Avoiding drunk driving with a push

The present study explores a novel approach for changing implicit attitudes toward drunk driving with behavioural training. Contrary to explicit attitudes, which people are consciously aware of and therefore can state, implicit attitudes are not necessarily consciously accessible; however, implicit attitudes also direct and affect behaviour. In order to combat problem behaviour such as drunk driving, it is, therefore, crucial to measure and target both types of attitudes. This randomised controlled study first measured implicit drunk driving attitudes. One week later, participants performed a behavioural training procedure, designed to influence implicit drunk driving attitudes, and a subsequent implicit drunk driving attitude test. We randomised young male participants into an experimental group that learned to avoid drunk driving stimuli and a control group performing a neutral version of the training setup. Results showed that behavioural training could change implicit drunk driving attitudes. However, contrary to expectations, the control group’s implicit attitudes also changed. We propose that drivers can hold both positive and negative drunk driving implicit attitudes, and a priming effect may have contributed to the results. We outline and discuss the results.

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