A Go/No-go approach to uncovering implicit attitudes towards safe and risky driving

Self-report measures of driving-related attitudes and beliefs miss potentially important precursors of driving behaviour, namely, automatic and implicit thought processes. The present study used an adapted Go/No-go Association Task to measure implicit thought without relying on the participants' self-reports. Implicit attitudes towards safe and risky driving were measured in 53 Danish drivers (31 female, 22 male). Further, we explored the relationship between implicit attitudes towards risky and safe driving, and self-reported driving behaviour and skills. The results suggest that implicit attitudes towards driving behaviour can be measured reliably with the Go/No-go Association Task. Also, the results suggest that implicit attitudes towards safe driving and risky driving, respectively, may be separable constructs, and might thus stem from different cognitive processes. Finally, implicit attitudes were significantly related to self-reported driving behaviour and skills for male (but not female) drivers. Pending future research with larger sample sizes, the difference between implicit attitudes towards safe versus risky driving that we observed may contribute to a greater theoretical understanding of the causes of safe and risky driving.
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