

STUDENT ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION: IMPORTANCE AND URGENCY

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Abstract

India is the second largest country in terms of population. It means that India has the largest number of children and adolescents. This population is either school or college going. Ostensibly this large population would be using vehicles also. Their age might sometime make them impulsive traffic rules offenders. This huge number of youngsters should be the target of our road safety and traffic rules awareness programmes. This paper will try to estimate as to how the students should be on the target of awareness and how they in turn can be utilized as the ambassadors of such awareness programmes.

Keyword: Student, Young Population, Traffic Rules, Awareness, Sensitization

*“India's 1.3 billion people make it the second most populous country in the world, but with an average age of 29, it has one of the youngest populations globally.”*¹ This statement can console our hearts and can fill it with pride that ours is a young country. We know that this population needs a gigantic infrastructure, roads, energy and other resources to survive. Any country's development largely depends on the condition of transportation facilities. This large population will also need to commute on roads for various reasons. That means we will have large number of lives exposed to unpredictable road mishappenings. There is startling fact about road deaths of young people which is really frightening which says “*Road traffic crashes are the number one cause of death for people between the age of 15 and*

29.”¹ It shows that how fast we are losing our youngsters in road accidents. But through awareness and sensitization these lives can be saved.

A huge number of our young people study in schools, colleges and universities and they commute on their own vehicles. In the first case in which the school students are involved many of them even don't attain the legal age to drive a vehicle. On the other hand they also don't possess legal documents to drive any vehicle. This is a gross negligence on the part of parents also. In this case the parents should be held responsible for handing over the vehicle to the teenagers in the wake of the fact that they don't possess valid documents to drive. Now-a-days the laws are strict and in case of negligence by any teenager the parents are persecuted. The schools do provide transportation facility to the students; the students need to encouraged to use this facility. It will not lessen the risk to young lives but also would save else's life. This will also inculcate a good sense amongst the youth towards using public transportation utilities. Some of the schools have been doing extremely well to dissuade the students bringing their personal vehicles. According to an article in The New India Express about Karnataka state administration who is mulling, *“a proposal banning students from bringing their vehicles to college campuses in order to promote public transport.”*² This is a welcome move to save lives of people. Moreover road safety education should be made compulsory in schools and colleges. Road safety education is extremely essential now as roads with traffic are becoming increasingly overburdened. Now there are more cars, scooters, motorbikes, and buses etc. on the road in comparison to the olden times.

The educational institutions should organize road safety education programmes to improve [student road safety](#). This may contain educational activities that help one to gain more knowledge about road safety.

By providing proper road safety education, we will be able to protect our child away from dangers caused by road accidents. We can give them certain facts, show the possible dangers and risks involved, explain ways to keep them safe and develop their skills in understanding consequences.

Road safety education plays a vital role in shaping the attitude and behavior of children as well as young people, thereby ensuring that they become a responsible driver, passenger, pedestrian, and cyclist.

In case of colleges, most of the students after one year of admission attain legit age to drive but many of them do not possess valid document to drive. In colleges and universities the students flaunt flashy and huge racing bikes. They become impulsive to break laws, to do traffic violations and hence they put others life in risk. This lot needs to be sensitized. They need to be the target of every road safety programme. This can be done through extension education clubs, organizations or associations like **National Service Scheme, NCC and Youth Red Cross**. These associations generally have expert volunteers and they are groomed in a way that they can disseminate awareness in a better way. There are various ways through which the information can be spread: Street Plays, Nukkad Natak, Workshops, Extension Lectures, Poster Making, Essay Writing and Slogan Writing, Awareness Rallies, Competitions and Quizzes are some of the methods with which we can spread awareness. Maximum of the students should be encouraged to participate in these events to gain utmost result. Though we have laws against traffic offenders but they are mere deterrents and incur punishment not behavioural correction. To bring about the behavioural correction we need to run specific dedicated programmes having these youngsters as target.

Our students are the biggest asset to our nation. They are sometimes impulsive offenders and seek thrill in breaking traffic rules and regulations. But we have to make them aware by sensitizing them through various programmes. We have to tell them that their life is not to be wasted in some silly road accident rather they can become role models for others and can save millions of lives.

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