

Example of hooning behavior report

Psychology, Behaviorism



Hooning Behavior

Hooning behavior refers to the behavior of drivers who drive in an anti-social manner with reference to the standards set for the contemporary society. It entails the use of a vehicle in an irresponsible manner, which is hazardous especially in public places. The severity of hooning behaviors is assessed on the impact that a particular behavior has on the people involved. In fatal cases, hooning behavior can lead to the loss of lives not only to the driver in question but also to other road users. Due to its prevalence, many people consider hooning behavior an international problem. Owing to this, different people have embarked on research about the various aspects of hooning behavior in the contemporary society.

Several individuals have carried out research to establish the most prevalent forms of hooning behavior. According to Palk, Freeman, Kee, Steinhardt and Jeremy (2010), street racing, drifting and burnouts are the most prevalent types of hooning behavior in Australia (p. 148). These behaviors are common in males who are 17-25 years old. They also found out that the other forms of hooning behavior that drivers portray are cruising and donuts. In addition, they found out that some risky driving acts that are synonymous to hooning. These acts include speeding, drag racing as well as rapid lane changes, which are potential causes of crashes. In their findings, they pointed out that only those irresponsible acts that lead to crashes are reported to the authorities leaving several incidences that did not lead to crashes. This presents hooning behavior as a risk factor to young males as they reported that in Queensland the road fatality rate in 2004 for 17-25 year olds was

double the fatality rate for drivers over 25 years old (Palk et al., 2010. P. 149). Hooning behavior is a threat to human life.

The vulnerability to injury because of hooning behavior is an aspect that has caught the attention of many researchers. Individuals that frequently engage in hooning behaviors are two to four times likely to incur injuries as compared to individuals who have little or no incidences of engaging in hooning behavior (Blows, Ameratunga, Iversen, Kailo, & Norton, 2005). They also pointed out that the severity of the injuries incurred by the drivers was subject to the type of risky behavior that the drivers had. The risk of incurring injury increases significantly with the number of risky driving behaviors that a given driver exhibits. Such behaviors include drink driving, speeding, passing in no-pass zones, close following and not wearing seatbelts among others. Some drivers may have more than one risky behavior at a given instance hiking their vulnerability to injuries. Palk et al. (2010) also found out that fatally crashed young male drivers were more likely to have a significant record of driving offences than their female counterparts (p. 151). Their research established that there exists a strong relationship between risky driving habits, previous convictions of traffic offenses as well as the magnitude of the injuries incurred by the driver.

Despite the potential harm of hooning behavior, young people still engage in risky driving habits. Ulleberg and Rundmo (2003) embarked on a study to determine the predictors of risk-taking behavior among young-drivers. In order to understand the aspects that underlie this behavior, they employed personality trait approach as well as social cognition approach. In their

findings, personality traits play a pivotal role in making young drivers to engage in hooning behavior. Personality traits are the dimensions of individual differences in showing consistency patterns of feelings, thoughts and behavior (Ulleberg & Rundmo, 2003, p. 430). Aggression, anxiety and sensation seeking drive their risk-taking behavior. It follows that the risk-taking behavior triggers them to engage in risky driving habits. Owing to the fact that over speeding is one of the major forms of risky driving, Machin and Sankey (2008) carried out a study seeking to justify this behavior among young drivers. In their research, they employed five personality variables and four risk perception variables. The personality variables were anxiety, excitement-seeking, normlessness, anger and altruism whereas the risk perception variables were worry and concern, likelihood of accident, aversion to risk taking and efficacy (Machin & Sankey, 2008, p. 542). They found out that nearly all the personality variables were of great significance on an individual's aversion to risk taking in influencing the speeding behavior. Additionally, they found out that aversion to risk taking behavior partially mediates the effects of personality variables in driving. Recent research has also shown that some people engage in hooning behavior due to the influence of substances that deter the normal functioning of their brains (Begg & Langley, 2004, p. 1068). These include alcohol and hard drugs such as cannabis.

Studies have shown that various attempts have been made to curb the vice in the contemporary society. Some countries have done safe driving campaigns among the most vulnerable groups in the society. The efficiency of such campaigns depends on the degree to which the matter is addressed.

Rundmo and Iversen (2004) studied the impact of one such campaign in Norway and two other countries. Their study shows that a safety campaign among young drivers in Norway significantly changed the adolescents' risk perception in relation to risky driving as well as other traffic hazards. As a result, cases of risky driving and the associated consequences reduced by 13 percent in the nation. They also found out that in the other two countries there were no significant changes to the prevalence of hooning behavior in the young drivers. They attributed this to the reluctance of the other two countries in carrying out the campaign. This showed that in dealing with hooning behavior, the whole society should be actively involved in addressing the issues of the most vulnerable group in the society-young adults.

A major shortcoming in the study of hooning behavior is that none of the approaches employed in the issue brings out the contribution of those who have never been involved in the behavior in tackling the issue in question. This could be helpful in pointing out the stand of the rest of the community, which would act as a basis for finding effective solutions to the problem in the future. The current study employed Machin and Sankey's approach of personality as well as risk perception. The personality variables were neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness and normlessness. On the other hand, the risk perception variables were worry and concern about having or being injured in an accident, perceived likelihood of accident, efficacy and aversion to risk taking. The study involved 200 participants: 100 of whom were referred for driver education for being involved in hooning behavior while the others were had never been convicted of any form of hooning

behavior. They were 18-25 year olds with gender equally represented. It was hypothesized that at least two of the personality variables (extraversion and agreeableness) were significant to the convicted participants' aversion to risky driving. It was also hypothesized that not all the personality variables were significant to the aversion of risky driving to those participants that had never been convicted of any form of hooning behavior-those from the rest of the society. It was anticipated that aversion to risk taking partially affected the personality variables on risky driving in all the participants.

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