The combined contribution of personality, family traits, and reckless driving intentions to young men’s risky driving: What role does anger play?

The study investigated the relation between the risky driving behavior of young male drivers and their personality traits, familial attitudes and conduct in respect to road safety, intentions to drive recklessly, and driving anger. In-vehicle data recorders were used to measure the actual driving of 163 young male drivers, who also completed self-report instruments tapping traits and perceptions. Personality traits were assessed near in time to receipt of the driving license, and actual risky driving and driving-related variables were measured 9–12 months after licensure to examine relatively stable driving behavior and attitudes. Findings indicate that (a) young male drivers’ personality traits and tendencies play a major role in predicting risky behavior; (b) intentions to drive recklessly are translated into actual behavior; and (c) the parental role is extremely relevant and counteracts risky tendencies. Moreover, the results suggest that although trait anger and driving anger both contribute to risky driving, they represent different aspects of anger. Thus, for safety interventions to be effective, they must not only teach drivers how to cope with anger-provoking driving situations, but also address underlying personality traits and environmental factors.