

Attitude and Behaviour of Students towards Driving on Road

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INTRODUCTION

The traffic scenario has been recently and will be for the foreseeable future pose a major challenge for the entire world just not India, Maharashtra or Pune for that matter. Hence, we must have a very holistic approach towards this epidemic to be.

Among the various challenges in Pune, Maharashtra are smaller roads, badly maintained roads that act as hindrance to smooth flow of vehicles, casual attitude towards safety and traffic rules, bad attitude towards other road users or the law or complete lack of it and last but not least; corruption at multiple levels while obtaining 'license to drive'.

Increased Carbon footprint eventually adds to the Global Warming as there isn't smooth flow of traffic. The carbon footprint also increases when vehicles are left running at traffic lights. Inhaling this polluted air further impacts the health of citizens of all age groups. These greenhouse gases further pollute our environment impacting plant and animal life.

Over the years our vehicles have gotten efficient, with advanced safety and better braking due to the advancement in technology and yet the number of casualties continue to rise.

The government statistic doesn't represent and/or include age group in the statistics which would assist in narrowing down the casualties to take remedial/proactive action. Neither can this be a true representation of the actual casualties since it is solely based on FIR or accidents

reported. Hence, an accurate number would be impossible to fathom.

However, the crucial element which needs more focus and channel our attention is to the process; how new license are being granted/renewed. This inception would mean that we are able to uproot the causes of the fatalities on our roads by process of elimination and making our roads safer, user friendly and less stressful. We must be very critical about ourselves and alienate any possible flaws in our system with a fine toothcomb.

This study focuses specifically on young students who are about to venture into their future.

Youngsters, are novices and should they receive the right training and guidance on how to use their vehicles safely and considerately, would be a step in making our roads safer since they would be inclined to carry on these habits for the rest of their lives. This would also mean there is harmony and respect on the roads for other road users and patience towards new or learner drivers.

Keywords: Traffic, Students, Safety, Rules, Driving

AIM & OBJECTIVES

- To gauge the knowledge, understanding and attitude towards driving among students.
- To ascertain the level of awareness and students responsibility towards other road users.
- To find out if formal training is given with regards to safe riding.

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- To understand the cause and effects of road rage/ reckless driving.
- To generate awareness amongst students before the driving scenario becomes dire.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Collection of Data- Primary and secondary.

Primary- Based on multiple choice questionnaire.

Secondary- Google Searches, source websites.

Dear all, I am doing research on 'Attitude & Behaviour of STUDENTS towards driving'. Please respond to the below questionnaire as accurately as possible. Regards, Sumeet Dua



ANALYSIS OF DATA

1. How did you obtain your licence?

Although the new generations have better access to internet and various other tools; Over 40% of the students choose to use an agent for varied reasons.

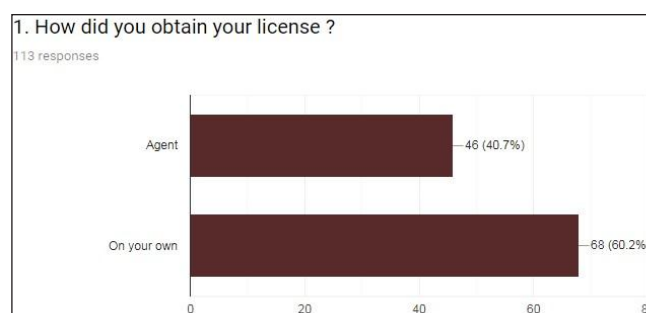


Fig. 1

- Corruption
- Process is quicker
- Lack of information due to unhelpful staff at RTO kiosks
- Less hassle given by RTO inspectors since they share the bribe



Fig. 2

In spite of 59% applying for licenses on their own, only 35.4% feel that traffic officer is not really testing their driving skills which may act as a demoralising factor for them to drive with due care and attention.

Over 30% definitely feel the RTO officer isn't even looking hence the students really wouldn't know definitely what's right from wrong when driving and may start driving and breaking rules without even realising since nobody corrected them.



Fig. 3

Even though statistics point out the rise in the number of casualties, over 25% of students didn't enroll for any learning lessons; highlights the flaws how Driving Licenses are being granted.

One is less likely to have a casualty and follow rules if has received appropriate training.

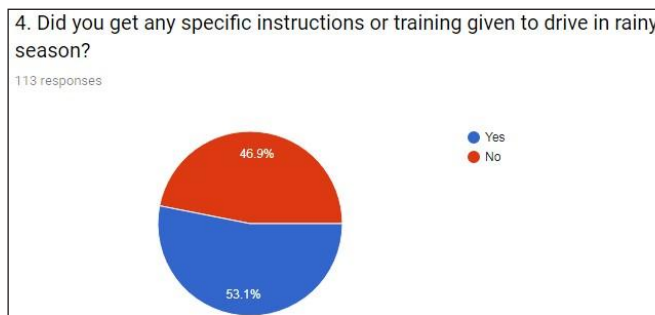


Fig. 4

Of the 74% who did enroll for some form of driving lessons, over 46% were advised about driving in wet weather or safety instructions to avoid any road traffic accidents.

The responses clearly indicate what more needs to be done while testing new driver skills.

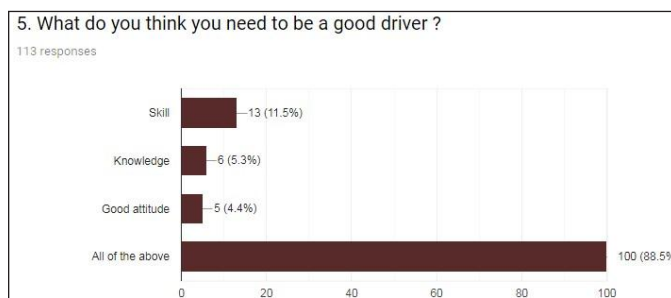


Fig. 5

Over 88.5% believe that driving is a combination of skills, knowledge of rules and Regulations and good driving attitude too.

Hence, the responsibility must be equally shared by the applicant and RTO officer to ensure the applicant complies with the latest rules and is ROAD READY which will ensure better driving culture in the long run i.e. attitude.

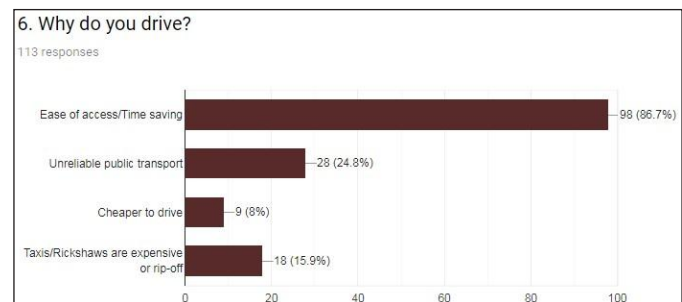


Fig. 6

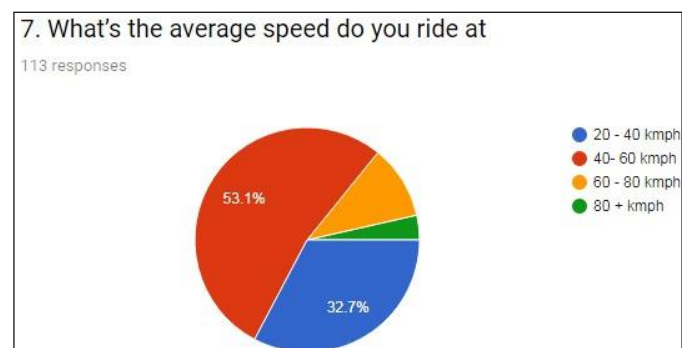


Fig. 7

Majority (53.1%) respondents drive at a decent of between 40-60 kmph which is still high for Pune city traffic which has a general speed limit of 30 kmph.

Driving at higher speed results in sudden braking which leads to emission of more greenhouse gases. It also is the reason for more casualties since the response time drastically reduces and so does your braking distance in an emergency.

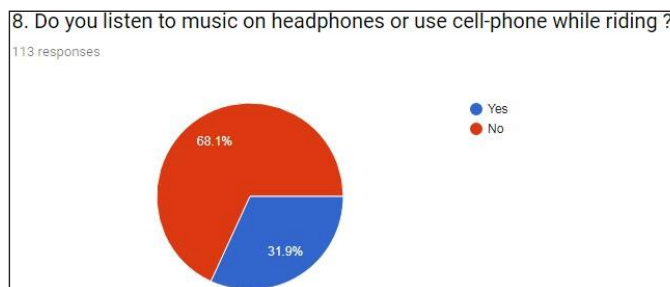


Fig. 8

31.9% admitted use of cell phone or headphones while driving which is another cause of distraction that may lead to Road traffic accident.

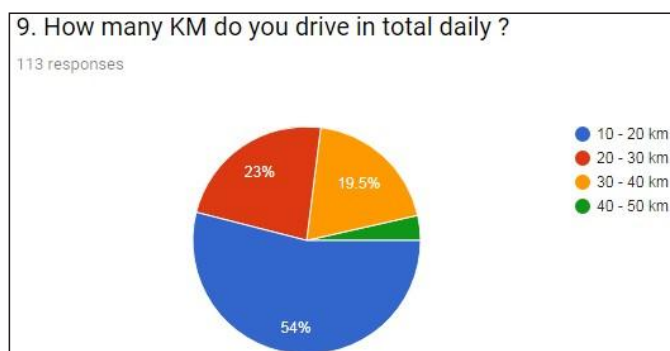


Fig. 9

Since an individual is not concentrating, they may not be aware or anticipate any hazards ahead of them which may lead to a fatality. They may also pose a danger to other road users 54% of the students drive less than 20 km in a day indicating they live within the city and yet almost the same number of % drive between 40-60 kmph which is higher than the average city speed limit of 30 kmph.

This indicates the lack of training and appropriate attitude towards safety and law.

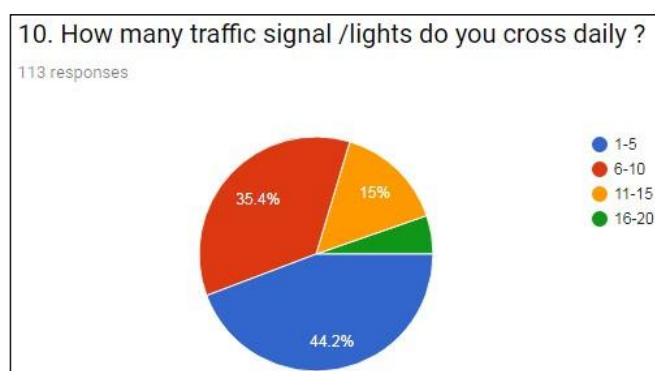


Fig. 10

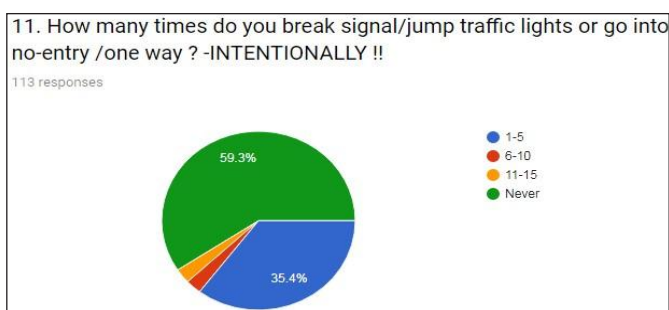


Fig. 11

Over 35% of respondents often violate traffic rules knowingly.

There may be varied reasons;

- Lack of time
- Damaged Roads signs
- Casual attitude/ No respect for law
- Too much traffic
- Unorganised road layout increasing travel time
- No repercussions ie fines or penalties

These can be easily managed should RTO only issue licenses to competent road ready Users only and enough manpower is being utilised maintaining law and order.

Over 58% violate traffic rules unknowingly where there are many possible reasons:

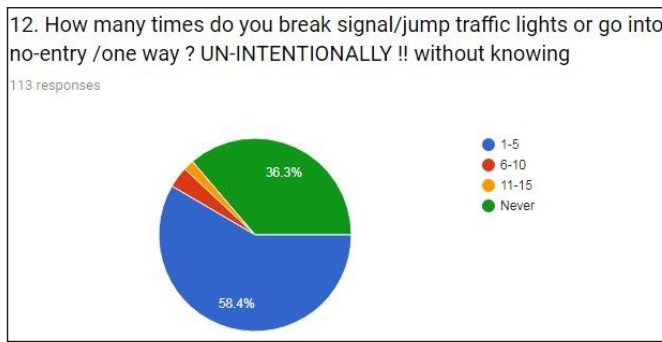


Fig. 12

- Multiple road signs
- Damaged/road signs blending with other boards/trees/structures
- Confusing traffic lights
- Lack of road markings

These responses shows areas of improvement where RTO or the Traffic department needs to make. Be it reading road signs and understanding the road markings or taking remedial action i.e. addressing the underlying cause due to lack of actual Infrastructure i.e. road signs.

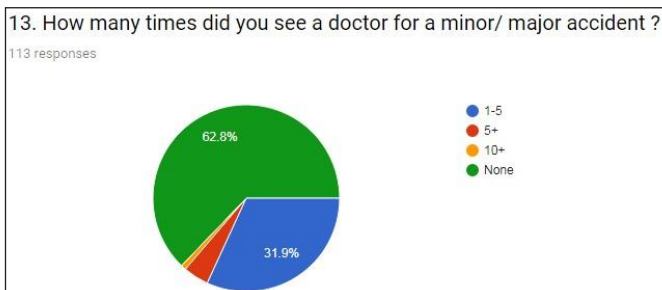


Fig. 13

A figure of 31.9% should be considered very high (specially since these students have had their licenses for a maximum of 3 years) by our RTO and Traffic department remedial action must be initiated in interest of public safety.

The students have had their licenses for a maximum of 3 years.

Hence, the RTO must only issue stringent guidelines on driving tests for new learners. They must take a theory exam testing applicants knowledge after which they would qualify for the practical test which would test their skill and knowledge both

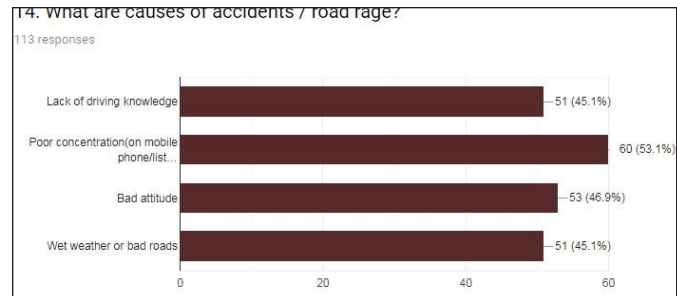


Fig. 14

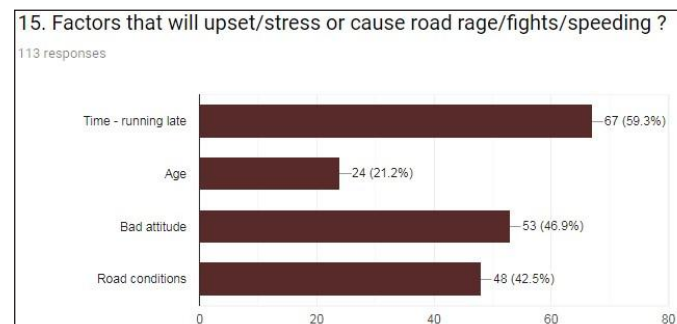


Fig. 15

Over 67% show that better time management could improve your driving experience.

When we are running late we tend to drive faster, cut corners and brake often which may cause inconvenience and turn into road rage.

Hence, when an applicant is enrolled for test/training they must be advised about managing their time to ensure safe and stress free journey for all.

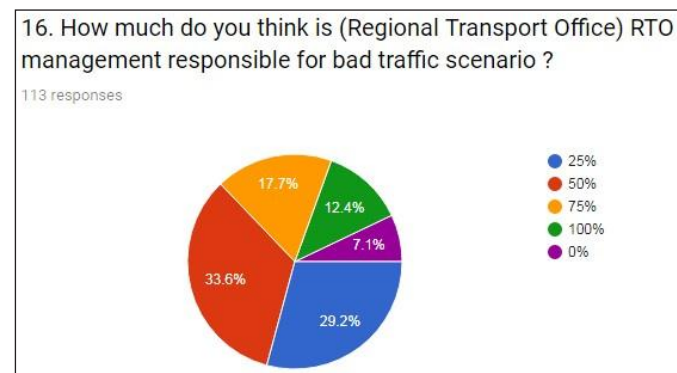


Fig. 16

Over 33.6% believe that RTO is atleast 50% responsible for this dire state of traffic.

This should be a wake-up call for the RTO. New licenses must not be issued without proper training and testing of candidates to ensure everyone starts obeying traffic rules which will further proactively remedy all other after effects of accidents, pollution and global warming.

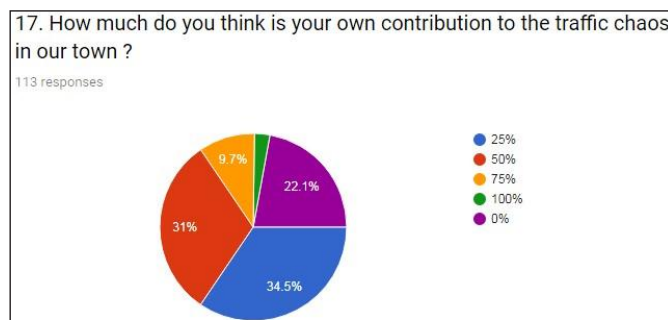


Fig. 17

Over 34% believe they are 25% responsible but 31% do think they are equally responsible in creating the chaotic situation we are all in.

Interestingly, over 22% think they do not contribute whatsoever to the traffic chaos.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Karl Benz invented the 1st true automobile in 1885 and little did he imagine his invention would cause a revolution for centuries to come. He would be very proud soul to realise how his invention has had a positive impact on people lives.

The internal combustion engine has come very far in the last 200 years, and the technological developments are making road travel easier, more comfortable, safer and eco-friendly. In contrast to these advancements our attitude and behaviour towards seem to be abusive. We tend to be in an overdrive of development and are forgetting to be humble and considerate especially on our roads.

Amcha Pune, per MoHUA (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs) has bagged the price of No. 1 city in country in 'ease of living' rankings a survey conducted in August 2018 which we are proud of, however, the reality is far from being merry.

The city ranked 25th for its safety and security where only 58 was scored out of 100. (1)

The above survey is an alarm call to all of us to take necessary action to make our city safer. The ideal place to start would our own self where we abide by rules and regulations and drive safely on our roads and respect/mindful of other road users. With appropriate support from RTO and Traffic department corruption could be exterminated.

As per report published by MMVD (Maharashtra Motor Vehicle Department) the statistics don't portray a very bright outlook for 2017-2018 from Jan-June.

The data reveals reported accidents have risen by 1%. Number of accidental deaths at an alarming increase of 2.23%.

Rate of injuries is highest to increase by 3.13%.

Overall this survey was conducted for 42 cities and rural areas within Maharashtra.

For Pune, the statistics are a weird combination of negatives and positives.

On one hand the numbers of accidents have reduced by ▼ 14.36% but sadly, death rate has risen by a massive ▲ 17.49%. This data is evidence of the efforts by individuals who drive safely and so also, various initiatives by RTO and Traffic department clamping down on driving culprits and revisiting the process of granting licenses, however, there is a long way to go and lot more needs to be done to make our city and lives better as revealed by the up-going trend of death rate. (2)

Al-Khalidi (2006) has mentioned in his article that majority of accidents happen due to speeding /disobeying of traffic signals which was the main cause of a high death rate (65%) . He further mentioned that students who came from villages were found to drive faster than those living in cities (Page 4). (3)

A working paper from the National Bureau of Economic Research indicates that higher levels of pollution can lead to behavioural and academic problems. (4)

Further, the issues get graver due to illegal parking and encroachment of public property or footpaths due to which the pedestrians have to walk on the main road. This further slows the traffic and also creates safety concerns over life and property. (5)

Injury occurrence was significantly more among the age group 15–30, males, and students and workers. (6)

As the data, the police department currently has a team of 1,277. However, as per calculations the department required a team-6627. (7)

Total economic losses are calculated to be around 20 crore/km/year for elevated metro construction in the given site. With such huge economic loss it becomes imperative to have systematic work zone scheduling and traffic management techniques so as to reduce the impacts of metro rail construction work zones. (8)

A development of the road safety curriculum in high schools needs to be considered at the earliest. (9)

There is a relationship between driving-violation behaviours and risk perception, both of which

are significant predictors of motorcycle-accident involvement. (10)

Only very few studies were done in India to estimate the cost of road accidents and most of them were underestimated because of improper/inadequate data recording and difficulty in obtaining the essential data to calculate accident cost. Many families in India get financially destabilized once their main earning member meets with a serious road accident injury or a fatality. Future education, career opportunities and even survival of several families have been seriously affected by road accidents.

This study also found that travel cost and number of accidents of the route selected, age, travel time, travel cost and personal/household income have significant effects on the decision-making process. (11)

Number of Accidents, Persons killed & Injured in Maharashtra State for the period
January to June 2017 & 2018.

Sr. No.	Name of the District	Total Number of Accidents			Total Persons Killed			Total Persons Injured		
		2017	2018	Growth %	2017	2018	Growth %	2017	2018	Growth %
1	Raigad	470	574	22.13	128	154	20.31	494	615	24.49
2	Ratnagiri	451	452	0.22	79	98	24.05	611	664	8.67
3	Sindhudurg	164	137	-16.46	38	47	23.68	182	171	-6.04
4	Thane(rural)	423	475	12.29	120	162	35.00	314	362	15.29
5	Palghar	765	735	-3.92	263	281	6.84	603	520	-13.76
5	Kolhapur	397	637	60.45	94	197	109.57	434	672	54.84
6	Pune (rural)	1254	1266	0.96	539	551	2.23	862	835	-3.13
7	Sangli	379	428	12.93	197	214	8.63	375	414	10.40
8	Satara	236	229	-2.97	63	110	74.60	285	256	-10.18
9	Solapur(rural)	457	529	15.75	235	285	21.28	356	459	28.93
10	Ahmednagar	777	816	5.02	415	436	5.06	462	492	6.49
11	Dhule	574	552	-3.83	181	184	1.66	658	625	-5.02
12	Nandurbar	281	277	-1.42	67	100	49.25	299	283	-5.35
13	Jalgaon	452	443	-1.99	233	201	-13.73	532	490	-7.89
14	Nashik(rural)	888	868	-2.25	392	455	16.07	697	711	2.01
15	Aurangabad Rural	324	395	21.91	201	226	12.44	337	286	-15.13
16	Jalna	236	202	-14.41	120	110	-8.33	180	162	-10.00
17	Beed	339	320	-5.60	167	165	-1.20	233	210	-9.87
18	Osmanabad	294	353	20.07	130	172	32.31	379	388	2.37
19	Nanded	390	364	-6.67	174	155	-10.92	331	283	-14.50
20	Latur	309	330	6.80	127	117	-7.87	201	203	1.00
21	Parbhani	174	169	-2.87	66	62	-6.06	153	135	-11.76
22	Hingoli	145	177	22.07	66	70	6.06	245	272	11.02
23	Akola	288	284	-1.39	75	103	37.33	263	242	-7.98
24	Washim	155	160	3.23	70	69	-1.43	121	135	11.57
25	Amravati (Rural)	404	324	-19.80	122	115	-5.74	235	228	-2.98
26	Buldhana	332	356	7.23	142	166	16.90	287	331	15.33
27	Yavatmal	527	430	-18.41	198	186	-6.06	300	301	0.33
28	Bhander	224	225	0.45	80	85	6.25	279	287	2.87
29	Gondia	139	157	12.95	84	93	10.71	191	155	-18.85
30	Chandrapur	354	336	-5.08	156	141	-9.62	336	325	-3.27
31	Gadchiroli	138	142	2.90	89	91	2.25	212	198	-6.60
32	Nagapur (rural)	488	548	12.30	189	169	-10.58	584	514	-11.99
33	Wardha	264	282	6.82	105	111	5.71	271	323	19.19
34	Mumbai City	1536	1608	4.69	231	216	-6.49	1574	1725	9.59
35	Thane City	503	511	1.59	105	147	40.00	521	523	0.38
36	Nashik City	367	302	-17.71	92	100	8.70	244	305	25.00
37	Aurangabad City	319	254	-20.38	70	76	8.57	253	239	-5.53
38	Solapur City	138	116	-15.94	36	47	30.56	118	75	-36.44
39	Pune City	808	692	-14.36	183	215	17.49	645	528	-18.14
40	Navi Mumbai city	711	641	-9.85	129	143	10.85	326	364	11.66
41	Amravati City	238	215	-9.66	34	42	23.53	186	200	7.53
42	Nagpur City	618	569	-7.93	109	120	10.09	632	575	-9.02
	Grand Total	18730	18880	0.80	6394	6987	9.27	16801	17081	1.67

CONCLUSION

Although we are in the 21st century and the young generation is tech savvy than ever before, 40% have obtained their license using an agent as opposed to making an effort on their own. The situation is further amplified by the fact the RTO officer isn't even looking which over 30% students definitely know.

This is quite alarming since these government officials are the very people who could really make a difference to our traffic situation and society. Over 25% students who were granted a license actually didn't even take any learning lesson which begs the question to be asked to the RTO officers as to how are the licenses being granted if these students don't actually possess any accurate knowledge about driving or its rules or read any road signs. Neither over 46% don't even have any understanding or risks involved if driving in wet weather, which is a major challenge for youngsters at an early stage of learning to drive and bearing in mind the monsoon in Pune.

Over 88.5% believe that driving is a combination of skills, knowledge of rules and Regulations and good driving attitude too. Hence, all the more reason for our RTO officers issuing new licenses to ensure that students are well versed with rules and regulations and their social responsibility while driving. Since 86% drive to save time, it would be in everyone's interest to adhere to traffic rules, but, they must know the signs first in order to follow them and also consequential repercussions for breaking the law, especially for students from rural areas as per a study.

This pandemic worsens due to badly maintained road signs or inappropriate/impractical road layout which sometimes forces people to enter a one way street or no entry for that matter intentionally which constitutes to over 35%. Although this is not an excuse however, over 58% make the same mistake unintentionally which does point out to the sorry state of our roads, markings, road signs and confusing traffic lights.

All these factors lead to accidents which almost 37% have met in the last 3 years which is quite a high number and swift action to address the problem must be resolute. Add poor concentration in the mix (being in cell phone/listening to music) which comprises of over 53% response would cause further road rage or accident at worse. Bad driving attitude came in next at 46% which would fall back on obtaining the license with right channel and learning all the pre-requisites rather than bribing to get past the test.

Over 33.6% believe that RTO is at least 50 % responsible for this dire state of traffic but 31% also feel they are equally responsible for the traffic chaos and RTO or Traffic authority cannot be blamed for everything.

The survey has indicated students obtain their license with minimal or no thorough training or guidance or any stringent scrutiny by the RTO for knowledge or driving skill. Due to the lack of basic training, many are unaware of the dangers of driving in wet weather and most of them meet with an accident or have to see a doctor within the first 3 years.

Accidents occur mainly due to lack of knowledge and poor concentration or bad attitude towards other road users due to which they also intend to jump traffic lights or drive on the wrong side of the road.

Most feel that the RTO is equally responsible for the sorry state of affairs of our traffic.

The vital solution to eradicate and have a significant impact on getting our traffic for the better is to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is installed for Traffic officers to do their jobs well in law enforcement. So also to RTO officers to ensure they don't give out licenses without being completely satisfied about an individual's driving competency.

Should these be implemented consistently, Pune, public would embrace and respect traffic rules for the better of all.

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