Title: Prediction of Seat Belt Use Among Iranian Car Drivers: Application of the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Health Belief Model

Objective: Seat belt use plays an important role in traffic safety by reducing the severity of injuries and fatality rates during vehicle accidents. The aim of this study was to investigate predictors of self-reported seat belt use in a sample of car drivers in Bandar Abbas, Iran. The theory of planned behavior and the health belief model served as the conceptual framework for the study.

Methods: The convenience sample consisted of 284 eligible car drivers who frequented eight petrol (gasoline) stations in different geographical areas of the city. Of the drivers approached to participate in the study, 21 declined to take part in the study and twelve other questionnaires were incomplete. Thus, a total of 251 questionnaires were analyzed (response rate=88.4%). A self-administered questionnaire including demographic characteristics and items arising from the theory of planned behavior and health belief model constructs were used to collect data. Data were analyzed using SPSS16.

Results: The subjects' mean age was 31.6 years (SD=8.7), mostly male (72.9%) and 53.4% of them reported that they used their seat belt "often." Multiple regression analyses revealed that from the theory of planned behavior attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control significantly predicted intention to use seat belt (R²=0.38, F=51.1, p<0.001); and subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intention significantly predicted seat belt use (R²=0.43, F=45.7, p<0.001). Arising from the health belief model perceived benefits and perceived barriers significantly predicted seat belt use (R²=0.39, F=26.2, p<0.001).

Conclusion: This study revealed that car drivers who perceived more subjective norms, more behavioral control, more intention to use seat belts, and who perceived more benefits and fewer barriers, were more likely to use their seat belts.

Seat belt, Theory of Planned Behavior, Health Belief Model, Automobile driver, car accident, Prediction

Presentation: Oral