Compliance of Designated smoking areas in restaurants, lounges, and hotels in 8 Indian cities

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Background

• In 2003, India banned smoking in many public places and workplaces including healthcare settings, educational institutes, and government facilities

• A provision in the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) permits Designated Smoking Areas (DSAs) in hotels (having 30 or more rooms), and restaurants/lounges (having seating capacity for 30 or more)

• As per the law, “smoking area” means a physically separated room with full height walls on all 4 sides. Further, DSAs are required to meet specific design standards by COTPA

Objective: This study assesses compliance of DSAs with COTPA requirements in hospitality venues in the cities of Bangalore, Chennai, Guwahati, Jaipur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, & New Delhi
METHODS

• Following a systematic method, an initial list of 6055 hospitality venues was generated using popular Indian search websites

• The study was conducted in two phases.
  • Phase 1:
    ▪ Each venue was contacted using a two-step calling protocol, to assess the proportion of venues that have a DSA.
    ▪ Approximately one quarter (26%, n=829) reported to have a DSA

• Phase 2: A total of 1069 venues (829 venues reporting having a DSA as well as a random sample of 240 venues that reported to not have a DSA) were visited by trained data collectors for COTPA compliance assessment
Compliance of DSAs

Key findings:

- Of the 120 DSAs that could be accessed for compliance with the COTPA requirements, 3% (n=3) were compliant across all measures.

- 58% (n=70) did not meet the design standards reviewed, 92% (n=110) of DSAs did not display a compliant “smoking area” signage, and 36% (n=43) of the venues had employees providing services inside the DSA.

Compliance of DSAs with the COTPA specifications for design, signage & service restriction (N=120*)

*6 DSRs were confirmed; however, the data collectors could not gain access to the rooms for varying reasons including the rooms being full.
Compliance by indicators

1. **Design standards**: DSAs shall be physically separated and surrounded by full height walls on all four sides; should have an automatically closing door normally kept in the closed position; and, shall not be located at an entrance/exit of the venue
   - 99% (n=119) DSAs observed had full height walls on all 4 sides;
   - 45% (n=54) DSAs were located at the entrance/exit of the venue;
   - 75% (n=90) DSAs had an automatically closing door, and 8 had them kept in the open position

2. **Smoking area signage**: DSAs shall be distinctively marked as "Smoking Area" in English and one Indian language, as applicable
   - 44% DSAs (n=53) displayed a “smoking area” sign; of which, only 19% (n=10) conformed to the signage specifications

3. **Restriction on services inside the DSA**: DSA should be used only for the purpose of smoking and no other service(s) shall be allowed.
   - 36% (n=43) of the venues had employees providing services inside the DSA
Conclusion

- Findings from the study suggest:
  - DSAs are not very common in hospitality venues across 8 cities
  - Among the venues that have a DSA, the overall compliance with the COTPA specifications that were measured for design standards, signage & service restriction is low
- Restricting smoking to DSAs does not provide adequate protection from dangerous tobacco smoke
Thank You!

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