

The Attitudes of Qatari Nationals and White-Collar Resident Workers Towards the New Traffic Law in Qatar

Elmogiera Elawad, Ph.D.

Social and Economic Survey Research Institute – SESRI
Qatar University
Doha, Qatar

Presented at the
2012 Transportation Research Forum
Tampa, Florida
March 2012

Introduction

In 2007 the government of Qatar enacted a new traffic law. The objective of this new law was:

- to improve the flow of traffic and
- to reduce the traffic-related deaths and accident rates in the country

Through

- policy interventions,
- mass media, and
- national traffic campaigns.

In the QATAR 2011 Omnibus survey, we asked Qatari nationals and expatriates about:

- ✓ their level of knowledge and awareness of the 2007 traffic law,
- ✓ the main causes of traffic accidents in Qatar and
- ✓ their attitudes towards the new penalties for traffic violation associated with the new law.

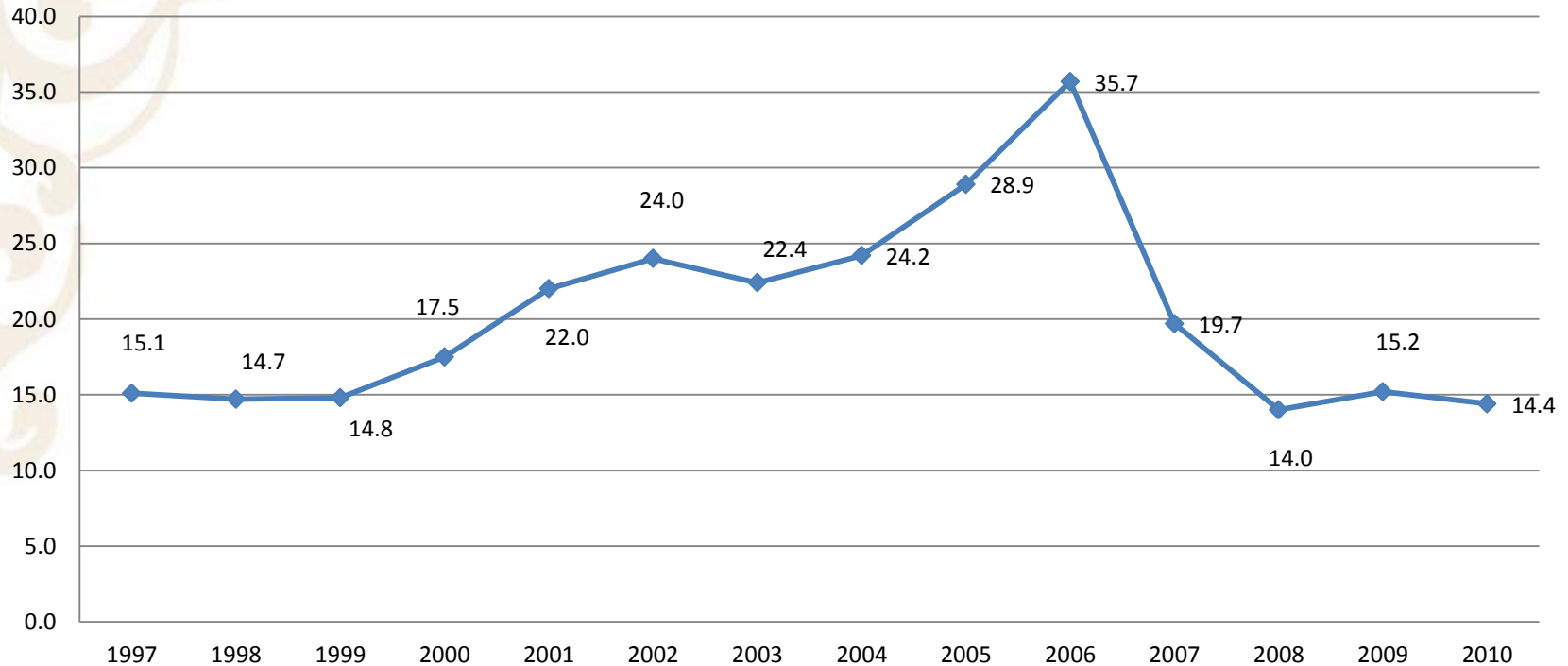
Objective

The objective of this study is to evaluate the new traffic law in reducing accidents in the State of Qatar by:

- Assessing its impact on drivers' behaviors
- Understand Qatari and foreign drivers' behaviors and awareness towards 2007 traffic law
- Study the drivers' opinions about the 2007 Traffic Law
- Study the differences among drivers' backgrounds towards their commitment and their knowledge of traffic rules

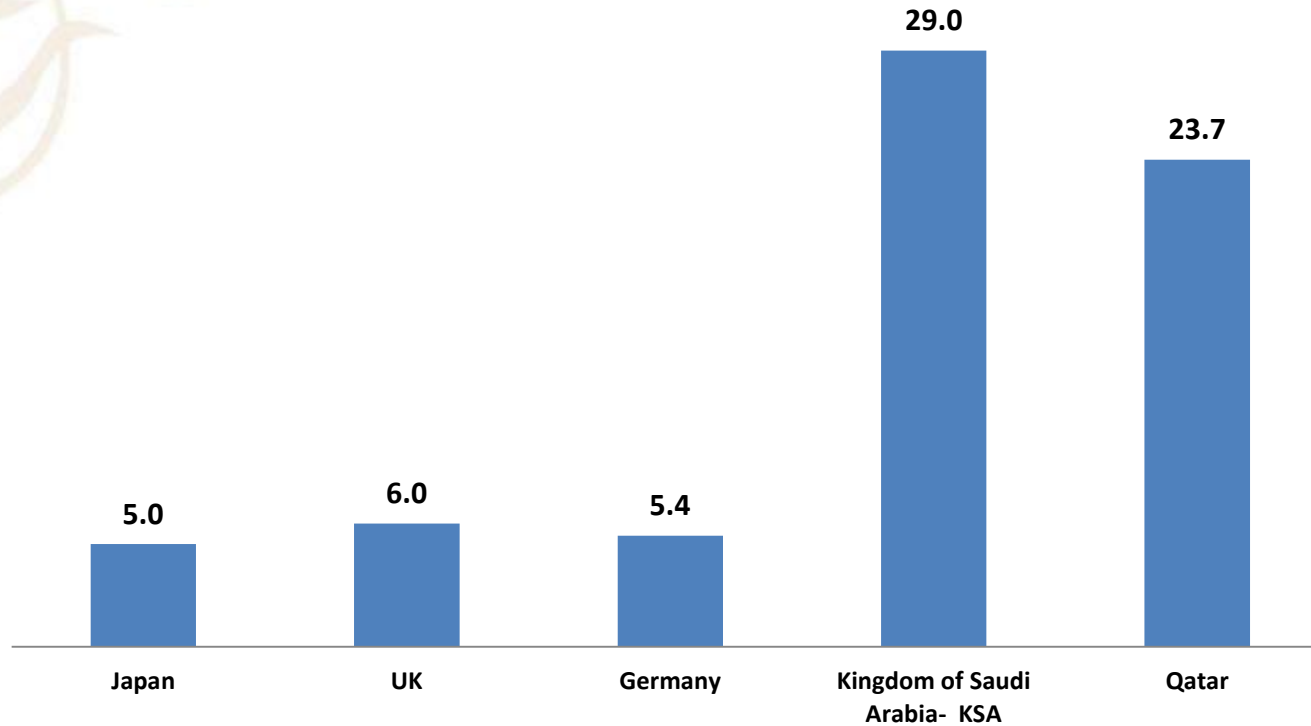
Death rate due to road traffic accident

(Per 100,000 of population (Qatar 1997-2010))

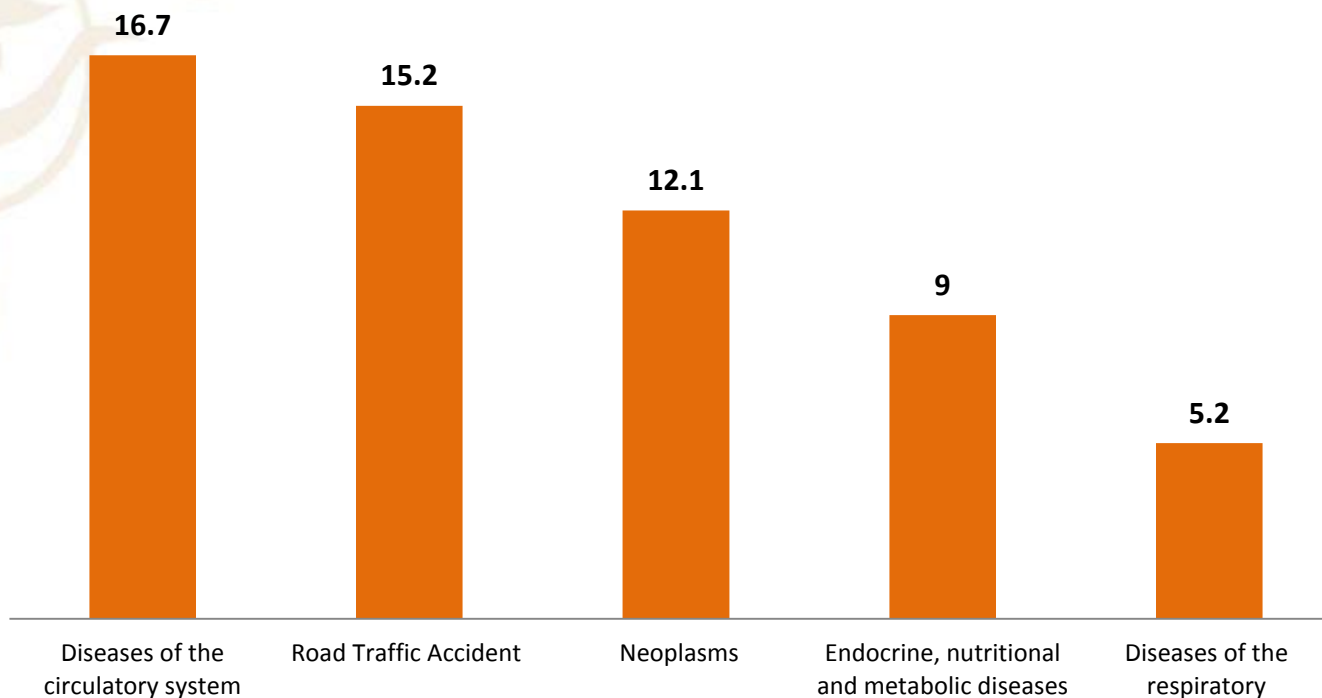


Car users killed in road traffic accident (rate per 100,000 Pop)

source WHO REPORT 2008



Top Five killers (rate per 100,000 population) QATAR 2009



Survey/Method

- Interviews were conducted in June 2011, using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) technology. Interviewers and supervisors, most of whom had relevant prior experiences, were recruited and carefully trained for the survey.
- A total of 2,000 interviews were completed, including 992 Qatari nationals and 1,008 resident white-collar expatriates. The response rate was 69 percent for the Qatari sample and 79 percent for the white-collar expatriate sample.

Example of traffic penalties - 2007 traffic law

Do not use seat belts	137 \$
Driving the opposite direction of the traffic	1644 \$
Lack of commitment to the traffic signs	1644 \$
Exceed the speed limit	137 \$ - 274 \$



Result

- Figure 3: Qataris' Knowledge of the 2007 Traffic Law by Gender**

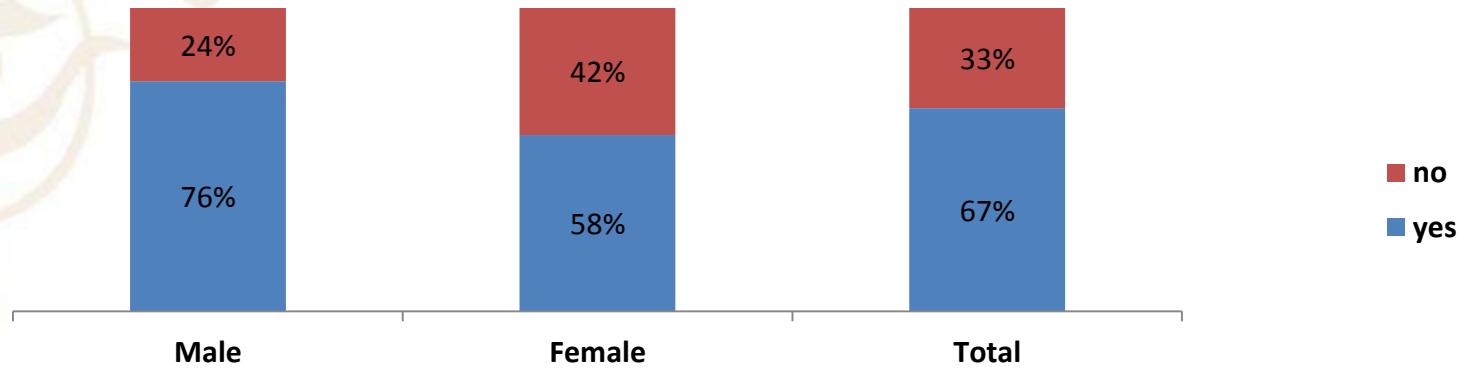
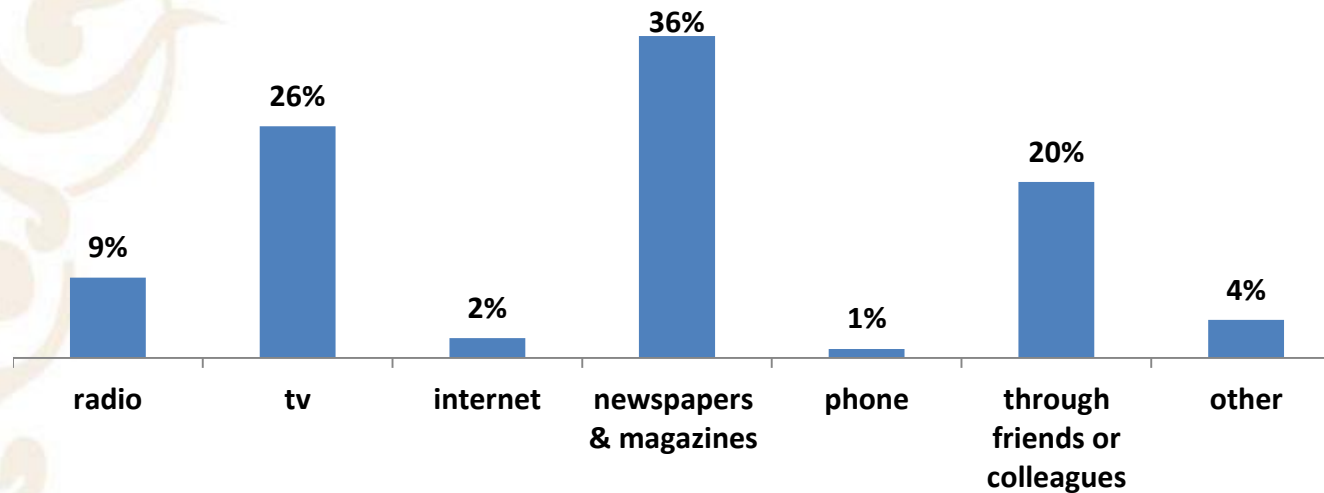


Figure 1 shows the level of respondents' knowledge of the new traffic law. Three out of ten (33%) respondents said they did not read or hear about the law. Female respondents were less knowledgeable than their male counterparts (58% versus 76%).

- **Figure 4: Sources of Knowledge about the 2007 Traffic Law**



Among respondents who said they had knowledge of the law, 36 percent obtained the information from the newspapers while 26 percent and 20 percent from TV and friends (see Figure 2).

Penalty for crossing a red light signal

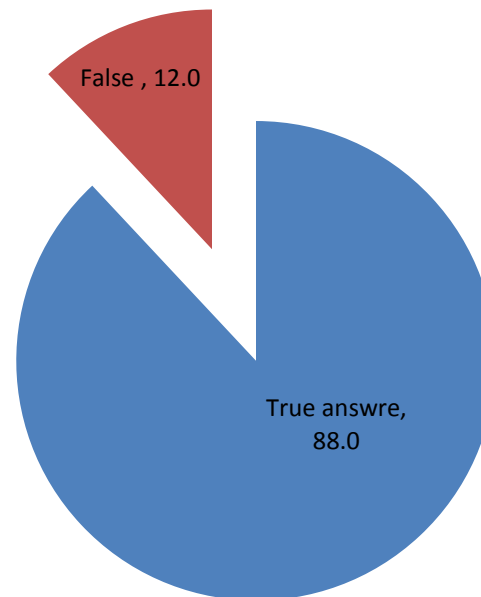
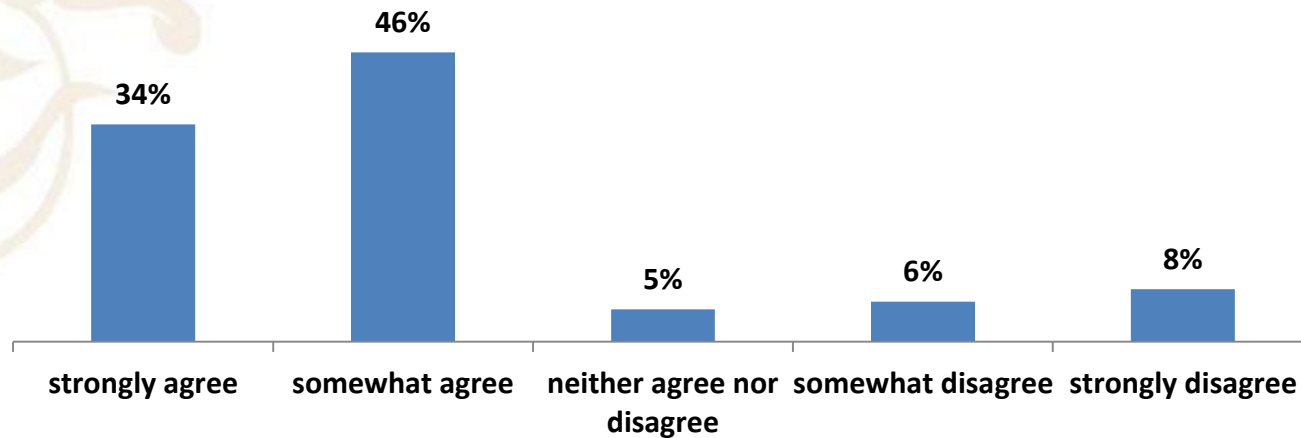
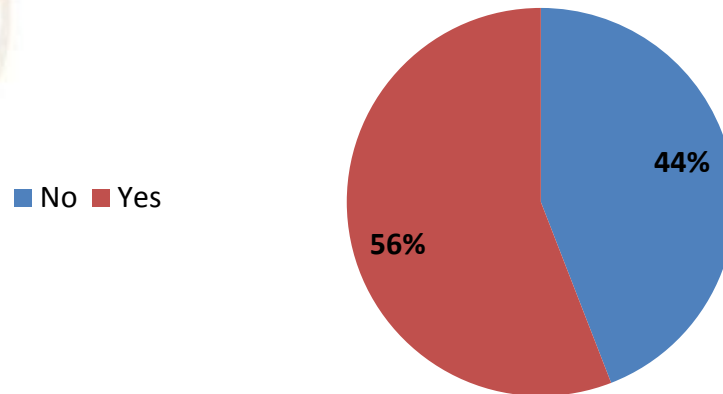


Figure 5: The 2007 Traffic Law Helps Reduce Traffic Accidents in Qatar



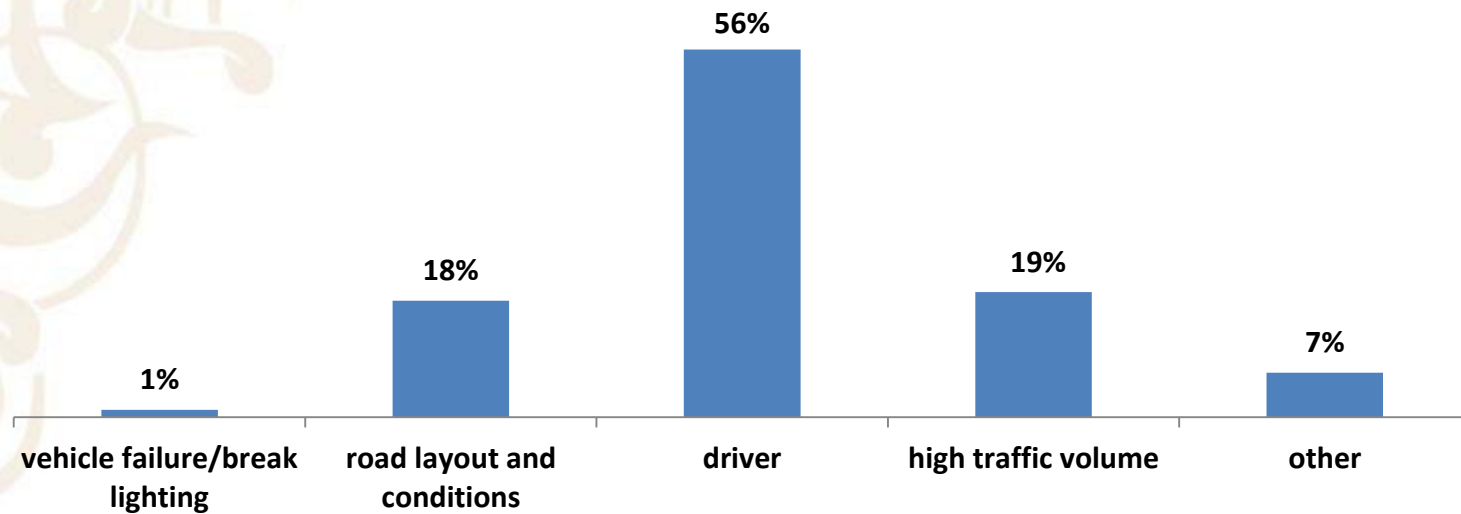
To assess people opinion about impact of the traffic law, respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with the statement that “the traffic law helps reduce traffic accidents in Qatar”. An Overwhelming majority of respondents (80%) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, while 14 percent stated that they disagreed or somewhat disagreed.

Figure 6: Change of Driving Behavior in the Presence of a Police or a Camera



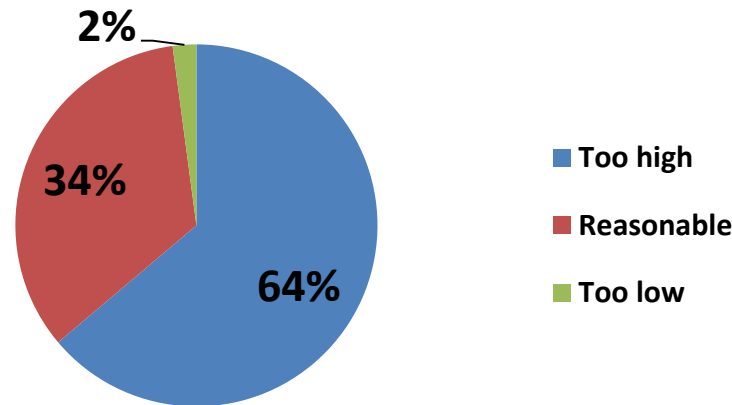
The survey also asked respondents whether they would change their driving behavior in the presence of a police or camera. Slightly more than half of the respondents (56%) stated that they would change their driving behavior while 44 percent stated that they would never.

Figure 7: Main Causes of Traffic Accidents



About the main factors which cause accidents in Qatar, the majority stated that the accidents are the result of careless drivers (56%). The second most cited cause of accident is the high traffic volume (19%). Some respondents pointed out bad road layout and conditions (18%), vehicle failure/break lighting (1%), and other causes (7%).

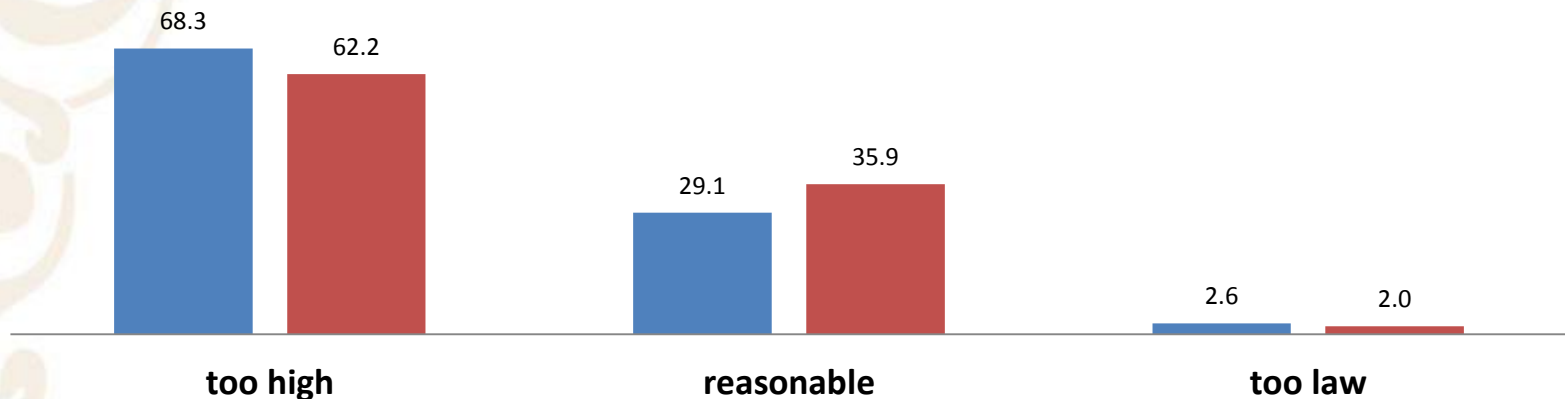
Figure 8: Assessment of the Current Traffic Penalties



Since the adoption of the new traffic law, the level of penalties has been the topic of debate in the media. Many believe that these penalties are too high. In our survey, we asked respondents about their assessment of these penalties, and six out of ten (64%) indicated that the current traffic penalties are too high. Slightly more than one third (34%) stated that the penalties are reasonable and 2 percent believed that the penalties are too low.

Figure 9: having involved in a traffic accident last year & thought about the current traffic penalties

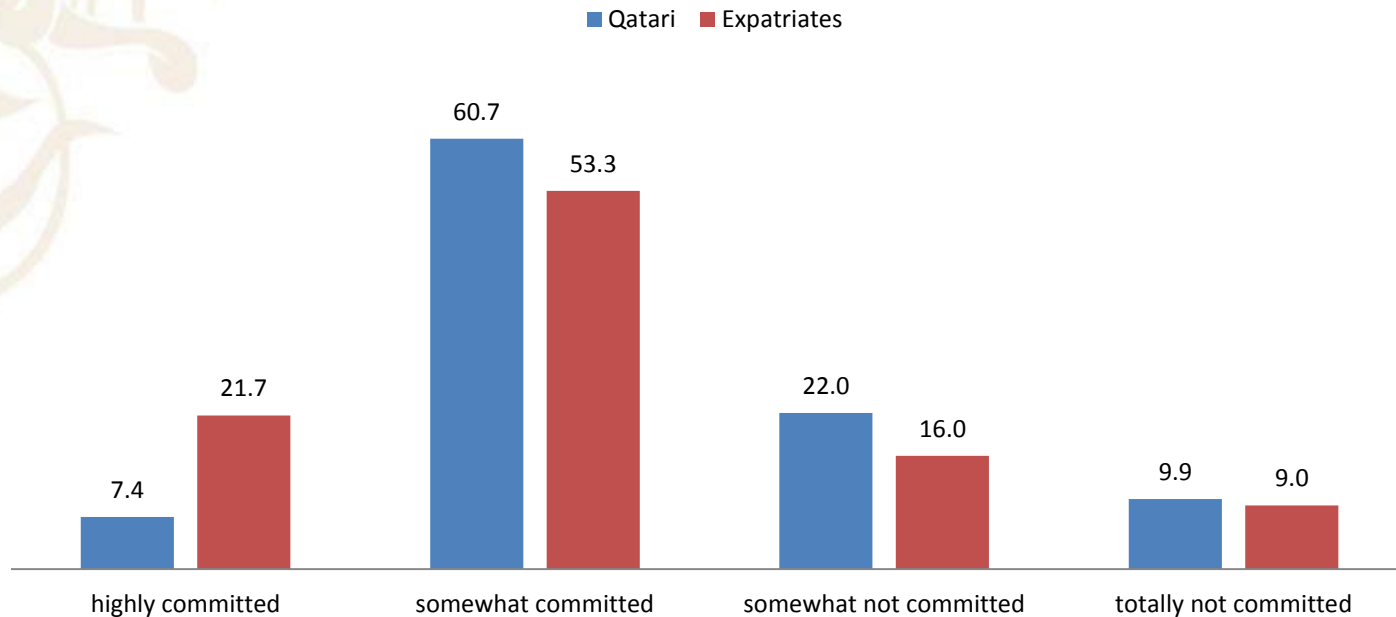
■ yes ■ no



There is no significant difference between respondents who received the penalties and those who didn't.

General idea about the drivers

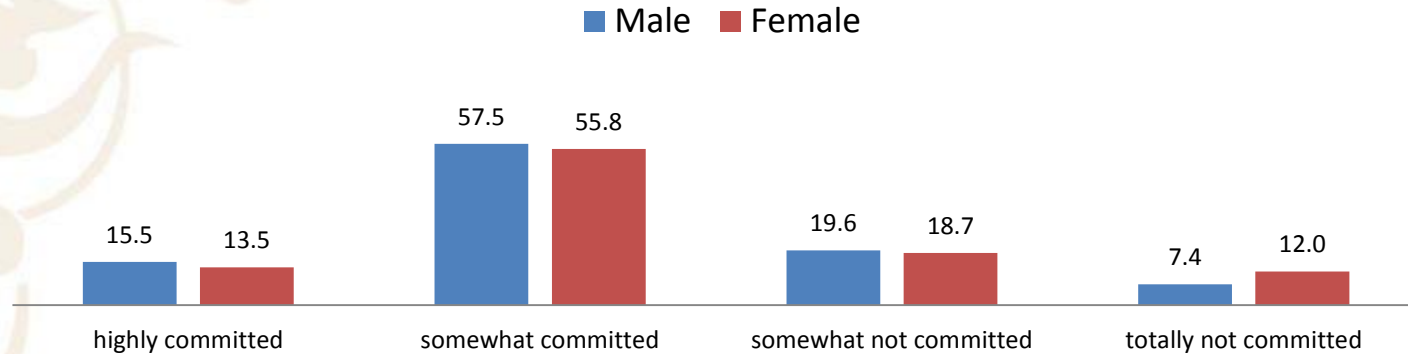
Figure 10: general idea about the drivers * according to respondent nationality



In general the 30% of respondents said that the drivers are not committed to the lows (somewhat & totally not committed) , this ratio differs between Qataris and expatriates, where the ratio was 32% and 25% respectively

Respondent general idea about the drivers

Figure 11: General idea about the drivers * according to respondent's gender



Respondents idea about driver is not vary, were the respondent is male or female, the result is similar the chart shows that 57% of male stated that the drivers are somewhat committed to the low, while 55.8% female stated that the drivers are somewhat committed, only 7.4% and 12.0% respectively stated that the driver are totally not committed.

Driver Gender

Figure 12: change a behavior in the presence of police or camera * respondent's according to gender

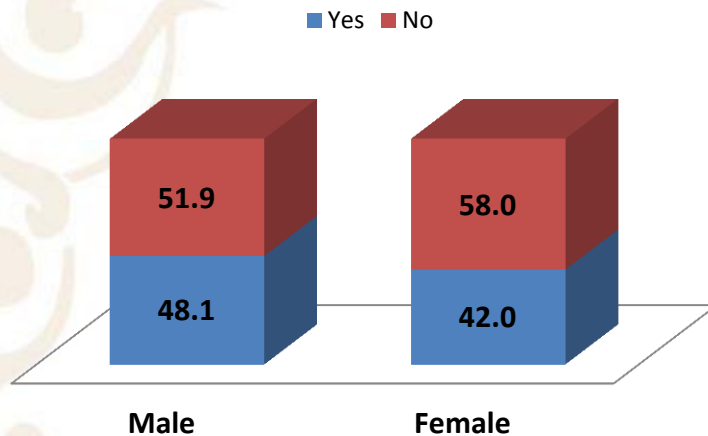
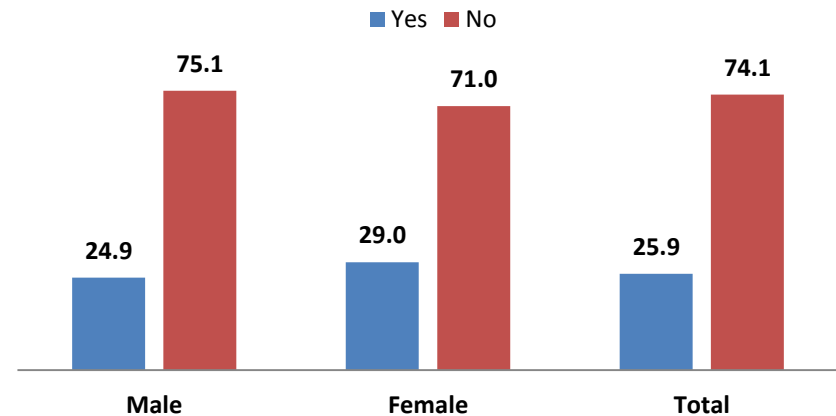


Figure 13: having involved in a traffic accident last year * according to respondent gender



Although the proportion of respondents in general who change their drive behavior is high (5 out of 10), This indicator is statistically significant between males and females.

The data also show that the proportion is not significant between males and females who involve in traffic accident last year.

Driver Nationality

Figure 14: change a behavior in the presence of police or camera according to respondent nationality

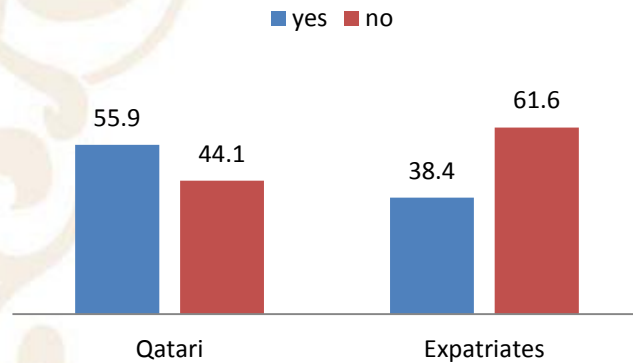
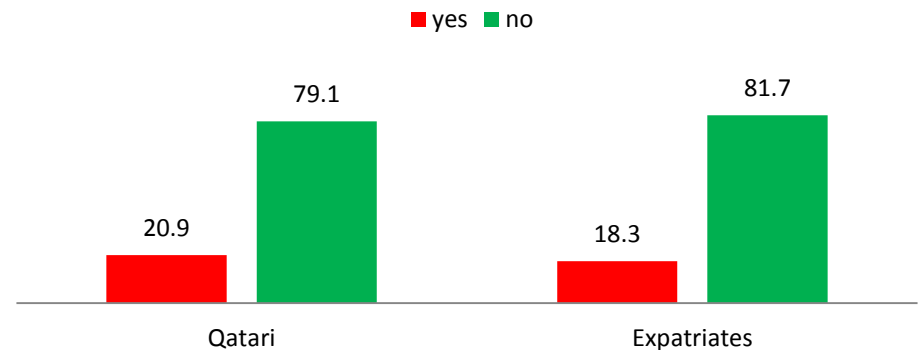


Figure 15: having involved in a traffic accident last year according to respondent nationality



More than a third of expatriates respondents change their behavior during the presence of cameras and police, while more than half of Qataris doing so, and the data show this different is significant.

While there is no any significant different between nationalities of respondents who involve in traffic accident last year.

Respondents Age groups

Figure 17: change a behavior in the presence of police or camera according to respondents age groups

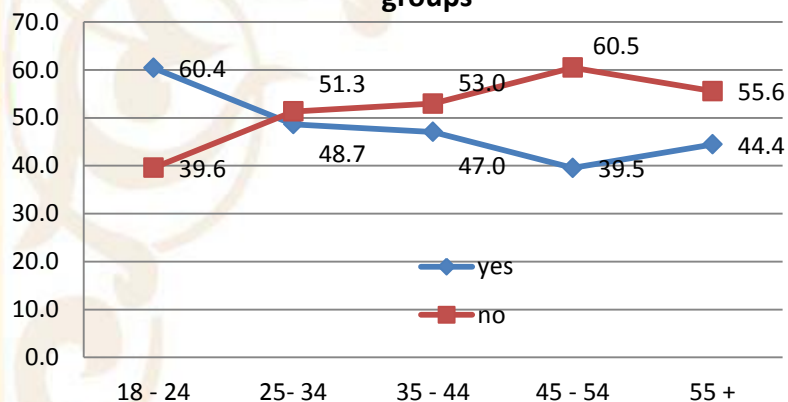
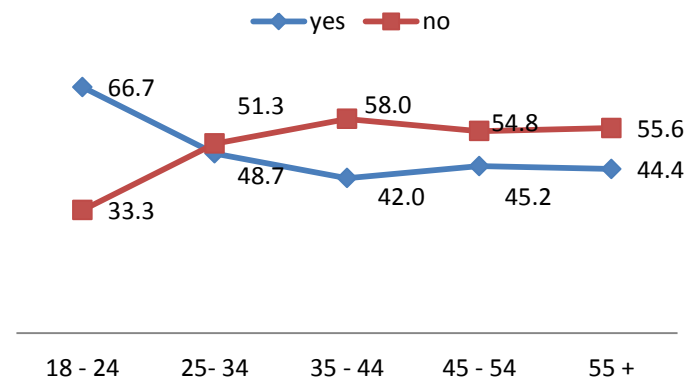


Figure 16: receiving traffic penalty last year according to respondents age groups



While traffic accidents kill the lives of young people, study results showed that, whenever the age of respondents is low the proportion of drivers who change their behavior only to the presence of (camera, police) is high , as well as the increase of the proportion of drivers who have received traffic penalties.(the result is significant)

Conclusions

- Drivers showed differences in their level and sources of knowledge about the 2007 traffic law.
- An Overwhelming majority of respondents (80%) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement “the traffic law helps reduce traffic accidents in Qatar”.
- The current traffic penalties are too high.
- The main cause of accidents in Qatar is the drivers.
- Young drivers receive penalties more than others
- Drivers tend to change their behavior in the presence of observation (Camera, police man)

Thank you!

For further information, visit:

<http://www.qu.edu.qa/sesri>

Or contact author via email:

elmogiera@qu.edu.qa