

# Prevalence of Respiratory and Allergic Symptoms among Auto Rickshaw Drivers of East Delhi: A Cross-Sectional Study

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## Abstract

*Introduction:* There is a rapid increase in air pollution in major cities of India with marked increase seen in past decade. It causes minor and major illnesses such as respiratory illnesses and infections, allergies, Obstructive and Restrictive Pulmonary Diseases (like COPD), Cardiovascular Diseases, Cerebrovascular Diseases and so on leading to significant mortality and morbidity. Auto rickshaw drivers are subjected to the environmental pollutants and their ill effects. Current study was done with the objective of finding the prevalence of acute respiratory and allergic symptoms among them.

*Material and Methods:* A community based cross sectional study was conducted in 2019 in Kalyanpuri circle of East Delhi in 409 auto rickshaw drivers in a total of ten Three-Seater Rickshaw (TSR) stands which were chosen by simple random sampling. Consecutive auto rickshaw drivers were chosen from each stand. Data was collected using a questionnaire for accessing socio-demographic characteristics and respiratory and allergic symptoms and spirometry was conducted using a handheld portable spirometer. Data analysis was done on SPSS version 22.

*Results:* All the study subjects were males with mean age of study subjects was  $39 \pm 7.54$  years (Age group 22 to 59 years). The prevalence of one or more respiratory symptoms and allergies was 36.4 % with chest tightness and shortness of breath was predominant among them.

*Conclusion:* The prevalence of acute respiratory and allergic symptoms was found to be higher among the study subjects. Long term sequelae such obstructive respiratory conditions usually occur in such individuals warranting a need for preventive and promotive measures for the same.