



KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES & PRACTICES OF DRIVERS TOWARDS ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATIONS IN TRINIDAD, WEST INDIES.

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INTRODUCTION

This study aims to test the knowledge, practices & attitudes of drivers in Trinidad through issuing a questionnaire based on driving practices in relation to seat belt use, alcohol consumption, fatigue & distraction, and a quiz, which focuses on road regulations. The information obtained from this study can be used to prevent accidents by identifying: poor knowledge, driving practices and attitudes in the driving population of Trinidad.

OBJECTIVES

- I. To determine driving practices in relation to seat belt use, alcohol consumption, fatigue and distraction.
- II. To determine the public's knowledge on road regulations & fines.
- III. To determine driver's population demographics related to knowledge, attitudes and practices.
- IV. To determine recommendations to prevent and control road traffic collisions.

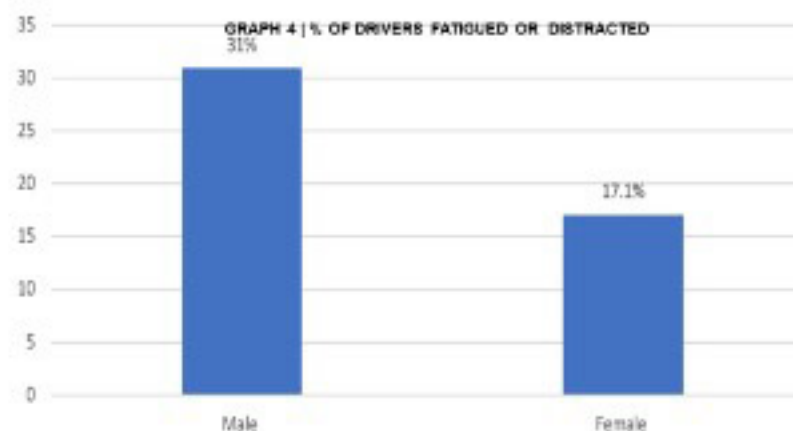
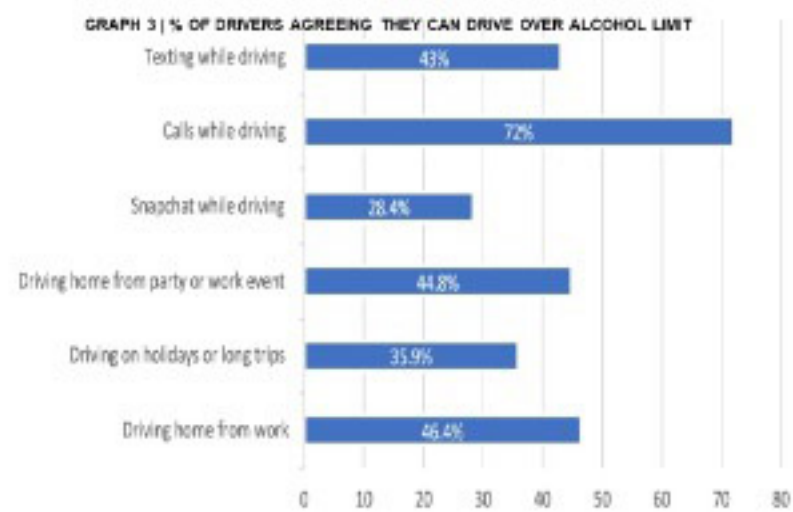
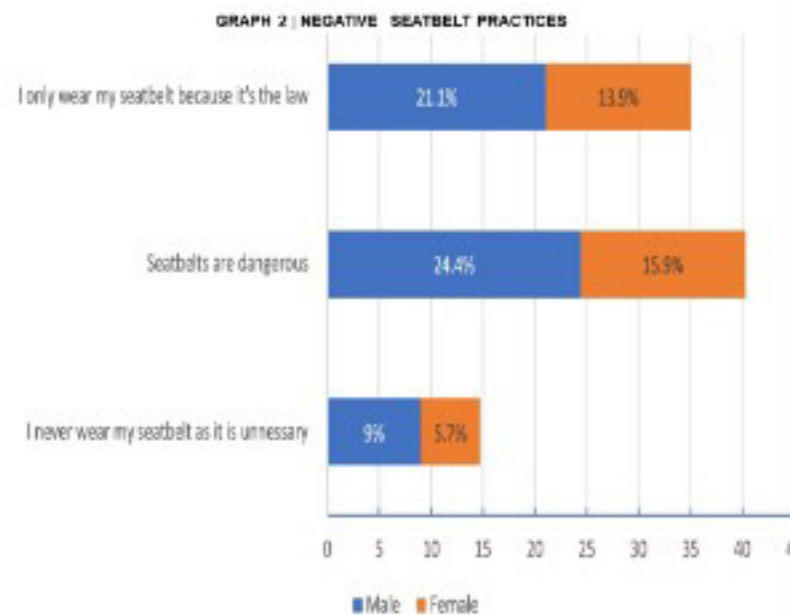
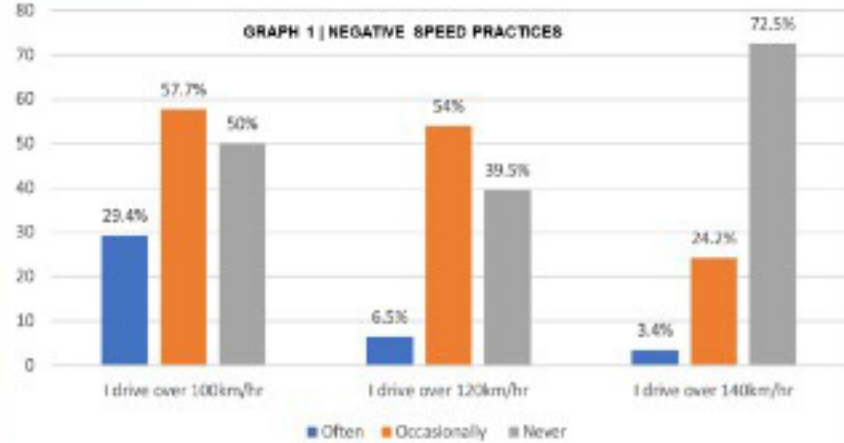
RELEVANCE TO PUBLIC HEALTH

On a global scale, road traffic accidents are within the top ten causes of death. Trinidad and Tobago, a leading Caribbean country in finance, commerce, trade & healthcare is a contributor to that statistic. Road traffic accidents account for > 37,000 fatalities each day and 1.35 million fatalities annually (WHO, 2019). Road injuries ranked the 12th cause of death in Trinidad and Tobago (IHME, 2017 & 2019). In 2015 - 2018 there were 513 road fatalities and 454 reported accidents (TTPS). Statistics from the Ministry of Works & Transport states in 2017 there were 1,016,265 registered vehicles and 654,895 licensed drivers in Trinidad and Tobago. SDG target of 3.6 (WHO, 2019) which envisages a 50% reduction in road traffic accident fatalities by 2020. Road traffic accidents and fatalities have become a global problem. This project's purpose is to hence analyze and correlate the knowledge, practices and attitudes of the driving population to the road traffic regulations in Trinidad and Tobago. The KAP results of this project is relevant to public health. Further investigation can be done to understand statistics of road traffic accidents and implement measures to prevent road traffic injury (CDC, 2018).

METHODOLOGY

A survey and quiz were administered to 384 participants a cross licensing offices in Trinidad located at Arima, Caroni, Point Fortin, Port of Spain, Princess Town and San Fernando. The questionnaire gathered demographics, attitudes and practices whereas the quiz determined the driver's knowledge and awareness of the road traffic laws and regulations. The data was analyzed using SPSS v25.

RESULTS



Graph 5 | Percentage of drivers who passed or fail the quiz



DISCUSSION

The study conducted yielded a wealth of information on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the driving population of Trinidad and Tobago. It also assessed which driving practices and attitudes were most prevalent in the population as well as which demographics were susceptible to these.

Graph 1 shows the respondents' attitude and practice toward speed. Here, we see over 50% of respondents occasionally drive over 120 km/h, and over 20% above 140 km/h (20km/h and 40km/h respectively, which is above the 100km/h highway speed limit).

Our study found little evidence of negative attitudes towards seatbelts with 35% of respondents agreeing that they only wear seat belts because it is the law and 40.6% of respondents agreeing that seat belts are dangerous, and only 7.5% of respondents agreed that seat belts are unnecessary (Graph 2). On closer examination, the figures for negative responses from males are above that from females, which shows a strongly relationship between reported lack of seat-belt usage and gender.

In Graph 3, 24.4% of our respondents agreed that they can be over the influence and still drive safely. On closer examination, that figure rose to 31% for males agreeing that they can be over the alcohol limit and still be a safe driver while it fell to 17.1% for females showing a strong association between gender and this dangerous driving practice.

Respondents showed high level of knowledge with respect to the dangers of fatigued driving (96.875% agreed driving while they are tired increase the chance of getting into an accident); however, this did not translate into low levels of fatigued driving practices. Illustrated in Graph 4, 43% of respondents reported texting while driving, 72% of respondents reported being on calls while driving, 28.4% of respondents reported using Snapchat while driving, 44.8% of persons reported having trouble staying awake driving home from a party or work event, 35.9% reported having trouble staying awake while driving on holiday or long trips, and, 46.4% of persons reported having trouble staying awake while driving to or from work.

The quiz which tested for drivers' knowledge of the traffic regulations saw 90% of respondent pass and 10% fail (Graph 5). Gender, age neither previous acquisition of defensive driving certificate was not associated with passing or failing the quiz.

The information from this study can be used to identify gaps in the knowledge of the population as it regard s to speeding, driving under the influence and lack of seat-belt usage among other dangerous driving practices.

CONCLUSION

This study used a 389 respondent KAP questionnaire conducted in 8 licensing offices in Trinidad. Results indicated that males were almost doubly associated with speeding, driving under the influence and low seatbelt use when compared to females. Additionally, drivers between 18-30yr were strongly associated with dangerous driving practices. Overall, fatigued driving practices were not uncommon although there was high knowledge of it's risks

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