

Awareness of health problem among male drivers in South Indian population – A survey

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ABSTRACT

Aim: The aim of this study was to create awareness of health problem among male drivers in the South Indian population. **Introduction:** Male drivers are at high risk of occupational morbidities and mortalities such as cardiovascular diseases, gastrointestinal disease, and musculoskeletal disorders such as back pain and high stress. Drivers are in a profession that exposes them to physical illness, mental illness, and addictions of habit-forming substances, specially tobacco. They suffer a lot from mental illness due to lack of proper sleep cycle and lack of proper meals at regular intervals. **Materials and Methods:** The questionnaire was prepared and survey was conducted among male drivers about health problems and data were collected. The survey was prepared on SurveyPlanet and was circulated among drivers. The survey was conducted among 100 male drivers. **Results:** As summarized, 55% of the population is not aware of gastric trouble. Yet, 81% of the population have faced gastric problems. About 72% of the population have chest burns regularly. About 51% of the population get sick often, most of the drivers eat out often at least 2 days once which is about 38%. **Conclusion:** Driving is a potential risk factor for a cluster of health behaviors and outcomes among drivers. Continuous driving affects a person both mentally and physically, there are many risk factors that may occur if an ill person is driving.

KEY WORDS: Gastric trouble, Health problem, Male drivers, Smoking

INTRODUCTION

Male drivers are at high risk of occupational morbidities and mortalities such as cardiovascular diseases (CVD), gastrointestinal disease, and musculoskeletal disorders such as back pain and high stress. Drivers are in a profession that exposes them to physical illness, mental illness, and addictions of habit-forming substances, specially tobacco. They suffer a lot from mental illness due to lack of proper sleep cycle and lack of proper meals at regular intervals.^[1] During recent years, truck drivers' health status has received growing attention, and many often assume that good health is a prerequisite to safe driving. Major attention has focused on the prevalence and effects of drivers' sleep apnea syndrome on driving performance. Obstructive sleep apnea syndrome is classified, according to the Association of Sleep Disorder Centers (1979), as a potentially lethal condition characterized by multiple obstructive or

mixed apneas.^[2] Work (or job) stress is a key predictor of adverse health and organizational.^[3] Particularly, anxiety, depression, psychosomatic symptoms, and general psychological strain have been previously associated with the exposition to work stressors.^[4] Regarding physical health, work stress has been proved to be a consistent predictor of CVDs, musculoskeletal problems, diabetes, and obesity.^[5,6] Furthermore, in the organizational field, work stress has been related to turnover intention, absenteeism, sickness absence, and presenteeism. Besides, drivers of city buses, minibuses, and taxis have the highest percentage of smokers among professional drivers (82.9%).^[7] Likewise, a recent study has found that 20.3% of professional drivers have the habit of actively consuming tobacco and 27.9% of regularly drinking alcohol.^[8,9] Perception of the Impact of Certain Health Conditions driving performance medical conditions affect daily routines is important and that not all drivers are aware of the risk of driving.^[10,11] Some medical conditions that can adversely affect the ability to drive safely include blackouts or fainting, diabetes (early and late-onset), epilepsy, eye problems (e.g., cataracts and myopia), hearing problems, heart disease, psychiatric

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disorders, sleep disorders, strokes, alcohol or drug dependency, neurological disorder, and age-related decline (other medical conditions, or combinations of conditions, may also be relevant).^[12,13] The prevalence of myocardial infarction, multi-vessel disease, and CVD risk factors was significantly higher among drivers than among age-adjusted non-drivers.^[14] A taxi driver study in Beijing found an association between high particulate matter exposure and low heart rate variability, strongly predictive for CVD. Driving is a complex task that demands to interact properly with the vehicle and the environmental conditions at the same time. For this reason, it is essential to perceive, process, and interpret the information accurately, as well as to select and perform the appropriate road behaviors.^[15-18] Fundamentally, the nature and evolution of the pathological process will set the level of condition regarding the capacity and ability to drive safely. Moreover, the assessment of health for driving does not only depend on the presence of a medical diagnosis but on the risk and threat that such diagnosis represents on the road. It is also important to understand if drivers' attention focuses on psychological conditions or on the physical ones when their health condition worsens.^[19,20]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The sample size of this study is 100. The study group consists of male drivers in the age group between 25-50. This was a questionnaire-based study. The survey questions were prepared and administered through SurveyPlanet using an online link. The questions basically analyzed on different aspects of their health problems. The results were statistically analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion is about health problems of male drivers, drivers where asked about their daily meals like how many meals they have a day 40% of them responded that they have more than 3 meals [Figure 1], the frequency of the meal is between every 6 h that 61% of the population agreed. About 38% of the population answered the survey take outside food every two days. We are aware that taking outside food

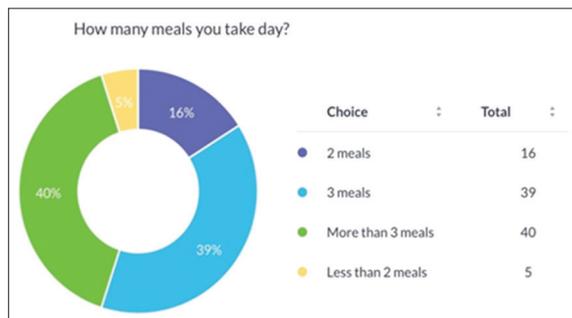


Figure 1: Number of meals taken in a day

often causes severe infections or diseases,^[18] but still, drivers are not able to take home mood due to their timing shifts and irregular eating habits. Most of the male drivers are non-vegetarians and often take non-vegetarian food that is 2 days once they are about 41% of population.

About 51% of the male drivers respond that they get sick often [Figure 2]. The sleep cycle of the drivers was disturbed; about 41% of the population sleeps <6 h/day. Most of the drivers are alcoholic, they take alcohol for sleep deprivation^[19] and about 33% of the drivers take alcohol 2 days once [Figure 3]. About 53% of the drivers are smokers [Figure 4]. Most of the drivers have chronic diseases about 48% of them are hypertensive [Figure 5]; 55 % of them are diabetic patients [Figure 6].

About 57% of the population are aware of ulcer, but still, 63% of the population take medication for the ulcer for the betterment of their health. About 72% of

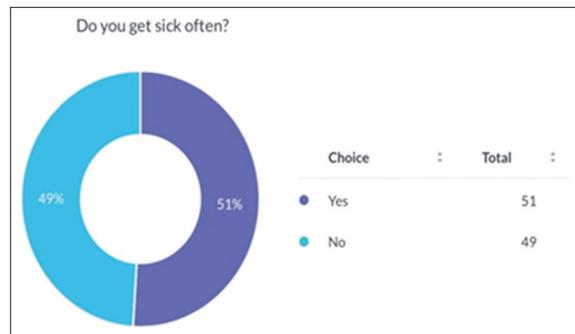


Figure 2: Do you get sick often

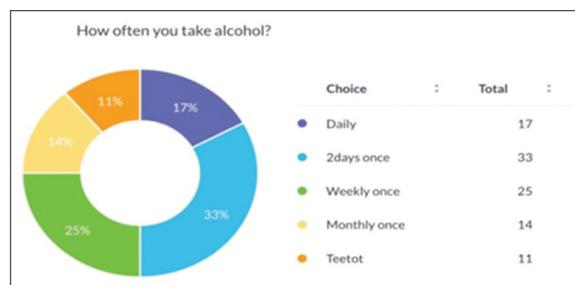


Figure 3: Alcohol consumption

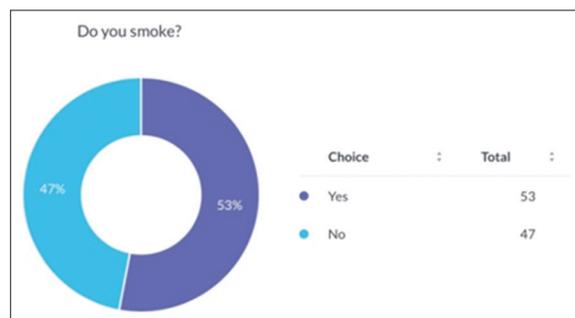


Figure 4: Do you smoke

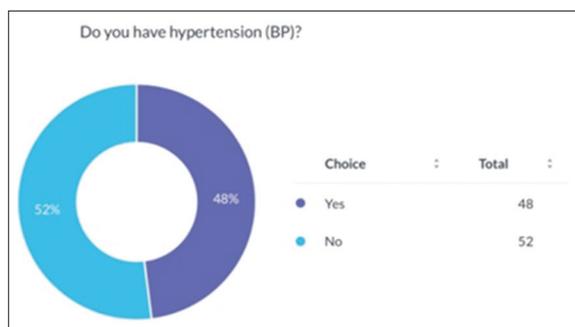


Figure 5: Do you suffer Hypertension

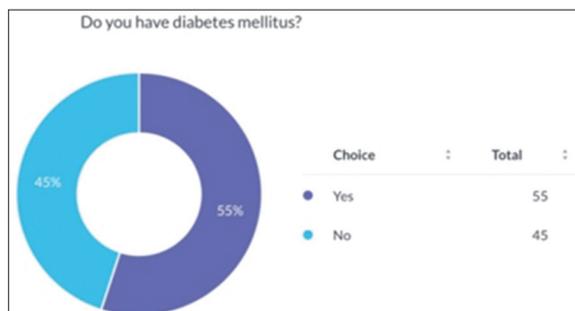


Figure 6: Do you suffer diabetes

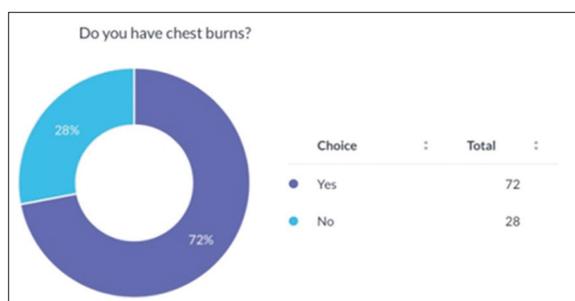


Figure 7: Do you suffer chest burn

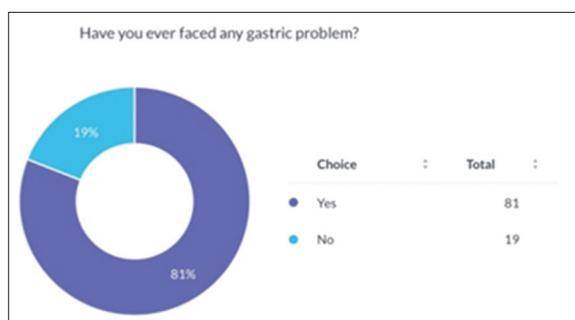


Figure 8: Do you suffer gastric problem

the population have chest burns [Figure 7] and take their own medication without doctors' advice, they also take home remedies.^[20] About 55% of the population are aware of gastric trouble and their consequences, 81% of the population have faced gastric trouble [Figure 8] and have taken immediate measures. Male drivers of this group of population face many health

problems than normal working population due to their irregular sleep patterns and eating habits.

CONCLUSION

Driving is a potential risk factor for a cluster of health behaviors and outcomes among drivers. Continuous driving affects a person both mentally and physically, there are many risk factors that may occur if an ill person is driving. Drivers should undergo regular checkups to know their state of health. Government guidelines should be completely followed by the drivers for their betterment and to lead a safe life.

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