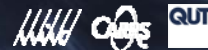




What Can Riders Tell Us About Motorcycle Rider Training? A View From the Other Side of the Fence

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Overview

- Rider training efficacy
- Parts of the puzzle
 - Content, delivery, licensing system
- Adult learning
 - Learner centred approach
- Method
- Limitations
- Key themes
- So what does it mean?
- Conclusions



Rider Training & Education

- **Formal rider training programs generally have not been found to reduce crash risk beyond informal training** (see review by Haworth & Mulvihill, 2005)
 - Pre-licence / post-licence
 - Mandatory / voluntary
- **Training that mainly focuses on vehicle-handling skills is successful in learning to ride and getting a licence but does not necessarily reduce crash risk**



Parts of the Puzzle

Why doesn't training reduce crash risk?

- **Training content**
 - Rider attitudes & hazard perception?
- **Overconfidence – perceived increased skills**
- **The influence of the licensing system**
 - Time, cost, assessment, motivation to undertake training
- **Evaluation methodology**
 - Self-selection bias, exposure
- **Training delivery**



Training Delivery

- One possible area for improvement is how training is delivered. No standardised approach in Australia
- Training should be underpinned by sound adult learning principles and delivered by qualified personnel
- M/cyclists are not a homogenous group
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Past experience



Adult Learning

Learner-centred / student-focussed approach to delivery required (see Bailey, 2003 for driver training)

- Shift towards this approach to training in other domains (e.g. OHS). Focus on learning rather than teaching
- Prior experiences (level of exp, bad habits, level of education)
- Perceptions of learning environment
- Learning styles
- Assessment / constructive alignment
- Learning orientation
 - Motives for learning (intrinsic / extrinsic)
- Deep & surface approaches to learning



Adult Learning (cont)

Delivery Techniques

- Active / experiential learning
- Group discussion
- Non-confrontational facilitation
- Self-reflection
- Feedback, questioning

"It is not the message which is delivered, but the message which is received by the participant(s) that counts" (EU ADVANCE Project, 2002).



Aim & Method

Aim: to explore rider trainee learning experiences and to gauge whether training delivery approaches are consistent with current adult learning principles

- Qualitative method using 10 focus groups
 - 40 participants (32 male, 8 female)
 - Mailout to 600 recent Q-Ride licence trainees (last 12 months) recruited from a single training organisation
 - Incentive to attract broad range of participants
 - Auditory recording of sessions plus 2 note takers
 - Focus groups 1-2 hours each in duration
 - Comparative conceptual content analysis to identify common themes



Study Context

- Phase 1 of an ongoing program of research with the specific training organisation. Will inform intervention development
- Q-Ride is the voluntary, competency-based motorcycle training/licensing option within Queensland
- No pre-learner training required in Queensland. Q-Ride can be undertaken to obtain a provisional or unrestricted motorcycle licence dependent on car licence status
- Delivered by independent registered service providers throughout the State and overseen by Queensland Transport



Method

Nine standardised questions were used across all focus groups. The scope was narrowed to **five** specific questions relating to adult learning for this paper.

1. What did you hope to get from the course when you commenced?
2. What was covered in the practical & classroom sessions of the course?
3. How do you think your past experiences affected how you learned during the course? For example, your past riding experiences or other courses you'd done.
4. Consider how you learn best. What things did the trainer do to help you understand and learn in the classroom and practical sessions?
5. What things have happened on the road since you've been licensed that make you think of important things you learned in the classroom and practical sessions of your training?



Theme 1

Two overarching themes emerged from the data

Theme 1: That a range of individual learning needs exist for motorcyclists during training and a variety of teaching methods are required to address these (consistent with the learner-centred approach).

Learning orientation (motives)

licence only

safety

skills

confidence

"I came here and I just wanted a motorbike licence.....but once I got into the courses it was really enjoyable and it gave me a thirst to keep learning" (40+male, Gr1)



Theme 1 (cont)

Past experiences

It was apparent that past experiences for some people enhanced their learning (e.g. past riding) whilst for others these inhibited learning.

"I think having the past practical experience of riding a (motor)bike I could take on board straight away exactly what they were talking about a lot easier" (male, Gr6)

"An under 30 person, that's how you did things. You just get in and do things. You don't have a preconceived way of doing things. But as you get older that all changes and we learn things. So I have to go through a lot of unlearning" (40+male, Gr1)

Perception of the learning environment

- Rapport building – credibility



Theme 1 (cont)

Learning styles

"I'm a cerebral learner. I've got to understand the theory before I can do the practical shit, that's just me...so they'd take me aside and talk to me and work me through it and explain the physics of the bike" (40+male, Gr8)

"The trainers went and did what they were telling us to do before we had to do it. I like to see something done and then do it myself. It doesn't matter if I think about it or read about it. I think showing you, doing it works fine" (young female, Gr2)

Techniques

- ✓ modeling correct behaviour
- ✓ repetition
- ✓ feedback/positive reinforcement
- ✓ group discussion
- ✓ manageable chunks of information

Presentation Modes

- ✓ visual
- ✓ auditory
- ✓ Kinaesthetic (hands-on)



Theme 2

Theme 2: Much information from training does transpose to actual on-road riding following licensing, however the most salient information is that which was personally encountered and reinforced in the on-road environment.

"When you're here (in the classroom) and they say something to you, you mightn't have much of a grasp of how important it is until you're out there on the road" (40+male, Gr1).



Theme 2 (cont)

New riders

- 'everything' learnt was important once on-road
- basic vehicle handling
- changing gears
- eyes up
- wearing protective clothing

Riders with previous experience

- roadcraft – identifying hazards / risks

"There were these two 4WDs speeding, one behind the other and I was in the next lane. And one decided to stop and the other one veered into my lane without looking. But because I hung back (I avoided a crash). I think they taught that.....you need to see things ahead" (female, Group 2).



Theme 2 (cont)

It was also evident that sometimes information taught in training was not utilised in subsequent on-road riding. It was only when an incident happened that training knowledge became salient.

"If I'm just a bit too relaxed and overshoot the corner, do something stupid.....you have to think back specifically to what you were supposed to be doing and what you learned here and why you weren't doing it and try to remember it for next time" (male, Group 9).

"We had an accident at Easter on the Harley.....I didn't have leather pants. I had a vest, I didn't have gloves.....we wear full leathers now, we won't get on the bike without them. We learnt from our mistake" (female, Group7).



So What Does It Mean?

Riding instructors in this study appear to be applying the learner-centred approach which is well received by participants. Their experiences suggest that:

- individual learning needs are predominantly met (for licence competencies)
- skills from training are seen as largely of value once licensed

However, training information is most salient if personally experienced following licensing. This suggests that:

- information and skills may decay over time if not utilised
- training information has more personal relevance once some experience is obtained and is therefore more meaningful

Implications for GLS in terms of second phase training.



So What Does it Mean? (cont)

On-road incidents following licensing suggest that training does not always have a protective effect even if relevant information has been covered in training.

Possibly due to:

- a lack of learning transfer for some riders (or decay of information or skills)
- factors of an attitudinal or motivational nature (e.g. peer influence) affecting behaviour once licensed

Affirms the need to address risk taking attitudes so that safety information isn't disregarded



Methodological Limitations

1. Possible response bias (more safety conscious or those who had positive learning experiences)
2. Recruitment from a single training organisation. Therefore this is only a preliminary exploration of the relevant issues and further research across organisations is required.
3. Actual levels of learning cannot be quantified



Conclusions

- A 'one size fits all' approach to motorcycle rider training delivery is not sufficient, as a broad range of individual learning needs must be accommodated. The learner-centred approach to training needs to be explored further across more training providers
- Further attention should be given to extending learning for motorcyclists beyond initial licensing (as it may then be more meaningful). This should focus on consolidating skills and knowledge from pre-licence training, and further aim to enhance attitudes towards safety
- Researchers, training practitioners, and Governments alike need to explore how learning can be optimised for riders to enhance safety



Thank You!

Questions?

