Observed Tobacco Product Waste Near Schools in Kolkata, India

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Background

Tobacco product waste is the most-collected litter item globally. Reducing tobacco litter will help the environment, and could further support the denormalization of tobacco use, an important strategy to discourage youth initiation.
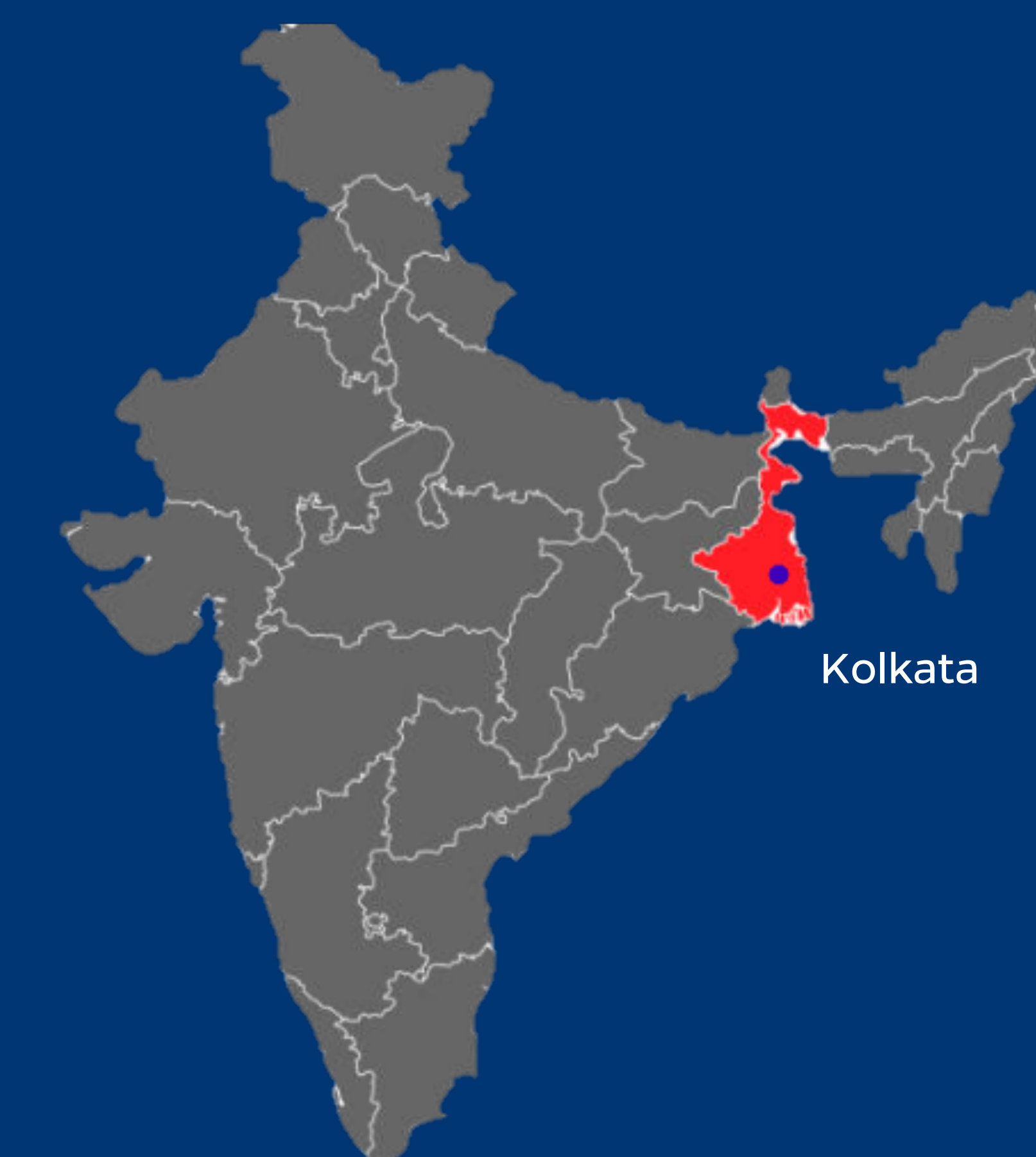
Methods

- Tobacco litter was observed twice in 18 spatially-dispersed, predetermined paths (500-700m) near schools (students 13-18) across Kolkata for 36 observations total.

- Schools in the sample were located in diverse neighborhoods (low-, medium-, and high-SES), and included both private- and government-run schools.

- Data collectors used a mobile app to record observations and classify the tobacco litter types.

Cigarette pack litter with distinguishable branding and HWL

We found **1 piece of tobacco litter for every 8m** traversed on average, totaling 2,340 pieces.

Tobacco litter near schools might be an additional **tobacco exposure point for youth.**

Kolkata

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Bidi butts and smokeless tobacco packets observed among tobacco waste near a school

Results

- Smokeless tobacco (SLT) packet litter was observed the most (51%), then cigarette butts (21%), bidi butts (21%), cigarette packs (5%), and bidi packs (2%).

- No e-cigarette/HTP waste observed

- 36% of the litter had visible branding.

- No sizeable difference in the quantity of tobacco litter observed around private (52%) vs. government (48%) schools

- Schools in low SES neighborhoods had the highest proportion of tobacco litter (38%) followed by medium (36%) and high (26%) SES.

A school along an observation route

Authors

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