

ROAD SAFETY PRACTICES OF MOTORCYCLE RIDERS IN MULTAN, PAKISTAN

doi:10.1136/injuryprev-2012-040590s.25

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Background and Objectives Pakistani motorcyclists constitute 2% of the global bikers' populace. The burgeoning trend of using motorbikes as a family vehicle in Pakistan and consequent increase in Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) warrant a study on the training, licensing, and adoption of safety practices in Punjab. RESCUE 1122 Punjab, Pakistan as an emergency management service, attends to such RTCs. With a mandate to identify and address the key contributors to such RTCs, a study was undertaken at RESCUE 1122 Multan to assess motorcyclists' awareness, attitudes and practices towards helmet usage and recommend improvement strategies thereof.

Material and Methods Rescue 1122 Multan carried out a population-based survey in collaboration with Atlas Honda, Multan, the largest manufacturer and seller of motorbikes in Pakistan. RESCUE 1122 Community Safety Officers administered a questionnaire, while officials of Atlas Honda offered incentive repair workshops for their motorcycles during the interview process.

Results 1748 motorcyclists participated in the survey. Age distribution of participants in years: 803 (46%); 18–27, 100 (5.8%); 12–17, Mean age; 28.75. Conspicuous demographics: Government employees 327 (18.7%), students 293 (16.8%), educational qualification under high school; 452 (26%), without licenses; 772 (44.2%), never attended driving school; 1513 (86.6%). Helmet usage; 292 (16.7%), Never used helmet; 1456 (83.3%), 134 (47%) used helmet but never fastened chin-strip. Justification for not wearing helmet: Vision and hearing impairment; 341 (19.5%), medical grounds; 232 (13.3%) and unable to buy; 90 (5.2%).

Conclusions The surveyed identifies socio-economic aspects of RTCs involving motorcycles. Engaging the stakeholders through 'citizen motorcyclists'-based watch-counsel and train programmes are expected to permeate desirable effect under cautious national legislation and enforcement.