Risk Factors for Pedestrian Related Road Traffic Injuries in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

Basilisa Kalanga
Emergency Medicine Department, Muhimbili National Hospital, Dar Es Salaam/Tanzania

Study/Objective: To describe the risk factors associated with pedestrian involved road traffic injuries in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

Background: Traffic related pedestrian injuries are a growing public health threat worldwide as reported by the World Health Organization (2013). The majority (91%) of road traffic fatalities occur in large cities of low and middle income countries and mainly involve young adults (WHO report 2013). Dar Es Salaam is the major commercial city in Tanzania, but to date there is no documented pedestrian risk factors related to traffic injuries.

Methods: A quantitative, descriptive, hospital based, cross-sectional study was done in an orthopedic institute. All adult patients who were unconscious or refuse to consent for the study were excluded. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the information from patients.

Results: Motorcycle accidents are the most common cause of pedestrian injury (42%). Male (81%), petty businessmen "machinga" (35%), of a young age from 21-30 years (31%), and those with the lowest level of education (40%) are commonly affected. The results found the majority of accidents occurred towards the end of the week, Friday (25%) and Saturday (25%). Among injured pedestrians, 37% were coming from their workplace and 28% describe that high speed among motorcyclists contributed to the accident.

Conclusion: High speed motorcyclists, education levels, fatigue among young males, being "machinga" (petty businessmen) and walking on Friday or Saturday, increases the risk of pedestrian related injuries in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

Recommendations include:
1. A massive education campaign about safety on the road
2. The government should enforce strict laws against speeding
3. Motorcyclists should be adequately trained to reduce pedestrian injuries
4. Education about traffic signs and rules should be adequately taught from primary school, to impact all people