

## ABSTRACT

Road traffic injuries become a growing disaster in the world. Almost 16,000 people die due to injuries on daily basis. Annually, over 1.25 million deaths and 20 to 50 million sustaining nonfatal injuries result due to road traffic accident (WHO, World Health Statistics, 2016) (WHO, Global status report on road safety 2015). There are 36,918 road traffic accidents and 2801 deaths were reported for 2015 in Sri Lanka (Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation). Number of accidents attributed to three wheelers are only seconded to motorcycle accidents in Sri Lanka.

This study is a cross sectional study with the main aim to describe knowledge, attitudes and practices of three wheeler drivers on selected road safety rules in the Horana Urban Council Area. Specific objectives of the study are (1) To describe knowledge on selected road safety rules among three wheeler drivers stationed in the Horana Urban Council Area, (2) To assess the association of knowledge on selected road safety rules and selected covariates, and (3) To observe the practices of road safety rules among the three-wheeler drivers pass through selected locations in the Horana Urban Council Area.

Data collection of the study comprised of two components. Administration of a questionnaire to the three wheel drivers at designated parks in the Urban Council of Horana was comprised of the first component. The second component comprised of direct observation of purposively identified 3 locations in Horana Urban Council Area. Locations for direct observations were identified based on (1) past data on road accidents reported at the Police station of Horana, (2) expert opinion taken by traffic police division and (3) selected insurance companies.

The data were presented as frequencies and percentages. Continuous data were presented as mean and standard deviation. Based on the responses received for questions on knowledge, a cumulative score was developed. Based on the score, participants were categorized as “good knowledge” and “poor knowledge” groups. The associations were assessed with Chi Square test for categorical data.

Out of 269 three wheeler drivers registered in 16 three wheeler parks, 206 three wheeler drivers responded (76.6% response rate). About 60 % of participants are in the age group of 35 to 50 years. About 60.2% of this age group had “Good knowledge” and



39.8% were in “Poor knowledge” group. Around 25.7% of the responders were in more than 50 years. There were 24.2% (n = 29) of “Good knowledge” and 27.9% (n = 24) of “Poor knowledge” in this age group. Others were in less than 35 years age category ( $\chi^2 = 0.378$ ,  $p = 0.828$ ). All responders had some education. About 41% of the participants have studied up to grade 10. Around 40.0% (n = 48) of this educational group were in “Good knowledge” category and 42.4% (n = 36) were in “Poor knowledge” category. The majority (59.0%, n = 121) were in O/L passed or above educational group and 60.0% (n = 72) of them had “Good knowledge” and 40% (n = 48) had “poor knowledge”. About 57.6% (n = 49) of this O/L passed or above educational level responders were in “Poor knowledge” category ( $\chi^2 = 0.114$ ,  $p = 0.736$ ). Around 61% (n = 126) of participants had “10 or less than 10 years” service experience. A 63% (n = 76) of those who have “10 or less than 10 years” service experience had “Good knowledge” and 58.8% (n = 50) of them had “Poor knowledge”. Seventy nine (38.5%) of total responded three wheel drivers had “more than 10 years” of service experience. There were 36.7% (n = 44) in “Good knowledge” category and 41.2% (n = 35) found in “Poor knowledge” in the service experience category of “more than 10 years” ( $\chi^2 = 0.427$ ,  $p = 0.513$ ). The findings of the study show that the overall knowledge on road safety rules of three wheeler drivers in the Horana Urban council area were satisfactory. But there are some gaps of knowledge on road safety rules specially the “maximum speed” for the three wheelers allowed in the city area. Knowledge is totally independent of age, sex, marital status, religions, ethnicity, educational level and service experiences of three wheeler drivers in the Horana Urban Council area. Around 20% of unsafe driving was observed during the direct observation at three locations for one hour duration. Though the knowledge is adequate, observation showed that practices of road safety rules are poor. Probably it may due to poor attitudes of drivers. It is recommended that, conducting programmes targeted for behavior change of three wheel drivers.