

Intro

The Bangladesh tobacco control law permits designated smoking areas (DSAs) in hospitality venues and public transportation, provided they are established as per the requirements outlined in the law. We conducted a study to assess the prevalence and compliance of DSAs in hospitality venues and trains in Dhaka city, Bangladesh.

Methods

An official list of restaurants and hotels was obtained through government sources. Using proportionate stratified sampling, 120 hotels and 387 restaurants were included in the initial sample. This sample also included 56 trains, based on a list obtained from the Bangladesh Railway Agency. 6.8% of venues would be eliminated due to permanent business closures. Using smartphone technology, data collectors successfully contacted and completed a standard checklist to record observational findings for the resulting 526 venues from December 2021-January 2022.

Results

The study surveyed 355 restaurants, 118 hotels, and 53 trains.

- **Only 8% (n=41) of the venues had a DSA**; trains had the highest percentage of DSAs (40%; n=21), followed by hotels (15%; n=18)
- Of the 41 DSAs that could be assessed for compliance with the current tobacco law, **none were compliant across all measures**
 - Only 14.6% (n=6) of all venues with DSAs met the design standards
 - None of the venues complied with the internal safety standards and signage specifications
 - All venues were observed to have people smoking and had smoking aids in non-smoking areas

Discussion

DSAs are not very common in hospitality venues and transportation. Among the venues that had a DSA, the overall compliance with law specifications that were measured was low. Restricting smoking to DSAs does not provide adequate protection from dangerous tobacco smoke.

Restricting smoking to Designated Smoking Areas in hospitality venues and transportation does not provide a 100% smoke-free environment in Bangladesh.

Acknowledgement: This work was supported with funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies' Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use (bloomberg.org).

Extra Tables & Figures

Figure 1: Prevalence of DSAs by Venue-type

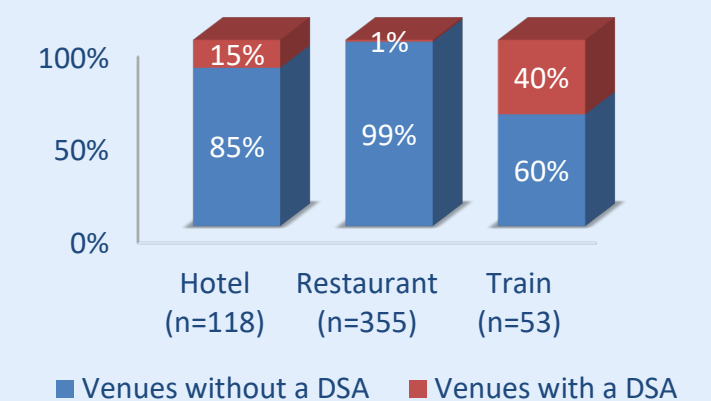
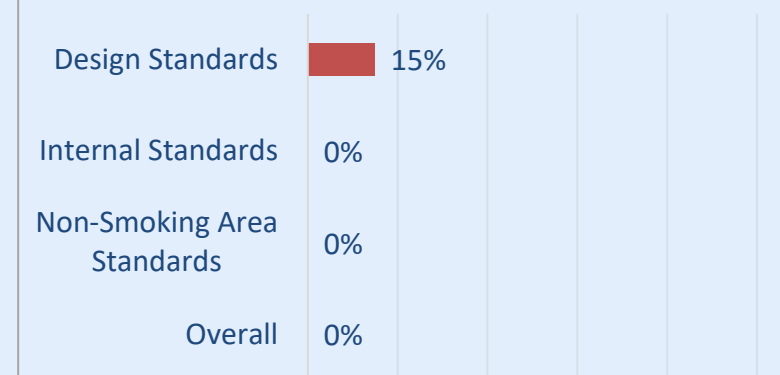


Figure 2: Compliance of DSAs



**Requirements as per the Bangladesh Tobacco Control Law*

1. *Design Standards: DSAs should be physically separated from non-smoking areas and shall not be passed to reach any services of the venue.*
2. *Internal Standards: All DSAs must carry a fire extinguisher, disposal container for tobacco products, and signage adhering to design specifications.*
3. *Non-Smoking Area Standards: No smoking aids (i.e. ashtrays) shall be provided in non-smoking areas. Non-smoking areas should display 'No Smoking' and warning signage that adhere to design specifications.*