

Compliance with Smoke-free Policies in Public Service Vehicles

Karachi, Pakistan

Fact Sheet

Background

In 2002, the Government of Pakistan passed the “Prohibition of Smoking in Enclosed Places and Protection of Non-smokers Health Ordinance”, which bans smoking and requires no-smoking signage be displayed inside any place of public work or use (Sections 6 and 10), including public service vehicles.¹ As Pakistan’s most populous city, Karachi’s public transport system, particularly buses, tend to be overcrowded with students and workers commuting long-distances. The objective of this study was to assess smoke-free compliance in public service vehicles in Karachi.

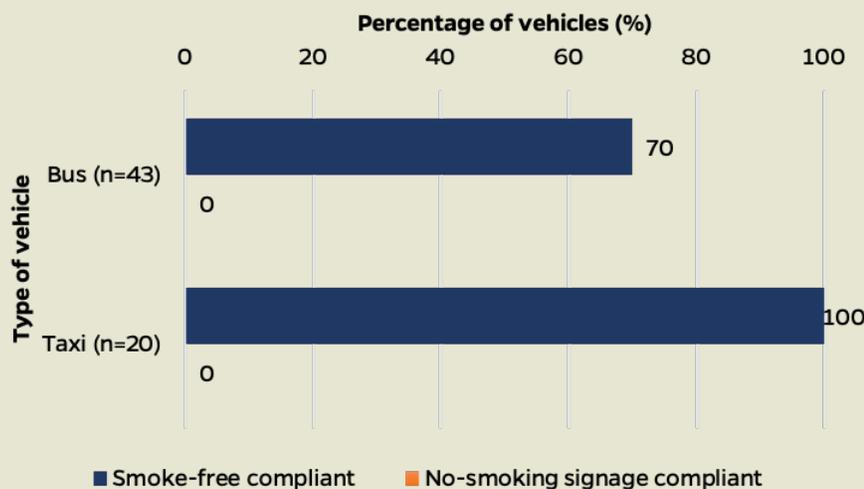
Methods

Staff and faculty from the Institute for Global Tobacco Control (IGTC), Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, with partners from The International

Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) trained local data collectors hired by Gallup Pakistan to follow data collection protocols and conduct observations in public service vehicles. Data collectors used smartphones/tablets equipped with the Survey CTO application to support the observational data collection, which was conducted during business hours (9AM – 5PM). Data collectors observed the inside of the vehicle thoroughly for instances of observed smoking, presence of cigarette butt litter, presence of ashtrays, and display of no-smoking signage. Due to safety concerns associated with using smartphones/tablets inside vehicles, data collectors completed the observational checklist upon reaching their destination. Data were collected between October - November 2019. The final sample (N=63) included public buses (n=43) and taxis (n=20).

Results

Figure 1. Percentage of vehicles compliant with: 1) the composite indicator assessing evidence of smoking, and, 2) no-smoking signage



A vehicle was considered compliant with the composite indicator assessing evidence of smoking (smoke-free compliant) if all of the following criteria were met:

1. No one was observed smoking;
2. No cigarette butt litter was found and;
3. No ashtrays or other instruments used to hold cigarette ash/butts were present inside the vehicle.

A vehicle was considered compliant with no-smoking signage if at least one no-smoking sign was displayed inside.

- All of the taxis (100%), and 70% of public buses, were smoke-free compliant
- None (0%) of the public service vehicles had no-smoking signage displayed inside

Discussion

Implementing comprehensive smoke-free public service vehicles is necessary to protect the public from exposure to tobacco smoke, and to discourage tobacco consumption as a socially acceptable behavior in Pakistan. Enforcement agencies and drivers operating public service vehicles must ensure all vehicles operating in Karachi are complying with smoke-free provisions. These findings indicate that:

1. Measures to improve smoke-free compliance need to be taken across public buses
2. Measures to improve the display of no-smoking signage need to be taken across buses and taxis, and will include the provision of appropriate signage from enforcement agencies

Enforcement agencies must ensure they are conducting routine inspections of public service vehicles, and monitoring smoke-free implementation across public service vehicles operating in Karachi.



References:

1. Government of Pakistan. The Prohibition of Smoking in Enclosed Places and Protection of Non-smokers Health Ordinance, 2002. Available at <https://www.tobaccocontrolaws.org/legislation/country/pakistan/laws>