Results of the Youth Vaping in the Falkland Islands Survey

A University of Gibraltar, Public Health Unit (Falkland Islands) and Public Health Gibraltar initiative[1]

Overview

The main purpose of the Youth Vaping in the Falkland Islands Survey was to collect comparable data on vaping and cigarette use and attitudes among year 7 to 11 students. The majority of students (n=190, 86.6%) from Falkland Islands Community School participated in this survey.

The present report will be broken up into several sections, each exploring an aspect of the brief survey that was conducted. As this questionnaire had been used in a recent study in Gibraltar and some questions were from the 2019 questionnaire of the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) we also had the opportunity to analyse the acquired data in a wider European context.

Key Findings

- The prevalence of e-cigarette use shows a gradual shift, with higher rates observed in later school years compared to earlier ages.
- Girls more likely try e-cigarettes than boys and less likely to want to quit.
- Students tend to start vaping during early adolescence, particularly around the age of 12-14.
- A significant number of students tried e-cigarettes due to social influence from friends and curiosity.
- Students have varied perceptions of the risks associated with vaping, with the majority perceiving vaping as high risk.
- There is a widespread recognition among students that disposable plastic vapes have a negative effect on the environment.
- Some students reported occasional or regular tobacco use when they initiated vaping.

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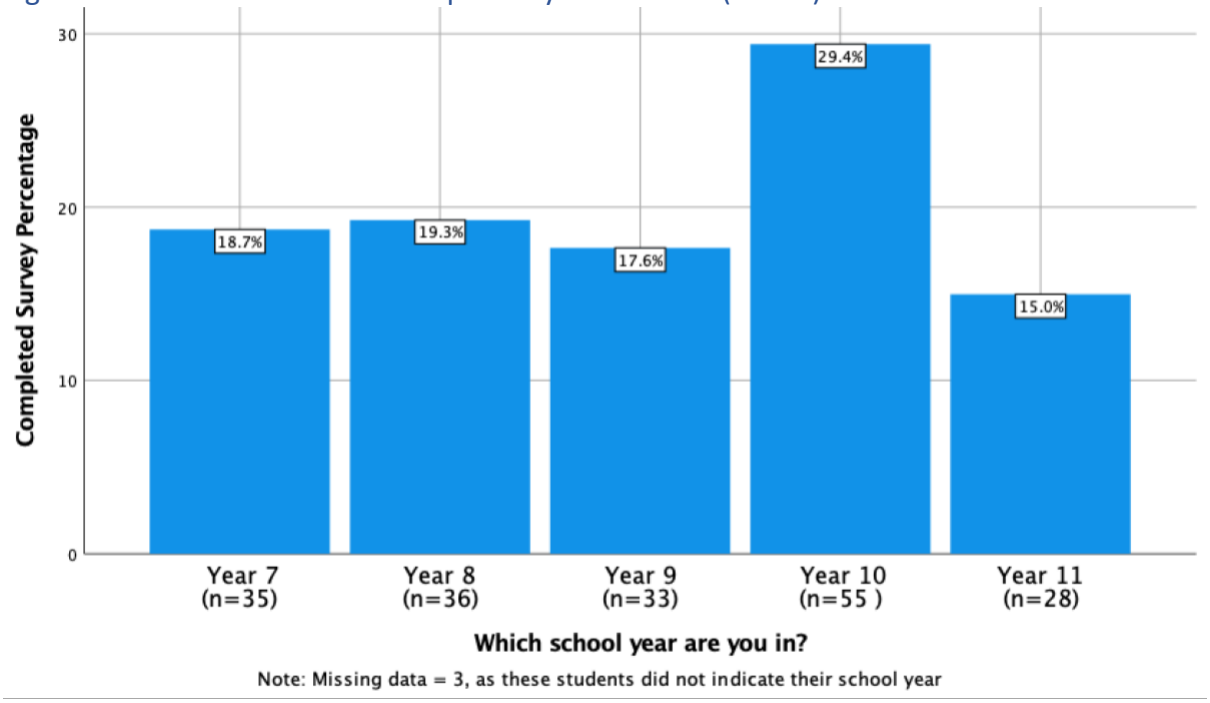
1. Methods

1.1. Participants

The participants of this study were recruited from Falkland Islands Community School (FICS). The sample consisted of a total of 190 students, 86.6% of students in the school (n=220), as 30 students were absent on the day of the survey. Figure 1.1.1. provides the distribution of participants by school year. The figure demonstrates a high number of students completed the questionnaire in year 10 (55 students), with the least participants in Year 11 (28 students).

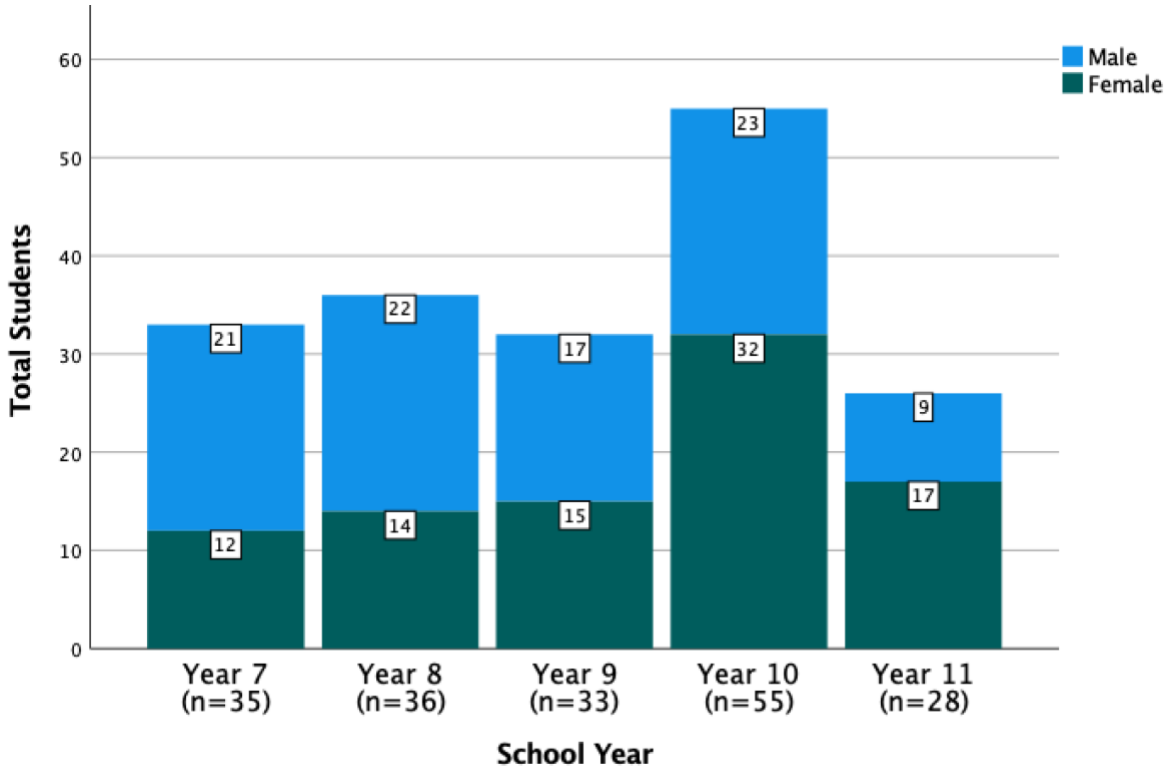
Figure 1.1.1. Distribution of Participants by School Year (n=187)



Note: Missing data = 3, as these students did not indicate their school year

In regard to age, the average age of the total sample was 14.5 years (SD = 8.860; range = 11-16). Among the total sample, 47.9% were female, 48.4% were male, while 3.7% of the students did not answer this question. The distribution of participants by gender and school year can be found in Figure 1.1.2.

Figure 1.1.2. Distribution of Participants by Gender (n=187)



Note: Missing data = 3, as these students did not indicate their gender and/or year level

1.2. Data collection

Data collection involved the use of paper questionnaires, which were distributed by teachers across different classes in March 2024. Prior to the commencement of data collection, parents were informed about the study's aims and methods through official school communications.

Teachers were in charge of the data collection process and facilitated various essential tasks. They distributed the questionnaires to students and provided clear instructions on the purpose of the study and how to complete the questionnaire. Teachers explained the concept of vaping and emphasized the importance of maintaining anonymity in their responses. Students were instructed to exclude their names or any identifying information from the questionnaire to ensure confidentiality. Once completed, student responses were sealed in envelopes, which remained unopened at the school and were scanned by a colleague of the Public Health Unit and sent to the research team at the University of Gibraltar.

1.3. Instruments

The questionnaire used in this study comprised 14 questions. These questions covered various aspects, such as sociodemographic data (gender, age, school, and school year), as well as vaping-related behaviours. The questions have been used in a school survey in Gibraltar in 2023, and some were derived from the 2019 questionnaire of the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD), a well-established survey tool (for more information on the ESPAD please refer to section 6).

Participants were not obligated to respond to all the questions; as such, missing data points are not included in the analyses. Certain questions were specifically targeted at

individuals who had previously used an e-cigarette, ensuring that the questionnaire was tailored to their relevant experiences and behaviours, thus those that did not use e-cigarettes did not answer some of the questions.

1.4. Data analysis

To examine the patterns of vaping across the cohort, a comparative analysis was conducted to explore the relationships between different school years and genders. Due to the small number of participants, when analysing responses by school years, we used two combined groups, one for the year 7, 8 and 9 students, and another one for the year 10 and 11 students. In order to assess the association, the Pearson's chi-square ($\chi 2$) test was employed. Additionally, the comparison of means was performed using t-tests. These statistical analyses were carried out with SPSS software, version 28 (IBM Corp, 2021). The choice of these statistical methods allows for an examination of the data and provides valuable insights into the observed patterns.

2. Vaping (e-cigarette use) prevalence and behaviours

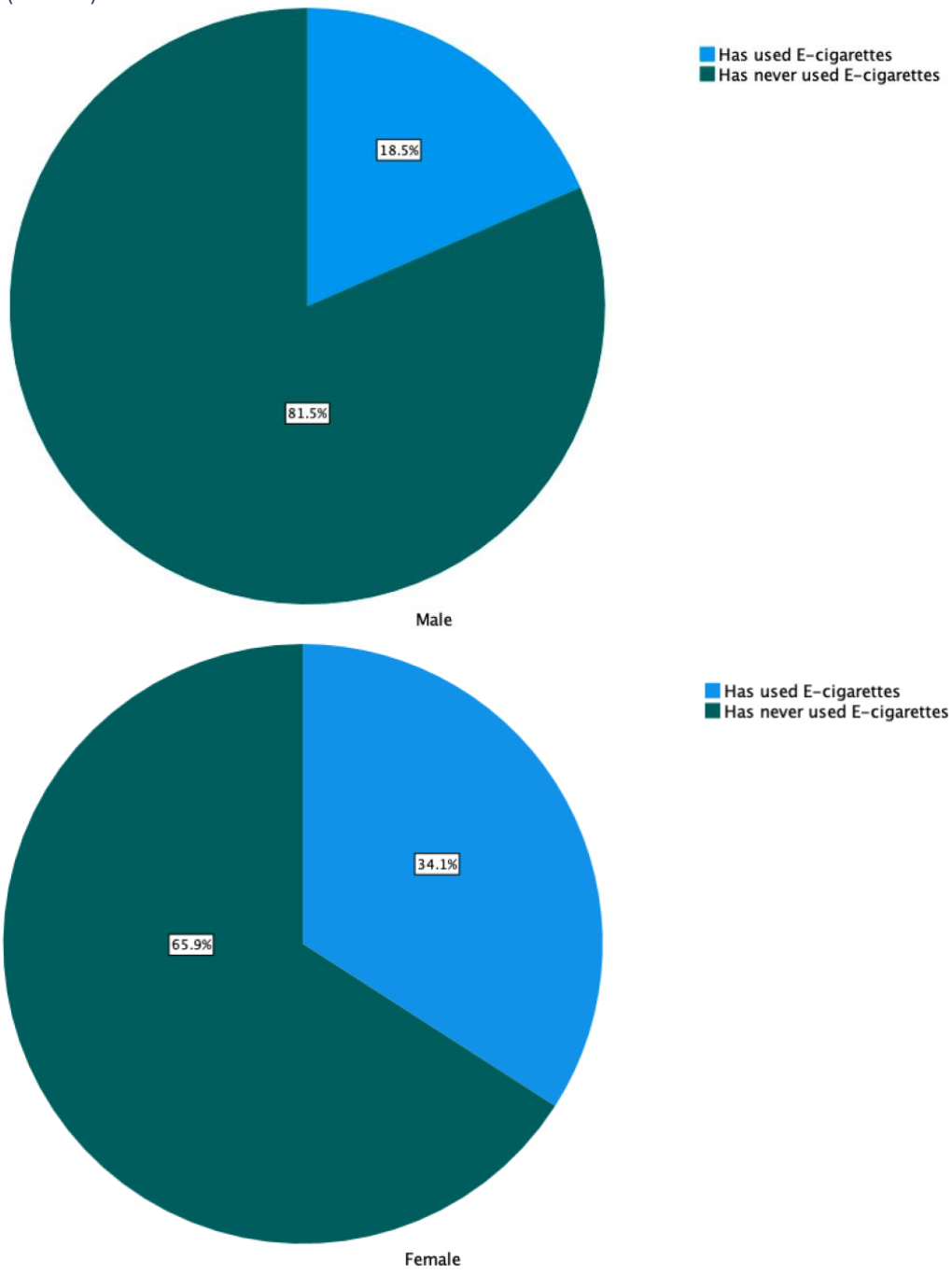
The following section explores the prevalence and behaviour of e-cigarette use among the whole student sample. It provides insights into the patterns of vaping across different school years and highlights the differences observed based on gender. Additionally, it delves into the behaviour of those who have tried e-cigarettes, examining factors such as frequency of use, types of e-cigarettes used, starting age, and relation to smoking habits. By examining these aspects, we gain a better understanding of the landscape of vaping among the participants.

2.1. Percentage of vapers (lifetime)

In general, 25.7% (n = 47) of the respondents reported having vaped at some point in their life ("Lifetime Vape"), while 74.3% (n =137) indicated they had never vaped ("No Never"). In Year 7,8 and 9, 21.2% have vaped in their lifetime, compared with 31.2% in Year 10 and 11.

Overall, the analysis highlights a significant difference in e-cigarette use when comparing year levels ($\chi 2= 33.19$, df = 12, $p<.001$), with a higher percentage of lifetime vapers among higher year groups.

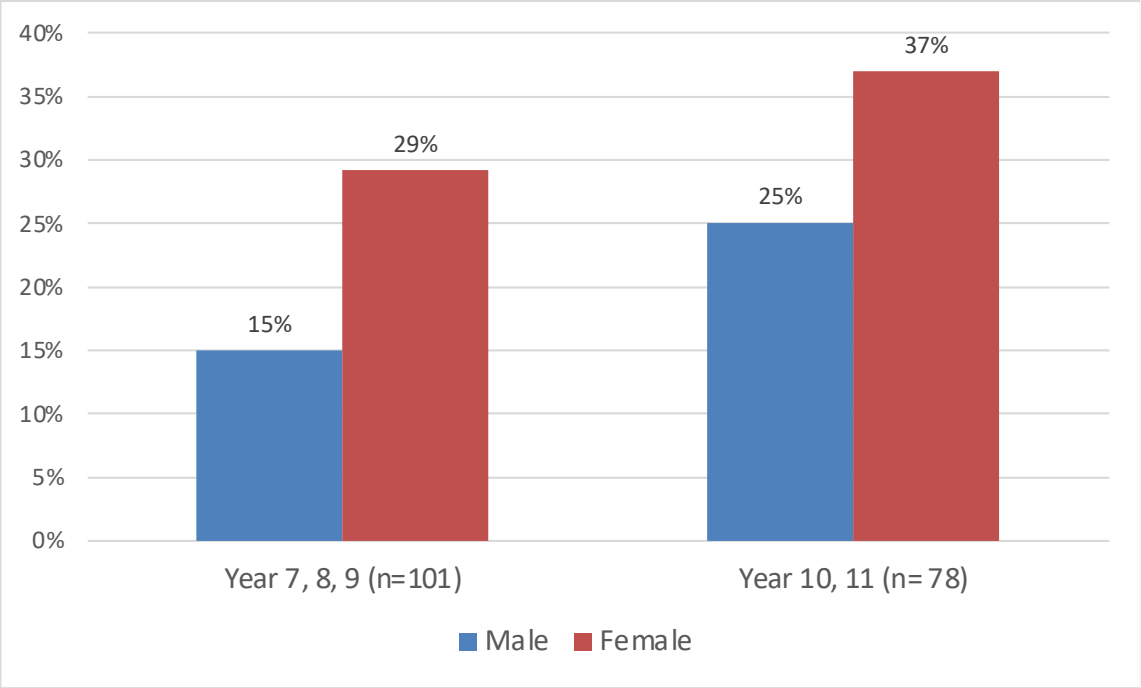
Figure 2.1.1. Percentage of students that have used e-cigarettes at least once in their life by gender (n=179)



Note. Missing data = 11, as these students did not indicate their e-cigarette use and/or gender. Total number of students: 87 female and 92 male. Figure does not include those who responded 'other or non-binary' due to small number.

The distribution of lifetime e-cigarette use among different genders is shown in Figure 2.1.1. and by school year groups and gender in Figure 2.1.2. The majority of respondents across both genders reported never having vaped, however females were more likely to try vaping when compared to their male counterparts.

Figure 2.1.2. Percentage of students that have used e-cigarettes at least once in their life by school year (n=179)

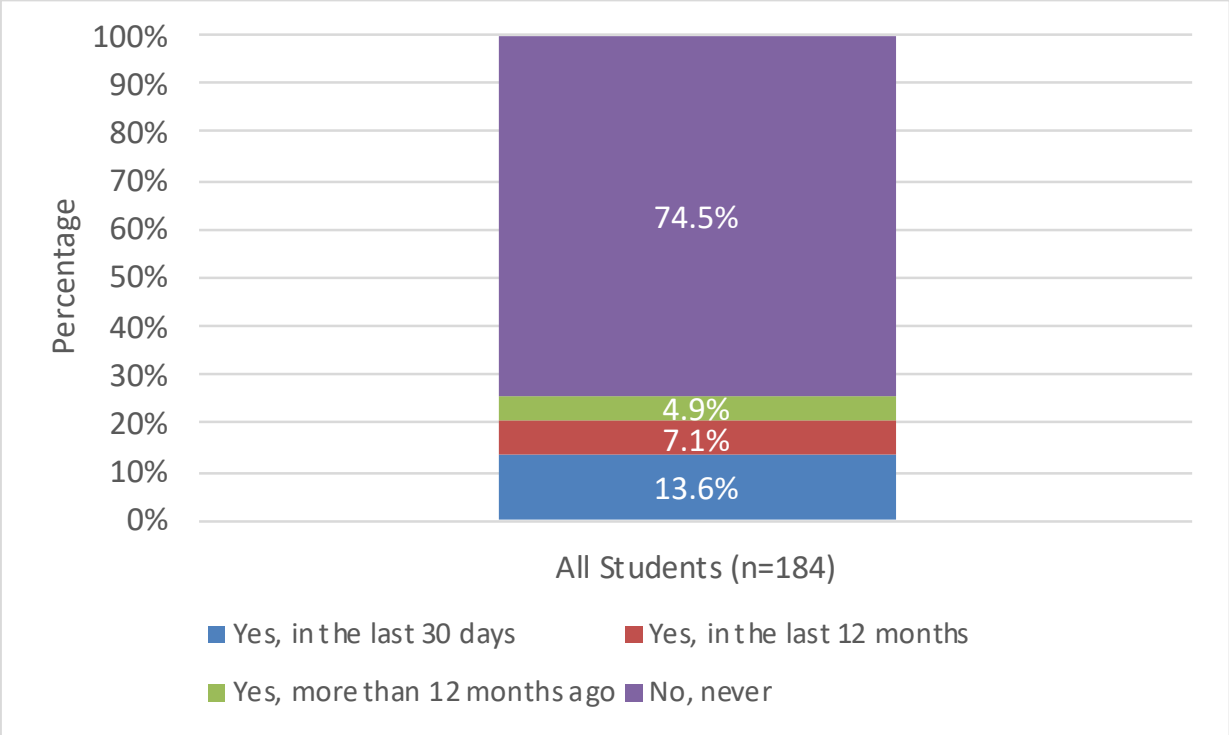


Note. Missing data = 11, as these students did not indicate their e-cigarette use, and/or school year, and/or gender. Figure does not include those who responded 'other or non-binary' due to small number.

2.2. Prevalence of vaping (past month and past year)

This section explores the prevalence of vaping in the past month and year (Figure 2.2.1) and how this is distributed by school year groups (Figure 2.2.2). In regard to the broader sample of the participants, 137 never used e-cigarettes in their lifetime (74.3%), 9 used e-cigarettes more than 12 months ago (4.9%), 13 used them the last 12 months but not in the past month (7.1%) and 25 used them in the last 30 days (13.6%)

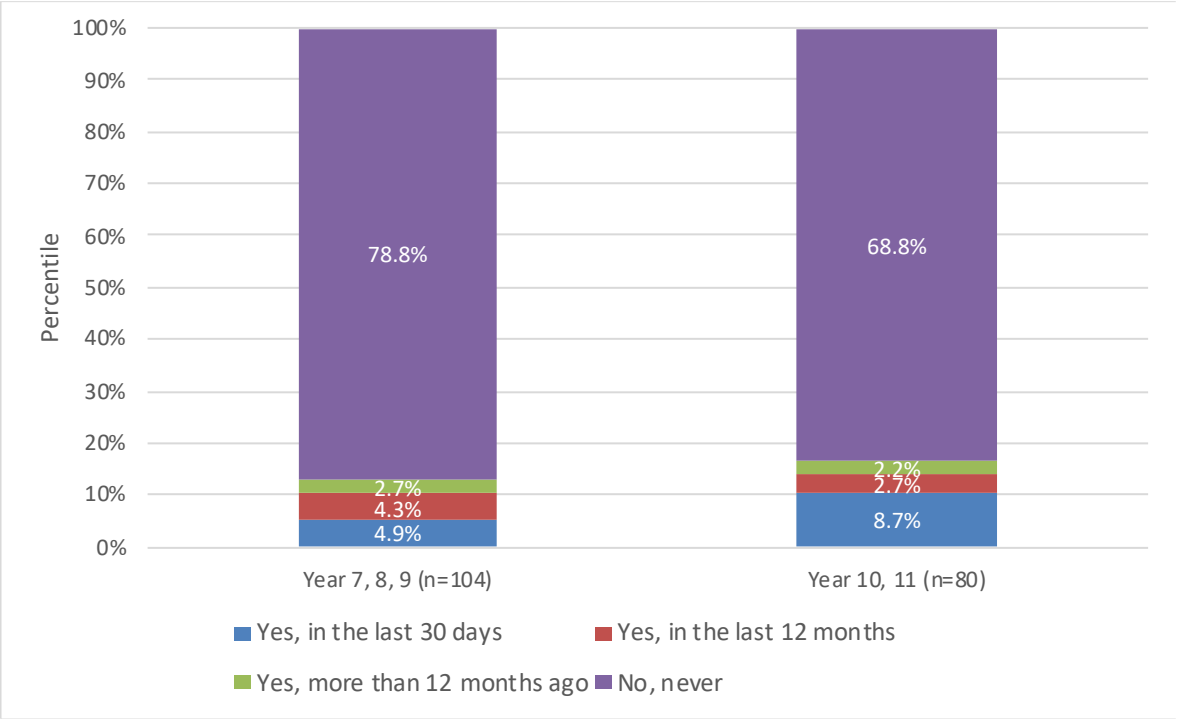
Figure 2.2.1. Past year and past month prevalence of e-cigarette use (n=184)



Note. Missing data = 6, as these students did not indicate their e-cigarette use

Figure 2.2.2. considers the prevalence of vaping by school year. In year groups 7, 8 and 9, 9 students used e-cigarettes in the last 30 days (4.9%), 8 used them in the last 12 months (4.3%), 5 used them more than 12 months ago (2.7%, and 82 never vaped (78.8%). In year groups 10 and 11, the number of students using e-cigarettes rises, with 16 students used e-cigarettes in the last 30 days (8.7%), 15 used them in the last 12 months (2.7%), 4 used them more than 12 months ago (2.2%). 55 year 10 and 11 students have never used e-cigarettes (68.8%). The data suggests that there is an increase in the frequency of e-cigarette use across the school years ($\chi 2 = 33.19$, $df = 12$, $p < .001$), with the later years being associated with more frequent e-cigarette use.

Figure 2.2.2. Past year and past month prevalence of e-cigarette use by school year (across lifetime vapers) (n=184)



Note. Missing data = 6, as these students did not indicate their e-cigarette use and/or year.

When further exploring the breakdown by gender it was found that among males, 11 reported vaping in the last 30 days (11.9%), 3 within the last 12 months (3.2%, and 3 (3.2%) more than 12 months ago. Additionally, 75 males indicated they had never vaped (81.5%). Among females, 15 reported vaping in the last 30 days (17.0%), 9 within the last 12 months (10.2%), and 6 more than 12 months ago (6.8%). Two third of females (n = 58) had never vaped (65.9%).

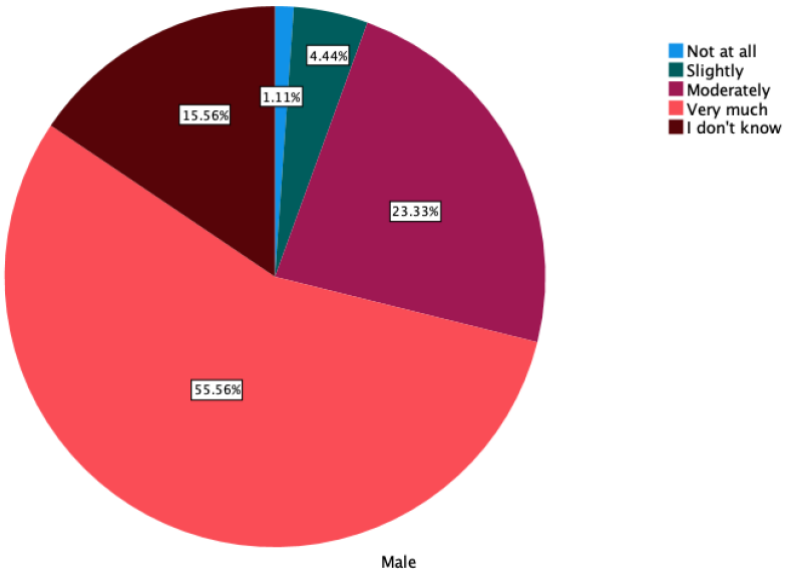
To summarise, the data presented provides insights into the frequency of vaping among students based on school year and gender. It is evident that the prevalence of e-cigarette use is higher in later school years compared to earlier school years. This suggests that educational initiatives to address the rising popularity of e-cigarettes among adolescents may be beneficial between years 9 and 11. However, it should be noted that a majority of students across genders have never engaged in vaping. These findings emphasize the importance of continued monitoring, prevention, and support programs to curb the use of e-cigarettes among students and promote healthier choices for their overall well-being.

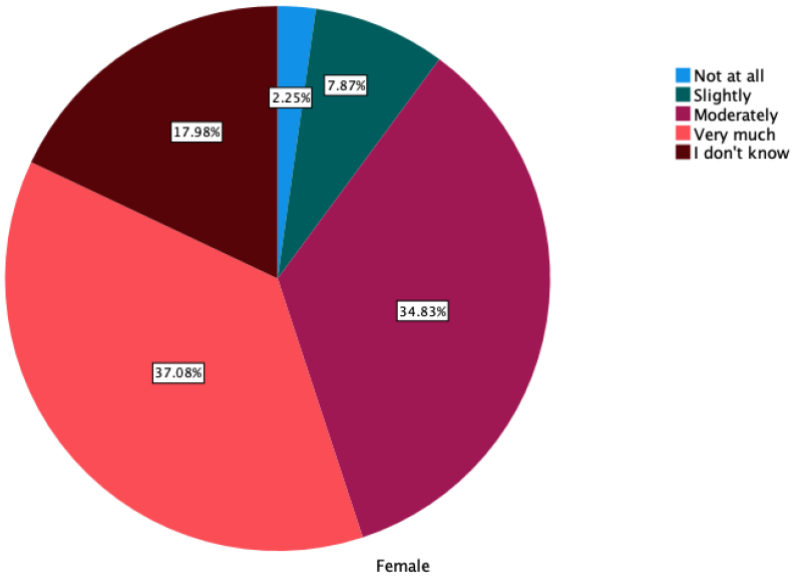
2.3. Perceptions of vaping

This section explores students' perceptions of the risks associated with vaping, and the environmental impact of plastic vapes, revealing different levels of perceived harm across genders. However, further research is necessary to gain a comprehensive understanding of these patterns and motivations.

In this section, students' perceptions of the risk of harming themselves (physically or in other ways) through vaping or using e-cigarettes are explored by gender (see Figure 2.3.1.).

Figure 2.3.1. Perceived health harm of use of e-cigarettes by gender (n=179).





Note. Missing data = 11, as these students did not indicate their perceived harm and/or gender. Figure does not include those who responded 'other or non-binary' due to small number.

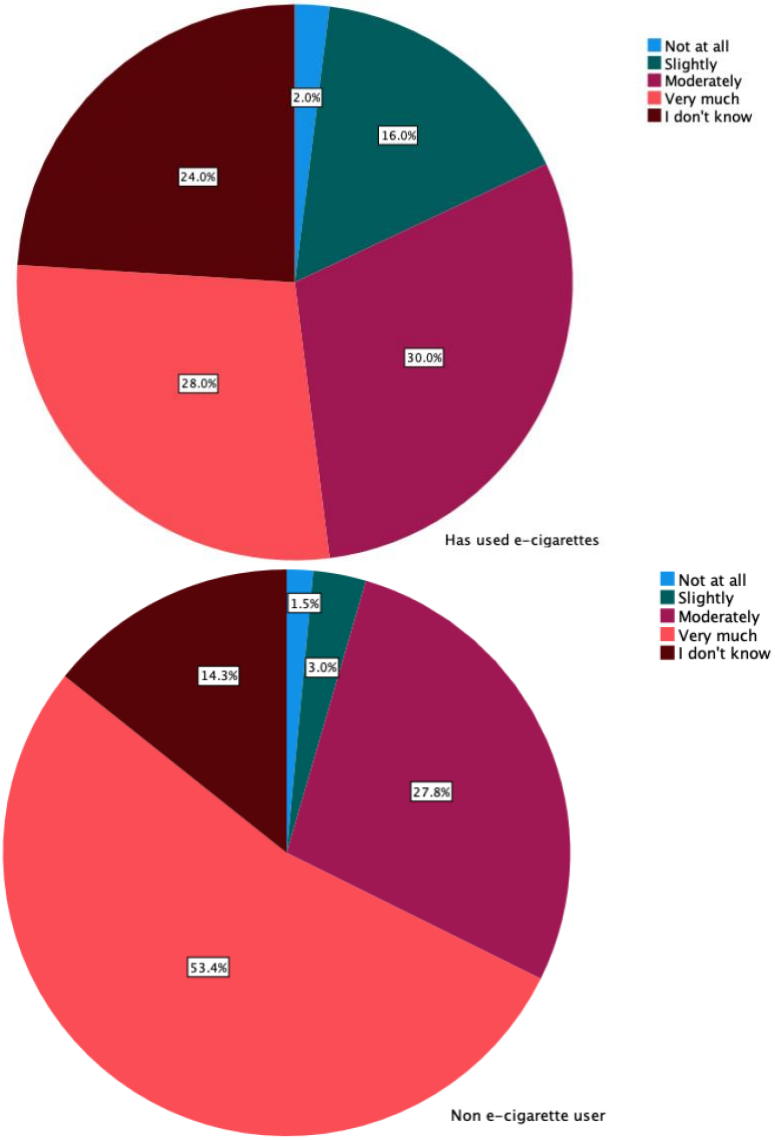
Overall, a total of 3 students (1.6%) across both genders believe that using e-cigarettes poses no risk no risk, while 11 students (6.1%) perceive a slight risk. Additionally, 52 students (29%) consider the risk to be moderate, and 83 students (46.3%) believe the risk is very high; while 30 students (16.7%) are uncertain about the level of risk associated with vaping or using e-cigarettes.

Among male students, 1 individual expressed that they believe using e-cigarettes poses no risk, while 4 respondents consider the risk to be slight. Additionally, 21 students perceive a moderate level of risk, while 50 students believe the risk is very high. Furthermore, 14 students indicated that they are uncertain about the level of risk associated with vaping.

Among female students, 2 individuals believe there is no risk, while 7 perceive a slight risk. Moreover, 31 students consider the risk to be moderate, and 33 students believe the risk is very high. Additionally, 30 respondents are unsure about the level of risk.

Further exploration was conducted into perceived harm based on previous e-cigarette uss(Figure 2.3.2.)

Figure 2.3.2. Perceived harm in the use of e-cigarettes by life time e-cigarette use (n=183).



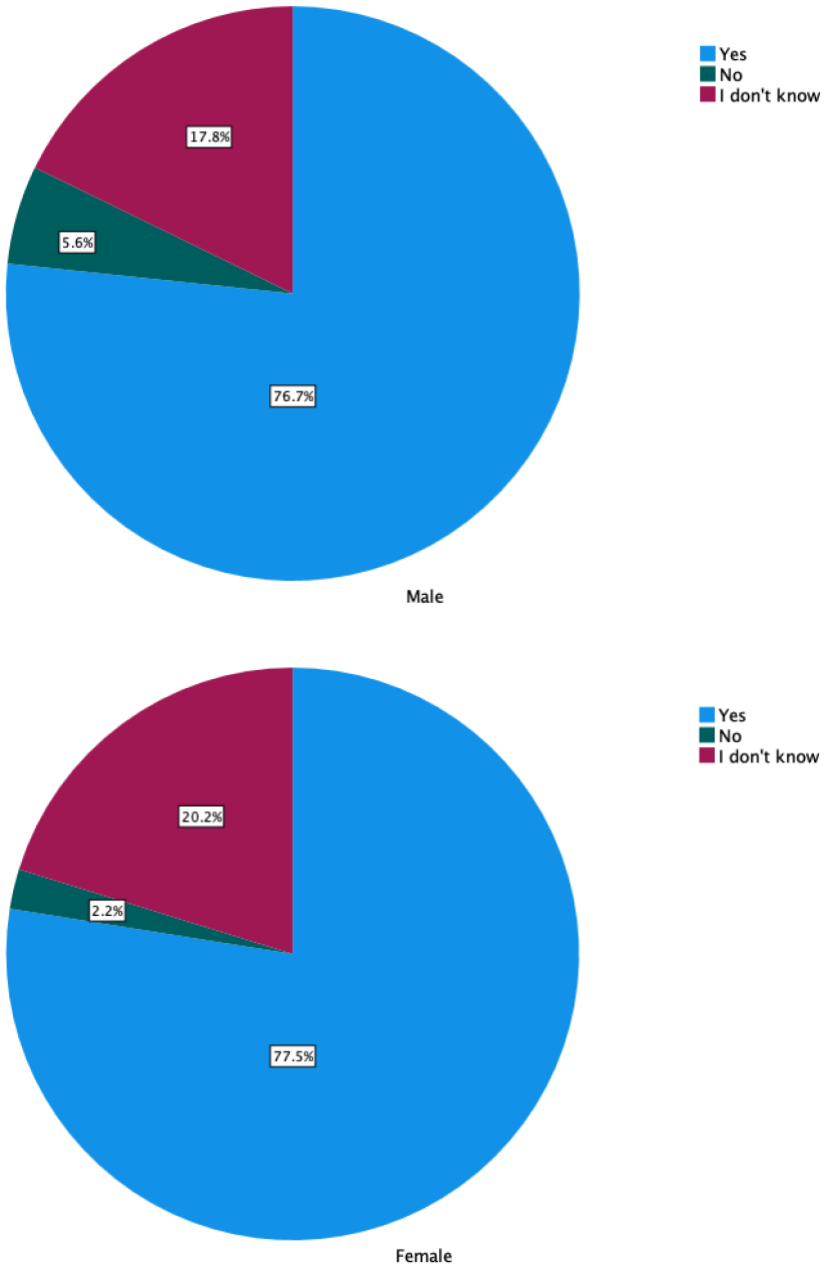
Note. Missing data = 7, as these students did not indicate their perceived environmental harm and/or vaping status.

Among those who never used e-cigarettes (n=133), 2 individuals expressed no perception of risk, while 4 individuals perceived a slight risk. Additionally, 37 individuals believed the risk to be moderate, and 71 individuals believed the risk to be very high. Furthermore, 19 respondents indicated uncertainty about the level of risk associated with vaping.

Among those who have used e-cigarettes (n=50) at least once in their life (i.e., lifetime), 1 individual believed there is no risk, while 8 individuals perceived a slight risk. Moreover, 15 individuals considered the risk to be moderate, and 14 individuals believed the risk to be very high. Additionally, 12 respondents were unsure about the level of risk. Altogether, while half (53.4%) of non-vapers believe that vaping is very harmful, from those who have vaped before, only 28.0% perceive vaping as very harmful. This highlights the varying levels of risk perception among different groups, with non-users generally expressing higher levels of concern compared to e-cigarette users. ($\chi 2$= 30.535, df = 12, p.0.002).

In relation to environmental harm, Figure 2.3.3. shows students perceptions in relation to disposable plastic vapes and their negative effect on the environment.

Figure 2.3.3 Perceived environmental harm of disposable vapes by gender (n=179)



Note. Missing data = 11, as these students did not indicate their perceived environmental harm and/or gender. Figure does not include those who responded 'other or non-binary' due to small number.

The data revealed that 138 students (77.1%) believed that disposable plastic vapes have a negative effect on the environment, while 7 students (3.9%) disagreed with this statement. Additionally, 34 students (18.9%) indicated uncertainty regarding the environmental impact of disposable plastic vapes. In regard to gender differences, both male and female students expressed similar concerns, with 69 males and 69 females acknowledging the negative environmental effects.

3. Smoking (tobacco) prevalence and behaviours

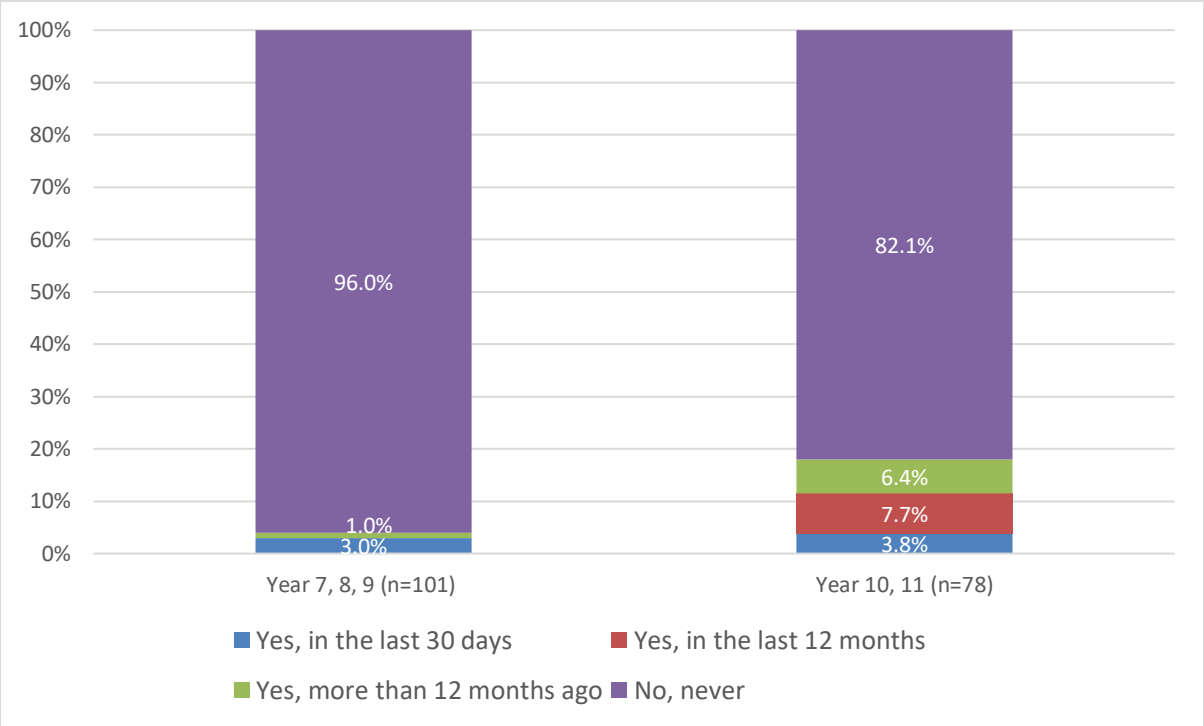
This section provides a snapshot of smoking habits among students, highlighting distinct patterns based on their year levels. Among lower year levels (years 7, 8 and 9), the majority (96%) of students have never smoked, with only a few reporting recent or past smoking. However, as the year levels progress, the prevalence of lifetime smoking increases significantly, reaching 17.9%. The data underscores the need for targeted educational programs to address smoking behaviours, particularly among students in higher year levels.

3.1. Cigarette use (Tobacco)

A total of 175 students responded to this question, with the majority of students never having smoked cigarettes (89.7%). Whereas a small percentage of students smoked cigarettes more than 12 months ago (2.8%), in the last 12 months (3.4%), and 2.9% in the last 30 days.

The data also suggests distinct patterns in smoking prevalence based on the students' year levels and gender. The breakdown of percentages can be seen below in Figure 3.1.1. and Figure 3.1.2.

Figure 3.1.1. Prevalence of cigarette smoking (tobacco) by school year (n=179)



Note. Missing data = 11, as these students did not indicate their tobacco use and/or school year.

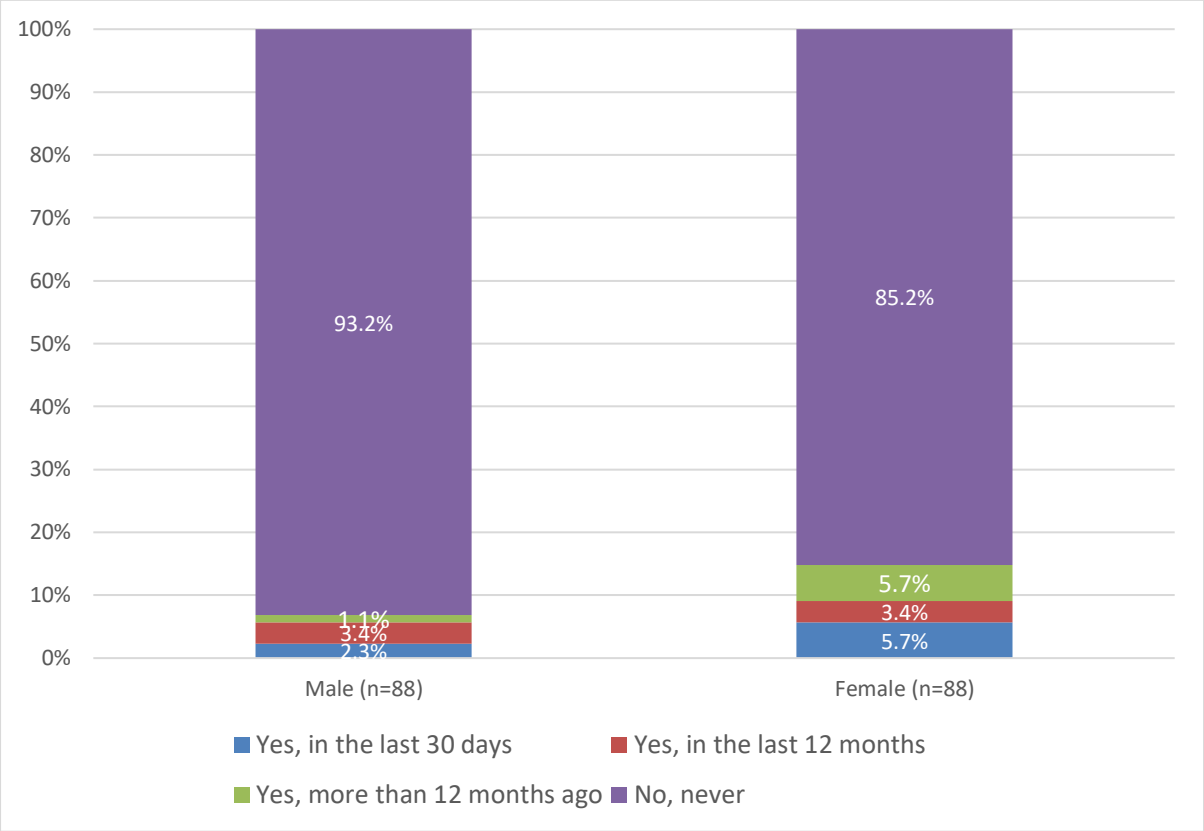
The data shows that lower year levels, year 7, 8 and 9, 97 out of 101 students had never smoked, with 3 reporting smoking in the last 30 days and 1 over 12 months ago.

As the year levels progress, the prevalence of smoking increases. Within this group, 3 reported smoking in the last 30 days with 6 students in the last 12 months, 5 more than 12 months ago and 64 students out of 78 having never smoked. (χ2= 12.685a, df = 3, p. 0.005).

The data underscores the importance of implementing targeted educational programs to address smoking behaviours among students, particularly in the higher year levels.

In regard to gender additional analyses were conducted, with the percentages being shown below in Figure 3.1.2.

Figure 3.1.2. Percentage of cigarette smokers (tobacco) by gender (n=176)



Note. Missing data = 14, as these students did not indicate tobacco use and/or gender. Figure does not include those who responded 'other or non-binary' due to small number.

Among males, 2 individuals reported smoking within the last 30 days, while 3 individuals had smoked in the last 12 months. Furthermore, 1 male reported smoking more than 12 months ago, while a substantial majority of 82 males had never smoked. On the other hand, among females, 5 reported smoking in the last 30 days, 3 within the last 12 months, and 5 more than 12 months ago. Similar to males, the majority of females (75) had never smoked.

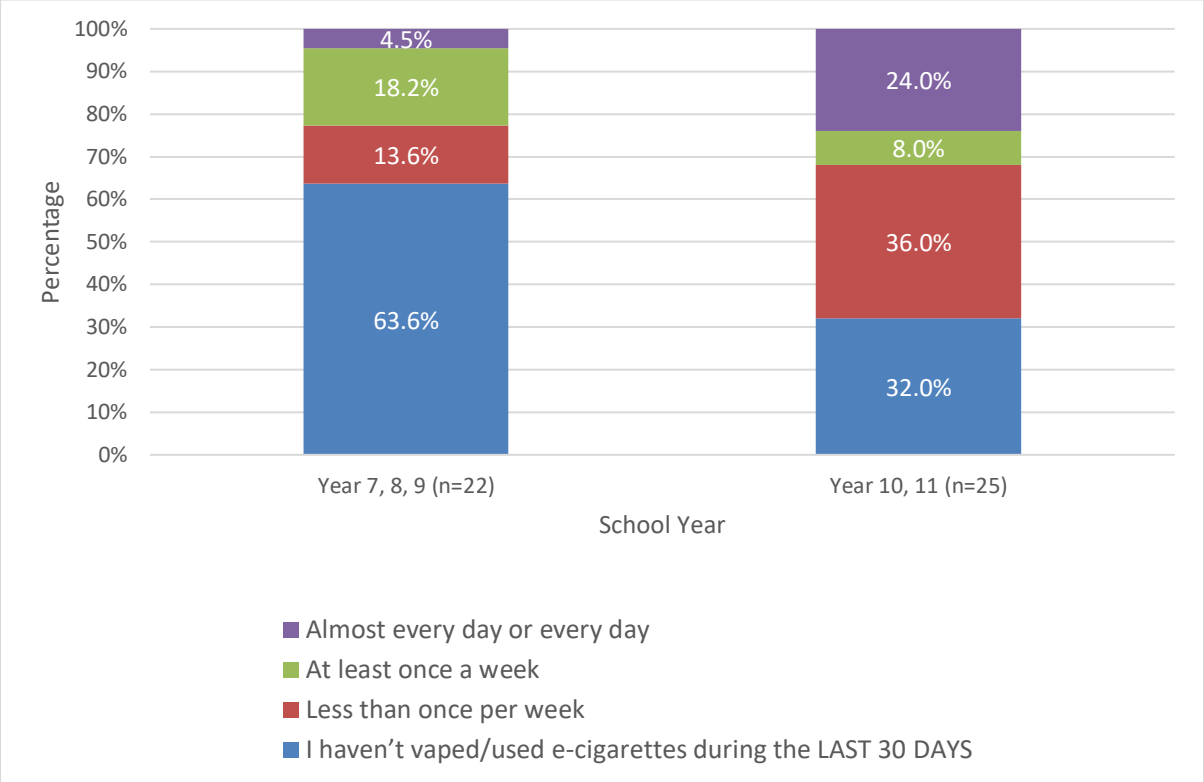
The prevalence of smoking varied across the 'last 30 days', 'last 12 months', 'more than 12 months', and 'no, never' categories, emphasizing the importance of considering gender-specific factors when formulating targeted anti-smoking campaigns and policies.

4. Vaping behaviours among past month e-cigarette users

4.1. Last month e-cigarette use

The present section considers e-cigarettes use that occurred in the last 30 days among those students that reported using e-cigarettes at least once in their lifetime. In total 47 students responded to this section. Just under half of the students who have ever used e-cigarettes indicated that they have not vaped in the last 30 days (46.8%). Whereas 12 students reported using e-cigarettes less than once per week (25.5%),6 reported using it at least once per week (12.7%), while 7 students reputed using e-cigarettes every day or almost every day (14.8%).

Figure 4.1.1. Frequency of last month e-cigarette use among those who ever vaped by school year (n=47)

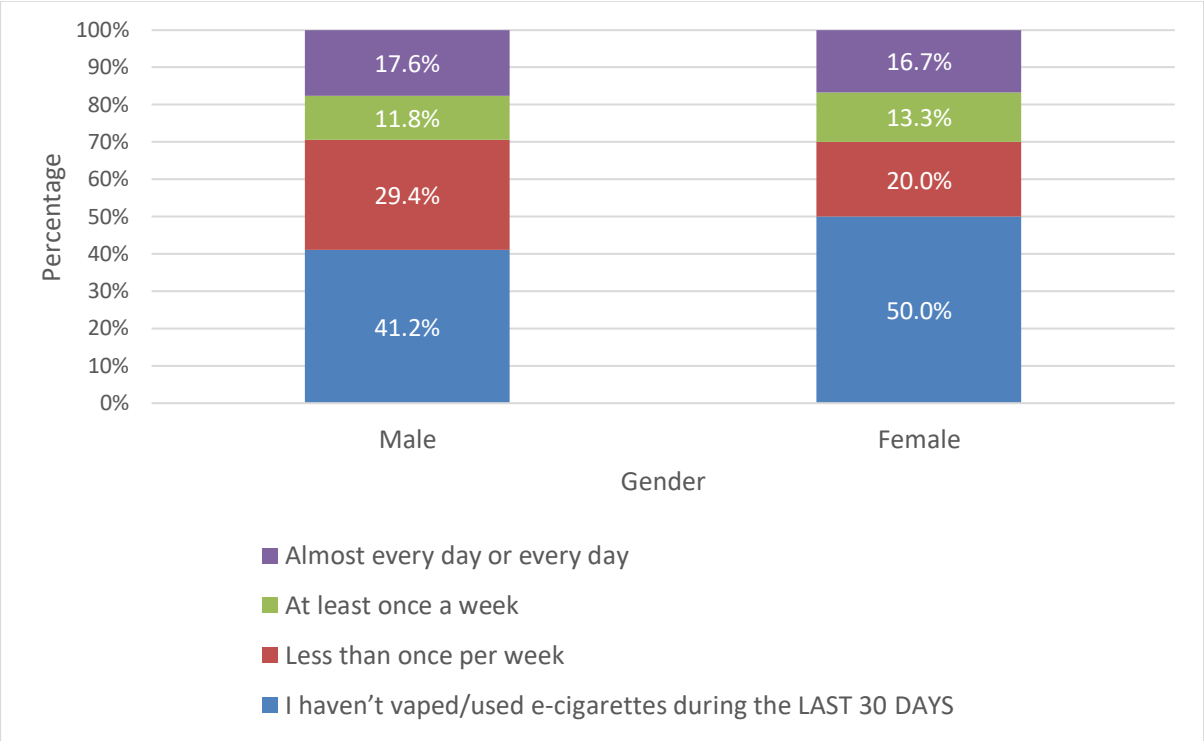


The frequency of e-cigarette use varied among students across different school years. In Year 7,8 and 9 (n=22); the majority of students who have ever vaped reported not using e-cigarettes in the last 30 days (n=14), while three students used them less than once per week, four students used them once a week and one reports almost every day or almost every day usage. In Year 10 and 11, out of 25 students who have ever vaped, 8 students reported not using e-cigarettes in the last 30 days, 9 students used them less than once per week, 2 students used them once a week, and 6 students used them almost every day or every day.

These findings suggest the frequency of e-cigarette use is higher in later school years. This underscores the importance of targeted interventions and preventive measures to address e-cigarette use among students.

In regard to gender (as seen below in Figure 4.1.2.), a total of 47 students were surveyed, who had ever vaped before, with 30 females and 17 males.

Figure 4.1.2. Frequency of last month e-cigarette use by gender among those who ever vaped (n=47)



Among males, 7 reported not using e-cigarettes in the last 30 days, 5 used them less than once per week, 2 used them at least once a week, and 3 used them almost every day or every day. On the other hand, among females, 15 reported not using e-cigarettes in the last 30 days, 6 used them less than once per week, 4 used them at least once a week, and 5 used them almost every day or every day.

4.2. E-cigarette types

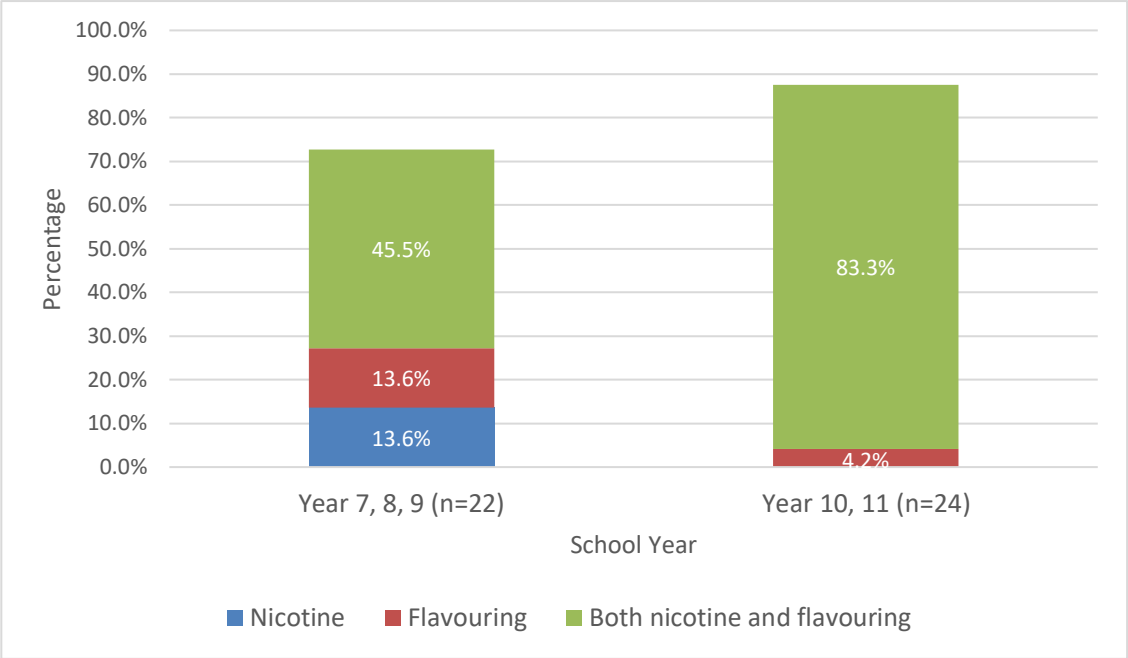
This section considers those who have ever vaped and what types of vapes / e-cigarettes are the most popular across school year and gender. The distribution of vape contents among students across years 7 to 11 is based on 46 responses. When considering the overall responses, 65.2% students reported using e-cigarettes that contained both nicotine and flavouring, 8.7% reported using only flavoured e-cigarettes, 6.5% used e-cigarettes which only contained nicotine. 19.6% of the surveyed students were not aware of their e-cigarette contents.

The findings reveal notable variations in vape contents across different year groups. Among year 7, 8 and 9 students, 10 students reported using vapes with both nicotine and flavouring versus 20 in years 10 and 11. As the school years progressed, the prevalence of

vapes containing both nicotine and flavouring has increased, however the level of nicotine only vapes has reduced to zero.

These findings provide an interesting snapshot into the types of vape contents used by students throughout each year level. Figure 4.2.1. gives a more detailed breakdown of the associated percentages.

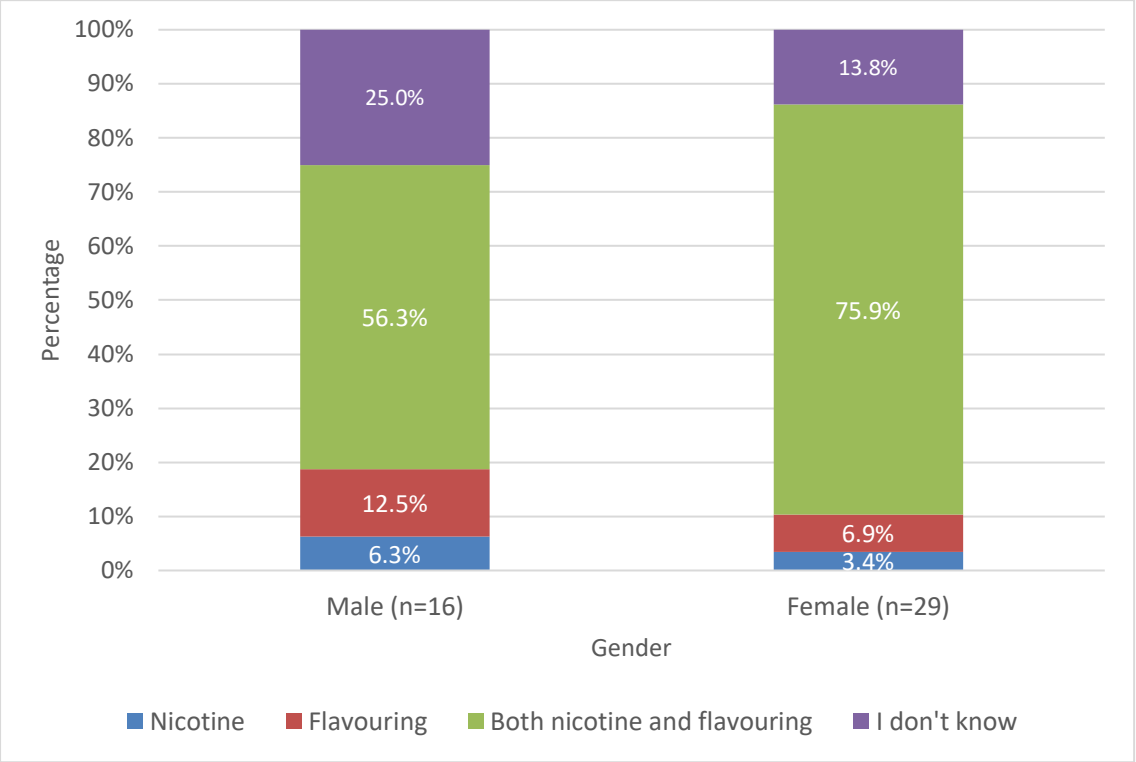
Figure 4.2.1. Percentage of the most used e-cigarette substance by school year among those who ever vaped (n=46)



Note. Figure does not contain students who responded "Neither" or "I don't know", and thus percentage totals do not add up to 100%.

In regard to gender and the contents of vapes or e-cigarettes used, specific percentages can be seen in Figure 4.2.2

Figure 4.2.2. Percentage of the most used e-cigarette substance by gender (n=45)



Note. Figure does not contain students who responded "Neither" nor "I don't know" nor those who responded 'other or non-binary' due to small number.

Among males, the most commonly reported vape contents were both nicotine and flavouring (n = 9), followed by flavouring only (n = 2) and nicotine only (n = 1). Females also reported a similar pattern, with the highest proportion using vapes containing both nicotine and flavouring (n = 22), followed by flavouring only (n = 2) and nicotine only (n = 1).

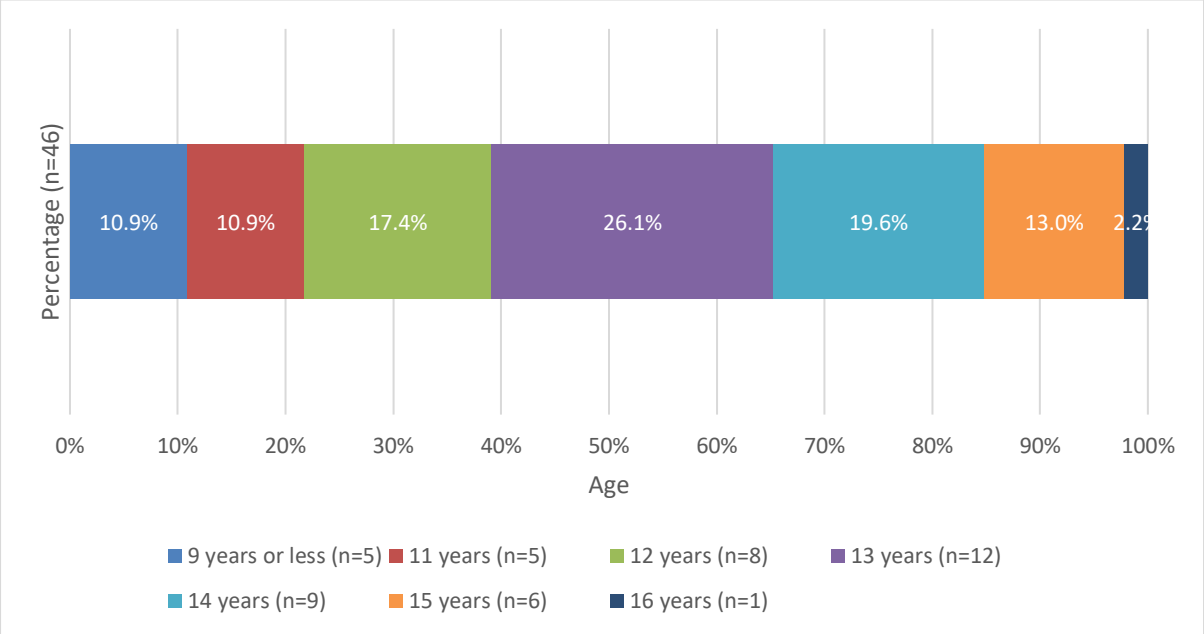
In summary, the findings reveal variations in e-cigarette types and contents across different school years and genders. As students' progress through their school, there is a noticeable increase in the prevalence of vapes containing both nicotine and flavouring.

Overall, data emphasizes the prevalence of vapes containing both nicotine and flavouring among students, indicating a need for continued attention and awareness regarding the potential risks associated with these types of e-cigarette contents. Additionally, the data highlights the importance of further research and education to address uncertainties about vape contents and to promote healthier choices among students.

4.3. Starting age

The present section explores the distribution of the age when individuals first used e-cigarettes. The data consists of 43 responses, providing a snapshot into the potential onset of e-cigarette use within students. In general, a large majority of students tried e-cigarettes for the first time between 12 and 15 years of age (n = 38, 88.4%). Whereas 7 students reported trying e-cigarettes before the age of 12, and 1 student reported trying e-cigarettes after the age of 15.

Figure 4.3.1. Percentages by age of first e-cigarette experience (n=46)



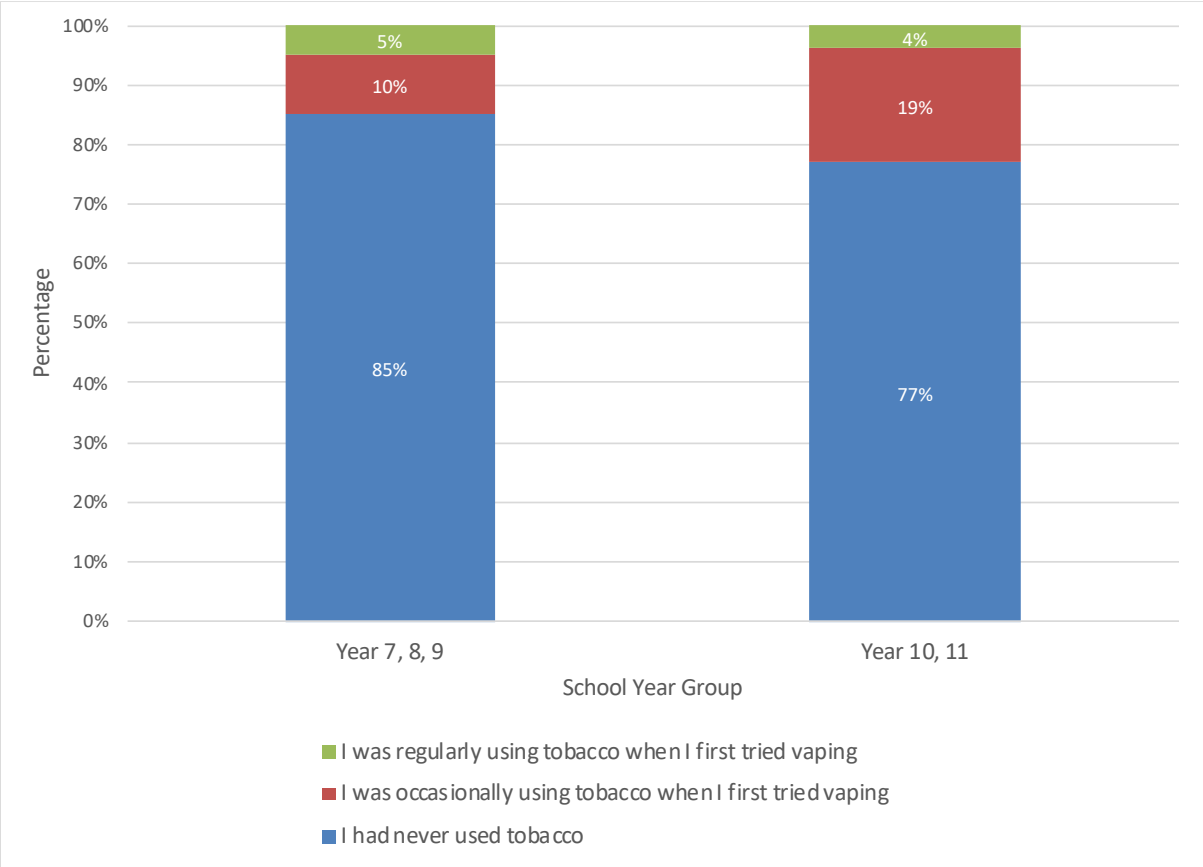
Note. Figure does not contain students who responded "Neither" nor "I don't know" nor those who responded 'other or non-binary' due to small number. No respondents replied aged 10 years.

Overall, while there is a small response rate, the data indicates that a number of students, began vaping during early adolescence, particularly at the age of 13 and 14 and this pattern remains similar irrespective of gender. It is important to address vaping habits and provide education on the potential risks associated with early initiation, considering the substantial number of individuals who start vaping at a young age.

4.4. Relationship to smoking

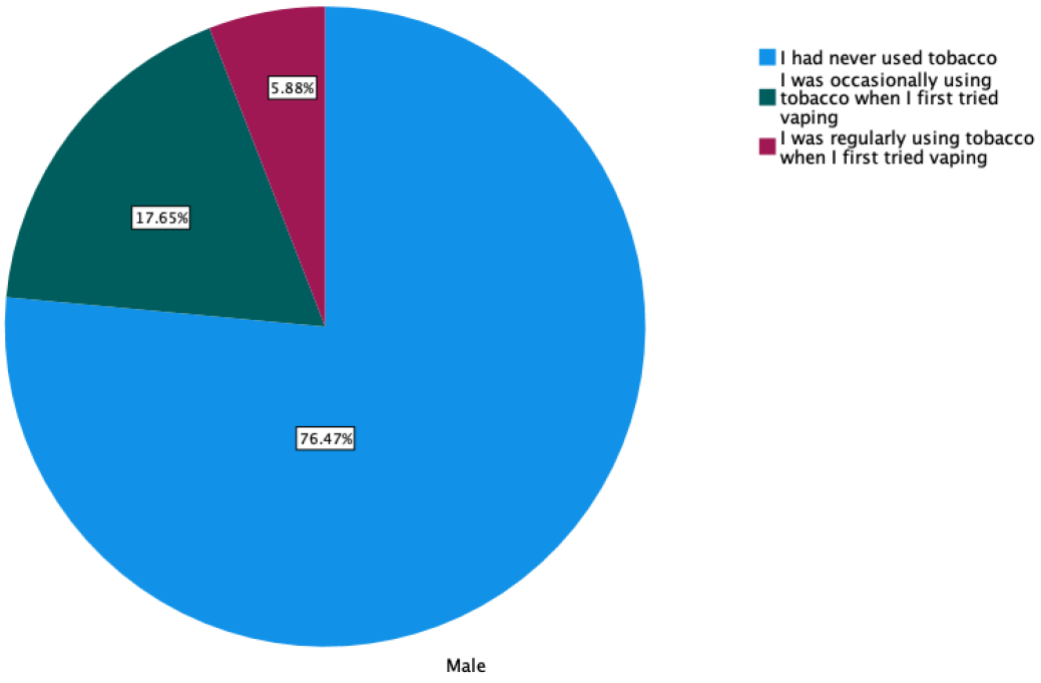
The following section examines smoking history and initial vaping experiences among students and differences across gender. The students provided information about their smoking history and initial experiences with e-cigarettes. The majority of students had never used tobacco (80.4%) prior to their first e-cigarette experience. While a small percentage of students occasionally smoked tobacco (15.2%), or regularly smoked tobacco (4.3%) prior to their first e-cigarette experience. Detailed percentages for each category by school year (Figure 4.4.1) and gender (Figure 4.4.2.).

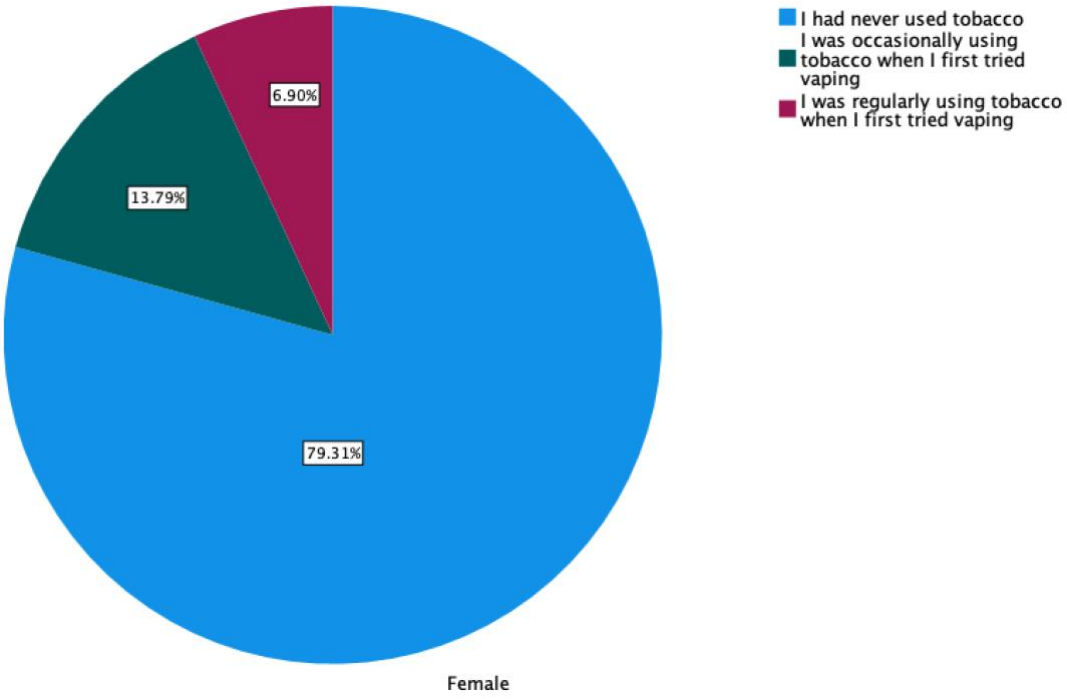
Figure 4.4.1. Percentage of relationship with tobacco by school year among those who ever vaped (n=46)



Note: Missing data= 1, as 1 student that responded yes to ever vaping in their lifetime did not indicate their relationship with tobacco.

Figure 4.4.2. Percentage of relationship with tobacco by gender (n=45)





Note. 'Other' or 'non-binary' was excluded due to small number (n=1).

Among the male respondents (n = 17), the majority (n = 13) reported having never used tobacco when they first tried vaping. A small number of males (n = 3) stated occasional tobacco use, while 1 male reported being regular tobacco user at the time of their initial vaping experience.

For the female respondents (n = 28) the majority (n = 23) reported no prior tobacco use, while 4 females were occasional tobacco users when they started vaping. Additionally, 1 female reported being regular tobacco user when they first tried vaping.

In summary, the data shows that the majority of participants regardless of gender, had no prior experience with tobacco before trying vaping. However, there were also individuals who reported occasional or regular tobacco use when they initiated vaping. These findings highlight the complex relationship between smoking tobacco and vaping habits, suggesting that some individuals may transition from tobacco use to vaping, while others may start vaping without any prior tobacco exposure.

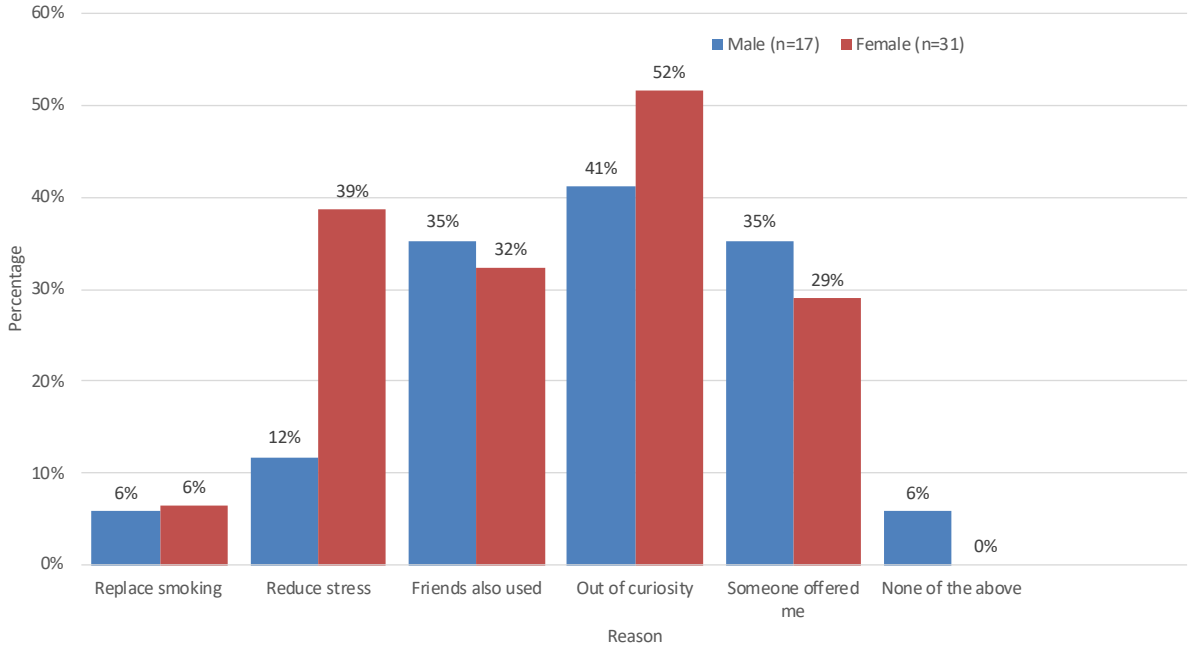
5. Motivations for vaping among e-cigarette users

This section provides insights into the motives of vaping among students. The data, based on a sample of 51 student e-cigarette users, reveals various motivations for using e-cigarettes, including substitution for tobacco smoking, stress reduction, social influence, and curiosity.

5.1. Motives of vaping

The following section contains data regarding students' reasons for using e-cigarettes. Students were given the option to select multiple reasons that applied to them. This data provides insights into the various motivations for using e-cigarettes among the surveyed students, allowing for an understanding of the factors influencing usage patterns. Percentages between gender can be seen below in Figure 5.1.1. while 'non-binary' and 'other' genders have been excluded due to small numbers (n=3).

Figure 5.1.1. Percentage of reasons for trying e-cigarettes by gender (n=48)



Note. Students could select multiple options and thus percentages do not equal up to 100%. In regard to gender, 'other or non-binary' category is not shown (n = 3).

In terms of using e-cigarettes, 23 students (7 males and 16 females,) expressed curiosity as a motivating factor for trying e-cigarettes. Social influence emerged as another popular factor influencing e-cigarette usage. Specifically, 16 students (6 males and 10 females) revealed that they opted for e-cigarettes because their friends also used them.

Furthermore, 15 students (6 males and 9 females) reported being offered e-cigarettes by friends or other people, which prompted their engagement with this form of nicotine consumption. While 14 students reported using e-cigarettes as a means to reduce stress or relax (2 males and 12 females).

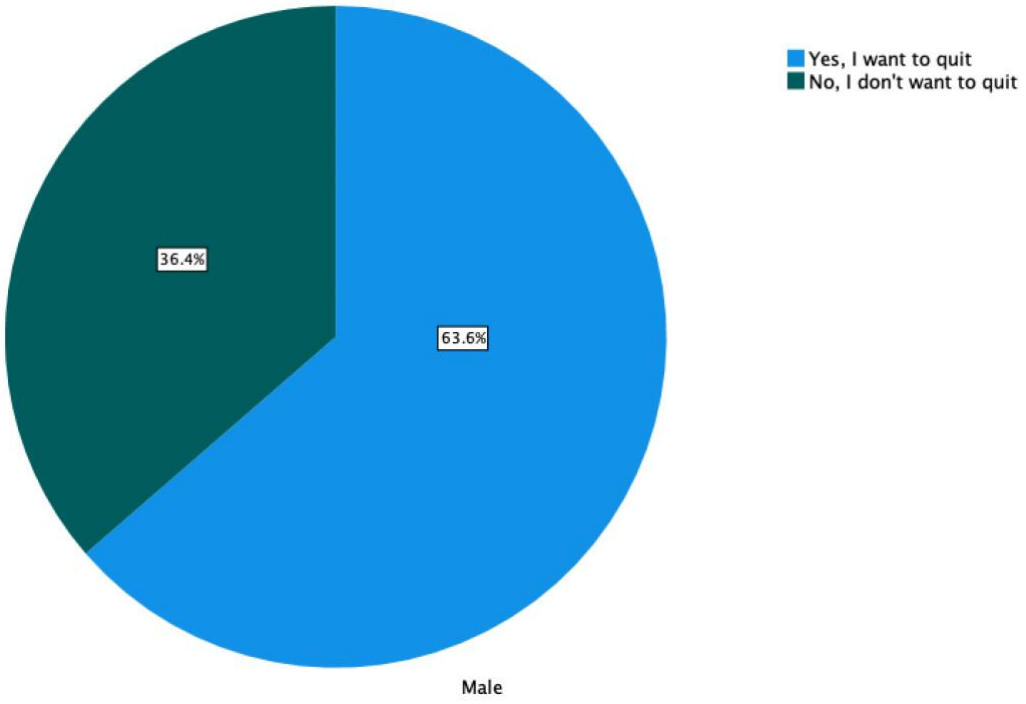
Additionally, 3 students (1 male, 2 females) expressed their preference for this alternative to replace smoking cigarettes (tobacco). While a total of 1 student (1 male) reported that

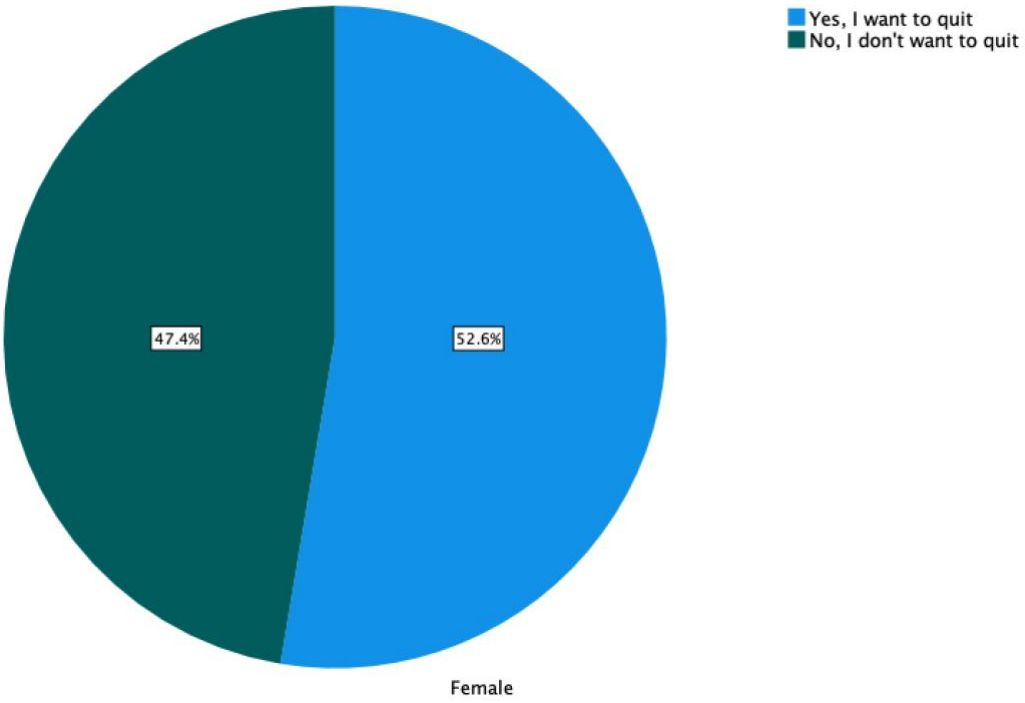
none of the above reasons were the reason they decided trying e-cigarettes, and their motivation was because they enjoyed it.

5.2. Motivation to quit e-/cigarette use

This section considers the smoking/vaping habits among students, specifically focusing on their desire to quit smoking/vaping. Figure 5.2.1. explores the distribution of desire to stop smoking/vaping among males and females.

Figure 5.2.1. Percentage of smokers wanting to quit smoking /vaping by gender (n=31)





Note. Missing data = 12. This includes those who answered both their desire to quit and gender. Individuals who reported not being a smoker or vaper (i.e., "I don't smoke/vape"; n = 353) were not included in the figure. Other' or 'non-binary' was excluded due to small number (n=3).

Among male students 7 expressed a desire to quit (63.6%), and 4 stated they did not want to quit (36.4%). Among female students, 10 expressed a desire to quit (52.6%), and 9 stated they did not want to quit (47.3%). These results suggest that there is a difference among gender in terms of the desire to quit smoking; specifically, a higher proportion of females appear to be less willing to quit when compared to males.

These findings shed light on the diverse smoking/vaping habits and attitudes towards quitting among different genders. These findings emphasize the importance of targeted smoking cessation programs and support services tailored to the specific needs and preferences of different gender groups.

6. Falkland Islands in an international context

The present section will look at the comparability of findings in relation to the European context and past Great Britain context where applicable. More specifically, this section will contain comparisons to the 2019 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) and the 2023 Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) survey. Finally, we can compare our results with the same Youth Vaping study delivered in Gibraltar in 2023.

6.1. European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) 2019

The present section explores the Falklands Islands e-cigarette data in comparison to the ESPAD study. These findings are exploratory and descriptive in nature, and continued research should be conducted in order to provide statistically supported conclusions. It is worth noting that the data for the ESPAD was collected in 2019 (pre-COVID), and thus behaviours or habits may have changed since this time. It is also important to note that ESPAD includes only 16-year-old students.

36.8% (n=7) of 16-year-old students reported having used e-cigarettes, compared to European average of 40% found in the ESPAD report. Regarding the broader European context, nine of the 35 ESPAD countries (which were primarily located in the Eastern part of Europe) reported more than half of the surveyed students had tried e-cigarettes at least once. While some countries reported lifetime prevalence rates lower than 30% (e.g., Malta, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia). It must be noted that the number of 16-year-old respondents in the Falklands Islands' survey was only 19, so given the small sample size this comparison of proportions must be interpreted with caution.

6.2. Action on Smoking and Health Survey (ASH) 2023

The present section explores the Falkland data and allows for more solid sample size of 187 participants, in comparison to the 2023 ASH survey. The ASH survey collected data across Great Britain from adolescent (aged between 11 to 17 years of age) participants.

In 2023, in Great Britain (GB), 20.5% of the adolescents tried e-cigarettes, which was lower than the 25.7% reported by Falkland Islands adolescents. This higher tendency is also reported in the current e-cigarette use where 7.6% adolescents in the ASH report to use e-cigarettes in the last 30 days versus 13.6% in The Falkland Islands, suggesting that vaping is more prevalent in Falkland Islands adolescents when compared with adolescents in GB.

6.3. Gibraltar Youth Vaping Study 2023

Based on the provided data, there are similarities between Falklands students and Gibraltar in regard to lifetime e-cigarette use: 25.7% of Falkland Island students (n=47) reported having used e-cigarettes, compared to 29.2% (n = 633) in Gibraltar. Furthermore, reported e-cigarette use in the past 30 days in Gibraltar is 14.2% which is slightly higher than

the Falklands 13.6%. However, female Falklands students show higher prevalence in first trying e-cigarette use with 34.1% versus 32.4% in Gibraltar females. While male counterparts trying e-cigarettes are much lower in the Falkland Islands at 18.4% and 25.1% respectively for Gibraltar males.

It must be noted that the number of respondents on the Falklands Islands was substantially less, and therefore difficult to achieve statistical significance. However, the data suggests that Falkland Island students may have lower lifetime use compared to the Gibraltar average. Given the small number of respondents this data must be interpreted with caution.

7. Appendix- Questionnaire

Dear Student,

This survey is a collaboration project between the Public Health Unit, Falkland Islands, Public Health Gibraltar and the University of Gibraltar, and we would like to ask you a few questions about vaping. Vaping means the use of e-cigarettes, also known as vapes, vape pen, vape mod. **This is an anonymous questionnaire**.

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THIS PAPER

Please fill out this questionnaire even if you have never tried vaping. Please follow the instructions as below for each question:
Read the questions and put an X in the box next to the selected answer.
When you have finished answering, put your questionnaire in the envelope provided.
Your participation is voluntary, and you may skip any question you prefer not to answer. If you do not wish to answer any questions at all, simply put the blank questionnaire into the envelope.

Thank you in advance for your help,

Question 1: What is your gender identity?
1 Male 2 Female 3 Non-binary 4 Other (please specify) .....

Question 2: How old are you?
☐11yrs ☐12yr ☐13yrs ☐14yrs ☐15yrs ☐16yrs ☐17yrs ☐18yrs ☐19yrs ☐20yrs or older

Question 3: Do you attend?
☐FICS ☐Falkland College

Question 4: Please select your school year if you attend FICS:
7 Year 7 8 Year 8 9 Year 9 10 Year 10 11 Year 11

Question 5: Have you ever vaped/used an e-cigarette
1 Yes, in the last 30 days
2 Yes, in the last 12 months
3 Yes, more than 12 months ago
4 No, never → **GO TO QUESTION 11**

IF YOUR ANSWER IS "NO, NEVER" TO QUESTION 5: GO STRAIGHT TO QUESTION 11.
OTHERWISE CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 6.

Question 6: How often have you vaped/used e-cigarettes during the LAST 30 DAYS?
1I haven't vaped/used e-cigarettes during the LAST 30 DAYS
2Less than once a week
3At least once a week
4 Almost every day or every day

Question 7: What do the vapes/e-cigarettes you usually use contain?
1 Nicotine
2 Flavouring
3 Both Nicotine and flavouring
4 Neither nicotine nor flavouring
99 I don't know

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Question 8: How old were you when you FIRST vaped/used e-cigarettes?
☐9 year or less ☐10 years ☐11years ☐12 years ☐13years ☐14years
☐15years ☐16 years ☐17 years ☐18years or more 99 I don't remember

Question 9: When you first tried vaping/e-cigarettes, what was your relationship with smoking tobacco?
1I had never used tobacco
2I was occasionally using tobacco when I first tried vaping
3I was regularly using tobacco when I first tried vaping

Question 10: Why did you try vaping/e-cigarettes for the FIRST time? (Check all that apply to you)
0-1 To replace smoking cigarettes (tobacco)
0-1 To reduce stress or to relax
0-1 Because my friends also used it
0-1 Out of curiosity
0-1 Because my friend/other people offered it to me
0-1 None of the above
0-1 Other reason ……

Question 11: How much do you think PEOPLE RISK harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they vape/use e-cigarettes?
1Not at all
2Slightly
3Moderately
4Very much
5I don't know

Question 12: Do you think that vapes have a negative impact on the environment?
1Yes
2No
3I don't know

If you would like to add any information as to why you chose your answer to question 12 please add below:

……

Question 13: Have you ever smoked (not including vapes/e-cigarettes)?
(Smoking includes any tobacco products including cigarettes, roll-ups, pipes, cigars, cigarillos, shisha)
1Yes, in the last 30 days
2Yes, in the last 12 months
3Yes, more than 12 months ago
4No, never

Question 14: Would you like to quit smoking/vaping?
1I don't smoke/vape
2Yes
3No

Thank you for your time in answering this survey.

Please note if you smoke or vape and would like help to quit please contact KEMH Tel 28000 and ask for an appointment with a GP or healthcare professional.