

Traffic Jam Is Freezing Strong Economy and Healthy Environment: A Case Study of Dhaka City

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Abstract: Located on the banks of the Buriganga River, Dhaka is the capital of Bangladesh. Along with its metropolitan Dhaka has a population of over 12 million. Day by day Dhaka is badly affected by huge traffic jam. Due to traffic jam a substantial portion of working hours have to be left on streets which create adverse impact on economy. Traffic jam has also many other negative impacts on economy, environment and human life. For this purpose this paper has given its attention on the impacts of traffic jam in Dhaka city.

I. Introduction

Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh, is the most densely populated city in the world. More than twelve million people live in Dhaka city. As a developing country, the city dwellers are facing lots of problems every day. The sewerage system, transportation, electricity, housing, traffic management, etc. in the city are problematic. Amongst these various problems traffic jam is the most acute one. Day by day the number is increasing and most part of Dhaka is badly affected by huge traffic jam. Faulty traffic signaling systems, inadequate manpower, narrow road spaces and overtaking tendency of drivers create pro-longed traffic congestions. Due to traffic jam a substantial portion of working hours have to be left on streets which indirectly put adverse impact on economy. It causes serious air pollution and noise pollution and thus worsens the overall environmental condition. By reducing traffic jam, this city can play a very important role by ensuring healthy environment free from noise and pollution.

Causes of Traffic Jam:

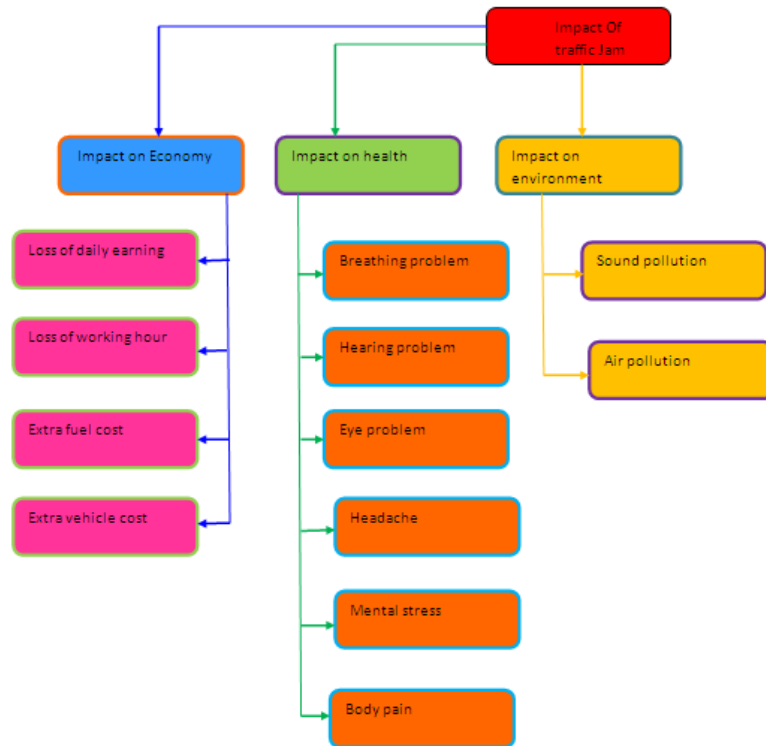
It is very hard to tell about the causes of congestion in Dhaka as it does not follow any pattern. It is a common practice in Dhaka to blame rickshaws as the only reason for creating traffic congestion. But in reality there are several of reasons behind this traffic congestion problem.

According to general people, who are the prime victims of traffic jam, think that Traffic rule violation is the main cause of traffic jam. After that lack of proper planning of the city, inadequate road space, unplanned stoppage or parking, different speed vehicle in the same road, over population, etc. are responsible for causing traffic jam in Dhaka City. On the other hand vehicle operators think that the main cause of traffic jam is traffic rule violation. Similarly too many vehicles in road and reckless driving of few drivers are causing traffic jams.

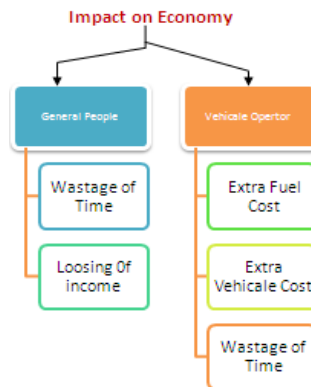


Impacts Of Traffic Jam:

The impact of traffic jam on Dhaka City can be viewed as the following way -



Impact on Economy:



A. General people :

1. Wastage of Time: In Dhaka City people on an average spend 2.35 hours in the traffic of which 1.30 hours are due to traffic jam. It means they are loosing 1.30 hours everyday due to traffic jam. People are loosing 55% of their traffic hour during staying in the traffic jam. They can convert this time into valuable work that might add something to our economy.

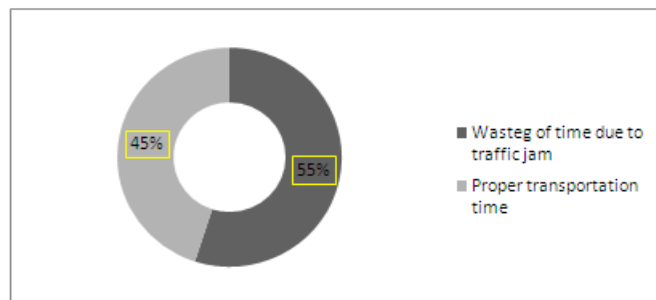


Figure : Wastage of time of general people due to traffic jam

2.Loosing Of income:

In Dhaka City Corporation there are around 7 million people and in Dhaka metropolitan there are more than 12 million people. As people are loosing 1.3 man-hour per day. So, per day the amount of loss is tk 26.54 crore and per annum it is tk 7,177 crore . According to Alam (2008), in whole Bangladesh the size of loss is tk 11,763 crore due to traffic jam. It means Dhaka City it self is contributing 63% of the total loss.

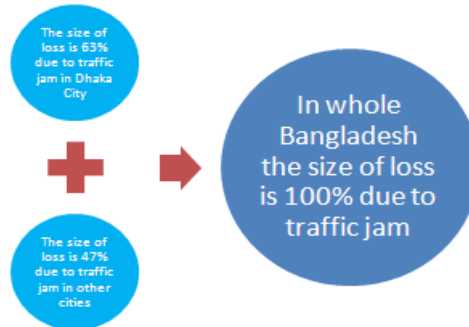


Figure : Loss in economy due to traffic jam

B .Vehicle operators :

1 .Wastage of Time: The vehicle operator are also loosing a lot of time due to traffic jam. They are loosing almost three hours due to traffic jams. On an average their daily working hour is slightly over 12 hours. It means they are loosing almost 25% of their working hour.

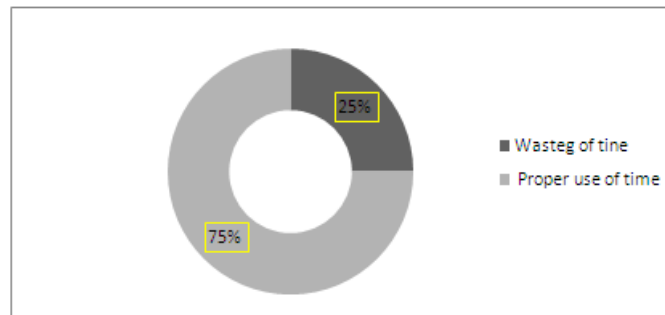


Figure : Wastage of time of vehicle operators due to traffic jam

2. Extra Fuel Cost : Due to traffic jam per annum extra fuel consumption cost is 11,228 crore BDT [24] which is enormous amount for a least developed country like Bangladesh. Bangladesh government is buying this extra amount of fuel with hard cash. This is considered a national loss.

3. Vehicle Operating Cost: Every car has a running cost. Vehicle operating cost is directly proportionate to traffic jam . Fuel consumption will continue if car is on during the jam . So, Traffic jam actually increases VOC.

Impact on Health : In Dhaka City about 73% people are suffering some kind of physical or mental discomfort due to traffic jam. Among vehicle operators 30% of them are suffering from physical discomfort.

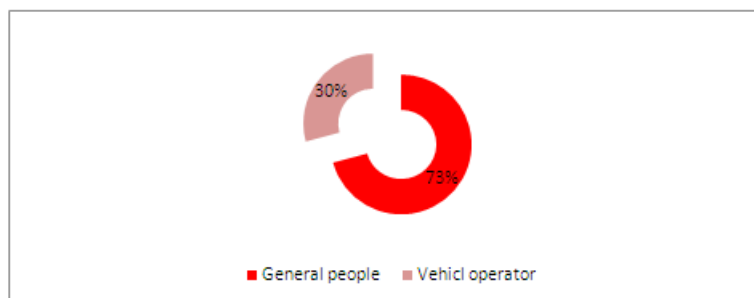
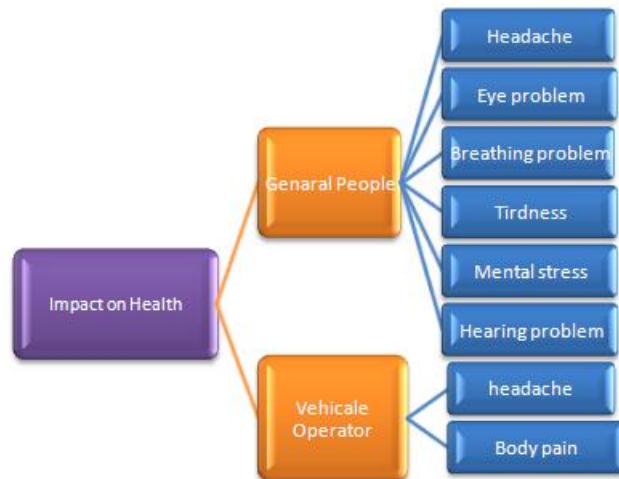


Figure : Impact on Health due to traffic jam



A. Sufferings of General People : People are suffering in many ways due to staying in traffic jam.

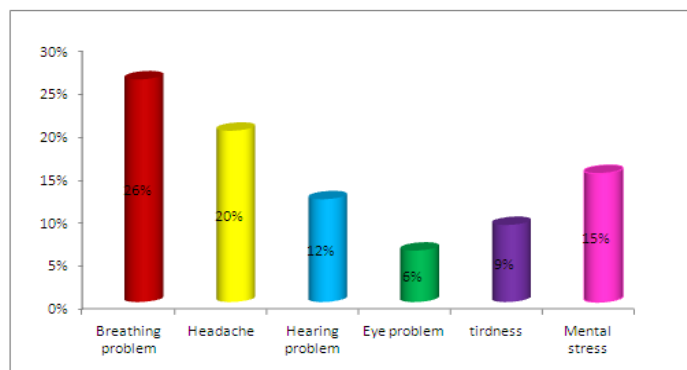


Figure : Suffering of the people due traffic jam

1. Breathing Problem :

25% people suffer from breathing problem due to traffic jam. It happens due to smoke and polluted gas.

2. Headache :

Longer stay in traffic cause headache to many people. Continuous horn creates headache. And if same thing keep happening 5 days a week, anyone will have a chronic headache. As a result 20% people of Dhaka City has got a gift headache from traffic jam.

3. Mental Stress :

Due to traffic jam, people get late in their working place. This gives people a continuous mental stress.

4. Hearing Problem :

12% people of Dhaka city suffer from hearing problem. Due to heavy horn at the time of traffic jam, people unable to hear clearly for a few minutes. If this continues, the hearing problem might be permanent.

7. Eye Problem :

Due to staying in traffic jam, people 's eyes come to contact of smoke. And this smoke cause pain in the eyes. Sometimes people tear in the jam automatically.

B. Sufferings of Vehicle Operators:

The ways of sufferings for the vehicle operators are almost similar to other people.

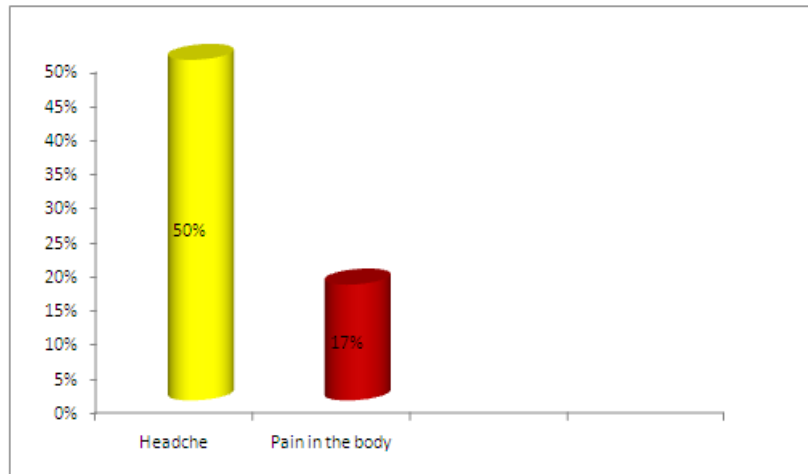


Figure : . Sufferings of Vehicle Operators due to traffic jam

1. Headache :

Headache is the most common form of suffering from the vehicle operators. 50% of the sufferers are sufferings from headache.

2. Pain in the body :

33% are suffering from Pain in the body due to longer stay in the vehicle Due to traffic jam, Vehicle operators get very little break. They have to stay tight in the traffic jam. So, trip after trip sitting in the same arrangement makes them feel pain in the back.

Impact on Environment :

1 .Sound Pollution :

Sound pollution due to traffic jam is the cause of headache, hearing problem, high temper , trouble in sleeping and disturbing in study. The general public strongly support actions to reduce noise pollution.

2. Air Pollution :

In the traffic jam, when vehicles stop for a longer periods of time and their engine is on, they emit SO_x, NO_x much which are lighter than air but very dangerous for our health and they even can cause death.

II. Conclusion

Various attempts are taken by governments to reduce the intensity of traffic problem in Dhaka city. Some tangible improvements were assured within the shortest possible time. But, in fact nothing has happened. We need to work on the basis of long term plan and at the same time take care of short term solution to remove current discomforts or problems. It needs a balance so that to fulfill too much short term solution we do not ruin the long term plan. Our focus should be the solution of traffic jam, strong economy and healthy environment.

References

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