind the statistics – 2008, WHO, https://www.who.int/features/2008/child_injuries/en/*

6 *Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India: http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/population_enumeration.html*

7 *Road traffic injures, World report on child injury prevention WHO - 2008, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK310645/*

8 *https://pqars.nic.in/annex/254/Au778.pdf*

9 *https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics-new/ESAG-2018.pdf*

10 *https://nimhans.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Advancing-Child-Safety-In-India-Executive-summary.pdf*

Along with the policy framework, we also need to look into on-ground implementation to understand areas that need improvement for ensuring child road safety.

Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India (MBRDI), headquartered in Bengaluru, has extensively worked on promoting roads safety for children in India.The MobileKids initiative was launched by MBRDI in 2018 with the focus on increasing awareness amongst school children as well as improving the school zone infrastructure. In the years to come, MobileKids will continue to be the flagship project for MBRDI in implementing a comprehensive strategy to ensure safer roads for children. In its endeavour to develop strategic solutions for safer roads for all road users including children, SaveLIFE Foundation, in partnership with Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India (MBRDI), commissioned a pan-India multi-city study to understand the issues around child road safety. The multi-city survey was conducted by Public Division, Kantar. The study highlights the existing status, gaps and challenges around school transportation and offers solutions for the same.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The primary objective of the study is to assess knowledge, attitude, perception and behaviour of target respondents with respect to child road safety and transport for school commute.

Research objectives:

1. Identify the existing guidelines for safety in school commute, and the adherence to these guidelines in practice.
2. To review the current status and conditions of school transport for children in India by various modes of school transport used like school buses, vans, RTVs etc; safety, security and comfort of the vehicle chosen for commute etc.
3. Assess the vulnerability of children vis-a-vis different modes of transport (buses, vans, auto rickshaws or children as pedestrians) while factoring in the additional risk of the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Offer suggestions/recommendations at both the individual and institutional level to improve safety of children commuting to schools, and reduce child crash deaths.

Chapter 2:

Research Design, Methodology, and Sample

2.1. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY:

Based on the objectives of the study, the research methodology was divided into two components - qualitative and quantitative, using a mixed method research technique.

Computer Assisted Telephonic Interviews (CATI)@ home data collection method was used, wherein the interviewers received training telephonically, and they telephonically interviewed respondents from their homes and recorded responses on Android Tablets provided by Kantar.

The quantitative and qualitative components captured an in-depth understanding of the perspectives of parents and children, school authorities, road safety experts, bus drivers, and enforcement officials.

2.2. TARGET RESPONDENTS:

The target groups of the two components are:

Quantitative component:

- Children of pre-identified groups (across ages 11-14 and ages 15-18)
- Parents of children in each category (across ages 5-10; 11-14; and 15-18)

Qualitative component:

- Parents of school going children
- School going children
- School Authorities and School Boards
- School Bus Drivers, Van or Carpool Drivers
- Enforcement Officials
- Child Road Safety Experts

2.3. GEOGRAPHY:

The study was conducted in 12 states, with one city selected from each state, except in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, where 2 cities were selected:

Table 2.1 Study Geography

S.No.	State	City	Zone	Tier
1	West Bengal	Kolkata	East	1
2	Delhi	Delhi	North	1
3	Tamil Nadu	Chennai	South	1
4	Karnataka	Bengaluru	South	1
5	Maharashtra	Mumbai	West	1
		Pune	West	2
6	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	Central	2
7	Bihar	Patna	East	2
8	Jharkhand	Jamshedpur	East	2
9	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	North	2
		Kanpur	North	2
10	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada	South	2
11	Gujarat	Ahmedabad	West	2
12	Rajasthan	Jaipur	West	2

2.4. SAMPLE SIZE:

2.4.1. Quantitative

The sample size was estimated using the mentioned formula per state given below:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times (p) \times (1-p)}{c^2} \times d \times r$$

Where,

n = required sample size

z = confidence level at 95% (standard value of 1.96)

p = estimated level of key indicators to be monitored

d = design effect (considered at 1.0 for multi-stage sampling)

r = margin error

The sample size has been estimated for school commute assuming the P-value as 40% for buses and 60% for other modes of transport at city level. With 95% CI and 7% margin of error and 1 design effect; the estimated sample for bus/other transport comes out to be 180.

Table 2.2: Estimated Sample Distribution

		Parents of Children		Children	
		Per city	Total	Per city	Total
Bus	Class 1 to 5	60	840		
	Class 6 to 9	60	840	90	1260
	Class 10 to 12	60	840	90	1260
Other modes of transport (with quota of bus users, van users, rickshaw, pedestrians)	Class 1 to 5	60	840		
	Class 6 to 9	60	840	90	1260
	Class 10 to 12	60	840	90	1260
Total		360	5040	360	5040

To ensure representation of each mode of transport, quota for transport per city was planned to be maintained in the following distribution:	
Van	30
Autorickshaw	30
Rickshaw	30
4W	30
2W	30
NMT	30

2.4.2.Qualitative

A total of 18 telephonic and web-based qualitative interviews were conducted across all stakeholders of the study. In-depth interviews were conducted with a child road safety expert, a school authority, enforcement officials, school vehicle and carpool drivers, children and parents across Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata.

2.5. SAMPLING METHODOLOGY:

Selection of cities:

- In consideration of the NCRB (2018) data of fatalities near school and other educational institutions, cities with higher fatalities were selected.

Selection of respondents:

- The respondents were recruited using Random Digit Dial (RDD) method.
- State specific databases of mobile phone numbers (excluding the DND numbers) were generated.
- The mobile numbers from the generated database were randomly selected to be interviewed.
- The respondents were screened, and then interviewed.
- Consent for the interview was obtained from eligible respondents. For children, informed consent was taken from their guardians/parents to continue with the interview.
- For the qualitative component, four major cities were selected. Additionally, a sub-set of children who have witnessed a crash were also recruited.

2.6. DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOLS:

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, the data collection was conducted through telephonic/ web based technology to minimise the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission. All the field teams and moderators were trained over Microsoft teams conference. The training covered an overview of the research context and study objectives, research ethics considerations, data security, techniques for conducting in-depth interviews, effective probing, and data collection and management procedures. Due emphasis was given on the quality of the training, ensuring that all interviewers and moderators are fully adept at administering the tools and adhering to the protocol in the study.

In the qualitative component, the interviews with enforcement officials were held face-to-face due to the unavailability of the respondents over call. Face-to-face data collection was conducted following all safety protocols of COVID- 19.

2.7. SAMPLE COVERED:

The total sample covered stands at 11,845 respondents. It has an equal representation of cities at parents and children's level, with 6,134 parents and 5,711 children covered as respondents in the study.

2.8. CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS:

The primary respondents were parents of school going children of class 1 to 12 and school going children of class 6 to 12. Parents are further segregated into three categories, and school going children are further segregated into two categories as shown in table 2.3.

The proportion of male children was higher in all cities except in Chennai, where the proportion of female children was higher (51%).

Table 2.3 Categories of respondents by cities

		Parent			Child	
		Parent of a school-going child in class 1-5	Parent of a school-going child in class 6-9	Parent of a school-going child in class 10-12	School-going child in class 6-9	School-going child in class 10-12
State	City	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count
	Base	2084	2029	2021	2768	2943
Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada	146	152	144	196	208
Bihar	Patna	130	131	120	180	180
Delhi	Delhi	151	153	210	189	215
Gujarat	Ahmedabad	140	136	130	180	198
Jharkhand	Jamshedpur	130	126	122	181	181
Karnataka	Bengaluru	151	149	155	214	214
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	135	145	165	190	215
Maharashtra	Pune	144	133	130	209	224
	Mumbai	211	196	153	223	272
Rajasthan	Jaipur	155	150	146	195	213
Tamil Nadu	Chennai	166	142	160	192	202
Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	148	143	126	214	221
	Kanpur	130	134	132	206	200
West Bengal	Kolkata	147	138	129	197	202

2.8.1. Mode of commute from home to school:

Overall, school bus was reported by the highest proportion of respondents as the mode of commute (one third (33%) of the children), followed by school van (12%). It was also found that 11% of the children also commute to school by walking. Across all cities, the school bus was the most used mode of commute. The largest number of respondents who/ whose children commute to school by walking were found in Mumbai and Bengaluru.

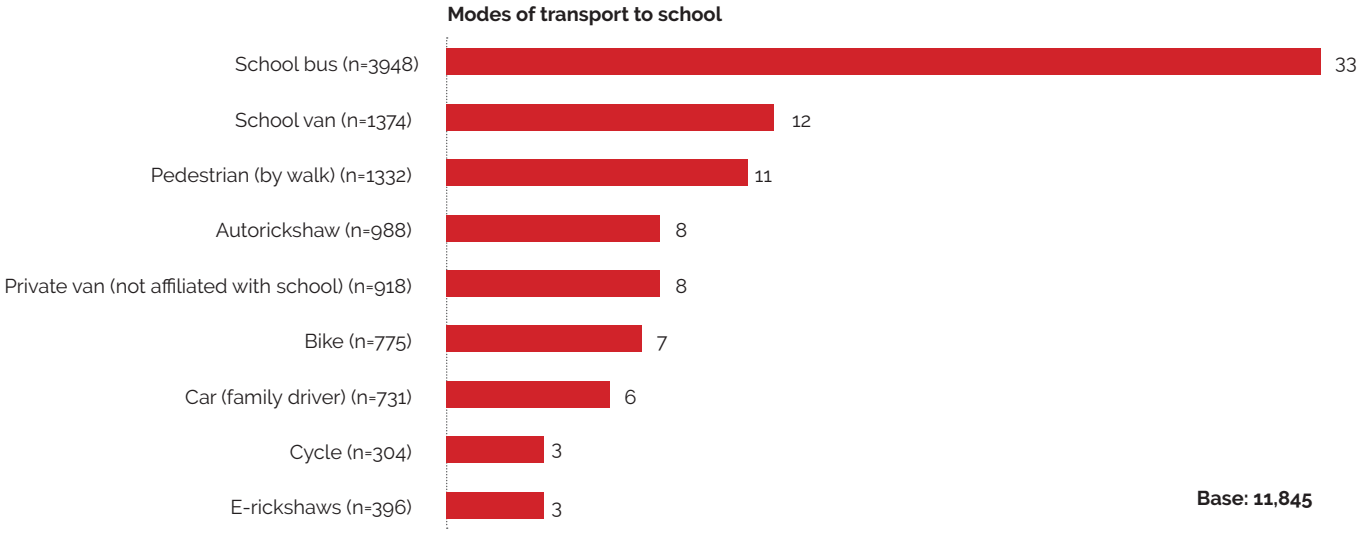


Figure 2.1. Mode of commute from home to school

Table 2.4 City wise break up for mode of commute to school

Mode of commute to school (N=11845)	School bus	School RTV/ Matador bus	School van	Private van	Autorickshaw	Pedal Rickshaw	E-rickshaws	Car (family driver)	Car (non-family driver)	Scooty	Cycle	Bike	Pedestrian (by walk)
Vijayawada	309	0	81	62	81	57	3	48	12	4	38	65	86
Patna	297	22	48	60	64	24	36	45	15	5	18	58	49
Delhi	338	57	50	64	67	2	60	65	7	33	8	39	128
Ahmedabad	151	13	199	76	76	0	2	33	27	40	41	47	79
Jamshedpur	286	2	75	61	66	9	52	45	15	8	12	52	57
Bengaluru	276	24	122	66	72	0	3	69	2	18	3	81	147
Bhopal	288	2	122	62	77	0	60	41	23	10	12	58	95
Pune	286	10	105	65	76	0	2	63	11	44	21	38	119
Mumbai	301	11	85	76	117	5	0	53	15	20	4	68	300
Jaipur	213	3	187	66	77	10	54	72	8	20	12	50	87
Chennai	334	2	28	106	61	0	0	54	9	13	39	82	134
Lucknow	274	0	115	63	71	6	64	62	4	16	53	56	68
Kanpur	246	2	137	65	62	13	54	56	16	13	25	58	55
Kolkata	354	13	21	61	68	45	20	26	40	15	26	51	73

Chapter 3:
School Affiliated Mode of Transport

Provision of school transportation can be extremely beneficial for child road safety if all the safety guidelines are adhered to by school authorities and drivers. COVID-19 poses additional risks to the safety of school students. Schools need to ensure road safety along with ensuring proper social distancing and sanitary precautions for all children commuting to school. Schools had briefly reopened in January 2021, however, due to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, they were again shut, and education was made entirely online. With the gradual unlocking post the second wave, states are considering reopening schools for physical classes. These schools will now have to take on the additional responsibility of ensuring that all precautions for COVID-19 are taken on school affiliated vehicles.

The study findings suggest that there is a need for schools to improve the safety standards of school affiliated vehicles, not only by taking on precautionary measures for COVID-19, but also to ensure road safety of all commuters. Frequent audits by school authorities and reporting of the same to government has the potential to increase compliance to guidelines. There is also a need to focus on building awareness amongst parents, thereby making them more vigilant towards ensuring norms. Involvement of parents in the process of audits is seen as a potential intervention in increasing awareness and building vigilance among them. The following chapter discusses the perception and behaviour of school transport users (both parents and children) to obtain a better idea of the current scenario of school transport. The school affiliated transport includes Buses, Vans and RTV/Matador.

3.1. SAMPLE COVERAGE:

This study covers a sample of 5,489 school transport users (2,822 parents and 2,667 children), out of which 3,953 (72%) are school bus users.

Children and parents from both government and private schools participated in the survey. Overall, 95% of the respondents using school affiliated transport went to private schools, and only 5% went to government schools. However, a relatively larger proportion of the respondents from Kolkata (24%) and Delhi (16%) went to government schools.

The low proportion of school transport users among respondents from government schools could be attributed to the fact that provision of school transportation is less for government schools. This is despite the fact that around half of the child population in India studies in government schools across all states[10]. Provision of school affiliated transport in government schools is low (<=8%) for school buses, school RTV/ Matador buses and school vans.

10 *MHRD (2018), Education statistics at glance https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics-new/ESAG-2018.pdf*

3.2. REASONS FOR THE CHOICE OF SCHOOL PROVIDED TRANSPORT:

School Vehicles are undoubtedly a safer mode of travel if all applicable safety guidelines are adhered to. Many parents are aware of this, and place their faith on school vehicles for ensuring safe commute. The findings suggest that the main reason for the choice of mode of commute for those commuting through school provided transport is safety. During discussions with parents, it was highlighted that a school bus gives them the combination of safe commuting and convenience.

Table 3.1 Reason for using school mode of transport across cities (all figures are in percentage) Multiple responses

Reason for using mode of transport	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	390	367	445	363	363	422	412	401	397	403	364	389	385	388
Takes less time to travel	38	53	55	50	41	50	40	29	54	54	22	45	23	37
Comfort	58	57	40	67	48	52	35	53	58	68	68	45	33	46
Safety	70	76	78	76	67	53	58	80	76	71	70	60	50	75
Not overcrowded	44	32	45	28	35	48	28	45	39	38	36	30	13	37
Stop is very close to house	44	17	26	37	33	50	25	43	40	29	46	21	12	57
Good staff	24	17	47	37	20	45	32	56	49	44	29	37	20	15
Known driver	24	5	9	19	12	43	26	21	31	26	23	19	8	15
Cheap/ affordable	17	25	31	34	21	43	30	48	56	45	14	30	17	9
Don't have any other option	22	8	19	26	16	40	18	21	35	24	23	20	25	11
Children in family and friend circle use the same mode	33	11	24	32	23	45	24	19	37	32	32	20	9	16
Children usually travel like this in our area	28	16	42	29	28	46	25	22	38	36	34	18	15	4
Convenience	35	40	27	49	41	49	28	46	53	63	48	39	26	52

Safety was stated as the key reason for choice of school transport across cities, with 8 out of 10 respondents (80%) in Pune reporting the same, followed by 78% in Delhi. Time as a factor in choice of transport was relatively higher among respondents from Delhi, Mumbai, Jaipur, Bengaluru and Ahmedabad. Table 3.1 provides a distribution of reasons for choice of mode of transport across cities.

3.3. IDEAL MODE OF TRANSPORT:

When all the respondent parents (n=6,134) were asked about their ideal mode of transport, school affiliated vehicles turned out to be the popular choice. 46% of the respondents opted for school affiliated vehicles as the ideal mode of transport. It should also be noted that 32% of the parents chose school buses specifically as their ideal mode of transport.

3.4. TRAVEL DURATION HAS A BEARING ON CHOICE OF MODE OF COMMUTE:

Most respondents using school buses spend 30-60 minutes on travelling to/from school, whereas most respondents using other school affiliated vehicles which are smaller in size like School RTV (68% parent, 40% child) and School van (59% parent, 58% child) spend less than 30 minutes on commuting to school.

Around 55% of the respondents reported that the duration of a one-way travel to school was more than 30-minutes. However, in Chennai, Lucknow, Patna, Bhopal, and Kolkata, 60% or more respondents travelled for more than 30 minutes.

Table 3.2 Ideal mode of transport reported by parents

Ideal mode of transport	Base	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base	6134	442	381	514	406	378	455	445	407	560	451	468	417	396	414
School affiliated vehicle	46	53	47	54	49	59	18	36	48	45	55	38	47	46	50
Private vehicle	17	12	21	16	19	12	27	21	18	26	13	11	15	5	15
Self/family driven vehicle	28	21	28	24	24	23	36	33	22	19	26	33	34	50	27
Pedestrian (by walk)	6	11	4	3	6	3	8	6	9	8	6	10	3	1	4
Other vehicle	2	3	0	3	0	4	8	1	1	3	0	8	1	0	3

Table 3.3 Reason for using different mode of transport to and from school across cities (all figures are in percentage) Multiple responses

*Responses of all respondents across the three modes of transport (school affiliated, privately arranged, and self/ family driven).

Reason for using different mode of transport	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base	1488	56	84	129	46	84	160	123	87	270	117	117	118	44	53
Unavailability of the person taking the child to school	35	32	41	22	22	29	41	62	30	31	47	30	28	32	26
Unavailability of transport at that time	38	32	58	35	39	33	47	30	17	37	46	38	46	39	17
It depends on the will of the child	38	25	45	28	24	40	53	42	43	32	40	40	43	34	19
Monetary constraints	31	39	38	18	2	23	37	35	41	39	29	32	25	18	19
School is near/ at a walking distance to the home	30	21	26	45	11	19	56	31	22	28	32	28	25	11	4
To save money	31	70	40	16	22	23	45	32	33	31	29	33	23	9	13
Children in family and friend circle use the same mode	28	27	14	18	22	8	58	38	22	26	46	31	16	5	6
Children usually travel like this in our area	29	21	26	29	15	13	52	42	16	29	36	40	18	0	4
To save time	42	29	61	53	35	33	39	37	45	57	58	38	17	9	23
Has a different drop off (goes to tuition or house of family/friend)	10	11	2	5	13	0	17	23	11	9	14	18	3	0	4
Other	1	0	6	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	2	9

3.5. DIFFERENT MODES OF TRANSPORT TO AND FROM SCHOOL:

When asked whether different modes of commute were used to and from school, only about 13% of the total respondents across modes of commute reported using different modes of transport, primarily to save time (42%). (Refer to table 3.3) This proportion was higher for the respondents from Patna, Jaipur, and Mumbai, where 61%, 58% and 57% of the respondents claimed that different modes of transport were used to save time, respectively.

3.6. REASONS FOR THE CHOICE OF IDEAL MODE OF COMMUTE:

The main factors that influence the decision of parents while selecting their ideal mode of transport for commute to school are safety of the child (68%), saving time (56%), comfort (39%), convenience of the vehicle (37%), and availability (35%). However, in Bengaluru and Lucknow, only 50% of the parent respondents claimed that safety was a factor for choice of mode of transport. In Bengaluru (55%) and Lucknow (58%), saving time was the priority of majority of the parents (refer to tables 3.4 and 3.5).

Table 3.4 Reason for choice of ideal mode of transport across school vehicles (all figures except base are in percentage) Multiple responses

Reason for choice of ideal mode of transport	Overall
Base (n) is parents of children using school transport	2822
Safety of the child	68
Saves time	56
Comfort of traveling by it	39
Convenience of reaching the transport	37

(Question asked only to parents using school affiliated vehicles)

Table 3.5 Reason for choice of ideal mode of transport across cities (all figures are in percentage) Multiple responses

Reason for ideal mode of transport	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	2822	206	190	249	184	186	243	192	188	208	199	181	204	193	199
Availability of the transport	35	27	16	39	40	27	53	23	47	48	53	29	30	13	41
Convenience of reaching the transport	37	31	26	35	41	40	52	19	28	52	48	36	30	18	55
Parent's availability/ non-availability	21	21	17	18	11	22	53	15	13	38	21	5	22	16	12
Safety of the child	68	66	83	82	69	65	50	58	79	71	78	69	50	60	71
Affordability	27	31	11	20	36	12	47	18	55	46	31	17	16	9	25
A trusted person driving the vehicle	26	27	9	16	28	24	53	31	40	40	21	27	21	12	16
Saves time	56	63	61	64	65	42	55	44	68	62	62	43	58	50	47
Health	21	26	6	26	37	12	50	15	20	32	15	14	15	8	10
Environmental concerns	20	29	13	25	19	5	53	14	22	31	20	20	17	3	3
Comfort of traveling by it	39	36	52	44	35	56	51	32	29	53	54	29	38	24	15
I enjoy riding/driving the vehicle	14	19	3	7	7	2	53	18	10	25	15	6	15	5	2
Children in family and friend circle use the same mode	23	30	9	13	20	22	49	28	18	39	27	27	15	12	12
Children usually travel like this in our area	25	31	14	22	19	25	51	22	20	44	29	29	19	12	4
Other	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

(Question asked only to parents using school affiliated vehicles

3.7. INCIDENCE OF CHILD BEING ACCOMPANIED TO PICK UP POINT:

Children are usually accompanied by friends or siblings (47%) to the pick-up point. However, this varies with the age of the child, wherein children in classes 1 to 5 are mostly accompanied by a parent (79%), fewer children from classes 6-9 are accompanied by parents (61%), and even fewer for classes 10 to 12 (36%) are accompanied by parents.

3.8. OVERCROWDING IN SCHOOL PROVIDED TRANSPORT:

A very small proportion of respondents reported overcrowding of the vehicle. However, protocol for adequate distance between two passengers would change due to the revised standards for maintaining social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Only 4% of the respondents claimed that their mode of transport does not have enough seats to accommodate all passengers. This proportion was relatively high for Mumbai, and Lucknow, where 11% and 7% of the respondents claimed that their mode of transport does not have enough seats to accommodate all passengers, respectively.

Table 3.6 Availability of enough seats for children to sit in school-affiliated vehicles across cities (all figures are in percentage)

Availability of enough seats	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	5489	390	367	445	363	363	422	412	401	397	403	364	389	385	388
Yes	95	97	94	99	95	98	97	96	96	88	95	96	92	93	98
No	4	3	6	1	5	1	3	3	3	11	4	3	7	6	2
Don't Know/Can't say	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0

3.9. AVAILABILITY OF SEATBELTS IN SCHOOL AFFILIATED VEHICLES:

As high as 47% of the respondents reported that their vehicles did not have seatbelts. Half of the respondents using school affiliated transport stated that the vehicles are equipped with seat belts. Whereas, 3% of the respondents were not aware if the school vehicles have seat belts. Among the cities, Bengaluru (78%) and Lucknow (66%) had higher proportion of school vehicles equipped with seat belts. Whereas, only 13% of the respondents in Vijayawada, and 28% of the respondents in Kolkata reported that their vehicles were equipped with seatbelts (refer to tables 3.7 and 3.8).

Table 3.7 Seats equipped with seat belts in school affiliated vehicle across mode of commute segregated by parent and child (all figures are in percentage)

Seats equipped with seat belts	School affiliated vehicle									
	Overall	School bus			School RTV/Matador bus			School van		
		Base	Parent	Child	Base	Parent	Child	Base	Parent	Child
Base (n)	5489	3953	2052	1901	161	74	87	1375	696	679
Yes	50	49	48	50	59	68	52	51	48	53
No	47	48	46	50	39	27	48	46	48	44
Don't Know/Can't say	3	3	6	1	2	5	0	3	3	3

Table 3.8 Seats equipped with seat belts in school affiliated vehicle across cities (all figures are in percentage)

Seats equipped with seat belts	School affiliated vehicle													
	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	390	367	445	363	363	422	412	401	397	403	364	389	385	388
Yes	13	30	55	60	33	78	58	61	50	50	62	66	48	28
No	87	65	40	37	62	20	39	34	45	47	37	33	48	69
Don't Know/Can't say	0	5	4	4	6	2	3	5	5	2	1	2	4	2

3.10. ADHERENCE TO ROAD SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN:

During the discussions with all stakeholders, it was acknowledged that there are improvements in adherence to guidelines due to strengthened monitoring in recent times. However, there are still many gaps. As reported by parents and children, it is seen that there is a relatively higher compliance to guidelines involving the exterior of school vehicles than to guidelines involving the interior. More than 3/4th of the respondents reported that 'School Bus', the driver's details, and the 'Helpline number' are mentioned on the school vehicle. Among the types of infrastructure available in the vehicle, seats equipped with seat belts were reported by only 49% of the parent respondents, and vehicles fitted with speed governors were reported only by 48% of the respondents. Authorised speed limit mentioned on the body of the vehicle is found to be very low among school vans (12% parent and 14% children). About 30% of the parent respondents were unaware about the installation of speed governors.

A large proportion of respondents in Vijayawada (87%), Kolkata (70%), Patna (65%) and Jamshedpur (61%) claimed that their vehicles were not equipped with seatbelts. Over half of the respondents from Mumbai claimed that the authorised speed limit for the vehicle was not displayed on the vehicle. Further, 56% of the respondents from Kolkata were unaware if their vehicles were fitted with speed governors. Additionally, 19% of the respondents from Mumbai and 15% of the respondents from Bhopal claimed that their vehicles had unreliable locks (refer to table 3.10).

Table 3.9. Infrastructure of the vehicle (all figures in percentage) Multiple responses									
Infrastructure of the vehicle		**Overall**		**School bus**		**School RTV/ Matador bus**		**School van**	
		Parent	**Child**	**Parent**	**Child**	**Parent**	**Child**	**Parent**	**Child**
Base (n)		2822	2667	2052	1901	74	87	696	679
Have seats equipped with seat belts	Yes	49	50	48	50	68	52	48	53
	No	46	48	46	49	27	48	49	44
	don't know/ not aware	5	1	6	1	5	0	3	3
Have school vehicle marked as 'School Bus' or 'On School Duty'	Yes	90	90	92	93	88	93	81	82
	No	8	8	6	6	4	7	17	15
	don't know/ not aware	2	2	2	1	8	0	2	3
Have details of the driver, telephone no. of the school/owner of the bus, transport department's helpline number and registration number of the vehicle	Yes	82	85	83	88	84	92	82	77
	No	11	11	10	9	8	6	13	19
	don't know/ not aware	6	3	7	3	8	2	5	4
Windows have glass films or curtains	Yes	83	81	85	85	70	67	76	73
	No	14	18	12	14	23	33	20	25
	don't know/ not aware	3	1	3	1	7	0	4	2
Vehicle has sufficient white light	Yes	81	86	84	89	82	92	74	78
	No	9	10	7	8	10	6	15	17
	don't know/ not aware	9	4	9	3	8	2	11	5
Vehicle is fitted with reliable locks	Yes	88	90	88	90	97	92	85	90
	No	7	8	7	7	3	7	10	7
	don't know/ not aware	5	3	5	3	0	1	5	3
Authorised speed limit mentioned on the body of the vehicle	Yes	60	61	61	64	70	80	12	14
	No	27	27	26	24	19	11	76	72
	don't know/ not aware	13	12	13	12	11	9	12	14
School vehicle fitted with speed governors	Yes	48	48	49	51	54	57	46	37
	No	22	26	19	23	17	10	30	37
	don't know/ not aware	30	26	32	26	29	33	24	26

Table 3.10 Infrastructure of the vehicle (all figures in percentage) Multiple responses

Infrastructure of the vehicle		Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)		390	367	445	363	363	422	412	401	397	403	364	389	385	388
Have seats equipped with seat belts	Yes	13	30	55	60	33	78	58	61	50	50	62	66	48	28
	No	87	65	41	36	61	20	39	34	45	48	37	32	48	70
	don't know/ not aware	0	5	4	4	6	2	3	5	5	2	1	2	4	2
Have school vehicle marked as 'School Bus' or 'On School Duty'	Yes	83	95	99	86	95	91	81	97	80	80	93	89	97	94
	No	15	4	1	12	4	8	16	2	16	13	5	8	2	5
	don't know/ not aware	2	1	0	2	1	1	3	1	4	7	2	3	1	1
Have details of the driver, telephone no. of the school/ owner of the bus, transport department's helpline number and registration number of the vehicle	Yes	90	83	90	86	72	96	80	90	75	83	91	84	78	76
	No	4	14	5	12	22	3	12	7	20	10	6	11	17	18
	don't know/ not aware	6	3	5	2	6	1	8	3	5	7	3	5	5	6
Windows have glass films or curtains	Yes	89	95	74	49	96	89	84	67	70	95	82	85	95	79
	No	10	5	26	45	4	9	12	32	22	2	17	14	4	21
	don't know/ not aware	1	0	0	6	0	2	4	1	8	3	1	1	1	0
Vehicle has sufficient white light	Yes	95	89	90	80	83	93	79	85	75	72	93	80	59	98
	No	1	7	5	13	8	5	11	10	18	13	4	14	27	2
	don't know/ not aware	4	4	5	7	9	2	10	5	7	15	3	6	14	0
Vehicle is fitted with reliable locks	Yes	89	81	98	94	95	90	73	94	78	83	95	82	91	99
	No	6	11	1	4	1	9	15	3	19	13	3	12	6	1
	don't know/ not aware	5	8	1	2	4	1	12	3	3	4	2	6	3	0
Authorised speed limit mentioned on the body of the vehicle	Yes	74	69	90	54	82	54	52	59	32	38	77	67	64	34
	No	17	18	9	31	11	39	27	33	51	39	9	23	27	43
	don't know/ not aware	9	13	1	15	7	7	21	8	17	23	14	10	9	23
School vehicle fitted with speed governors	Yes	56	36	66	38	42	76	46	56	35	44	75	44	44	12
	No	18	21	12	31	22	9	21	28	38	33	8	30	32	32
	don't know/ not aware	26	43	22	31	36	15	33	16	27	23	17	26	24	56

Table 3.11 Safety in the vehicle (vehicle fitted with safety tools) across mode of commute segregated by parent and child (all figures in percentage)								
Vehicle fitted with safety tools	Overall		School bus		School RTV/ Matador bus		School van	
	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n)	2822	2667	2052	1901	74	87	696	679
Yes	78	82	81	85	81	75	71	74
No	12	12	10	10	12	13	17	16
Don't know /Can't say	10	7	9	5	7	12	12	10

3.11. GRILLS AND MESH WIRE ON SCHOOL AFFILIATED VEHICLE'S WINDOWS:

Presence of both grills and mesh wire on the windows were reported by a little over one fourth of the respondents, while in school vans, 22% of the parent respondents, and 34% of the child respondents claimed that neither grill nor mesh wires were present.

36% of the respondents from Ahmedabad, and 24% of the respondents from Lucknow and Kanpur claimed that their vehicle windows were not equipped with either grills or mesh wire.

3.12. AVAILABILITY OF SAFETY TOOLS IN VEHICLES:

In order to reduce the impact of the road crash by providing first aid to a road crash victim, it is also essential to have certain safety tools such as fire extinguishers and first aid kits in the vehicle. Majority of the school affiliated transport users reported the presence of safety tools in the vehicle, with just 12% reporting their absence. However, 17% of the parents and 16% of the children respondents stated that the school vans are not fitted with safety tools. The compliance to safety measures in school affiliated transport vehicles are observed to be higher in Delhi and Bengaluru. However, only 63%, and 64% of the respondents in Mumbai and Jaipur respectively reported that their vehicles are fitted with safety tools.

3.13. TYPES OF SAFETY TOOLS PRESENT IN THE VEHICLE:

The respondents were then asked about the kinds of safety tools present in the school vehicle. Over 70% of the respondents reported the presence of fire extinguishers in their vehicles, and over 75% of the respondents reported the presence of a first aid kit. However, less than half of the respondents claimed that their vehicles had emergency contact numbers listed. In the city wise data, a relatively lower proportion of respondents from Lucknow (43%), Jamshedpur (48%), and Mumbai (57%) claimed that their vehicles had first aid kits. Further, 26% of the respondents from Mumbai, 18% of the respondents from Jaipur, and 15% of the respondents from Jamshedpur and Bhopal claimed that their vehicles were not fitted with any safety devices (refer to tables 3.12 and 3.13).

Table 3.12 Safety tools in the vehicle across mode of commute segregated by parent and child (all figures in percentage) Multiple responses

Safety tools in the vehicle	Overall		School bus		School RTV/ Matador bus		School van	
	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n) is all respondents who mention vehicle is fitted with safety tools	2273	2185	1696	1615	60	66	517	504
Fire extinguisher	72	74	75	77	70	65	62	64
First aid kit	77	79	80	78	88	95	67	78
Emergency numbers listed	46	50	47	52	70	62	39	42
No	12	12	10	10	12	13	17	16
Don't Know/Can't say	10	7	9	5	7	11	12	10

Table 3.13 Safety tools in the vehicle (all figures in percentage) Multiple responses

Safety tools in the vehicle	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n) is all respondents who mention vehicle is fitted with safety tools	333	294	430	261	250	410	274	339	264	278	325	334	327	339
Fire extinguisher	77	87	80	56	68	60	81	41	72	80	63	95	97	64
First aid kit	83	81	84	92	48	96	69	89	57	65	94	43	71	98
Emergency numbers listed	59	49	63	52	62	31	43	54	51	33	52	42	43	38
No	7	14	2	13	15	2	15	13	26	18	7	14	8	9
Don't Know/Can't say	7	8	1	16	17	1	19	3	11	18	4	2	7	3

3.14. AVAILABILITY OF GPS/CCTV:

Overall, 33% of the parent respondents and 38% of the child respondents reported that neither GPS nor CCTV are present in their vehicle. In a city wise analysis, about two fifth (40%) or more respondents reported not having any equipment in the vehicles in cities like Ahmedabad, Jamshedpur, Pune, Mumbai, Lucknow, Kanpur and Kolkata. Among respondents reporting the usage of both GPS and CCTV, only 25% of parents and 38% of the child school bus users reported that the equipment is in working condition. This proportion is even less for school RTV and school van users (table 3.14-table 3.16).

Table 3.14 Presence of GPS/ CCTV across school vehicles segregated by parent and children (all figures in percentage)

Presence of GPS/ CCTV in the vehicle	Overall		School bus		School RTV/ Matador bus		School van	
	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n) is all respondents who mention vehicle is fitted with safety tools	2822	2667	2052	1901	74	87	696	679
GPS is there	22	22	23	20	35	47	17	22
None are there	33	38	28	35	28	20	45	50
CCTV is there	9	7	11	8	1	3	6	3
GPS and CCTV are there	14	17	15	20	20	20	12	6
Don't Know/Can't say	22	17	23	16	15	10	20	19

Table 3.15 GPS/CCTV in the vehicle across cities (all figures in percentage)

GPS/ CCTV in the vehicle	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	390	367	445	363	363	422	412	401	397	403	364	389	385	388
GPS is there	26	34	19	25	10	49	19	20	14	27	10	9	33	8
None is there	32	31	20	44	46	15	24	43	41	33	13	51	48	58
CCTV is there	6	4	22	2	1	18	12	12	8	0	5	2	4	13
GPS and CCTV are there	22	11	32	2	2	5	22	18	25	17	46	2	1	6
Don't Know/Can't say	13	21	7	28	40	13	23	7	11	22	26	37	14	15

Table 3.16 Condition of GPS/CCTV in the vehicle across mode of commute segregated by parent and children (all figures in percentage)

Condition of GPS/CCTV in the vehicle	School bus		School RTV/ Matador bus		School van	
	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n) is all respondents who mention vehicle is fitted with GPS/CCTV	1000	927	42	61	239	216
GPS is in working condition	47	39	52	56	47	57
Not in working condition	1	2	0	5	1	8
CCTV is in working condition	23	16	0	2	18	9
GPS and CCTV are in working condition	25	38	36	26	28	18
Don't Know/Can't say	4	4	12	11	6	8

3.15. PRESENCE OF SCHOOL TRANSPORT MANAGER, INCIDENCE OF DRIVER AND CONDUCTOR HOLDING A VALID LICENSE:

A school transport manager plays a vital role in ensuring that all safety guidelines for school vehicles are adhered to. About 6 out of 10 school bus user respondents reported that their school had a transport manager. Further, about 71% of the parents of school bus users reported that they have been informed about the valid licence of the driver, and approximately 62% report the same for the conductor. However, in a city wise analysis, it was observed that 42% of the respondents in Jaipur and 41% of the respondents in Pune reported that the school did not have a transport manager. Further, 32% of the respondents from Jamshedpur and Lucknow claimed that parents were not informed/ did not enquire about the validity of the driver's license; and as high as 63% of the respondents from Jamshedpur claimed that parents were not informed/ did not enquire about the validity of the conductor's license (refer to table 3.17 and 3.18).

Table 3.17 Staffing for the transportation across school vehicles segregated by parent and children (all figures in percentage) Multiple responses

Staffing of the vehicle		School bus		School RTV/ Matador bus		School van	
		Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n)		2052	1901	74	87	696	679
School has a transport manager is present	Yes	64	62	77	70	49	39
	No	22	24	11	17	37	41
	Don't Know/Can't say	15	14	12	13	14	21
Parents enquire/informed about valid license of driver	Yes	71	-	69	-	72	-
	No	18	-	12	-	19	-
	Don't Know/Can't say	11		19	-	9	-
Parents enquire/informed about valid license of conductor	Yes	62	-	66	-	62	-
	No	38	-	34	-	38	-

Table 3.18 Staffing of school vehicles across cities (all figures in percentage) Multiple responses															
Staffing of school vehicles		**Vijayawada**	**Patna**	**Delhi**	**Ahmedabad**	**Jamshedpur**	**Bengaluru**	**Bhopal**	**Pune**	**Mumbai**	**Jaipur**	**Chennai**	**Lucknow**	**Kanpur**	**Kolkata**
Base (n)		390	367	445	363	363	422	412	401	397	403	364	389	385	388
School has a transport manager	Yes	75	70	84	45	58	66	46	52	57	43	71	47	49	50
	No	12	13	6	38	18	23	28	41	29	42	16	38	35	32
	Don't Know/ Can't say	12	16	10	17	24	11	26	7	15	15	12	15	16	18
Parents enquire/ informed about valid licence of driver	Yes	91	65	70	82	51	94	48	74	48	85	78	59	72	77
	No	4	30	14	12	32	6	29	17	28	6	10	32	19	15
	Don't Know/ Can't say	5	5	16	7	17	0	23	9	25	10	11	8	9	8
Parents enquire/ informed about valid licence of conductor	Yes	88	45	69	56	37	95	51	59	47	73	76	48	58	53
	No	12	55	31	44	63	5	49	41	53	27	24	52	42	47

3.16. WAYS OF PROVIDING CONTACT DETAILS OF DRIVER:

When asked about the means by which contact details of the driver was provided, more than half (54%) of the respondents stated that the contact details of the drivers was provided to the parents via mobile phone messages. This was the usual trend across cities except for Pune, where most respondents (52%) claimed that a notification was provided to the child, and Lucknow, where most respondents (53%) reported that contact details were mentioned on the bus.

3.17. PERSON THAT ENSURES THAT THE CHILD REACHES THE SCHOOL SAFELY FROM DROP OFF POINT:

Overall, more than three fifth (62%) of the school affiliated transport users reported that one of the three- the teacher in the bus, the conductor, or lady attendant, ensures the child reaches school safely from the drop off point. Overall, 35% of the respondents claimed that the children go by themselves. In a city-wise analysis, it was revealed that 72% of the respondents in Ahmedabad, and 62% of the respondents in Jaipur claimed that the children go to school from the drop off point by themselves.

3.18. STRANGERS BOARDING SCHOOL AFFILIATED VEHICLES; DROP OFF AT LOCATIONS OTHER THAN DESIGNATED POINT:

When asked whether strangers could board the school vehicle, 13% of the respondents responded affirmatively. This proportion was relatively higher for Chennai (24%), Bhopal (22%), and Bengaluru (19%). Additionally, when asked whether the child could be dropped off at points other than the designated stop, 8% of the respondents answered affirmatively. This proportion was higher for Bhopal (17%), Bengaluru (16%) and Mumbai (16%). 90% of the parents and children who chose to commute via school affiliated vehicles mentioned that the child cannot get off at any stop other than the designated bus stop.

3.19. BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS:

Based on the responses of parents, 20% of those using school affiliated transport mentioned that their child mostly or sometimes complains about rash driving/overtaking/jumping red light at the traffic signals. Further, 22% of the parents claimed that their child never waits for the vehicle to completely halt before boarding or de-boarding.

Figure 3.1. Base (n) is all parent respondents whose children commute by school affiliated transport (n=2822)

Behaviour and perception insights - as reported by parents

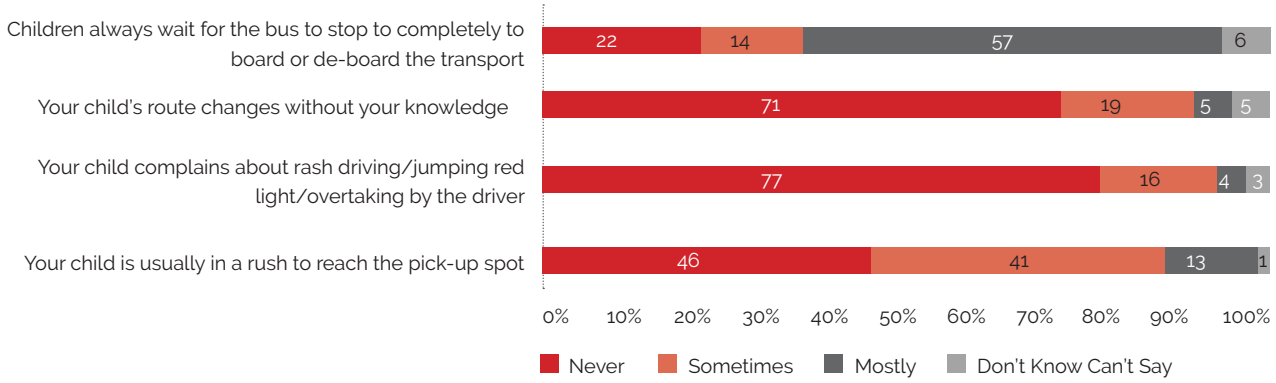
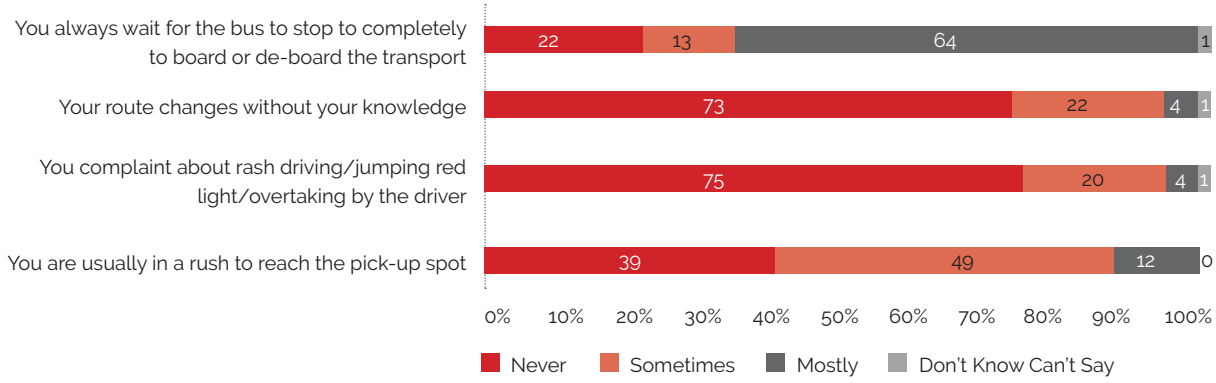


Figure 3.2. Base (n) is all children respondents commuting by school affiliated transport (n=2667).

Behaviour and perception insights - as reported by children



Based on the responses of children, 24% of the child respondents using school affiliated transport mentioned that they mostly or sometimes complain about rash driving/overtaking/jumping red light at the traffic signals. Further, 22% of the children claimed that they never wait for the vehicle to completely halt before boarding or de-boarding.

3.20. ATTENDANCE OF CHILDREN:

Overall, 90% of the parents whose children commute via school affiliated vehicle, and 92% of the children who commute via school affiliated vehicle mentioned that it is ensured that all children are present while leaving the school. Among them, 3/4th of the respondents reported that attendance is taken in the school affiliated vehicle on both sides of their commute.

Table 3.19 Ways of ensuring all children have boarded the vehicle across school vehicle segregated by parent and children (all figures in percentage) Multiple responses

Ways of ensuring all children have boarded the vehicle	School bus		School RTV/ Matador bus		School van	
	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n)	1843	1752	71	78	616	611
Proper attendance is recorded of each student while coming to school and while leaving school	71	72	68	53	75	59
Students are asked to check whether their fellow mates are all present	28	32	17	13	36	39
Headcount is done	26	30	48	45	25	25
Students are asked to queue as per the route no. and then start moving from class to vehicle	23	26	38	31	22	31

Chapter 4:

Privately Arranged Mode of Transport

Privately arranged modes of transport are used for school commute by many children in each city, both parallel to the school provided transport and in the absence of school provided transport. These privately arranged transport vehicles (Van, Autorickshaw, Pedal Rickshaw and E-rickshaw) are often hired by a group of parents residing in a neighbourhood. In most cases, school authorities are not involved with private modes of transport, thereby creating a gap between them and the private providers. During the discussions with parents, it was observed that school authorities do not register details of privately arranged transport, and are often even unaware of the number of private vehicles providing transportation facilities for their students. The lack of any accountability regarding privately arranged vehicles poses additional risks to children commuting in these vehicles. The road safety risks associated with privately arranged vehicles are thus greater than those associated with school affiliated vehicles. Additionally, adherence to guidelines among private transport users is relatively lower in comparison to school provided transport users. A greater effort is required in recognising the risks associated with using privately arranged vehicles. In this chapter, the current perception and practices of privately arranged vehicle users will be analysed.

Overall, among private transport users, more than three fourth (76%) of the child respondents reported that they are attending private schools. Among the cities, Ahmedabad reported the highest proportion of children attending private schools, followed by Bengaluru (97% and 95%, respectively). Higher proportion of children were found to be attending government schools in Delhi (57%), Kolkata (55%) and Chennai (53%).

A significant number of children attending private schools also commute by pedal rickshaws and E-rickshaws. The most popular mode of transport for children attending government schools was pedal rickshaws (30% parents and 37% children).

4.1. REASONS FOR THE CHOICE OF MODE OF TRANSPORT:

Most of the government schools and a significant proportion of private schools do not provide transport facilities, 63% of the child respondents from government schools and 19% of the child respondents from private schools, claimed that their school did not provide transport. Overall, 1/4th of the respondents using private modes reported that their choice of mode of transport was due to unavailability of other options. As a result, parents had to depend on private modes of transport without taking the safety standard into consideration. On discussing with the parents, it was revealed that they were dissatisfied with the safety standards of the vehicles. For example, a parent claimed that the private van that their child commutes in is overloaded beyond the seating capacity, stating: "The private transport such as the private vans are not safe because they also

Table 4. 1 Reason for using mode of transport across mode of commute reported by child and parent (all figures in percentages) Multiple responses

Reason for using mode of transport	Overall	Privately arranged mode of transport							
		Private van		Autorickshaw		Pedal rickshaws		E-rickshaws	
		Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n)	2569	483	470	543	492	93	78	200	210
It takes less time to travel	40	39	39	44	43	29	27	39	38
It is very comfortable	42	44	47	42	40	34	28	39	43
It is safe	57	64	52	56	56	56	60	57	55
It is not overcrowded	31	31	28	32	30	32	37	35	37
It stops very close to my house	30	32	36	27	28	39	33	23	27
The staff is good	22	28	25	24	17	17	19	17	19
The person driving the vehicle is known/ acquaintance	24	27	27	30	20	13	19	18	23
It is cheap/affordable	40	38	37	42	38	40	26	52	47
I don't have any other option	24	26	26	24	25	9	18	21	26
Children in family and friend circle use the same mode	19	25	20	17	17	11	14	16	17
Children usually travel like this in our area	22	25	31	21	20	9	8	19	13
It is convenient mode of transport	36	39	37	37	36	35	29	32	35
Other	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

stuff in kids like animals." In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, where social distancing is mandatory, cases of overcrowding will greatly compromise the safety of students.

Despite the claims of the parent, it was revealed that safety was a key consideration by most respondents in their choice of mode of transport (57%). Other factors influencing the choice of mode of commute included affordability, commute time, comfort, and convenience of the vehicle. Affordability as a factor was reported by a relatively higher proportion of privately arranged vehicle users (40%) than users of school affiliated vehicles. Further, not much variation was observed between the responses of parents and children across various modes of private transport. In a city-wise analysis, it was observed that 74% of the respondents from Pune, 71% of the respondents from Jaipur, and 70% of the respondents from Patna stated that safety was the key factor for deciding their mode of commute.

4.2. DURATION OF TRAVEL:

As discussed in the previous section, short travel time was a major factor for choosing privately arranged vehicles. The travel-time for majority of the respondents (64%) was less than 30 minutes. However, more than one-third (34%) of the respondents claimed that the children travel to school for more than 30 minutes. Also, similar trends were observed amongst parents and children.

4.3. SATISFACTION WITH CURRENT MODE OF TRANSPORT AND IDEAL MODE OF TRANSPORT:

Overall, 88% of the parents and 90% of the children reported that they were satisfied with their current mode of transport. However, when parents were asked whether they would change their choice of transport if there were no constraints to cost and access, 26% parents reported they would prefer to switch to school provided vehicles.

4.4. HIRING OF THE DRIVER:

When asked whether the same driver was hired for daily school commute, more than two fifth (46%) of the respondents responded affirmatively. However, over half of the respondents claimed that they did not use a hired vehicle. More than one fourth (28%) reported to know of the person who drove the vehicle, whereas, 25% reported that they were commuting with different vehicles daily (refer to table 4.2). In a city-wise analysis, it was observed that 53% of the respondents in Kolkata were using different vehicles with different drivers for their daily commute, while 45% and 44% of the respondents from Vijayawada and Mumbai respectively reported the same. Further, usage of different vehicles with different drivers was reported by a larger proportion of respondents who/ whose children belong to class 10-12 (31%-parents, 32%-children) (refer to table 4.3).

Table 4. 2 Sample distribution of private vehicle users who hired the vehicle across cities (all figures in percentages)

Whether the vehicle was hired	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n) respondents using private mode of transport	2569	203	184	193	154	188	141	199	143	198	207	167	204	194	194
Yes	46	7	65	41	12	51	87	75	41	41	67	26	50	47	38
The vehicle is not hired on a permanent basis, but we are familiar with the driver	28	47	11	33	68	28	8	20	45	15	27	67	14	17	9
No, the vehicle and person driving it is different each day	25	45	24	26	20	21	6	5	14	44	6	7	36	36	53

Table 4. 3 Responses on whether the vehicle was hired segregated by classes (all figures in percentages)

Whether the vehicle was hired	Class 1-5	Class 6-9		Class 10-12	
	Parent	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n) respondents using private mode of transport	444	497	603	379	652
Yes	47	47	53	40	43
The vehicle is not hired on a permanent basis, but we are familiar with the driver	36	31	24	30	24
No, the vehicle and person driving it is different each day	17	21	24	31	32

**For classes I-V, only parents were interviewed*

The study findings also revealed that a large proportion of children (as reported by 46% of the respondents) travel to and from their pick up points alone (aggregate of the responses in table 4.4). Interestingly, a lower proportion of children report that their parents accompany them to the pick-up point than the parents themselves. As children studying in classes 1-5 are very young (aged between 5 to 10 years), a larger proportion of parents of children in classes 1-5 accompany their child to the pick-up point.

Table 4. 4 Person accompanying child to pickup/drop point across grade segregated by parent and children (all figures in percentages)					
Accompaniment to pick up/hiring point	Class 1-5	Class 6-9		Class 10-12	
	Parent	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n) respondents hiring a private vehicle on day to day basis	76	106	142	117	211
Parents of the child accompany and find a vehicle to travel	66	45	28	15	10
The child goes alone	7	28	41	54	69
Someone from family	16	6	5	6	1
Someone outside the family	4	2	1	1	0
Friends/ siblings of the child	8	16	24	22	17

4.5. ADHERENCE OF THE SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR VEHICLES TRANSPORTING SCHOOL STUDENTS:

The findings suggested that not only was the adherence to safety guidelines low for privately organised vehicle users, there was low awareness of the same, particularly amongst parents.

A significant proportion of parents claimed that they were aware of the contact details of the driver. Overall, 84% of the respondents reported that they possess the contact information of the person driving the vehicle used for commuting to school by the child. In a city-wise analysis, 98% of the respondents from Vijayawada, and Ahmedabad, and 96% of the respondents from Bhopal reported that they possess the contact information of the person driving the vehicle used for commuting to school by the child. However, in Chennai only 37% of the respondents reported that they possess the contact details of the person driving the vehicle. In addition, 80% of the respondents reported that they knew or had enquired about the driver possessing a valid license and having a minimum of 5 years of experience of driving vehicles. All respondents in Vijayawada reported the same whereas only 45% of the respondents in Lucknow reported the same (refer to table 4.5, and 4.6).

In order to reduce the impact of a road crash by providing first aid to the victim, it is also essential to have certain safety tools such as fire extinguishers and first aid kits in the vehicle. According to the WHO, 50% road crashes victims die in the first 15 minutes and the rest can be saved by providing basic life support during the "Golden Hour". However, as high as 49% of the respondents reported the absence of such safety tools in the school vehicles (refer to table 4.5).

The respondents also reported a number of additional gaps in the safety standard of the vehicle. About 72% of the privately arranged vehicle users reported that the vehicle(s) that they use for commute did not have seatbelts. In Vijayawada, Chennai and Kolkata, 1%, 5% and 8% of the respondents respectively claimed that their vehicles were equipped with seatbelts. In addition, about 15% of the respondents reported that the vehicle was overloaded. When two wheeler, rickshaw, and cycle users were asked about the use of retro- reflective stickers, only 35% of the respondents reported that their vehicle had retro reflective stickers or other such measures to increase visibility on roads. In fact, the presence of retro reflective stickers on the vehicles was as low as 12% in Ahmedabad and as high as 69% in Delhi (refer to table 4.5, and 4.6).

Table 4. 5 Reported Safety measure by private vehicle users (all figures in percentage)				
Safety measures	**Base (n)**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**
Contact information of driver of the vehicle	1917	84	15	1
Enquired about driver possessing valid license and 5 years of experience	819	80	16	4
Seats equipped with seat belts	1988	25	72	3
Overloaded vehicle	2569	15	81	3
Presence of reliable locks	953	77	19	4
Closed doors while vehicle is moving	953	85	14	1
Retroreflective stickers on 2 wheelers/ rickshaw/ cycles	1616	35	65	-
Other respondents can board while school children are boarded	2569	27	69	3
Safety tools present	2569	39	49	12
Fire extinguisher	1119	62	-	-
First aid kit	1119	61	-	-
Emergency numbers listed	1119	37	-	-
Child can get off points other than designated point	2569	19	78	3

Table 4.6 Safety tools in private vehicle across cities (all figures in percentage) Multiple responses

Safety measures		Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Contact information of driver of the vehicle	Base (n)	111	140	143	123	148	133	189	123	111	194	155	130	125	92
	%	98	93	87	98	84	81	96	90	86	81	37	77	82	89
Enquired about driver possessing valid license and 5 years of experience	Base (n)	43	50	60	68	58	60	73	67	74	72	73	42	41	38
	%	100	76	80	87	57	93	81	90	78	93	63	45	95	79
Seats equipped with seat belts	Base (n)	143	124	131	152	127	138	139	141	193	143	167	134	127	129
	%	1	16	21	38	28	50	39	30	21	36	5	34	21	8
Overloaded vehicle	Base (n)	203	184	193	154	188	141	199	143	198	207	167	204	194	194
	%	23	18	13	20	11	11	22	10	6	26	10	18	18	8
Presence of reliable locks	Base (n)	62	60	64	76	61	66	62	65	76	66	106	63	65	61
	%	90	72	97	93	90	71	90	74	72	79	29	68	89	100
Closed doors while vehicle is moving	Base (n)	62	60	64	76	61	66	62	65	76	66	106	63	65	61
	%	92	98	100	96	92	92	90	82	74	80	53	73	97	98
Retroreflective stickers on 2 wheelers/ rickshaw/ cycles	Base (n)	141	124	129	78	127	75	137	78	122	141	61	141	129	133
	%	19	29	69	12	22	55	42	37	26	24	52	59	29	25
Other respondents can board while school children are boarded	Base (n)	203	184	193	154	188	141	199	143	198	207	167	204	194	194
	%	15	28	29	19	29	18	14	23	23	24	28	48	40	39
Safety tools present	Base (n)	203	184	193	154	188	141	199	143	198	207	167	204	194	194
	%	30	26	78	33	22	58	50	45	36	46	19	46	39	27
Fire extinguisher	Base (n)	60	65	156	63	57	83	100	76	76	108	33	98	75	69
	%	60	58	76	35	42	35	90	32	68	67	42	91	95	14
First aid kit	Base (n)	60	65	156	63	57	83	100	76	76	108	33	98	75	69
	%	83	57	60	67	35	93	71	76	43	48	97	36	41	75
Emergency numbers listed	Base (n)	60	65	156	63	57	83	100	76	76	108	33	98	75	69
	%	63	23	59	54	49	54	31	28	21	20	24	48	25	3
Child can get off points other than designated point	Base (n)	203	184	193	154	188	141	199	143	198	207	167	204	194	194
	%	11	22	27	6	15	21	16	6	13	14	14	33	32	35

4.6. INCIDENCE OF CHILDREN BEING ACCOMPANIED:

Since young children do not have fully developed cognitive abilities, it is advised to ensure that the child is accompanied by someone to and from the pick up point. However, when asked whether the child is accompanied to the pick-up point, only 47% of the parents responded affirmatively. In Chennai and Bengaluru, only 5% of the respondents reported that their child was always accompanied by someone to the pick up point. Amongst respondents who answered affirmatively, only 31% reported that their child was accompanied by parents, 18% reported that their child was accompanied by a family member, 47% reported that their child was accompanied by their friends or siblings, and 5% reported that their child commutes alone.

4.7. AVAILABILITY OF SAFETY TOOLS:

Safety tools are essential for saving the lives of road crash victims in the event of a road crash occurrence. However, when asked about the kinds of safety tools available in the vehicle, only 39% of the respondents reported that vehicles were fitted with safety tools like first-aid box, fire extinguishers etc. (refer to table 4.5). About half of all respondents claimed that no safety tools were present in their vehicle. The absence of safety tools was especially high in pedal rickshaws, where 74% of the parents, and 87% of the children reported the absence of such tools, followed by e-rickshaw, where 62% of the parents and 52% of the children claimed that no safety tools are present in the vans.

In a city wise analysis, it was observed that over 60% of the respondents from Vijayawada, Patna, Mumbai and Kolkata claimed that there were no safety tools present in their vehicles.

Table 4. 7 Safety tools in the private vehicle across cities (all figures in percentage) Multiple responses

Safety tools in the vehicle	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n) participants using private mode of transport	2569	203	184	193	154	188	141	199	143	198	207	167	204	194	194
Yes, safety tools are present in vehicle	39	30	26	78	33	22	58	50	45	36	46	19	46	39	27
No safety tools are present in the vehicle	49	65	63	18	44	51	35	36	50	61	43	56	50	47	62
Don't Know	12	6	11	4	23	27	7	14	4	4	11	26	5	14	11

4.8: BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS FROM CHILDREN:

The following section discusses the current practices and behaviour of children with respect to adherence of road rules, as well as their perception of risks to safety such as over speeding and dangerous driving. When parents were asked about the practices of their child, one fourth (25%) of the parents using privately arranged transport reported that their child never waits for the vehicle to stop to board/de-board the transport. About one fourth (23%) of the parents reported that their children sometimes or mostly complain about the driver engaging in rash driving. In addition about 6 out of 10 (59%) of the parents claimed that mostly or sometimes there was dangerous traffic on the road.

In a city wise analysis, 48% of the parents in Chennai, and 32% of the parents in Mumbai and Jaipur, claimed that their child complains about rash driving by the driver.

When children were asked about their practices and behaviour, about 12% of children using private mode of transport claimed that they were most of the time in a rush while leaving for school. More than half (54%) of the children reported that sometimes or mostly there was dangerous traffic on the way to school and 26% of children claimed that they sometimes or mostly complain about the driver's rash driving/overtaking/jumping red light at the traffic signals.

In a city wise analysis, 61% of the children in Bengaluru, 52% of the children in Mumbai, and 45% of the children in Bhopal, claimed that they complain about rash driving by the driver.

Figure 4.1. Base (n) is all parent respondents whose children commute by privately arranged transport (n=1319)

Behaviour and perception insights - as reported by parents

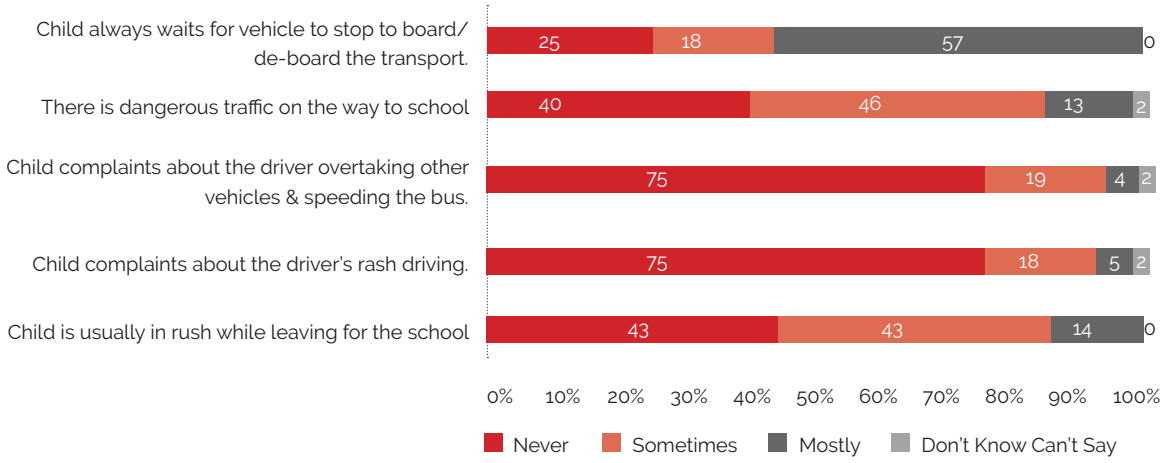
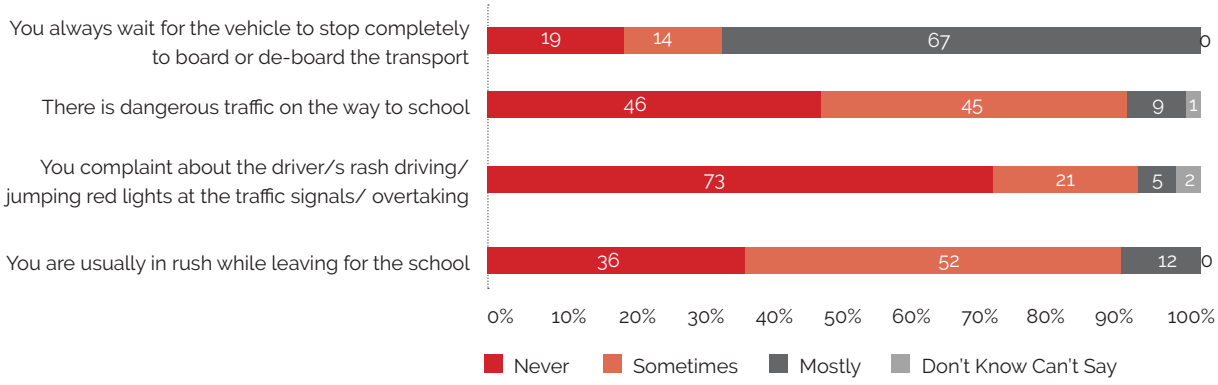


Figure 4.2. Base (n) is all child respondents who commute by privately arranged transport (n=1250)

Behaviour and perception insights - as reported by children



4.9. ENSURING SAFETY OF THE CHILD FROM DROP OFF POINT:

Most private transport users (81%) reported that students were dropped outside the school. However, about half of those dropped outside (47%) reported that they travel alone from the point where they were dropped by the vehicle. Delhi (75%) was found to have a relatively higher proportion of respondents that claim that the teacher or the guard ensures that the child reaches the school safely from the drop off point, whereas in Vijayawada, about three fourth (74%) of the children go by themselves from the drop off point.

Table 4. 8 Person ensuring child reaches the school safely from drop off point by private vehicle users across cities (all figures in percentage)

Who ensures child reaches safely to school from drop-off point	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	2569	203	184	193	154	188	141	199	143	198	207	167	204	194	194
Teacher	8	14	4	1	6	16	10	19	3	6	1	5	14	8	2
Guard standing at the school gate	45	12	36	74	42	31	40	49	36	54	54	82	31	36	48
The children go by themselves	47	74	60	25	50	49	48	31	60	38	44	11	55	56	51
Don't Know/Can't say	1	0	0	0	2	3	2	1	1	2	0	2	0	1	0

Chapter 5:

Family/Self-Driven Mode of Transport

Many children commute to school by either personal vehicles, or by walking, yet little is known about this aspect of their journey. Owing to the choice of mode of commute, the responsibility of ensuring safety for the child during commute is borne largely by the parents, with the government and schools playing a supporting role. However, schools play a vital role in ensuring the safety of children at school zones, particularly for those who are pedestrians and non motorised transport users. As schools reopen, it is expected that many parents will shift their children to self/ family driven modes of transport as they are the safest for social distancing norms. Therefore, it is essential for parents to also adhere to road safety guidelines while their child is commuting to and from school.

Additional measures need to be taken to ensure safety of children at school zones. It is essential for the schools and the government to ensure that adequate infrastructure is provided at school zones, so that children can safely commute while maintaining social distancing. Enforcement measures near school zones should be stricter to minimise exposure of children to moving traffic. Further, schools should deploy traffic marshals to assist children in crossing roads safely in the school zones.

5.1. SAMPLE:

Around 31% of the respondents overall claimed to use self/family driven mode of transportation. The modes of commute include walking, using a bike, car (family driver), cycle, scooty, and car (non-family driver). Amongst those travelling in personal vehicles, 15% drove/rode their own vehicle, out of which most children drove cycles (76%). However, a few respondents reported that their child/ they drove scooties, bikes and cars, highlighting cases of under-age driving. Overall, amongst the self/ family driven transport users, 82% of the children were attending private schools. Among the cities, Ahmedabad had the largest proportion of respondents reporting that their children attend private schools (96%), followed by Bengaluru and Lucknow with 92% each. Only in Kolkata, majority of the children (54%) were attending government schools, followed by Delhi (40%). It was observed that a relatively higher proportion of children commuting by cycle (32% parent, 36% children), and by walking (24% parent, 29% children) were studying in government schools.

5.2. NON-AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL AFFILIATED TRANSPORTATION:

Although millions of children travel to school everyday, many schools do not provide the option of school affiliated transport. Around 48% of the children did not have the option of school affiliated transportation. In a city-wise analysis, in Delhi (59%), Ahmedabad (76%), Chennai (61%), Mumbai (53%) Pune (51%), and Vijayawada (56%), majority of the children did not have any transportation facility in their school, followed by 47% in Jaipur, and 46% in Bengaluru. Interestingly, half of the respondents using self/family driven transport stated that school transport was available in their schools. This proportion is especially high for car users. However, for cycle users and pedestrians, the availability of school transport is relatively low.

Table 5. 1 Sample distribution of Self/family driven transport users across availability of school transport and mode of commute segregated by parent and children (all figures in percentage)

Availability of school transport	Overall			Car (family driver)			Car (non-family driver)			Scooty			Cycle			Bike			Pedestrian (by walk)		
	Total	Parent	Child	Total	Parent	Child	Total	Parent	Child	Total	Parent	Child	Total	Parent	Child	Total	Parent	Child	Total	Parent	Child
Base (n)	3787	1993	1794	732	363	369	204	106	98	259	137	122	312	144	168	803	415	388	1477	828	649
Yes	50	52	49	76	77	76	68	65	70	59	61	57	40	44	36	56	60	53	32	34	29
No	48	47	50	23	23	23	31	35	27	40	37	43	59	54	63	43	40	46	66	63	69
Don't Know/ Can't say	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	3	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	2

5.3. REASONS FOR COMMUTING THROUGH SELF/FAMILY DRIVEN TRANSPORT:

When asked about the reason for using self/ family driven vehicles, majority of the respondents stated safety (60%) as the key factor. Other important factors highlighted by the respondents for selecting self/family driven mode of transport are low travel time (45%), comfort in the vehicle (43%), and convenience of the vehicle (33%) (refer to table 5.2).

Table 5. 2 Reason for mode of transport used for self/family vehicle users segregated by parents and children (all figures in percentages) Multiple responses

Reason for mode of transport used	Overall	Car (family driver)		Car (non-family driver)		Scooty		Cycle		Bike		Pedestrian	
		Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n)	3787	363	369	106	98	137	122	144	168	415	388	828	649
It is safe	60	75	78	64	65	81	66	43	52	65	62	48	49
It takes less time to travel	45	53	50	38	47	53	55	26	36	53	51	40	39
It is very comfortable	43	58	63	51	54	50	55	40	33	47	43	31	33
It is convenient mode of transport	33	48	47	45	46	45	42	24	33	43	37	16	20
It is cheap/ affordable	31	24	24	20	16	43	48	44	50	33	32	26	32
It stops very close to my house	26	22	21	28	30	25	19	31	15	22	25	33	27
It is not overcrowded	24	32	29	28	39	23	25	22	26	28	25	20	16
I don't have any other option	24	19	14	14	17	23	19	38	36	22	23	25	29

5.4. DRIVERS OF THE PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLE:

Amongst those commuting by personal vehicles, majority of the respondents (61%) claimed that the vehicles are driven by their parents. This proportion was high in Delhi (78%), and low in Patna (43%). Around 15% claimed that children drive/ride their own vehicle, with a relatively higher proportion in Lucknow (28%), and lower proportion in Delhi (3%).

Around 76% of the bicycle users claimed that they ride the cycle themselves. Surprisingly, 14% of scooty users, 9% of the bike users, and 1% of the car users reported self driving. This shows evidence of under-age driving. Interestingly, a higher number of child respondents reported that they drive their own scooties, bikes, and cars, than parent respondents. School authorities should conduct educational workshops to discourage children from such practices.

Table 5.3 Driver of the vehicle across cities (all figures in percentages)

Driver of the vehicle	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	2310	167	141	152	188	132	173	144	177	160	162	197	191	168	158
Parent of the child	61	60	43	78	57	51	71	51	67	60	57	75	53	59	59
Someone else from the family	13	5	32	14	4	17	21	13	7	24	21	6	11	11	3
Someone outside the family but acquaintance	5	5	1	5	13	3	2	8	6	4	5	8	5	3	1
Someone else outside the family (Hired driver)	6	2	10	0	2	11	1	13	5	6	0	1	2	10	25
The child	15	26	14	3	24	19	4	15	16	6	17	11	28	17	12

Table 5.4 Driver of the vehicle segregated by self/family vehicle users (all figures in percentages)

Driver of the vehicle	Overall	Car (family driver)	Car (non-family driver)	Scooty	Cycle	Bike
Base (n) those respondents who commute through self/ family driven vehicle	2310	732	204	259	312	803
Parent of the child	61	78	-	73	16	74
Someone else from the family	13	21	-	10	4	14
Someone outside the family but acquaintance (Neighbour,	5	-	43	3	3	2
Someone else outside the family (Hired driver)	6	-	57	1	1	2
The child	15	1	-	14	76	9

5.5. ADHERENCE TO RULES RELATING TO CHILD ROAD SAFETY:

Adherence to road traffic rules among the respondents is low. One fifth (20%) of the respondents admitted that they never use a seatbelt. In addition, 34% of the respondents claimed that they never wear a helmet while riding a two-wheeler (aggregate of data in tables 5.5 and 5.6). In addition, 53% of the parents admitted that their child is sometimes or mostly in a rush while leaving for school. Further, 15% of the parents and 17% of the children also claimed that most of the time there is dangerous traffic while travelling to and from school (refer to tables 5.5 and 5.6).

Table 5.5 Perceptions of parents on road behavior of children (all figures in percentages)

Parents	Base (n)	Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Don't Know Can't Say
Child is usually in a hurry/rush while leaving for the school.	1165	46	40	13	0
I usually drive in a rush to drop child to school to reach office/drop other child to school in time.	1165	72	20	7	1
Child complaints about rash driving/ breaking red light/ overtaking by the driver.	282	71	20	8	1
Everyone in the car uses a seat belt.	469	21	21	56	2
Everyone on the vehicle wears a helmet.	696	35	18	45	2
The child sits in the front seat	469	18	40	40	2
There is dangerous traffic on the way to school	1165	38	45	15	1

Table 5.6 Children's perception of their behavior on road (all figures in percentages)

Children	Base (n)	Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Don't Know Can't Say
I am usually in a hurry/rush while leaving for the school.	1145	36	51	12	0
I usually drive in a rush to drop child to school to reach office/ drop other child to school in time.	1145	68	23	7	2
I complaint about rash driving/ breaking red light/ overtaking by the driver.	275	70	23	5	2
Everyone in the car uses a seat belt.	467	19	22	58	0
Everyone on the vehicle wears a helmet.	678	33	19	46	2
I sit in the front seat	467	20	41	39	0
There is dangerous traffic on the way to school	1145	36	47	17	1

5.6. SCHOOL ZONE INFRASTRUCTURE:

5.6.1: Cycle paths:

Cycling paths are an essential safety measure for ensuring that non motorised transport is not exposed to fast moving motorised transport. However, 47% of the respondents commuting to school on a cycle stated that there are no separate cycle paths for their mobility implying that they have to move along with motorised traffic, which potentially exposes them to a greater risk of road traffic injury. This proportion is especially high in Vijayawada (87%), Patna (72%), and Delhi (63%) (refer to tables 5.7 and 5.8).

Only 27% of the respondents mentioned that cycle paths were present across the commute of the child. Further, when all the respondents using self driven transport were asked about the condition of paths, only 49% of the respondents reported that the condition was good. The least number of respondents (20%) that considered the condition of paths as good were in Kanpur, followed by Ahmedabad (29%), Chennai (31%) and Patna (37%) (table 5.9).

Table 5.7 Separate cycle paths between school to home for respondents commuting on cycle (all figures in percentages)

Separate cycle pavements between school to home	Cycle		
	Overall	Parent	Child
Base (n)	312	144	168
Across the commute	27	37	18
Only at some places	26	24	27
No	47	39	55

Table 5.8 Separate cycle paths between school to home across cities for those who commute by cycle (all figures in percentages)

Separate cycle pavements between school to home	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	312	38	18	8	41	12	3	12	21	4	12	39	53	25	26
Across the commute	27	8	22	0	17	33	0	58	43	0	25	41	19	48	31
Only at some places	26	5	6	38	41	17	67	33	5	75	42	46	34	0	19
No	47	87	72	63	41	50	33	8	52	25	33	13	47	52	50

Table 5.9 Condition of paths between school to home (all figures in percentages)															
Condition of paths between school to home	**Overall**	**Vijayawada**	**Patna**	**Delhi**	**Ahmedabad**	**Jamshedpur**	**Bengaluru**	**Bhopal**	**Pune**	**Mumbai**	**Jaipur**	**Chennai**	**Lucknow**	**Kanpur**	**Kolkata**
Base (n)	2310	167	141	152	188	132	173	144	177	160	162	197	191	168	158
Bad	4	0	12	2	2	0	4	1	0	8	1	7	3	15	4
Average	46	48	51	39	69	15	32	57	31	49	51	62	35	65	39
Good	49	52	37	59	29	85	64	42	69	43	48	31	63	20	58

5.6.2. Road conditions for pedestrians:

Pedestrians are the most vulnerable road users with the highest exposure to road traffic injury.

When asked whether the school zone had footpaths, 30% of the respondents claimed that no footpaths were present across the school zone. This proportion was higher for Lucknow (53%), Patna (51%), Vijayawada (48%), Kanpur (45%), and Jaipur (43%).

When asked about which areas they consider unsafe for their child's commute, overall, 27% of the respondents reported the absence of pavements and footpaths, 19% reported the absence of zebra crossings, 16% reported the absence of traffic lights, and 21% of the respondents reported poorly maintained public spaces as vulnerable or unsafe areas for their children's commute.

Table 5.10: Availability of pavements across the school zone

Pavements are available across the school zone	Base	Parent	Child
Base	1483	829	654
Yes, across the commute	31	35	26
Yes, at some places	39	35	43
No	30	30	31

Table 5.11 Areas considered vulnerable/unsafe segregated by parents and children overall (all figures in percentages) Multiple responses

Areas considered vulnerable/unsafe	Overall	Parent	Child
Base (n)	250	177	73
Absence of pavements/footpath	27	28	25
Poorly maintained public spaces/ subway/foot-over bridges	21	16	33
Unfamiliar public spaces	26	24	32
Empty/ dilapidated buildings or plots or streets	23	18	37
Unfamiliar people/ shops/ vendors	30	27	37
Places without visible and accessible police booths, patrolling, CCTV coverage etc. or poor network coverage	23	18	36
Male dominated places	16	10	32
Badly maintained public toilets	15	11	25
Crowded places	43	46	34
Absence of zebra crossing	19	16	26
Absence of red light on a rush road	16	16	18
Narrow lanes	14	12	16
Other	7	9	3

5.6.3. Usage of retro- reflective stickers:

Retro reflective material has the potential to drastically improve the visibility of pedestrians and NMT users, particularly in harsh weather conditions or at night time. However, the study findings reveal that merely 15% of the children were using retro-reflective stickers. Usage of such stickers was reported to be the highest in Pune (44%) and lowest in Delhi (2%). Schools should take measures to ensure that children use such stickers at school zones by distributing them, and by deploying a traffic marshal to monitor their usage.

Table 5.12 Usage of retro reflective stickers by pedestrians across cities (all figures in percentages)

Use retro reflective stickers	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	649	25	20	42	35	25	75	29	68	151	25	54	42	22	36
Yes	15	8	5	2	3	8	21	17	44	7	16	22	10	14	11
No	85	92	95	98	97	92	79	83	56	93	84	78	90	86	89

**Question asked only to children*

5.7. RESPONSIBILITY OF ENSURING SAFETY OF THE CHILD:

The respondents were asked about who was responsible for ensuring that the child safely reaches school. While 39% of the respondents reported that the child was responsible for his/her own safety, 38% respondents were of the opinion that the security guard of the school was responsible for children's safety. Further, around 15% of the respondents claimed that children's safety is the responsibility of the person who drops them, while merely 7% respondents believed that it was the teacher's responsibility (refer to table 5.13).

In most of the cities, children and parents had different opinions on who should ensure safety of children during their commute to school. In all the cities except Ahmedabad and Bhopal, compared to parents, higher percentages of children thought they could safely commute to school all by themselves.

Interestingly, 46% of the respondents commuting to school by a car (driven by non-family driver) were of the opinion that a security guard was responsible for children's safety, but a lesser proportion (37%) reported the same when commuting by scooty. On the other hand, as high as 62% of the respondents commuting by cycle felt that children could ensure that they reach school safely on their own. Among those commuting by bike, majority of the children (46%) thought that they could commute on their own while majority parents (42%) thought that the guard standing at the school gate was responsible for ensuring that the child commutes safely.

Table 5.13 Child reaches school safely is responsibility of: (across cities; all figures in percentages)															
Child reaches school safely is responsibility of	**Overall**	**Vijayawada**	**Patna**	**Delhi**	**Ahmedabad**	**Jamshedpur**	**Bengaluru**	**Bhopal**	**Pune**	**Mumbai**	**Jaipur**	**Chennai**	**Lucknow**	**Kanpur**	**Kolkata**
Base (n)	2310	167	141	152	188	132	173	144	177	160	162	197	191	168	158
Teacher	7	16	2	5	4	14	5	9	5	6	1	8	11	8	2
Guard standing at the school gate	38	11	36	63	31	34	29	46	32	33	43	50	36	43	43
The one who drops them	15	8	7	9	18	12	34	10	12	16	15	25	9	8	28
The children	39	64	55	24	46	40	32	31	49	45	41	15	42	42	27
Don't Know/Can't say	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	1	0	2	2	0	0

Table 5.14 Stakeholder who is responsible for ensuring that the child reaches school safely (all figures in percentages)															
Stakeholder who is responsible for ensuring that the child reaches school safely	**Car (family driver)**			**Car (non-family driver)**			**Scooty**			**Cycle**			**Bike**		
	Overall	**Parent**	**Child**	**Overall**	**Parent**	**Child**	**Overall**	**Parent**	**Child**	**Overall**	**Parent**	**Child**	**Overall**	**Parent**	**Child**
Base (n)	732	363	369	204	106	98	259	137	122	312	144	168	803	415	388
Teacher	6	9	3	8	3	14	5	7	2	6	6	7	8	9	6
Guard standing at the school gate	40	37	44	46	49	43	37	40	33	27	34	21	37	42	32
The one who drops them	21	27	15	11	15	6	15	18	11	4	5	2	16	18	15
The children	32	26	37	35	33	37	43	34	53	62	53	68	38	30	46
Don't Know/Can't say	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1

5.8. REASON FOR RESPONDENTS WALKING TO SCHOOL:

The proximity of the school to the child's home is a major factor in the choice of mode of commute. About 65% of the respondents stated that they walk to school because it is at a walkable distance. Interestingly, 36% of the respondents choose to walk due to the health benefits associated with it. A large proportion of respondents from Ahmedabad (67%) and Bengaluru (57%) stated that they use walking as the mode of commute because of the health benefits.

When respondents that commute by walking were asked whether there were any alternate modes of transport, more than two-third (67%) of the respondents reported that there was no alternative available for them to commute to school other than walking.

Table 5.15 Reason to choose walking to school across cities (all figures in percentages) Multiple responses

Reason to choose walking to school	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	1477	86	49	128	79	57	147	95	119	300	87	134	68	55	73
The school is at a walkable distance	65	69	71	56	81	53	62	49	66	73	63	66	74	49	63
It is the parent's wish	28	5	27	23	42	28	46	27	24	30	32	34	24	24	4
It is good for health	36	21	37	30	67	25	57	20	54	39	41	25	29	27	5
It is good for environment	21	10	16	21	37	18	37	17	21	21	24	13	13	20	3
The child enjoys walking	28	17	20	22	59	9	45	27	34	38	15	13	21	35	3

5.9. INCIDENCE OF CHILDREN BEING ACCOMPANIED WHILE WALKING TO SCHOOL:

When asked whether anyone accompanies the child during his/her commute, half of the respondents shared that some friends or siblings of the children accompany them to school. In addition, while in most of the cities, majority of the respondents shared that friends or siblings of the children accompany them to school, in Kolkata and Chennai, 75% respondents and 57%, respectively, shared that parents accompany their children to school. (refer to table 5.16).

Table 5.16 Children accompanied by person across cities (all figures in percentages)

Companion of the child	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	1305	76	38	123	64	47	139	83	98	296	74	95	64	45	63
Parents	37	39	42	27	42	21	26	40	30	40	24	57	38	16	75
Someone from the family drops the child	10	5	8	16	3	11	24	13	6	8	7	13	5	13	3
Friends/ siblings of the child	50	54	45	56	50	68	49	47	63	49	68	29	56	62	19
Someone outside the family	2	1	5	1	5	0	1	0	1	4	1	1	2	9	3

5.10. BEHAVIOUR INSIGHTS OF CHILDREN:

Travelling alone certainly poses risk, especially for children. The study findings reveal that only 57% of the respondents reported that the child was accompanied while walking to school, and 17% of the respondents reported that the child walks to school all alone. The following section discusses the road user behaviour of children while commuting to school, as reported by parent respondents. Over one third of the respondents (37%) admitted that the child never uses footpaths or pavements while walking, if they are present. Further, 33% of the respondents claimed that the children never use zebra crossings to cross the roads. Over one fifth (23%) of the respondents claimed that the child runs while crossing the road, and 26% claimed that the child is distracted during his/ her commute. This shows the need for road safety education workshops to ensure that children follow road rules while commuting to and from school (refer to table 5.17).

A significant number of the parent respondents also reported rash driving by people on the road during their commute. Over one fourth (31%) of the respondents claimed that the child complains about rash driving at the school zone during his/ her commute. Further, 49% of the respondents admitted that the child witnesses dangerous traffic on the way to school. This shows the need for schools as well as enforcement officials to make sure that there are adequate speed calming measures across the school zone.

Table 5.17 Attitude towards road safety while walking to school as reported by parents (all figures in percentages) Multiple responses

Attitude towards road safety while walking to school	Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Don't Know Can't Say
Child is usually in a rush while leaving for the school	44	39	17	1
Child complaints about rash driving by the people around	62	24	7	7
Child is distracted during his commute to school (using a phone, looking at things around)	70	20	6	5
Child uses a zebra-crossing to cross the road	33	16	42	9
Child avoids dashing out between vehicles	31	18	45	6
There is dangerous traffic on the way to school	48	34	15	4
Child runs while crossing the road	73	15	8	4
Child uses a footpath or a separate pavement for walking, if present	37	22	34	7
Child walks in the opposite direction of the traffic	66	15	14	5
Child maintains a safe distance from the vehicles around	18	15	62	5
Base(n) is 828 - parents whose children walk to school				

Chapter 6:

Road Safety Practices during Commute to School

Road safety for children is a shared responsibility. One of the most important frameworks which needs to exist at multiple levels is a formal complaint management mechanism to address any deviance. While a formal complaint mechanism exists in most schools for school provided transport, a number of parent respondents showed scepticism towards its efficacy. A weak complaint redressal system compromises the safety and security of the child during their commute to school.

> *Although the drivers of the buses are very careful, earlier there was one rash driver against whom everyone (parents, children, teachers), complained very strongly. However, for 10-20 days no action was taken by the administration, and then because of the driver's fault the bus had a minor crash. It was only after this incident that the driver was removed. If the school had acted before, the crash could have been avoided.*
>
> *-Quote from a child during one of the in-depth interviews*

DURING THEIR COMMUTE:

When asked whether any problems were faced during their commute, over 30% of the respondents reported that they face different kinds of problems while commuting to and from school. About 1 out of 10 respondents (13%) reported overcrowded areas as a problem. In a city-wise analysis, overcrowded areas as a problem was reported by one third of the parent respondents in Delhi (33% parents) and one fourth of the child respondents in Bhopal (24% children). On an average, 4-6% of the parents and children across cities mentioned problems such as driver related problems like over speeding and dangerous driving, late arrival at school/ stop, long/different routes, long waiting times, bad condition of seats, etc. In a city-wise analysis, it was found that a relatively large proportion of the respondents reported driver related problems in Delhi, where 19% of the parents and 10% of the children reported over speeding, and 17% of the parents and 11% of the children reported dangerous driving by the vehicle driver.

In an analysis of the different modes of commute, no significant difference was observed among the children who were school affiliated vehicle users, privately affiliated vehicle users or self/

family driven vehicle users, with regard to facing problems during school commute. Slight variations were seen, wherein a relatively larger proportion of parents of privately affiliated vehicle users reported the problems of overcrowded areas (15%), overcrowded vehicle (12%), over speeding vehicle (8%) and long waiting time (8%), as compared to school affiliated vehicle users or self/family driven vehicle users.

Table 6. 1 Problems faced by children while commuting to and from school through different vehicles (all figures in percentages)

Problems faced by the child while commuting to and from school	Overall	School affiliated vehicle		Privately affiliated vehicle		Self/family driven vehicle	
		Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n)	11845	2822	2667	1319	1250	1993	1794
Bullying (like threaten, criticise, teased, called hurtful names, ridiculed/mocked, bossing around the child)	3	3	4	3	4	3	3
Being abused	3	2	3	2	3	3	3
Overcrowded vehicle	9	7	9	12	11	9	9
Over-speeding vehicle	6	5	6	8	6	6	6
Dangerous driving	4	4	4	4	3	4	4
The driver is always in a hurry and leaves children	1	0	0	3	3	0	0
The seats are not in a good condition	4	4	5	5	5	2	2
Makes the child late to school	6	6	6	6	6	5	5
The route is really long	6	5	7	7	6	4	5
Not affordable	3	3	3	4	3	3	3
The transport is usually late (longer waiting time)	3	3	4	5	3	3	3
Unavailability of other transports in absence of the regularly used transport	3	4	3	4	4	3	3
Long waiting time	5	5	6	8	5	4	4
Physical hurt/injury in an accident	2	2	2	2	3	3	2
Physical hurt injury by a person (slapping, twisting of ears, pushing, pinching, shaking, kicking, beating/ hitting with an object)	3	3	3	3	4	2	3
Makes the child late to school because of being slow	4	4	4	5	5	3	3
Usually takes different routes	4	4	4	6	4	4	5
The child doesn't like the person driving the vehicle	3	2	3	2	3	3	3
Overcrowded areas	13	9	13	15	13	13	13
Rough driving by others	4	2	4	4	4	4	5
Bad infrastructure	3	3	4	4	3	3	4
Being stalked	3	3	2	2	2	3	3
The vehicle is not in a good condition	3	3	4	3	4	3	3
Lost something while travelling	3	4	4	3	3	4	3
Inappropriate touch or uncomfortable touch of a person or being intimidatingly close to the child	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
Not willing to share	2	2	1	3	1	2	2
No problems faced	68	72	67	63	64	69	70

Table 6.2 Actions taken across cities for grievance redressal segregated by parents and children (all figures except bases in percentages) Multiple responses

Actions taken		No action taken	Called a helpline/ registered a complaint in police	Complained to Department of Education	Changed the mode of transport	Contacted the driver	Complained to the school authorities/ attendant/ transport manager	Other	Base (n)
Overall	Parent	54	2	11	13	22	21	2	2552
	Child	47	4	10	15	27	26	1	1864
Vijayawada	Parent	63	5	13	6	13	22	0	63
	Child	56	11	15	17	21	30	0	66
Patna	Parent	73	2	4	2	15	11	2	186
	Child	61	0	2	3	25	17	0	138
Delhi	Parent	37	1	6	14	24	34	2	300
	Child	24	0	3	5	17	55	5	128
Ahmedabad	Parent	77	0	1	3	15	3	2	177
	Child	76	0	1	1	18	5	0	142
Jamshedpur	Parent	57	0	11	11	20	16	0	141
	Child	46	0	14	17	26	16	0	109
Bengaluru	Parent	43	1	5	6	47	7	5	153
	Child	42	11	20	26	34	28	1	109
Bhopal	Parent	26	14	24	33	32	43	1	139
	Child	7	3	9	6	26	66	0	195
Pune	Parent	48	2	10	17	29	15	0	192
	Child	54	2	11	13	22	21	2	176
Mumbai	Parent	47	4	10	15	27	26	1	305
	Child	63	5	13	6	13	22	0	211
Jaipur	Parent	56	11	15	17	21	30	0	244
	Child	73	2	4	2	15	11	2	96
Chennai	Parent	61	0	2	3	25	17	0	220
	Child	37	1	6	14	24	34	2	196
Lucknow	Parent	24	0	3	5	17	55	5	206
	Child	77	0	1	3	15	3	2	144
Kanpur	Parent	76	0	1	1	18	5	0	127
	Child	57	0	11	11	20	16	0	84
Kolkata	Parent	46	0	14	17	26	16	0	99
	Child	43	1	5	6	47	7	5	71

6.2. ACTION TAKEN FOR GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL:

More than half of the parents (54%) and nearly half of the children (47%) across cities, reported to not have taken any action for grievance redressal. The most preferred actions across cities, involved contacting the driver and complaining to the school authorities. Other reported actions were changing the mode of transport or complaining to the Department of Education. A small fraction of respondents (3%) reported to have contacted a helpline number or registered a police complaint for grievance redressal.

Across different modes of transport, it was seen that the percentage of respondents not reporting to have taken any action for grievance redressal is highest for parents of (70%), or children who are (64%) self/family driven vehicle users, as compared to school affiliated vehicle users or privately affiliated vehicle users. Additionally, it was observed that the reported actions taken for grievance redressal is higher for parents of/ children who are school affiliated vehicle users, as compared to respondents reported to privately affiliated vehicle users (refer to table 6.3).

Table 6. 3 Actions taken for grievance redressal by type of vehicle segregated by parents and children (all figures except bases in percentage

Actions taken	Overall	School affiliated vehicle		Privately affiliated vehicle		Self/family driven vehicle	
		Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n)	4416	1028	876	613	448	911	540
Complained to the school authorities/attendant/ transport manager	23	26	38	16	13	18	17
Contacted the driver	24	32	35	28	22	8	16
Changed the mode of transport	14	16	14	11	13	10	18
Complained to Department of Education	10	11	12	8	6	12	11
Called a helpline/registered a complaint in police	3	3	5	2	1	2	6
No action taken	51	41	30	53	57	70	64
Other	1	1	0	1	1	2	0

6.3. ACTION TAKEN BY SCHOOL AUTHORITIES:

When asked whether any action was taken by school authorities for complaints regarding school affiliated transport, more than half of the parents and children shared that the school authority took no action on complaints related to school affiliated vehicles. Further, 20% of the respondents claimed that the school authorities gave the driver a warning.

Table 6.4 Actions taken by school authority to address complaints on school affiliated vehicles (all figures except bases in percentages)

Actions taken by school authority	Overall	School affiliated vehicle	
		Parent	Child
Base (n) respondents who mentioned school authority were reported about the issue	5489	2822	2667
Changed driver	13	14	12
Enrolled driver in a safe driving course	9	10	8
Gave driver warning	20	21	19
Improved bus infrastructure	12	14	10
Assigned a supervisor	11	12	10
Contacted the parents/ guardians of student	12	13	12
Took strict disciplinary action	9	9	10
No action taken	54	55	53
Other	4	3	5

**Question asked only for children commuting through school-affiliated vehicle*

In a city-wise analysis, it was observed that Ahmedabad was the city where the highest proportion of parents claimed that no action was taken by school authorities (86% of the parents claimed no action was taken), followed by Patna, where 82% of the parents reported that no action was taken. Interestingly, in Bengaluru, while only 19% parents reported that no action was taken, 44% children reported that no action was taken by school authorities on complaints.

6.4. ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION:

When asked about the source of road safety education, most respondents across cities reported that children obtained maximum knowledge around road safety from their parents (approximately 70%), followed by their school-teachers (51%) and friends or siblings (20%). On an average, 12% parents and children across cities mentioned other sources like – self learning by the child or a programme/ event/ exhibition organised at school. In a city-wise analysis, it was observed that half of the children in Delhi reported to have learnt about road safety from a programme/ event/ exhibition organised at school. No significant difference was observed among children who were school affiliated vehicle users, privately affiliated vehicle users, or self/family driven vehicle users, with regard to source of information around road safety.

Table 6. 5 Source of information around road safety for child by type of vehicle (all figures except bases in percentages) Multiple responses

Source of information around road safety for child	Overall	School affiliated vehicle		Privately affiliated vehicle		Self/family driven vehicle	
		Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n)	11845	2822	2667	1319	1250	1993	1794
Parent	70	69	73	65	67	71	69
Teacher during a class at school	51	52	55	43	50	47	54
Friends/ siblings of the child	20	19	21	21	17	23	21
The child searched himself/herself	12	9	13	11	10	15	13
Programme/ Event/ Exhibition organised at school	12	12	14	10	13	10	12
No such thing is told/discussed	11	11	8	14	11	12	12
Don't Know/Can't say	5	6	4	7	4	5	5

When asked whether the school conducts any workshops or activities for road safety education, only 32% parents and 35% children mentioned that their schools conduct road safety education workshops/classes. In a city-wise analysis it was observed that least proportion of parents and children in Vijayawada (10% parent, 16% children) and Pune (15% parent, 16% children) reported that road safety education was being imparted by schools, while this proportion was highest for Bengaluru (76% parent, 57% children) (refer to table 6.6).

It was observed that a lower proportion of parents of/children who were privately affiliated vehicle users (25% parent, 31% children) reported that their schools conducted road safety education workshops/classes, as compared to parents of/children who were school affiliated vehicle users or self/family driven vehicle users (refer to table 6.7).

Table 6. 6 School conducts workshops to educate the child on road safety and safe driving across cities segregated by parents and children (all figures except bases in percentages)

Education around road safety		Base (n)	Yes	No	Don't know/Can't say
Overall	Parent	6134	32	52	16
	Child	5711	35	60	5
Vijayawada	Parent	442	10	80	10
	Child	404	16	78	6
Patna	Parent	381	35	43	21
	Child	360	34	64	1
Delhi	Parent	514	51	42	7
	Child	404	74	26	0
Ahmedabad	Parent	406	15	54	30
	Child	378	29	65	6
Jamshedpur	Parent	378	17	43	40
	Child	362	25	72	3
Bengaluru	Parent	455	76	19	5
	Child	428	57	38	6
Bhopal	Parent	445	36	35	30
	Child	405	34	62	4
Pune	Parent	407	15	77	8
	Child	433	16	79	5
Mumbai	Parent	560	33	54	13
	Child	495	19	73	7
Jaipur	Parent	451	32	60	8
	Child	408	38	54	8
Chennai	Parent	468	37	46	17
	Child	394	54	36	10
Lucknow	Parent	417	16	68	15
	Child	435	22	68	9
Kanpur	Parent	369	24	54	22
	Child	406	31	67	2
Kolkata	Parent	414	40	52	9
	Child	399	40	55	5

Table 6. 7 School conducts workshops to educate the child on road safety and safe driving by type of vehicle preferred segregated by parents and children (all figures except bases in percentages)

Education around road safety	Overall	School affiliated vehicle		Privately affiliated vehicle		Self/family driven vehicle	
		Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child
Base (n)	11845	2822	2667	1319	1250	1993	1794
Yes	33	37	37	25	31	30	34
No	56	47	58	58	64	55	61
Don't know/Can't say	11	16	5	17	5	16	6

6.5. RESPONSES ON WHETHER THE CHILD WAS INVOLVED IN A ROAD CRASH:

When asked whether their children were ever involved in a road crash, 6% of the parents mentioned that their child had been involved in a road crash or a near miss situation while commuting to and from school across cities, with the highest percentage of responses from Bhopal (15%) and Mumbai (11%). No significant difference was observed among responses of parents whose children were school affiliated vehicle users or privately affiliated vehicle users or self/family driven vehicle users, with regard to the child being involved in road crash or a near miss situation while commuting to and from school (refer to table 6.9).

Table 6. 8 Child involved in road crash or near miss situation across cities (all figures except bases in percentages)

Child involved in road crash or near miss situation	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	6134	442	381	514	406	378	455	445	407	560	451	468	417	396	414
Child has been involved in a road crash or a near miss situation while commuting to and from school	6	1	6	5	6	2	8	15	6	11	5	5	4	8	2

**Question asked only to parents*

Table 6. 9 Child involved in road crash or near miss situation by type of vehicle (all figures except bases in percentages)				
Child involved in road crash or near miss situation	**Overall**	**School affiliated vehicle**	**Privately affiliated vehicle**	**Self/family driven vehicle**
Base (n)	6134	2822	1319	1993
Child has been involved in a road crash or a near miss situation while commuting to and from school	6	6	6	7
**Question asked only to parents*				

When asked about the impact of the crash, most parents across cities (74%) reported that their child did not have any injury – the percentage being highest for Bengaluru (100%) and lowest for Chennai (33%). It was also revealed that 4% of the parents in Chennai and 5% of the parents in Jaipur stated that their child had died due to the road crash (refer to table 6.10).

It was also observed that only parents whose children were school affiliated vehicle users reported the death of their child during such an incident (refer to table 6.11). Additionally, 39% of the respondents claimed that they are using the same mode of transport that was involved in the crash as the current mode of transport. This proportion was high for Kolkata (88%), Patna (62%), and Bengaluru (53%). Further, 45% of self driven vehicle users, 39% of school affiliated vehicle users, and 30% of privately affiliated vehicle users reported that they are using the same mode of transport that was involved in the road crash.

Table 6. 10 Impact of crash or near miss situation on children while commuting to or from school across cities (all figures except bases in percentages)															
Impact of crash or near miss situation child has been involved in while commuting to and from school	**Overall**	**Vijayawada**	**Patna**	**Delhi**	**Ahmedabad**	**Jamshedpur**	**Bengaluru**	**Bhopal**	**Pune**	**Mumbai**	**Jaipur**	**Chennai**	**Lucknow**	**Kanpur**	**Kolkata**
Base (n)	382	6	21	28	24	9	36	66	24	63	22	24	18	33	8
No injury	74	50	57	36	88	78	100	88	58	90	55	33	89	73	50
Minor injury	23	33	33	61	13	22	0	11	42	10	32	58	11	21	50
Serious injury	3	17	10	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	9	4	0	6	0
Death	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4	0	0	0
**Question asked only to parents*															

Table 6. 11 Impact of crash or near miss situation on children while commuting to or from school by type of vehicle (all figures except bases in percentages)

Impact of crash or near miss situation child has been involved in while commuting to and from school	Overall	School affiliated vehicle	Privately affiliated vehicle	Self/family driven vehicle
Base (n)	382	169	76	137
No injury	74	73	74	74
Minor injury	23	24	24	22
Serious injury	3	2	3	4
Death	1	1	0	0

**Question asked only to parents*

6.6. ACTION TAKEN BY SCHOOL AUTHORITIES WHEN THE SCHOOL VEHICLE WAS INVOLVED IN A CRASH:

When asked whether the school authorities took any action after the road crash, 25% respondents across cities reported that the school authorities did not take any action in that regard.

6.7. CHILDREN'S RESPONSES ON EXPERIENCES WITH ROAD CRASHES:

When asked whether they have ever had any experience with road crashes, 30% of the children across cities reported to have witnessed road crashes during their commute to school, while 6% said that they themselves were involved in road crashes during their commute to school. No significant difference was observed among children who were school affiliated vehicle users, privately affiliated vehicle users, or self/family driven vehicle users, with regard to witnessing or being involved in road crashes. However, the proportion of children involved in road crashes was marginally higher for school affiliated vehicles (7%). (refer to table 6.13) The percentage of children witnessing (48%) or being involved in (17%) road crashes was the highest in Bhopal as compared to other cities (refer to table 6.12).

6.8. MEASURES TO ENSURE ROAD SAFETY:

When the child respondents were asked about the measures that they take to ensure road safety, looking both sides before crossing the road to make sure there weren't any vehicles (58%), following speed limit (50%), following traffic light (48%) and wearing seat belts/helmets (46%) were the top four measures that were reported. The trend across cities, as well as across modes of transport, was similar, with these measures as the priority in most cities. (refer to table 6.14)

Table 6. 12 Children's experience with road crashes across cities (all figures in percentages)

	Overall	Vijayawada	Patna	Delhi	Ahmedabad	Jamshedpur	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Pune	Mumbai	Jaipur	Chennai	Lucknow	Kanpur	Kolkata
Base (n)	5711	404	360	404	378	362	428	405	433	495	408	394	435	406	399
Witnessed a road crash	30	34	36	28	30	27	19	48	31	34	38	28	34	26	10
Involved in road crash	6	2	7	3	6	3	3	17	5	8	11	7	3	6	6

**Question asked only to children*

Table 6. 13 Children's experience with road crashes by type of vehicle (all figures in percentages)

	Overall	School affiliated vehicle	Privately affiliated vehicle	Self/family driven vehicle
Base (n)	5711	2667	1250	1794
Witnessed a road crash	30	31	30	28
Involved in road crash	6	7	4	6

**Question asked only to children*

Table 6. 14 Measures to be taken to ensure road safety while commuting to and from school (all figures in percentages) Multiple responses

Measures to be taken to ensure road safety while commuting to and from school	Base	School affiliated vehicle	Privately affiliated vehicle	Self/family driven vehicle
		Children		
Base (n)	5704	2667	1247	1790
Before crossing the road look both sides to make sure there aren't any vehicles	58	58	56	60
Cross road on zebra crossing/ foot-over bridge / subway	44	45	45	41
Follow speed limit	50	50	48	50
Wear seat belts/helmet	46	49	42	45
Walk on the footpath/ pavement while on the road	39	40	39	38
Get down from the bus on the left side of the road	36	40	36	30
Follow traffic light	48	49	48	47
In case no sidewalks are there, walk facing the traffic.	24	25	23	22
Follow the road signs	37	38	37	36
While on road do not text, play or hear music. Avoid distractions as much as possible	25	26	24	24
Always maintain 3 feet distance from the road	28	28	27	27
During harsh weathers or at night, try to wear light coloured clothing so that you are visible	18	20	19	16
Leave home well in time, so that you won't have to run to catch the bus.	29	30	29	26
At the bus stand, always follow the queue. Board the bus only after it has come to a halt, without rushing in or pushing others.	23	25	24	19
While in the bus, shouting or making a noise is definitely bad manners. Such behaviour can also distract the driver.	21	23	22	19
Never board and alight at a red light crossing or unauthorised bus stop	21	23	21	18
Do not sit, stand or travel on the footboard of the bus	21	22	21	18
Do not put any part of your body outside a moving or stationary bus.	23	24	26	20
Reflectors are provided on spokes of wheels, on the pedals and on the front / rear mudguard	16	17	17	15
Under no circumstances should you ride on the wrong side of the road or cross the road abruptly	23	24	23	20
Never try to overtake- if you must, do it only if the driver of the vehicle in your front has permitted or signalled you to overtake.	24	25	24	23
Use the indicator or hand signals when changing lanes.	26	28	26	23
Do not overload your vehicles - be it luggage or passengers	25	26	26	24
Do not use tinted glasses, lenses or visors or anything that restricts vision at night or in poor visibility conditions	14	15	14	13
Regular servicing of the vehicle	19	20	17	20

Chapter 7:

COVID-19 & Safe Commute to School

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted understandable anxiety in relation to many facets of everyday life including children's commute to school. In January 2021, schools had briefly reopened in all the states covered in the study. However, due to the second wave of the pandemic, by March 2021, they were shut again. Now, as schools begin to gradually reopen, there are a number of challenges. One such challenge is the provision of safe transportation to children. Social distancing guidelines will need to be followed not only by children commuting by school bus or public transportation, but also by children who would walk or cycle to school. There will be requirements for the capping of bus capacities and mandatory mask use in all school and public transport vehicles. The fear of exposure to the virus may cause a shift towards usage of private self/ family driven vehicles. It is also the need of the hour for the government and school to adapt to the changing commuting pattern of school children due to the pandemic. While the Union Government in its guidelines, has recommended the usage of privately owned modes of transport[11], the report findings highlight the gaps in safety standards of these modes of commute. About 34% of the respondents (overall) who commuted by two wheelers admitted that riders never wear a helmet. In addition, 20% of the respondents (overall) travelling by self/family driven cars admitted that all passengers (including children) never wear seat belts while commuting to school. Therefore, it is necessary to take precautions for both COVID-19 as well as the road crash pandemic.

7.1. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR COMMUTE TO SCHOOL DURING COVID-19:

Many States, including the ones covered in the study, had reopened schools in January 2021, and had issued State specific guidelines and standard operating procedures to be followed by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as class wise/ section wise/ batch wise occupation of school buses with half occupancy. With the COVID-19 cases declining post the second wave, many states are now considering reopening schools for physical classes again, and some states such as Bihar and Gujarat have already opened schools. The guidelines will be applicable for the second reopening as well.

11 *https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/SOP_Guidelines_for_reopening_schools.pdf*

The guidelines that are to be adhered to while commuting to school include minimum physical distance of 6 feet between all passengers, proper sanitisation of school vehicles at least twice a day, mandatory face masks, windows kept open, increasing awareness about COVID-19 precautions among children specifically among those who travel by public transport, thermal screening (if possible), avoid carpooling, etc.

It is to be noted that the study survey and the In Depth Interviews (IDIs) were conducted before schools reopened briefly in January 2021. During the IDIs, the school head from a Delhi based school mentioned that they are currently in the process of planning, and a final decision around safety protocols would be taken only when the government orders to reopen schools. The protocols would be in line with government policies and regulations. The school authorities understand that these are unusual and difficult times, for which they are willing to plan and improvise in order to ensure the safety and security of their school children, but would require support from the local police and administration officials. There is no clarity on what kind support might be required from the authorities, but the school head believes that their intervention would facilitate reopening of schools.

Preparedness of school authorities to prevent the spread of COVID-19 during commute to school was considered to be the most important factor for ensuring child safety during these unusual times.

The traffic sub-inspector from Bengaluru reported that they have sent circulars to Bengaluru schools regarding the safety practices that are to be followed in school vehicles, in light of COVID-19. Some of these include – sanitisation of buses before the beginning and end of each trip, covering the driver's seat with a transparent shield, wearing masks, maintaining social distance, etc. Alternate modes of commute that will limit the child's level of exposure during his/her commute (e.g: private cars) will be preferred by parents. However, the decision to switch to such modes of commute is highly contingent upon the availability of resources. The financial cost of complying with COVID-19 safety guidelines is also high for schools. The Delhi school head mentioned that it has been financially difficult to maintain commercial vehicles, which were used for transportation prior to COVID-19. With the schools being shut, the transportation system has come to a halt and it has been tough for the school to sustain and cover maintenance expenses. Post COVID-19 protocols (like regular sanitiswation, reduced bus strength, etc) would only further strain their management.

The guidelines by the Union Government advise using modes of commute such as self/ family driven motor vehicles, walking, and cycling to avoid overcrowding. However, due to monetary constraints, many respondents may not own private motor vehicles. Additionally, the current infrastructure is insufficient to adopt this potential change in commuting pattern, wherein around 47% respondents (overall) mentioned that no cycling paths were present across their commute and 30% of the respondents (overall) reported the absence of a footpath in the school zone.

7.2. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19 safe public transportation, including organising "walking buses" and safe cycling routes.
- Reorganisation of school transportation and arrival/departure times can facilitate smoother management of social distancing guidelines.
- Installation of temporary or permanent infrastructure to provide more space for pedestrians and cyclists (to meet physical distancing recommendations).
- Adoption of a module for online road safety education to increase awareness among school children and parents. For example, since children have been attending online classes due to COVID-19, Delhi Traffic Police, in association with the Delhi Government, has also been conducting online programs on road safety for school children. Awareness and knowledge among children would be the key towards adherence to these public health requirements.

Chapter 8:
Way Forward

This study was conducted during the first wave of the pandemic, while States across the country had ordered that schools remain shut. Schools had briefly reopened in January 2021, and had issued guidelines for travelling on school vehicles such as routine sanitisation of the vehicle, and ensuring social distancing. However, due to the second wave of the pandemic which began in March, 2021, schools were again shut. Now, states are considering reopening schools for physical classes again, and states such as Bihar and Gujarat have already reopened schools. With the reopening, it would be imperative to follow both the COVID-19 guidelines as well as road safety guidelines.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court had passed a judgement on 16-12-1997 that includes guidelines for safe plying of school buses and ensuring safety of school children during their commute. In consideration to the Hon'ble Supreme Court's judgement, CBSE included guidelines (dated 23-02-2017) to be scrupulously followed by all CBSE affiliated schools as per provision under CBSE bye-laws. For any lapse in this regard, school heads and management are to be held responsible, which would invite appropriate action including the disaffiliation of schools. While there are national policies that specify the standards for school buses, there is a compelling need to include other modes as well. For example, States like Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu have inclusive policies that cover Vans and Auto-rickshaw – Maharashtra's School Bus Policy[12]; Tamil Nadu's Motor Vehicles Special Rules[13].

Based on the discussion with the school authorities, it was gathered that transportation is one of the most crucial areas which needs special attention. Thorough planning and management by school authorities helps in ensuring seamless and safe commute to school for the children. During the IDIs, the school head reported that their school executes a 30 minute dispersal mechanism when school is over – starting with 10-15 minutes for children who commute by foot or private mode of transport and followed by 15-20 minutes for children who commute via school vehicles. The transport department along with the team of teachers, helpers, maids and guards coordinate to ensure safe dispersal of all students.

Additionally, schools refuse to provide transportation services on certain routes to save on their expenses. In such situations, the responsibility of arranging for commute lies solely with the parents, who in turn are usually unable to drop and pick up their child due to busy schedules. As a result, parents hire private modes of transport for their child(ren)'s commute to school, which often do not follow road safety norms (overloading the vehicle, and violate traffic rules). In cases where parents arrange for the commute on their own, socio-economic background plays an important role – sometimes parents are forced to choose unsafe modes of commute, as they are affordable.

The enforcement officials highlighted the need to have a school safety zone around each school. This can be done via placing sign boards, creating

12 *Maharashtra' school bus policy (page 13)http://www.mahatranscom.in/pdf/Revise%20Draft1-2015.pdf*

13 *Tamil Nadu's Motor Vehicles Special Rules http://www.stationeryprinting.tn.gov.in/extraordinary/2012/274-Ex-III-1a.pdf*

speed breakers, adding white strips on roads, proper lighting on roads, etc. In terms of handling traffic and maintaining road safety around the school, the inspector was of the opinion that private schools have an edge over government schools as they are able to appoint multiple guards who ensure children's safety.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on discussions with parents, children, enforcement officials, school authorities, and child road safety experts, suggestions are being offered for improving the safety standards of school commute for all children across the nation. These suggestions are segregated for policy makers, schools and parents.

8.1.1. Recommendations for Policy Makers

a) Creation of policies for safe school transport:

Policies for ensuring safe school transport should be created at both the national and the state level to issue guidelines for schools, parents and road authorities to follow, so that risks to road safety are mitigated during school commute. As the COVID-19 pandemic still looms large the policies should be inclusive of the sanitisation and social distancing requirements to prevent the risk of contracting COVID. The policies should also contain guidelines for all modes of commute.

b) Ensuring proper design and maintenance of school zone infrastructure:

The relevant road authority should ensure that school zone infrastructure is well designed and maintained to ensure safe travel for all road users passing through the zone, particularly pedestrians and non motorised transport users. According to the study findings, around 47% respondents (overall) that commute by bicycle mentioned that no cycling paths were present across their commute and 30% of the respondents (overall) that commute by foot reported the absence of a footpath in the school zone.

c) Ensure proper enforcement throughout the school zone:

Police patrolling should take place routinely around school zones to ensure that there are no traffic violations or no bad road user behaviour taking place around the zones. The police should also check if current road infrastructure is being properly used. From the study, it was reported that 49% of the parent respondents whose child walked to school for their commute witnessed dangerous traffic on their way to school. In addition, 33% of the parent respondents (overall) whose child walked to school to school reported that the child never uses a zebra crossing.

d) Strengthening data collection w.r.t. Road traffic violations and crashes:

Traffic police departments across India need to strengthen data collection records with respect to traffic violations and road crashes. During the discussion with the child road safety expert, it was found that data recorded by the traffic police departments are often under-reported in the traffic police records and have certain gaps like: absence of data standardisation due to different reporting methods, unavailability of correct data around certain parameters which have to be estimated (like – age of person affected by road accident), etc. Recording incomplete/incorrect data is a major problem primarily due to the absence of resources in the traffic police departments. Under-resourced traffic police departments, either in terms of money, staff or time do not prioritise collection of high-quality data. Since such data should be utilised for designing road safety policies and interventions at the parliament level, it is important to ensure high quality standards so that informed decisions can be taken for arriving at data driven policies.

e) Add mandatory road safety education throughout all boards:

The Central Government and State Governments should add mandatory road safety education in the curriculum of all classes. It can be in the form of a chapter (in social science), separate course, or a workshop. When asked about road safety education, only a third of the respondents claimed that their schools took an initiative to conduct road safety workshops.

8.1.2. Recommendations for Schools :

a) Ensure proper grievance redressal system:

Schools should make sure that complaints of parents and children regarding problems while commuting to and from school should be adequately addressed to make sure that the problem does not arise in the future. From the study, 54% of the respondents mentioned that the school did not take any action against school-affiliated vehicle related complaints.

b) Ensure that school drivers are enrolled in driver refresher training programmes:

According to the study, 24% of the child respondents, and 20% of the parent respondents using school affiliated vehicles claimed that they complain about rash driving by the driver. Driver refresher training courses will help in instilling good driving practices in the drivers.

c) Deploy a traffic marshal for the school zone:

It was ascertained that 39% of the respondents claimed that either their school did not have a traffic marshal to monitor school zones, or they were unaware of the presence of one. A traffic marshal can help children safely cross the road, help in reducing bad driving practices such as over-speeding around the school zone, monitor helmet or seatbelt violations among private transport users, and can also check for the use of retro reflective material among children who walk or use non motorised transport to school.

d) Appoint a transport manager:

According to the study findings, 22% of the parent respondents who were school bus users reported that their schools did not have a transport manager, and 15% of the parent respondents who were school bus users were unaware of the presence of a transport manager. A school transport manager plays a vital role in ensuring that safety guidelines for school transport vehicles are adhered to. The school transport manager should be responsible for conducting audits of the school vehicles and school zone, and should also be in charge of the grievance redressal system. He/ she should also be in charge to ensure that all protocols for COVID-19 are adhered to.

e) Conduct road safety education workshops:

As reported above, only one third of the respondents reported that their schools conduct road safety education workshops. Such workshops should be conducted for students across all classes to spread awareness about good road user behaviour, stress on the need for adherence to road safety guidelines, and discourage practices of under-age driving.

f) Ensure that all safety devices are installed in the school vehicles:

According to the study findings, 47% of the school vehicle user respondents reported the absence of seatbelts in the school vehicles. Further, about 12% of the school vehicle user respondents reported the absence of safety devices such as fire extinguishers and first aid kits. School transport managers need to conduct audits of all school vehicles to ensure the presence of safety devices.

8.1.3. Recommendations for Parents /Guardians:

a) Awareness about the mode of commute:

Parents need to be aware about the specifics of the mode of transport used. This requires their utmost attention to ensure safe commute for their children. Parents need to have all information regarding the vehicle including, validity of the driver/ conductor's license, contact details of drivers and transport managers, availability of safety devices, and so on. With active participation of parents in ensuring road safety, the schools will also be pressured to make sure that road safety guidelines are adhered to. According to the study findings, 18% of the parents of school bus users did not inquire about the validity of the school driver's license, and 38% did not inquire about the validity of the conductor's licence. Further, about a third of the parents of school transport users were unaware about the installation of speed governors, 15% of the parents of school bus users were not aware of the presence of a transport manager, and 22% of the parents of school transport users mentioned they did not know whether GPS/CCTV was installed. Further, about 12% of the privately arranged transport users reported that they were not aware of the presence of safety tools in the vehicles. Parents should be especially vigilant if they choose privately arranged modes of transport. As mentioned by the child road safety expert, since the private auto/rickshaw/van driver is not answerable to school authorities, parents should be more cautious and keep a regular check on the driving style, behaviour of driver towards the children, seating arrangement in the vehicle, pick-up and drop points, etc.

b) Ensure the usage of safety devices:

Parents need to ensure that their children are using safety devices such as seatbelts, helmets, and retro reflective stickers while commuting to school. According to the study, 34% of the respondents using two-wheelers mentioned that they never use a headgear/helmet while riding a two-wheeler, and 20% of the respondents using self/ family driven vehicles claimed that they never use a seatbelt during their commute. Further, 85% of the respondents reported that they do not use retro reflective stickers while walking on the road.

Mercedes-Benz

Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India Private Limited
Registered Office: Embassy Crest
Plot No. 5-P, EPIP Zone, Phase 1, Whitefield Road, Near Satya Sai Baba Hospital,
Bengaluru ,Karnataka – 560066
Website: www.mbrdi.co.in

SaveLIFE FOUNDATION
IMPROVING ROAD SAFETY AND EMERGENCY CARE ACROSS INDIA

SaveLIFE Foundation
D-10, First Floor, Nizamuddin East
New Delhi - 110013, India
website: www.savelifefoundation.org