

An Evaluation of the Role that Traffic Culture Plays in Reducing Consequences of Accidents and Promoting Social Security and Order

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Introduction

Accidents and traffic security have become serious issues in our country, to the extent that most of the people and authorities are severely concerned about them. On the other hand, research shows that human factor has the most important role in the occurrence of accidents. According to the records, only %1 of all accidents in Iran are resulted from "vehicle malfunction" and "immunodeficiency of the roads"; while other events, directly or indirectly, are caused by human wrong operations. Analysis of various factors shows that the human factor is not an element, but is characterized by three axes: (1) drivers and pedestrians, (2) planning and legislation and (3) control factors. In this paper, approaches to develop transportation and traffic security through teaching traffic behaviors to road users are investigated in the framework of three scenarios. Also, the solutions for improving safety, traffic and transportation through culture and education have been investigated. Moreover, the behavior of road users has been studied in the form of these traffic scenarios.

Material & Methods

In scenario No. 1, the importance and the role of traffic culture and behavior in the development of traffic flow is investigated and the process of AHP is used to investigate the decision making processes about the improvement of traffic culture and behavior. In this scenario, the importance of culture together with the role that it plays in improving the safety and facilitative factors of transportation is evaluated. To this end, "improving traffic behavior and culture alongside of the improvement of transport safety and facilitation" is intended to be the assumed target.

Therefore, all the factors and parameters effective on the improvement of traffic behavior and culture are the statistical variables in this study:

- The training method (culture)
- The enforcement of traffic laws and regulations variable
- The variable of social and psychological factors
- The variable of rescue coordination centers and road safety management methods [8]

The Statistics used in this study is derived from published collections of "Traffic and Safety", affiliated to the "Deputy of Traffic Police" and the

"Traffic Control Center" of the city of Tehran. Analysis of the data has been conducted using the Expert Choice software and Analytic Hierarchy process.

In scenario No. 2, the effective factors on traffic culture in the viewpoint of police officers and municipal authorities are investigated. In this part, the effective factors on the traffic culture have been studied from the viewpoints of the police administrators and officials together with those in the municipality of Najaf Abad in 1391.

The three main and effective factors on the improvement of traffic include:

- Cultural-social factors
- Technical-financial factors
- Organizational factors

In scenario No. 3, the process of determining Isfahani citizens' educational needs with regard to traffic in the city is discussed. The purpose of this study was to determine the educational needs of citizens of Isfahani citizens in case of traffic. The research population of this research consists of all seven-year-old and above citizens, mostly residents of the 3rd, 6th, and 9th regions of the city of Isfahan in the time of the study. A number of 384 individuals from different educational backgrounds, various ages and different genders and jobs have been chosen; their opinions were collected and then analyzed using SPSS software.

Discussion of Results & Conclusion

Considering the given results from the above scenarios, the following points can be noted:

From the analysis of the factors involved in improving safety in the first scenario, it can be concluded that inclusive education to different casts of the society with a weight of approximately %50, plays the highest role in improving traffic safety.

The factors of "imposing strict regulations", "re-education and re-test courses", "control of

social- psychological factors" and the "road safety management" after the "inclusive education", each, respectively, has its own contribution to the improvement both in the safety and facilitating of transportation. Therefore, addressing these factors should be given priority on the agenda of any administrator or cultural planner.

- According to the results of the second scenario, the degree of cultural-social factors, together with the organizational, technical and economic factors—effective on the traffic culture—have given out more than the average level (3) from the viewpoints of police officials and municipal administrators.
- The most important cultural-social factors, from the viewpoints of police officers, go to the observance of driving principles and rules with an average of 4.48, respecting the rights of citizens with an average of 4.32, considering the police commands with an average of 4.32 and teaching citizenship culture to elementary students with an average of 4.32. And the lowest average goes to the periodic meetings for city drivers with an average of 3.16.
- In the directors and officers of the municipality opinion, the highest mean score goes to the compliance with the principles and rules of driving with an average of 4.34, citizenship teaching to elementary students with an average of 4.32, respecting other citizens rights with an average of 4.21, and the lowest mean goes to the periodic meetings for city drivers, averaged 2.56.
- The results of the third scenarios show that 58.4 percent of respondents assume that the education of traffic rules is very much essential; therefore, it should be noted that both men and women know that the notion of training the needed traffic do's and don'ts to the citizens is very much essential.
- The effectiveness of the rules is dependent on three parameters: (1) up-to-date rules, (2) fair act, and (3) knowledge of the rules, and that the

old rules, which lose their balance against the modern day traffic violations, bring about opportunities for traffic violators. The supportive laws for the pedestrians have prepared grounds for the abuse of the laws and have led to many complications.

- The performance of the police and security forces is also a considerable issue. Lack of police capabilities (hardware and software, human resources) and the state of the accuracy of police actions, dealing with the culprits and the ability in applying law and rules fairly (studying the accidents and finding the guilty driver), the degree of the credence given to the priority of “prevention” to the “confrontation”, the lack of police equipment and other resources have led to a feeling of police weakness among traffic users and drivers, drivers who lack this conformity with the norms of society and thus only conform to the rules when they are under police control.
- Knowledge of the law is one of the contributing factors in traffic behavior. In defining the term “violation” and classifying it, some of these violations are rooted in lack of information about the rules. This lack of traffic information includes both the users (drivers, pedestrians and passengers) and the law administrations.

Keywords: Traffic Culture & Behavior, Education, Traffic Rules, Transportation Safety.

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