

Abstract

The majority of casualties of road traffic accidents were motorcyclists with head injury involved in almost all deaths.

Underlying causes of motorcycle accidents were found out to be inattentive mode, driving under stress, poor attention to distances, poor attention towards regulations, unfamiliarity with the road of the accident and absence of protection systems.

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among all Public health inspectors attached to regional directorate of health services (RDHS) Kurunegala, to assess their knowledge, attitudes on motorcycle riding safety and the practices related to safety. Being role models related to public health, being frequent motorcycle riders, being riders throughout the urban, suburban and rural roads are among the factors favourable for the selection of the population of Public Health inspectors attached to Kurunegala RDHS division.

Majority of the responders had the knowledge of the presence of safety measures in the motorcycles they used. A minority of responders (11%) had no knowledge on presence or absence of integrated break systems and 22% had no knowledge on presence or absence of anti-lock brake systems which were rare safety measures. Most of the respondents (88%) were aware that road traffic accidents is a public health issue.

Safety measures available in respondents' motor bicycles were found to be average. Air bags and antilock brake systems were not available in any of the motor bicycles according to the respondents' knowledge while 5% of the respondents reported the presence of crash bars.

A majority of the respondents (76%) reported to have answered the mobile phone or used the mobile phone while riding at least 2-3 times a month. Another significant proportion (82%) of the respondents reported to have overtaken other vehicles from left side more than 2-3 times a month. A majority of respondents reported to have ridden motor cycles at least 2-3 times a month or more frequently (76%) while tired. Only 30% of the respondents used the helmets always.

Out of the population surveyed 41% of the respondents reported to have been involved with a road traffic accident that led to vehicle damage and or physical injury to the driver/passenger/bystander.

A majority of the respondents (72%) agreed that there should be strict punishment for offenders in road traffic accidents. A significant majority (80%) of the respondents agreed that exceeding speed limits are not acceptable in an urgency.

Key words- knowledge, attitudes, practices, motorcycle safety, public health inspectors