

# PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL-BOUND CHILDREN'S MOTHERS ON ROAD-CROSSING AND OTHER ROAD-SAFETY ISSUES IN BANGLADESH

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**Background** Parents often possess unrealistic expectation on the ability of school-bound children in crossing roads safely. Little is known about mothers' understanding of such unwise-behaviour plunging them into serious road-traffic/RT-injuries. Here, we report mothers' perception on RT-regulations with certain plausible-factor (s) predisposing reckless-attempts of fatal-RTAs.

**Purpose** Study perception of such mothers' accompanying school-bound children on RT-regulations/laws; and, examine if mothers' education/knowledge remains plausible-predisposing factor(s) in taking such deadly-attempts of road-crossings.

**Methods** We conducted this study among 148 mothers accompanying school-bound-pedestrian children crossing busy city-roads adjacent to nine randomly-selected school-fringes in Dhaka city. Two-tier-methodology was used: assessed mothers' knowledge (using structured-questionnaire), quantitatively and determined perception, qualitatively (Focus Group Discussion-FGDs).

**Outcome** Lower-maternal-education (Lo-Mat-Ed) was associated with running-off roads ( $p<0.02$ ) and inadequate knowledge on RT-safety-regulations/signals ( $p<0.01$ ). Lo-Mat-Ed was linked with knowledge-gap/faulty-ideas (concentration on 'school-bag' than watching traffic-vehicles), ( $p<0.01$ ). Inadequate knowledge/Lo-Mat-Ed was related to faulty road-crossing (not using zebra-crossing/over-bridge), ( $p<0.03$ ). Mothers possessing better-knowledge/higher-Mat-Ed recognised RT-signals more-correctly ( $p<0.009$ ): cross on red ( $p<0.005$ ) and never on green lights ( $p<0.03$ ). Risk-estimate-analysis revealed Lo-Mat-Ed as potential risk factor for risky road-crossing ( $OD=3.1(1.2-8.2)$ ), knowing RT-laws ( $OD=2.8(1.3-5.7)$ ), signal-lights ( $OD=3.2(1.6-6.5)$ ) and safe road-crossing ( $OD=2.24(1.10-4.57)$ ), etc. Post-FGD transcript-analysis also revealed gross inadequacy in mothers' perception on RT-rules and safe road-crossing mainly due to Lo-Mat-Education.

**Significance/Contribution** Parental-education, a primary determinant of health-related-behaviour, requires RT-safety adaptation. Since knowledge alone is not sufficient to institute RT-safety, developing instructive/environment strategies remains imperative, but mother's proficiency on road-safety must be assessed prior to confer responsibility of pedestrian-school-bound-children, as our findings suggest along with imparting intensive-training/education on road-safety.