

Road rage and road side accidents involvement in commercial vehicle drivers of Karachi

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Madam, rage expressed on the road by occupants of one vehicle directed at the occupants of another in terms of verbal abuse, threats, and acts of physical harm constitute road rage.¹ It jeopardizes road safety and increases the burden of morbidity and mortality.^{1,2} Although several studies in different cities of Pakistan have reported verbal abuse and rude gestures as common type of road rage encountered by commercial vehicle drivers.¹⁻⁵ There are no studies published on road rage in Karachi. A cross-sectional survey with convenience sampling was conducted from May-August 2012 among bus, and rickshaw drivers in Karachi to study their behaviours/experiences regarding road rage and involvement in road traffic accidents. Injuries resulting

at least one year were interviewed by a trained interviewer, after obtaining verbal consent. Results were analyzed using open source statistical analysis software package R version 2.14. Chi-squared and Fisher's Exact tests were used as test of statistical significance.

Cumulatively, 187 drivers were interviewed; 91 bus and 96 rickshaw drivers. The mean age of drivers was 31.3±6.9 years. Most respondents had 5 or less years of schooling or no formal education i.e. 80 (42.8%), and had been driving commercially for a mean of 3.6±2.6 years. Table lists the road rage behaviours, experiences and involvement in accidents disaggregated by type of commercial vehicle driven. Statistically significant

Table: Road rage behaviors, experiences and involvement in accidents by vehicle type.

Behaviour/Experience	Bus (N=91)	Rikshaw (N=96)	**Pvalue
	Yes (%)	Yes (%)	
In the past 24 hours someone in another vehicle shouted, cursed, or made rude gestures at me, while I was driving.	54 (59.3%)	33 (34.4%)	0.001*
In the past 24 hours someone in another vehicle threatened to physically hurt me or threatened to damage the vehicle I was driving.	29 (31.9%)	23 (24.0%)	0.228
In the past 24 hours I shouted, cursed or made rude gestures at a driver of another vehicle, while I was driving.	27 (29.7%)	31 (32.3%)	0.699
In the past 24 hours I threatened to physically hurt someone in another vehicle or threaten to damage the vehicle they were driving.	25 (27.5%)	30 (31.2%)	0.571
In the past 30 days (excluding past 24 hours) someone in another vehicle shouted, cursed or made rude gestures at me, while I was driving.	30 (33.0%)	41 (42.7%)	0.170
In the past 30 days (excluding past 24 hours) someone in another vehicle threatened to physically hurt me or threatened to damage the vehicle I was driving.	40 (44.0%)	36 (37.5%)	0.369
In the past 3 months (excluding past 24 hours) I shouted, cursed or made rude gestures at a driver of another vehicle, while I was driving.	15 (16.5%)	20 (20.8%)	0.446
In the past three months (excluding past 24 hours) I threatened to physically hurt someone in another vehicle or threaten to damage the vehicle they were driving.	26 (28.6%)	39 (40.6%)	0.084
In the past 07 days I had a physical fight with someone in another vehicle or I physically damaged his vehicle.	15 (16.5%)	26 (27.1%)	0.080
In the past 15 days someone in another vehicle had a physical fight with me or physically damaged my vehicle.	13 (14.3%)	25 (26.0%)	0.046
I was involved in a traffic accident in the past one year.	8 (8.8%)	0 (0%)	0.003*

*Statistically significant. **Pearson Chi-Square test used for all except for the last question on traffic accident involvement, where Fisher Exact Test used owing to cells containing less than 5 observations.

from road traffic accidents were also inquired about. Injury defined as one requiring either self-treatment or visit to a physician and requiring treatment. An interviewer-administered, pre-tested, structured questionnaire with both open and close-ended questions was used. Only those commercial vehicle drivers who had been driving for

associations were found between road rage experiences/behaviours and the type of commercial vehicle driven. More bus drivers reported experiencing verbal road rage in the past 24 hours compared to rickshaw drivers, while this pattern was reversed when inquired about experiencing this behaviour in the past 30-days. Eight accidents were reported by bus drivers in the past 12-months, with an equal number involving commercial and private vehicles. Two accidents resulted in the driver being injured himself; while in one someone

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other than the driver got injured. Interestingly none of the accidents were reported to the traffic-police.

The results of this study are comparable to the other studies conducted on road rage in other cities of Pakistan.¹⁻⁵ However, there is a need for developing a better and more representative profile of road safety in Karachi, by conducting larger studies involving other types of commercial vehicles like taxis.

References

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