



RESEARCH ARTICLE

A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY ON THE EXISTING GAP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF ROAD SAFETY AMONG GOVERNMENT COLLEGES IN CHENNAI

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ABSTRACT

Every week nearly 2,650 people get killed and 9,000 get injured due to traffic accidents. In 2017, latest year for which data is available, 137,423 people died and 469,900 people got injured due to road accidents in India. Thus it is very essential that we understand the knowledge level of the college students and the practices and thus identify the gap if it exists.

Objective: To study the knowledge of the respondents on Road Safety and practices and identify the existing gap between knowledge and practice.

Methodology: A cross sectional study was done with semi structured questionnaire was used to obtain data from 420 students who drive two wheelers were taken in the study. Government colleges with co -education were selected to collect the data. SPSS version 20 was used for data entry, cleaning and analysis.

Results: The knowledge level of study participants regarding road signs was considerably high especially in case of what do the traffic signal lights indicate (95%), not to horn (75%) zebra crossing (94%) and pedestrian prohibited (84%). All the students agreed that driving without a valid license is an offence and chance of accidents increase when driving bikes without a helmet 8% of the students did not feel that using mobiles while driving was offense. 77% of the respondents agree to the fact that they travel in triples to college and majority (55%) of them were males.

Conclusion: Good knowledge about road safety did not lead into prudent traffic practices by younger generation. More concentration on sensitisation programs are needed.

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INTRODUCTION

Every week nearly 2,650 people get killed and 9,000 get injured due to traffic accidents. In 2017, latest year for which data is available, 137,423 people died and 469,900 people got injured due to road accidents in India. Traffic accidents have now earned India a dubious distinction; with nearly 140,000 deaths annually, the country has overtaken China to top the world in road fatalities. India is the only country in the world which faces more than 15 fatalities and 53 injuries every hour as a consequence of road crashes. While in many developed and developing countries including China, the situation is generally improving, India faces a worsening situation. If the trend continues, the total number of road traffic deaths in India would increase by 100% between 2013 and 2027. Ninety percent of world's road traffic fatalities occur in developing countries.

It is in this background that the UN General Assembly has declared 2011 to 2020 as the "Decade of Action for Road Safety" which seeks to halt the increasing trends in road traffic deaths and injuries worldwide.

Objective

To study the knowledge of the respondents on Road Safety and practices and identify the existing gap between knowledge and practice.

METHODOLOGY

A cross sectional study was done with semi structured questionnaire was used to obtain data from 420 students. Government colleges with co -education were selected to collect the data. SPSS version 20 was used for data entry, cleaning and analysis.

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Review of literature

In a study done by Sharma & Saini (2017) in Uttarakhand reveals that only 18.7% of students has high level of knowledge regarding road traffic safety regulation and majority (81.3%) of them had moderate to low level of knowledge. However, they had good mean score of attitude but still they endanger their lives, probably this has contributed in their inappropriate practices of road traffic safety. Therefore, they require sanitizations program to improve the knowledge, attitude and practice of road traffic safety regulations to reduce the chances of road traffic accidents.

Study done among school student in Chennai by Mary et al (2016), out of 360 participants, 186 participants (51.7%) had adequate knowledge and 174 participants (48.3%) had inadequate knowledge on the road safety rules and regulations. 54.4% participants knew that 40 kmph is the normal driving speed limit in the city and only 24.4% participants knew that the permissible blood alcohol limit for driving in India. Among the study participants, more than half of the participants had a positive attitude towards road safety rules and regulations. Among the 360 participants, only 45% used zebra crossing for crossing roads, 77.5% followed the road signs and symbols and only 201 participants (55.8%) had the habit of wearing seat belt while in a moving car. 293 participants were driving vehicles. (Table 4) Among them, 18 drove four wheelers, 10 drove three wheelers and all of them drove two wheelers. Only 28 participants (9.6%) were driving with a valid driving license

RESULTS

Knowledge

The knowledge level of study participants regarding road signs was considerably high especially in case of what do the traffic signal lights indicate (95%), not to horn (75%) zebra crossing (94%) and pedestrian prohibited (84%). All the students agreed that driving without a valid license is an offence and chance of accidents increase when driving bikes without a helmet 8% of the students did not feel that using mobiles while driving was offense.

Practices

Of the 420 respondents only 36 of the respondents expressed that they use helmet every time they drive their vehicle. Of the 36 respondents majority (27%) of them were females. Though the respondents had knowledge on rules on driving and about road safety rules only 32% of the respondents expressed that they follow it and 20% of the respondents were females. Though all the respondents knew that it was mandatory for a respondent to have a license to drive, not all the respondents who drove bike possessed license. Of the 420 respondents only 64% of the respondents had license to drive. Of the 64% who held license majority(50%) of them were male respondents. While all the male respondents who had license carried them only very few (15-n) female respondents carried it with them. Only 12% of the respondents had renewed the insurance. All the respondents who used bike expressed that they do attend to phone calls while driving. More than half (52%) of the respondents listen to 39% of the female respondents expressed that listen to music while drive and they outnumber the male members. 22% of the male respondents admitted that they drive bike even if they are under the influence of alcohol. 77%

of the respondents agree to the fact that they travel in triples to college and majority (55%) of them were males. 87 % of the respondents agreed that they exceed the speed limit and males outnumbered the females by 57%. While sharing about parking, 93% of the respondents park their vehicle in non parking area and again male members outnumber females by 62%. Only 9% of the respondents maintain distance with other vehicles and not much of difference were noticed between the genders. Only 8% of the respondents did not over take other vehicles and the 8% were girls. While all the female respondents use indicators, only 21% of the male respondents use them.

Suggestion

Students should be encouraged to obtain license. RTO officials can be requested to visit college and licence and be issued in the college campus, if found eligible. College should not allow students inside the campus if they are not wearing their helmet. Students should not be allowed to enter campus if they are travelling triples. Awareness programs on road safety can be organised periodically.

Conclusion

Though respondents had knowledge they were not able put them in to practice. It is very essential to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice.

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