



## Street racing and stunt driving in Ontario, Canada: Results of a web-based survey of car and racing enthusiasts



Evelyn Vingilis<sup>a,\*</sup>, Jane Seeley<sup>a</sup>, David Wiesenthal<sup>b</sup>, Robert Mann<sup>c</sup>, Larissa Vingilis-Jaremko<sup>d</sup>, Ward Vanlaar<sup>e</sup>, Nerida Leal<sup>f</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, The University of Western Ontario, London, Canada

<sup>b</sup>Department of Psychology, York University, Toronto, Canada

<sup>c</sup>Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Toronto, Canada

<sup>d</sup>Department of Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour, McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada

<sup>e</sup>Traffic Injury Research Foundation, Ottawa, Canada

<sup>f</sup>Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety-Queensland, Queensland, Australia

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 28 August 2012

Received in revised form 23 May 2013

Accepted 9 August 2013

#### Keywords:

Web-based survey  
Stunt driving  
Street racing  
Risky driving  
Canada

### ABSTRACT

In the Canadian context, stunt driving refers to street racing and associated risky driving activities. Although no national official statistics are available, other data have found that stunt driving is a common activity among young males. Research from Australia, New Zealand and other jurisdictions has shown that those engaged in stunt driving are at higher crash and violation risk. The purpose of this study was to examine the correlates of self-reported stunt driving and the effects of thrill seeking, competitive driving and attitudes towards risky driving on self-reported stunt driving among a sample of car and racing enthusiasts through a web-based survey of car and racing clubs. The Internet questionnaire included: (1) personality variables (Driver Thrilling Seeking Scale, Competitive Attitude Toward Driving Scale); (2) beliefs about seriousness and perceived crash likelihood of various drivers and driving behaviours; (3) attitudes regarding Ontario, Canada's new stunt driving legislation and street racing/stunt driving; (4) risky driving behaviours, as measured by the Manchester Driver Behaviour Questionnaire subscale, Self-Report Driver Aggression Questionnaire, Risk-Taking Driving Scale, collisions in past five years, traffic offences in last year and stunt driving, as defined by Ontario's Street Racers, Stunt and Aggressive Drivers Legislation. A minority of car and racing enthusiasts reported stunt driving. Clear differences emerged between the self-reported stunt drivers and non-stunt drivers. Stunt drivers were more likely to be young, less concerned about excessive speeding and street racing, to hold more negative attitudes towards Ontario's stunt driving legislation and more positive attitudes towards street racing and stunt driving, to score higher on the driver thrill seeking, competitive attitude toward driving and risky driving scales and more likely to report traffic offences in the past year. The sequential logistic regression showed that personality characteristics and attitudes provided unique contributions to the model in predicting stunt driving. Thus, although a minority of the sampled car and racing enthusiasts engage in stunt driving, further interventions need to be considered to reduce their risky driving beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

© 2013 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

\* Corresponding author. Address: Western Centre for Public Health and Family Medicine, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, N6A 5C1, Canada. Tel.: +1 (519) 858-5063x2; fax: +1 (519) 661 3878.

E-mail address: [evingili@uwo.ca](mailto:evingili@uwo.ca) (E. Vingilis).

## 1. Introduction

Street racing and associated stunt driving activities, such as burnouts and drifting, are high risk driving activities and of considerable concern to the general public (Palk, Freeman, Gee Kee, Steinhardt, & Davey, 2011; Vanlaar, Simpson, Mayhew, & Robertson, 2008). These driving activities have also fostered media and government attention because of associated traffic-related deaths (Palk et al., 2011). Peak and Glensor (2004), in their review of street racing for the US Department of Justice, state that “the problem has reached serious levels” within North America, Europe and Australasia.

Official statistics are limited on street racing, stunt driving and related casualties because most police agencies lack a dedicated coding category for street racing on police collision reporting forms, although investigating officers can include the contributing factor of street racing in the incident description on the reporting form (Folkman, 2005; Vingilis & Smart, 2009). Moreover, witnesses are needed to identify whether street racing or stunt driving activities were involved prior to a collision, but drivers, passengers and spectators are reluctant witnesses (Folkman, 2005). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that some street racing-related collisions are coded as speeding-related because of the challenges for police to obtain information on street racing (Vingilis & Smart, 2009). Transport Canada identifies speeding as the second most common contributor to motor vehicle fatalities with 27% of fatalities and 19% of serious injuries involving speeding (Transport Canada, 2011).

There are few studies on street racing or stunt driving-related collisions and fatalities. A study conducted in Utah found that 0.2% of all crashed drivers received at least one street racing citation between 1992–2002, although drivers with a street racing citation had seven times the number of crashes per 1000 days (0.70) than drivers with no citations (0.10) (Li et al., 2008). Another study, using the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) form that reports fatal crashes in the US, found that .021% (315) of all fatal collisions (149,568 fatal collisions in total) and 399 fatalities were attributed to street racing during 1998–2001 (Knight, Cook, & Olson, 2004). Project Eliminate Racing Activity on Streets Everywhere (E.R.A.S.E), a database by police forces in southern Ontario, Canada, reports that between 1999 and 2007, 38 individuals died (average of five per year) as a result of street racing activities in the Greater Toronto Area (Girard, 2007), representing on average 6.4% of the region's motor vehicle fatalities (Ministry of Transport of Ontario, 2006). In Queensland, Australia, between 1999 and 2004 street racing and stunt driving activities, colloquially labelled “hooning”, were identified through examination of the incident descriptions of young driver collisions in Queensland Transport's WebCrash database; street racing and stunt driving contributed to a total of 169 motor vehicle collisions (Armstrong & Steinhardt, 2005), representing a small percentage of the total crashes (Fuller, 2007). The same database identified one street racing/stunt driving-related fatality and 11 hospitalized injuries for 2001–2004 (Folkman, 2005). Leal and Watson (2011) found that of 848 street racing and stunt driving offences that occurred in Queensland, Australia, 3.7% resulted in a collision, and street racing and stunt driving offenders had significantly more traffic offences, licence suspensions, revocations and collisions than a matched comparison group.

Surveys have provided additional information on street racing. In a representative sample of adults surveyed by telephone in Ontario, Canada, only one percent reported street racing within the previous year, although street racing was more commonly reported by male respondents, those under 35 years of age, and those who reported more drinking driving, psychological and substance use problems (Smart et al., 2011; Smart et al., 2012). In a representative sample of high school students in Ontario, Canada, 20.4% of grade 11 and 12 students with advanced-level or full licences reported street racing at least once in the past year (Vingilis et al., 2011). In a national US Gallup poll conducted to examine speeding and unsafe driving attitudes and behaviour, 3% of 4010 drivers 16 years of age and older, reported racing in the past month (Royal, 2003). Arnett, Offer, and Fine (1997), examining risky driving practices in a sample of 139 students 17–18 years of age, found that 69% of males and 36% of females reported racing another car in the past year, with 6% of males and 3% of females reporting engaging in this activity more than 10 times in the past year. Similarly, Bina, Graziano, and Bonino (2006) found that 38% of males and 13% of females reported “racing a car on the streets” (p. 475) at least once in the last two months in a sample of 645 Italian adolescents, aged 14–17. Thus, street racing is a commonly reported activity among young drivers.

Despite the lack of official, national statistics available on stunt driving in Canada, regional collision and casualty statistics and other data on street racing and stunt driving were of sufficient concern that various jurisdictions across Canada introduced legislation to tackle these driving behaviours.

### 1.1. Street racing legislation

In September 2007, the province of Ontario introduced Bill 203 to target street racing and stunt driving. In Ontario, stunt driving was defined by the following activities: causing some or all tires to lose traction with the surface of the highway while turning (drifting); spinning tires or causing a vehicle to circle (burnouts, doughnuts); lifting some or all tires from the surface of the highway (wheelies); driving while the driver is not sitting in the driver's seat (ghost riding); preventing another vehicle from passing; driving two or more motor vehicles side by side where one of the motor vehicles occupies a lane for oncoming traffic (playing chicken); driving as close as possible to another vehicle, pedestrian or object without a reason and driving 50 km per hour over the speed limit (Highway Traffic Act, 2009). The penalties include seven-day vehicle impoundment and driver's licence suspension, fine from \$2000 to \$10,000, driver's licence suspension for up to two years

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7258477>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7258477>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)