Compliance of Traffic rules amongst College Students of Chandigarh

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Introduction

Driving in India: *"It has been said that an Atheist had gone to India. After having driven on the roads there, he has returned as a believer in God. Which country has a more powerful spiritual presence ?"*

Total population in India was last recorded at 124 crore people in 2014 from 36 crores in 1950, changing 245 percent during the last 50 years**.** In the last 10 years India has witnessed a demographic explosion. More than 50% of this growth is in the urban areas, spread over nearly 7900 cities and towns, contributing to over 70% of India's GDP and occupying only 3% of India's land mass. Our urban population is likely to be over 55 crores by 2021, out of total population of 145 crores. We have a challenging situation of doubling of the urban population, with the cities bursting at the seams due to inadequate basic infrastructure, housing and other social amenities. The inadequate public transport infrastructure and the easy availability of financing facilities for private vehicles have resulted in increased vehicle ownership levels and their usage. In other words the traffic problems are increasing in the cities in general and the situation is becoming complex especially in core areas of the city. The uncontrolled and ill planned growth of urban centers have resulted in traffic congestion. The growing cities have generated high levels of demand for travel by motor vehicles in the cities. To match the increasing travel demand, commensurate efforts have not been made to develop the mass transport systems. On the other hand, the Government of India has permitted the manufacture of indigenous automobiles. Further on, no policy exists to check the number of vehicles that an individual can buy based on parking space available at his residence. This has resulted in tremendous increase in the number of automobiles in the cities with an individual usually owing more than one car per family in urban India. Due to higher income levels and greater needs for mobility in the urban areas, more than 90 percent of the automobiles are located in urban centers. Management of all these vehicles in a systematic traffic management approach is of utmost importance in any city.

Traffic on roads may consist of pedestrians, ridden or herded animals, vehicles, streetcars and other conveyances, either singly or together, while using the public way for purposes of travel. Traffic is formally organized in many jurisdictions, with marked lanes, junctions, intersections, interchanges, traffic signals, or signs. Organization typically produces a better combination of travel safety and efficiency. Events which disrupt the flow and may cause traffic to degenerate

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into a disorganized mess include: road construction, collisions and debris in the roadway. On particularly busy freeways, a minor disruption may persist in a phenomenon known as traffic waves. A complete breakdown of organization may result in traffic jams and gridlock. Thus traffic laws are needed to control the phenomenon. Traffic laws are the laws which govern traffic and regulate vehicles, while rules of the road are both the laws and the informal rules that may have developed over time to facilitate the orderly and timely flow of traffic. Organized traffic generally has well-established priorities, lanes, right-of-way, and traffic control at intersections. Lack of awareness amongst mainly youth of India regarding rules for safety is so low that the frequency of traffic collisions in India is the highest in the world.

Objectives of the study

- To analyze the level of awareness of Traffic rules and laws among the College students in Chandigarh.
- To suggest ways to improve the awareness level.

Methodology

The study was carried out among the college students in Chandigarh. Primary data was collected from undergraduate students. The data was collected from 120 respondents through Random sampling method from two Government Institutions i.e Post Graduate Government College for Girls and Post Graduate Government College for Boys sector- 11, Chandigarh.

The tool used for study is Traffic awareness and Road safety Questionnaire divided into 3 parts:

1. Awareness about the Traffic Signs
2. Awareness about the Traffic rules
3. General Awareness

Major Results (Table 1-10)

Table 1 Awareness related to Road Signs

Sr. No.	Particulars	Girls				Boys			
		Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%

1.	Zebra Crossing	51	80.9	12	19.1	41	71.9	16	28.1
2.	School ahead	45	71.4	18	28.6	44	77.2	13	22.8
3.	Horn prohibited	53	84.1	10	15.9	47	82.4	10	17.6
4.	Cycle path*	48	76.1	15	23.9	46	80.7	11	19.3

*It was found during the research that respondents were confused regarding the sign board of cycle path that whether the sign board depicts the path for cyclist's or a parking place for cycles.

Table 2 : Awareness related to Road Limits

Sr.No.	**Particular's**	**Girls**				***Boys**			
		Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Four ways	25	39.6	38	60.4	11	19.29	46	80.71
2.	U-turn prohibited	48	76.2	15	23.8	44	77.2	13	22.8
3.	Left and Ahead Way	14	22.2	49	77.8	14	24.5	43	75.5

* Boys must have taken short cuts on the road causing chaos as they could'nt recognize the sign.

Table 3: Awareness related to Road Turns

Sr.No.	**Particular's**	**Girls**				**Boys**			
		Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Load Limit	10	15.9	53	84.1	21	36.8	36	63.2

2.	*Restriction ends	0	0	63	100	24	42.1	33	57.9
3.	Give way	11	17.4	52	82.6	18	31.5	39	68.5

* Surprising fact come to light that even not a single girl i.e 0% girls and 42.1% boys know the sign board of "Restriction end" whereas 100% girls and 57.9%boys did not bother to see the sign board.

Table 4 : Awareness related to Driving Warnings

Sr.No.	**Particular's**	**Girls**				**Boys**			
		Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Yield right of the way	13	20.6	50	79.4	15	26.3	42	73.7
2.	*When you change your lane	19	30.1	44	69.9	21	36.8	36	63.2
3.	Maximum speed limit of bike	22	34.9	41	65.1	23	40.3	34	59.7
4.	Driving on wet and slippery land	47	74.6	16	25.4	39	68.4	18	31.6

*Majority of the respondents i.e 69.9% girls and 63.2% boys did not bother to look whether it is safe or not to change the lane.

Table 5 Awareness related to Road Signals

S.No.	Particular's	Girls				Boys			
		Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Right hand turn signal	34	64.1	29	35.9	15	26.3	42	73.7
2.	*All hand signal while driving	24	45.2	39	54.8	21	36.8	36	63.2
3.	Crossing railway line	46	86.8	17	13.2	35	61.4	22	38.6

* A very interesting fact came into light that only 1/5th girls and boys were aware regarding the "All hand signal"

Table 6. Responsiveness among Respondents

Sr.No.	Particular	Girls				Boys			
		Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
1.	1st step in case of accident	49	77.7	14	22.3	30	52.6	27	47.4
2.	Driving with expired insurance	23	36.5	40	63.5	22	38.5	35	61.5
3.	Correct parking of a	39	61.9	24	38.1	34	59.6	23	40.4

	vehicle								

Table 7 Awareness related to Actions Taken in Emergency

Sr. no	**Particular's**	**Girls**				**Boys**			
		Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Correct emergency number	38	60.3	25	39.7	42	73.7	15	26.3
2.	Use of mobile while driving	0	0	63	100	13	22.8	44	77.2
3.	Given bribe to traffic police officer	17	26.9	46	73.1	28	49.1	29	50.9
4.	Awareness regarding all traffic rules	25	39.6	38	60.4	24	42.1	33	57.9
5.	Role of beat box	22	34.9	41	65.1	28	49.1	29	50.9
6.	Use of helmet and seat belt	53	84.1	10	15.9	46	80.7	11	19.3

* Another important outcome from the above table regarding to use of helmet while driving two wheeler and use of seat belt while driving four wheeler is that 84.1%girls and 80.7% boys follow this rule whereas only 15.9% girls and 9.3% boys disobey this traffic rule.

Table 8 Awareness related to Documents

Sr.No	**Particular's**	**Girls**				**Boys**			
		Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Documents required								
a)	License	53	84.1	10	15.9	48	84.2	9	15.8
b)	R.C	41	65.1	22	34.9	43	75.4	14	24.6
c)	Insurance	18	28.5	45	71.5	36	63.1	21	36.9
d)	Pollution	16	25.3	47	74.7	25	43.8	32	56.2

* It is inferred from the above table that respondents gave more importance to license than any other document.

Table 9 Awareness related to Usage of Map

Sr. no	**Particular's**	**Girls**		**Boys**	
1.	Use of map	Yes	%	Yes	%
a)	Always	33	52.38	31	54.38
b)	Frequent	-	-	-	-
c)	Often	18	28.57	10	17.54

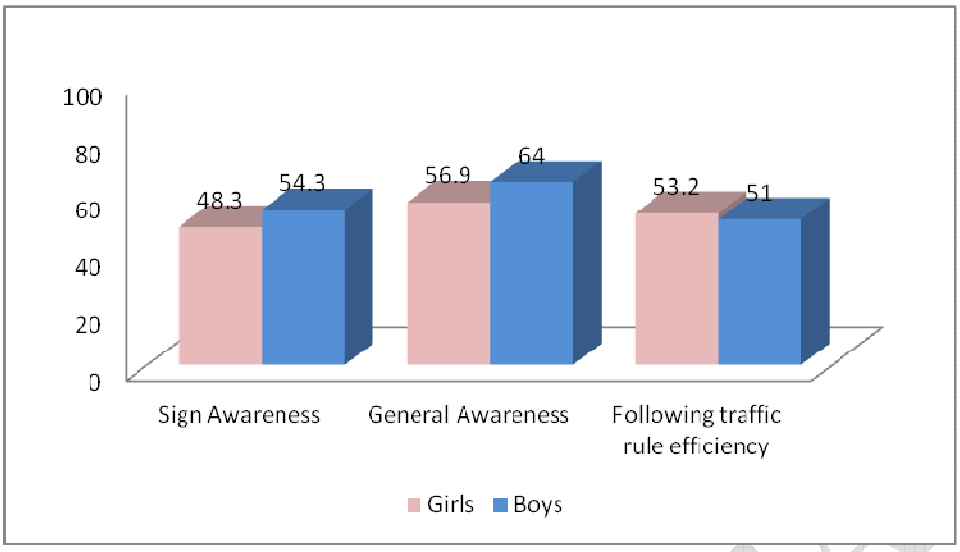
d)	Never	12	19.05	16	28.08

Table 10 Awareness related to Road Rage

Sr. no	**Particular's**	**Girls**		**Boys**	
1.	Road rage	Yes	%	Yes	%
a)	Always	55	87.3	27	47.36
b)	Frequent	8	12.7	-	-
c)	Often	-	-	-	-
d)	Never	-	-	30	52.64

The research shows that 87.3% girls always face the problem of road rage and 12.7% frequently came in contact with road rage as compare to it, it was found that 47.36% boys always remain involved in road rage and 52.64% boys had never faced the problem of road rage while driving.

Chart Representation:



Particulars	Sign Awareness	General Awareness	Following traffic rule efficiency
Girls	48.3	56.9	53.2
Boys	54.3	64	51

As brought out in the tables & chart above:

- Awareness regarding Traffic Signs is more in boys than girls but girls are better off in awareness about traffic rules.
- Overall General awareness is more in boys than girls. But we can conclude from it all that girls promptly follow as much they are aware of but boys being more aware are not sincere rule observers.
- It has been also observed that with the kind of awareness our youth has they are more vulnerable and prominent reason behind Traffic accidents.
- There have been many campaigns by the Government but they are not been recognized by the people because people are ignorant about the laws and scope of improvement.
- It is sad to mention that youth feels proud in following well said statement "rules are meant to be broken" as being their status symbol.

Therefore, what lacks in our system is not awareness but execution and laid back attitude of people regarding Traffic.

Suggestions

The traffic problem in our city should be considered as one of the most vital problems that must be solved immediately. In order to solve this problem, the following measures must be taken.

1. Sign posting of road signs should be prominent and well illuminated. (Day & Night)
2. Although the Knowledge of road signs is tested at the time of issuing driving license but it seems that many drivers are unable to interpret few signs that are sparingly used. So it is suggested that a method may be evolved to refresh their awareness.
3. With recent expansion of roads and introduction of lane driving many of the drivers do not possess the necessary skills. Hence, it is mandatory to reinforce lane driving skills by introducing monetary fines.
4. It is suggested that a media campaign may be launched to curb irresponsible behavior of the drivers to improve road safety.
5. The steps and protocols to be followed after an accident/emergency should be properly laid out and made familiar to the drivers. Thus allaying their untoward fears and streamlining reporting.
6. Mapping of city traffic and lanes including direction of traffic flow should be accurately prepared and reviewed from time to time to help drivers commute. This would help minimize traffic jams. The same information should also be made available online.
7. There is a constant rise in the incidence of road rage. To minimize this and maintain order the traffic bottlenecks/snarls should be identified and efficiently managed using technology and manpower.

We hope that if the above-mentioned measures are strictly executed, the number of traffic jams and accidents will be diminished to a greater extent.

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