

**ASSESSMENT OF RISK TAKING BEHAVIOR REGARDING ROAD TRAFFIC
ACCIDENTS AMONG YOUTH MOTORCYCLISTS IN RURAL AREA OF HLEGU
TOWNSHIP**

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ABSTRACT

World Health Organization reported that more than 1.2 million young people (15-29 Years) die each year due to road traffic accidents globally. It's estimated that RTAs death rate in 2013 in Myanmar was 20.3 per 100,000 populations and at third place in WHO's South-East Asia Region. This study was a cross-sectional study conducted in rural area of Hlegu Township. A total of 198 youth motorcyclists were selected by multistage sampling method. Their risk taking behavior regarding RTAs were assessed by face to face interview method using pre-tested structured questionnaires. Frequency distributions were used for descriptive analysis. Multiple logistic regression analysis was done to identify the factors influencing for high risk taking behavior. About 49% started motorcycling since the age of 16 years or younger, 83.3% had no driving license, and 43.9% experienced previous motorcycle accidents. Regarding to motorcycling behavior, 77.8% drove with more than one pillion rider, rush driving in 42.4%, stunt driving in 23.2%, 17.7% was doing race or nuisance driving and used mobile phones during motorcycling. Regarding to following road safety rules and regulations, 24.2% was doing drunk driving and 57.6% not used motorcycle-helmet. Only 39.9% knew the helmet law and 46.5% drove motorcycle on Yangon-Mandalay Express Way. Using the scoring system, about 50% had risk behavior regarding to RTA, 63.1% had bad behavior regarding to road safety measures and 54.5% were not following the rules and regulations. The majority (83.3%) had high risk taking behavior i.e. exercising any of above three risk behaviors, and 16.7% had low risk taking behavior i.e. none of above. Youth motorcyclists with the previous motorcycle accidents were 5 times more likely to have high risk taking behavior than those without previous motorcycle accidents (OR=5.58, 95%CI=2.0 to 15.63). According to above findings, the study concluded that youth motorcyclists were high risk group of RTAs and more likely to get frequent and serious injuries due to their high risk taking behavior. Hence behavioral change communication among youths not only at rural but also at peri-urban area should be enhanced.