ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Frequency of use of mobile phones during driving among citizens of Lahore

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ABSTRACT

Background; Use of Mobile phone during driving is very common but very dangerous because it may distract driving and cause accidents. There are a high number of accidents due to attending calls and sending text messages during driving, some law experts have labeled the use of mobile phone during driving illegal.
Aim: To determine the frequency of use of mobile phones during driving among citizens of Lahore.
Methodology; This descriptive Case series study was conducted at Lahore from 1st July 2019 to 31st December 2019. After taking informed consent, 396 subjects ,302 males and 94 females of 18 years or above were included through convenient sampling. Data were collected on a specified questionnaire andinterpreted as frequency and percentage distribution regarding the use of mobile phone during driving. The data were analyzed by SPSS
Results; In this study 396 subjects participated, 302(76.26%) males and 94(23.74%) females. 79(26.15%) males and 02(02.12%) females were motor cycle drivers, 140(46.36%) males and 82(87.23%) females motor car drivers, 67(22.19%) males and 02(02.12%) females motor cab drivers and 16(05.30%) males and 08(08.51%) females were van drivers.158(52.32%) male and 37(39.36%) female drivers used mobile phones during driving.
Conclusion; the use of mobile phone was common among males. The young drivers from both sexes used mobile phone during driving. Majority of motor car drivers were more involved in using mobile phone.
Keywords: Accidents, Cell phones, Distract, Experts, illegal

INTRODUCTION

Use of Mobile phone during driving is very common but is considered very dangerous and distracts driving to cause accidents. Due to the number of accidents those are due to attending calls and text messages during driving, some law experts have labeled the use of calling mobile phone during driving illegal. Many experts have suggested laws to ban on mobile phone use. Some law experts are in favor to permit the use of a hands-free set. Use of a hands-free set is not even safer than use of a mobile phone to conduct calls, as observed by different studies[1,2], epidemiological[3,4] meta-analysis[5,6] and simulation[7]. Use of mobile phone during driving is one of the major source of morbidity and mortality all over the world. Motor vehicle accidents cause approximately 1.2 million deaths and 20–50 million injuries each year[8].

Visual distraction of the road is reproving in explaining the risks related to text messages and any other activity by attending mobile phone[9.10.11,12]. It has been reported the highest level of mobile phone-related accidents and near accidents by young drivers, relative to older drivers.[13,14]In some cases sanctions are advised only for children, thosehave got new licenses (of any age), or to drivers in areas nearby schools. In addition to texting messages during driving, use of video games, or general use of phones can increase the risk of a accidents. The increased workload in holding a chat may cause increased risk of danger[15,16,17]. For example, a study found that listening to somebody on mobile phone lead to 37% less activity in the parietal lobe, where spatial tasks are arranged[18]. The consistency of increased accident risk between hands-free set and mobile phone use is at odds with rules and regulation in many areas that stops mobile phone use but use of hands-free set is allowed. It has been shown in a number of cases that bans on use of mobile phone during driving have led to be an effective way to stop public from attending mobile phones. Those not following the rules and regulations usually getchallan and points entry on their license. Although an initial change in driving habits is to be expected. With the time, the numbers of peoples those violate these rules and regulations eventually become normal, sometimes higher levels with the passage of time, people go back to their old habits. Moreover traffic police officers face difficulties finding mobile phone use in vehicles, which decreases the results of imposition of rules and regulation for use of mobile phones during driving[19].

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This descriptive case series study was conducted at Lahore from 1st July 2019 to 31st December 2019. After taking informed consent, 396subjects 18 years or more from both sexes were included through convenient sampling. 302 males and 94 females participated in this study. Data were collected on a specified questionnaire by a doctor and his team and required information regarding the use of mobile phone during driving were recorded. The questions regarding age group of the drivers, type of driving, use of mobile phones during driving, often use of

mobile phones, off and on use of mobile phones, use of mobile phones for songs or emergency purposes and use of mobile phones with handset free or blue tooth were asked. The data were entered and interpreted as frequency and percentage distribution. Only those subjects fulfilling the inclusion criteria were included in this study. The data were analyzed by SPSS version 24.

RESULTS

In this study 396 subjects participated, 302(76.26%) were males and 94(23.74%) females. It was observed that79(26.15%) males and 02(02.12%) females were motor cycle drivers, 140(46.36%) males and 82(87.23%) females motor car drivers, 67(22.19%) males and 02(02.12%) females motor cab drivers and 16(05.30%) males and 08(08.51%) females were van drivers.

It was also noted that 64(21.19%) male and 19(20.21%) female drivers belonged to age group18-30 years. 117(38.74%) male and 53(56.38%) female drivers belonged to age group 31-45 years. 77(25.50%) male and 16(17.02%) female drivers belonged to age group 46-60 years whereas 44(14.57%) male and 06 (06.38%) female drivers belonged to age group 61 years or above (Table-1).

It was observed that 41(13.58%) male motor cycle drivers were using mobile phone during driving whereas no lady motor cycle driver used mobile phone during driving. Seventy three(24.17%) male motorcar drivers and 33(35.10%) female motorcar drivers used mobile phone during driving. 37(12.25%) male motor cab drivers and only 01(01.06%) lady motor cab driver used mobile phone. 07(02.31%) male van drivers out of 16 and 03(03.19%) female van drivers out of 08 used mobile phone. 144(47.68%) male and 57(60.63%) female drivers from all categories did not use mobile phone during driving.

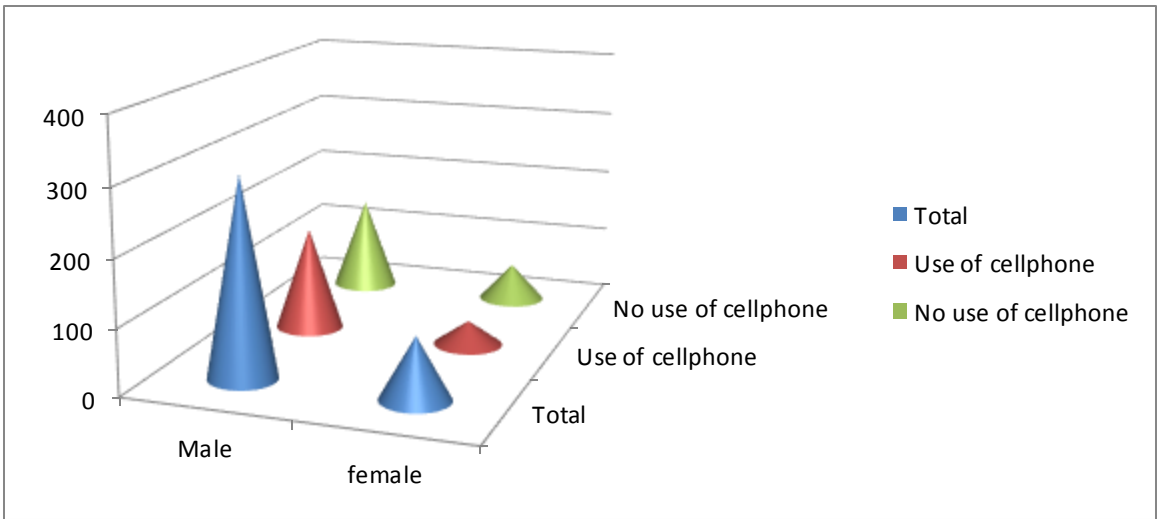
Study showed that 37(23.41%) male and 07(18.92%) female drivers often used mobile phone, 41(25.95%) male and 12(32.43%) female drivers used mobile phone off & on, 21(13.29%) male and 09(24.32%) female drivers used mobile phone only in case of an emergency calls, 26(16.46%) male and 04(10.81%) female drivers used mobile phone for songs, 11(06.96%) male and 02(05.41%) female drivers used mobile phone with Bluetooth device whereas 12(07.59%) male and 03(08.11) female drivers used mobile phone with hands free device\ .(Table-2).

Table-1 Drivers' category according to vehicle and Age groups in years

Gender	Driver's category according to vehicle			
	Motorcycle riders	Motorcar riders	Motor cab Drivers	Van drivers
Male(n=302)	79(26.15%)	140(46.36%)	67(22.19%)	16(05.30%)
Female(n=94)	02(02.12%)	82(87.23%)	02(02.12%)	08(08.51%)
	Age groups in years			
	18-30 years	31-45 years	46-60 years	61 years or more
Male(n=302)	64(21.19%)	117(38.74%)	77(25.50%)	44(14.57%)
Female(n=94)	19(20.21%)	53(56.38%)	16(17.02%)	06(06.38%)

Table-2 Use of mobile phones by drivers and type of use of mobile phones

Gender	Use of mobile phone by different drivers				
	Motor cycle riders	Motor cycle riders	Motor cab Drivers	Van drivers	No use by Drivers
Male(n=302)	41(13.58%)	73(24.17%)	37(12.25%)	07(03.31%)	144(47.68%)
Female(n=94)	NIL	33(35.10%)	01(01.06%)	03(03.19%)	57(60.63%)
	Different type of use of mobile phones				
	Often Use	On & Off Use	Emergency Use	Use for Songs	Use with Bluetooth	Use with ear aids
Male(n=158)	37(23.41%)	41(25.95%)	21(13.29%)	26(16.46%)	11(06.96%)	12(07.59%)
Female(n=37	07(18.92%)	12(32.43%)	09 (24.32%)	04(10.81%)	02(05.41%)	03(08.11%)



DISCUSSION

Driving is a responsibility. Whenever you are behind the steering wheel of a vehicle or riding a motorbike, it is your legal and moral obligation to protect all the living beings around yourself whether they are human or animals. Unfortunately, drivers nowadays don't realize such responsibility anymore. The public sector drivers especially don't pay attention to it. This is the fact that even educated class is not following the traffic rules. And as far the motorbikes are concerned, it's a street or the main road, they always ride like they are doing a stunt[20].

In this study majority of the males and one fourth female drivers participated from all over the Lahore. Authorities of Lahore traffic police is making challan against the use of mobile phones during driving but that is strictly implemented on Mall road and Jail road only. That's why drivers from these roads are not included in this study.E-challan system was started at Lahore but could not be continued due to unknown reasons It was observed that majority of the drivers from both categories were motor car drivers whereas majority of the motor cycle were males and a few number was female drivers. One fourth motor cab drivers were males whereas a few numbers was female motor cab drivers. Majority of male drivers were motor cycle, motor car and motor cab drivers whereas majority of female drivers were motor car drivers only.

It was also noted that one fifth of male and female drivers belonged to age group18-30 years. Less than half male and more than half female drivers belonged to age group 31-45 years. One fourth male and less than that female drivers belonged to age group 46-60 years whereas number of male drivers was double the number of female driversthose belonged to age group 61 years or above. Majority of the male and female drivers belonged to age group 18-60 years. Age group has great impact on use of mobile phones during driving.

In the United States a list of distracted driving laws has been maintained by Public health research law. A detailed view of the provisions of laws those stop the use of mobile phone devices while driving for all 50 states of USA and the District of Columbia between 1992, when first law was imposed, through 1st December, 2010 is provided by database of laws. The database includes information on 22 ways, continuous or categorical variables including, i.e activities regulated (e.g. hands-free versus handheld, texting versus talking), targeted populations, and exemptions[21].

It was observed that tendency to use mobile phone during driving was more among male motor cycle drivers whereas no lady motor cycle driver used mobile phone during driving. Use of mobile phone by motor bikers is very dangerous during driving. Majority of female motor car drivers was engaged in the use of mobile phone as compared to male drivers. It was observed that use of mobile phone among male motor cab drivers was more whereas a fewlady motor cab drivers used mobile phone. The majority of motor cab drivers belonged to UBER and CAREEM drivers. Their excuse was that they had to attend the calls of customers. Use of mobile phone among male and female van drivers was very less. This is appreciable that half of the male drivers and more than half female drivers from all categories did not use mobile phone during driving. They attended calls after stopping vehicle on side. It was observed during this study that use of mobile phone was common among males. The young motor car drivers of both sexes were commonly involved in using mobile phones.

Study showed that often use of mobile phone was common among male drivers as compared to female drivers. Off and on use of mobile phone during drivingwas common among female drivers. Attending mobile phone during driving was common among females as compared to males. Use of mobile phone for songs was common among males whereas very less female drivers used mobile phones for songs.Approximately equal number of male and female drivers used mobile phone with Bluetooth device and hands free device. Attending emergency call with Bluetooth and hands free device might be acceptable in an emergency but routine use of these devices may cause distraction of driving.

Driving licenses and occurrence of minor or major accidents related to this issue were not included in this study because true statistical data was not available in public and private sectors. When drivers were asked about their licenses and any an accident during attending mobile phones, they didn't reply satisfactorily.

CONCLUSION

The use of mobile phone was common among males as compared to females. Majority of the young and middle ageddrivers from both sexes used mobile phone during driving. Majority of motor car drivers were more involved in using mobile phone during driving. Approximately one fourth drivers used mobile phones with devices.

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