



The role of sensation seeking, perceived peer pressure, and harmful alcohol use in riding with an alcohol-impaired driver

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ABSTRACT

Alcohol-related motor vehicle collisions have been the top of policy agenda for more than three decades in Korea. Despite implementation of various traffic safety measures, some drivers' alcohol use and abuse has resulted in a high number of alcohol-impaired traffic fatalities every year. This paper presents the association of theoretical factors with behavior of riding with an alcohol-impaired driver (RAID) among all age groups in the Korean adult sample. The theoretical factors of the drivers are personality factor, socio-psychological factor, and alcohol-related behavioral risk factor. We utilized national survey data from 1007 respondents consisting of 703 males and 304 females aged 20–66 collected by Korean Institute of Criminology (KIC) to test our theorized model. Our results indicated that there were three major predictors of RAID involvement: sensation seeking propensity, perceived peer pressure, and frequent harmful drinking. Overall, prediction of RAID behavior by gender was mediated entirely through these predictors. The issue of males' higher risk of RAID involvements was addressed for effective communication strategies such as campaigns.

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1. Introduction

Alcohol-related motor vehicle collisions are a major social problem seen throughout South Korea. Road Traffic Authority statistics show that alcohol use and abuse are responsible for nearly 1000 traffic fatalities and cause more than 50,000 injuries each year despite widespread anti-drinking efforts since the year 2000.

In contrast to young adults' playing a disproportionate role in incidences of crashes involving driver impairment that has been reported in multiple studies from western cultures (Beck et al., 2010; Nygaard et al., 2003; Perkins et al., 2010; Sun and Longazel, 2008), national data (2007–2009) on motor vehicle crashes in South Korea indicate that alcohol involvement is relatively frequent in 31–50-year-old drivers. 41–50-year olds and 31–40-year-old represented 27.95–28.49% and 26.63–29.24%, respectively, of all alcohol-related crashes in South Korea while 21–30-year-old drivers represented 25.27–26.51% during that period.

Many researchers have investigated the internal and external factors of the drivers and have found some variables that significantly distinguish individuals who committed alcohol-impaired

driving from others, but relatively few researchers have investigated the factors affecting the behavior of individuals who choose to ride with an alcohol impaired driver. The available literature on the topic puts young people in the spotlight: previous analyses of data from countries such as Spain, Canada, and the United States suggest nearly one-third of the youths have ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking (Adlaf et al., 2003; Calafat et al., 2009; Everett et al., 2001). However, little is known about the risk of injury among adult male and female population in general who reported being a passenger in a car driven by alcohol-impaired drivers.

Though the acceptance and refusal to ride with a driver under the influence of alcohol have an actual positive and a negative effect, respectively, on the deviant behavior, little is known about risk factors predicting RAID (riding with an alcohol-impaired driver). Personality factors, socio-psychological factors, and alcohol-related behavioral risk factors of individuals have traditionally and even as recently as the 2000s been described as associated with RAID in western literature, but the information concerning the risk factors related to RAID is still scarce. The purpose of the present study was to explore the association of theoretical factors with behavior of RAID among all age groups in the South Korean adult sample, with a special focus on gender differences. This paper is organized as follows. A brief literature review will be provided in Section 2, which is followed by a description of dataset, measurements, and statistical methods in Section 3. Analysis of the results will be elaborated

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