

Exploring the Regional Disparities in Substance Use Among Indian Youth: A State-wise Comparative Analysis Using the WHO ASSIST Tool

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➤ KEY FINDINGS

- The prevalence of substance use in Northeastern states is *higher* than other states in India.
- Individuals in Northeastern states of India are *8.6 times* more likely to engage in substance use as compared to individuals in other states.

BACKGROUND

Understanding the regional disparities in substance use among young people in India is critical for developing effective public health strategies. This study examines these variations across different Indian states, taking into account the diverse socio-cultural and economic factors.

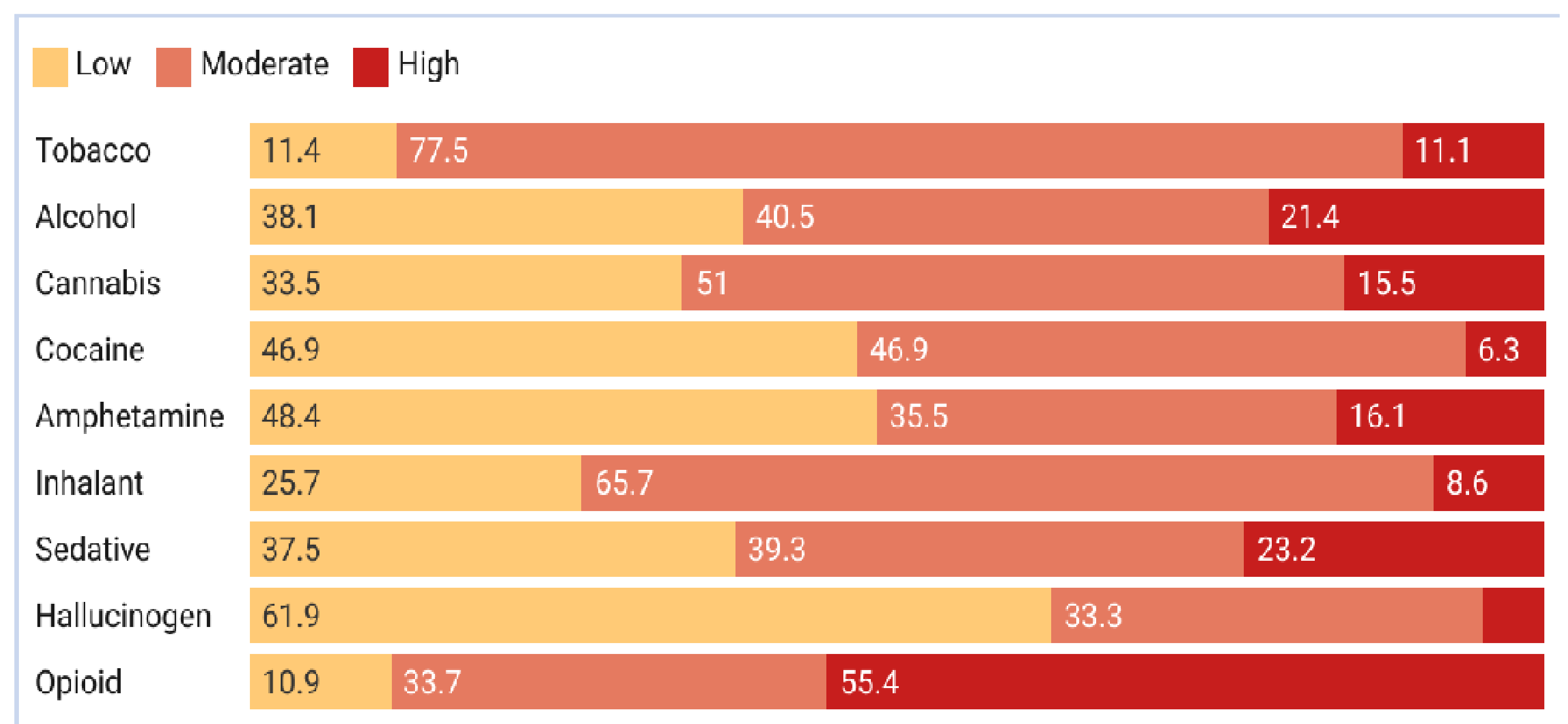
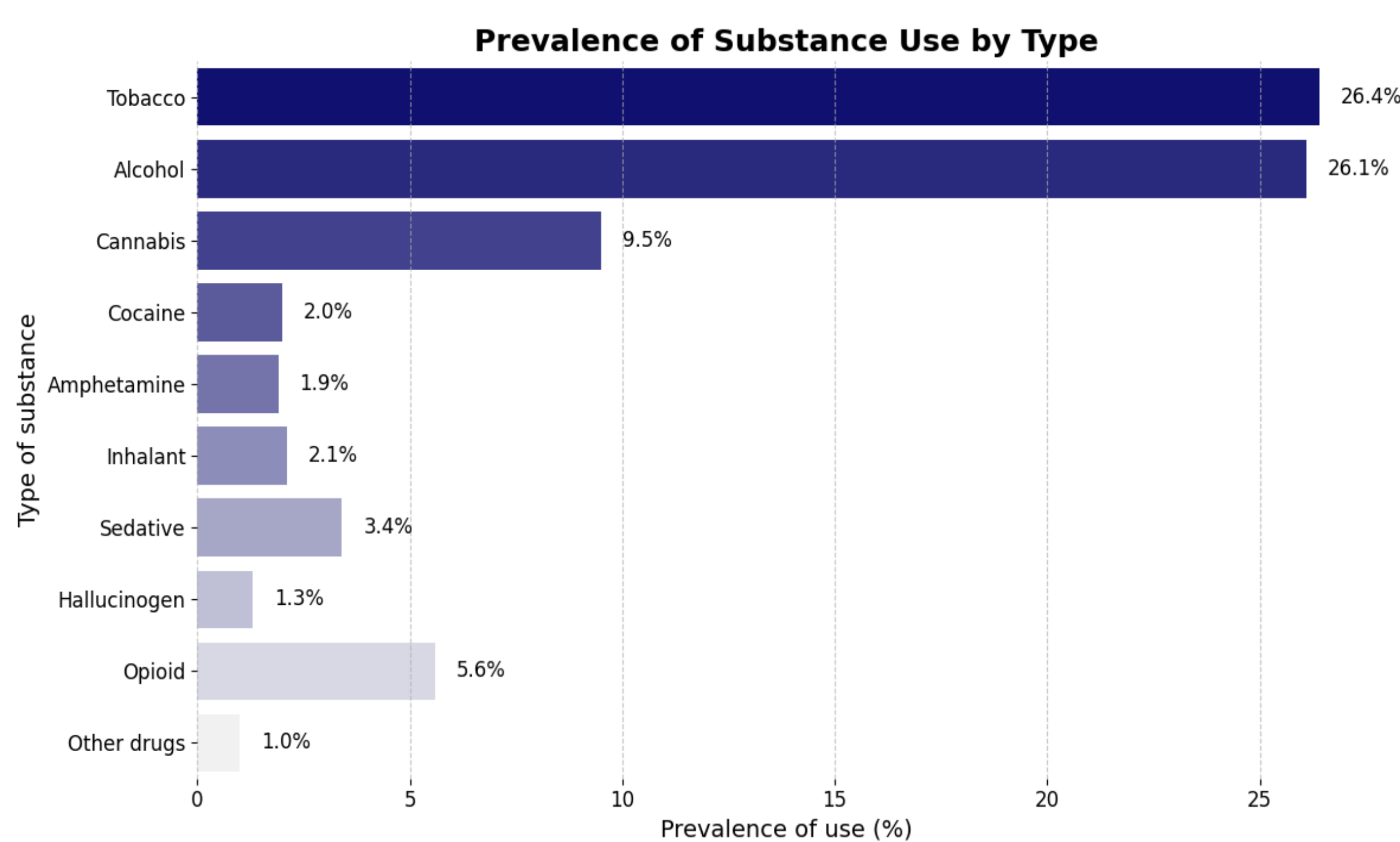
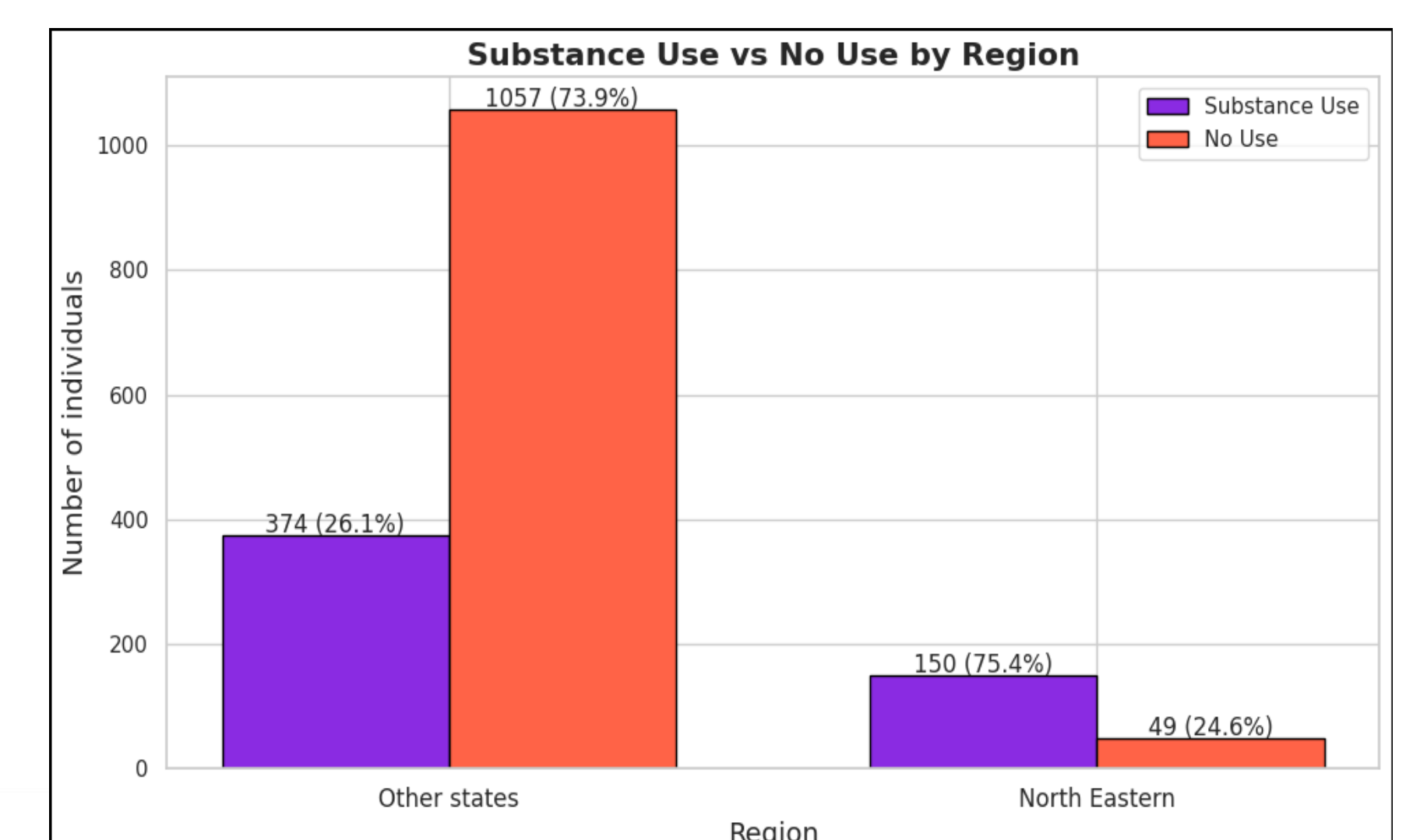
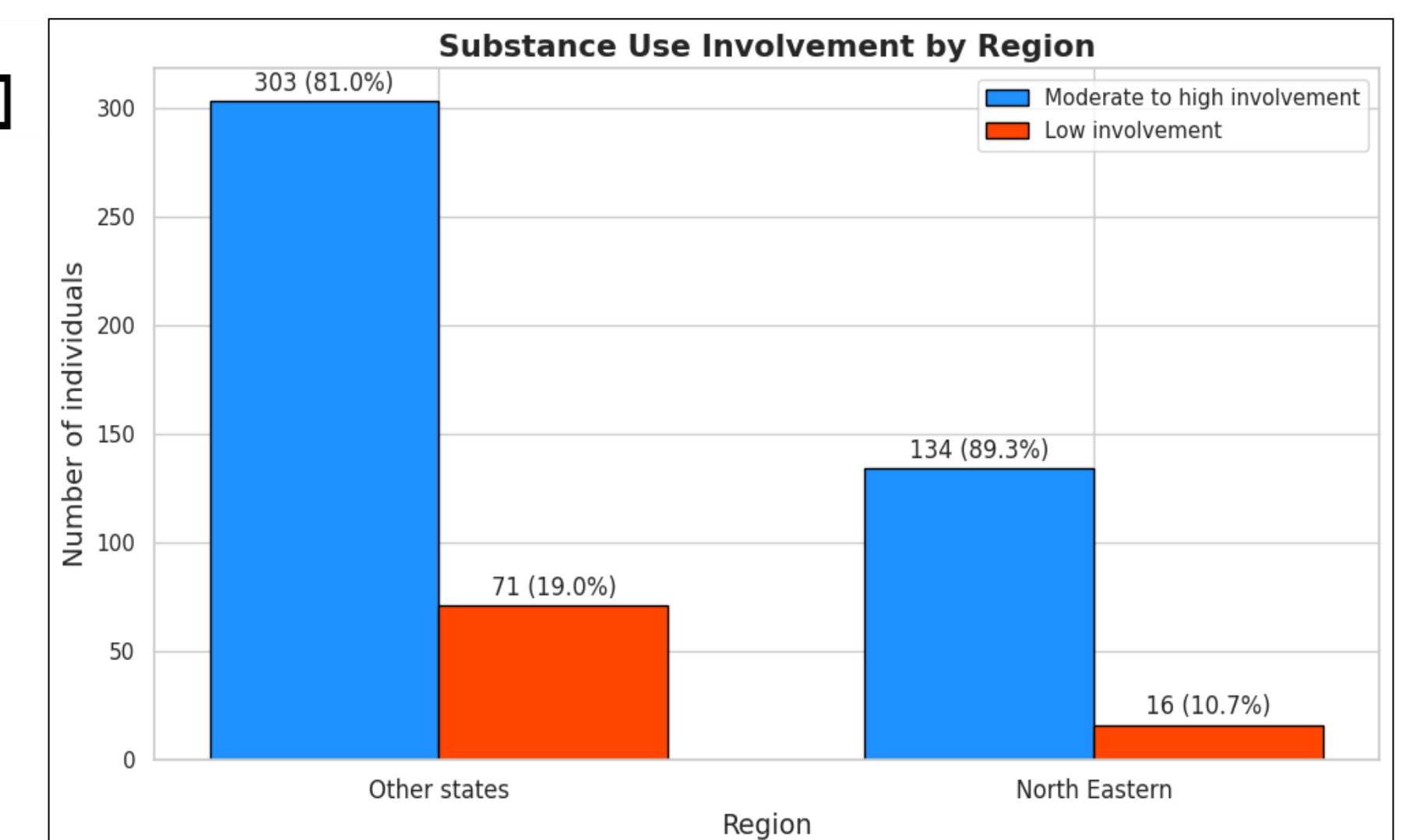
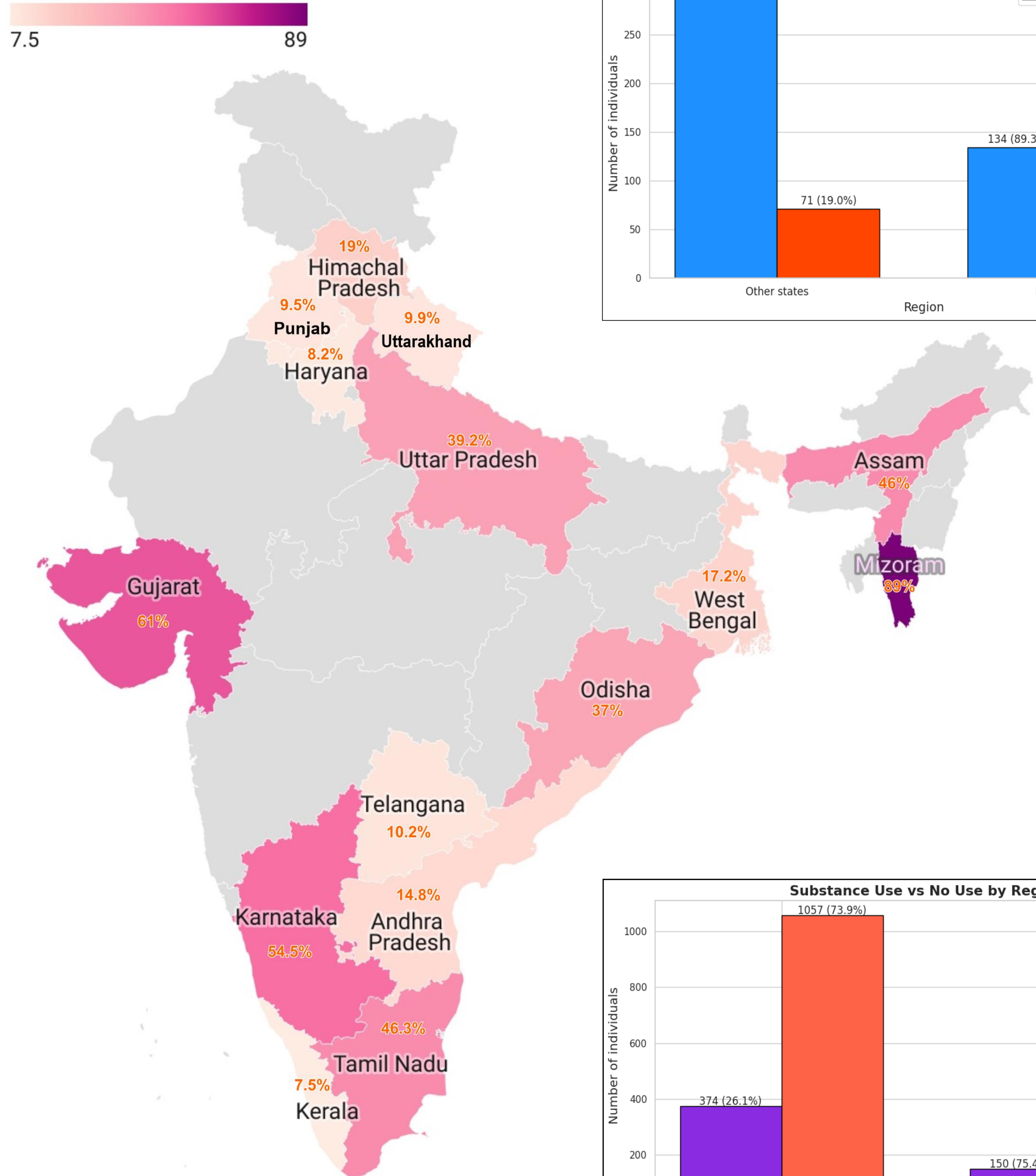
METHODS

This cross-sectional study utilized data from primary health centers in 15 Indian states. Key variables such as age, gender, residence type, and severity of substance use were assessed. The World Health Organization's Alcohol, Smoking, and Substance Involvement Screening Test (WHO ASSIST) was employed to evaluate the severity of substance involvement, ensuring a standardized and comprehensive assessment across all regions.

RESULTS

- The overall prevalence of substance use was 32.8%. The prevalence of substance use in female is 12.2% and male is 45.6%.
- Prevalence of Substance user in Urban was 40.5% and rural was 26.6%.
- Mizoram had the highest prevalence of substance use (89%), and Kerala the least (7.5%).
- The Prevalence of substance use in Northeastern state is 75.4% is where the prevalence in other regions in India is 26.1%
- Among the substance, Prevalence of Tobacco(26.4%) and Alcohol(26.1%) was maximum.
- Among the substance users, 210 (40.1%) were willing to take help for quitting, and another 212 (19.5%) reported that they might consider taking help.

[SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVALENCE ACROSS STATES]



CONCLUSIONS

- Female had lower prevalence of substance use than male.
- The prevalence of substance use in Northeastern state is higher than other states.
- Tobacco and Alcohol both highly prevalent and are nearly equal in usage among young people in India.
- Tobacco and Alcohol are mostly moderate risk, while Opioid shows a higher high-risk percentage and Hallucinogen show lower risk.
- The northeastern states had higher substance use involvement, with **89.3%** moderate to high users, compared to **81.0%** in other states.
- Males are 6.03 times more likely to engage in substance use compared to females.